

# **The Role of Transit Oriented Development in Selecting the Locally Preferred Alternative**

Talking Points

# Federal Transit Administration Transit Oriented Development Lessons Learned

- ▶ The FTA states in its TOD lessons learned report dated December 2005 that:
  - **Proactive Planning** – Local and regional entities must invest in community outreach and a master plan - a signal to the development community that the public is eager for TOD. **Participants stressed the need to take time to do the planning process right.**
  - **Prepare For What You Need** – **Conduct a market analysis, then request the zoning changes to meet the market.** This statement infers that one should not engage in setting specific TOD-related zoning policies/ordinances until after a detailed market analysis has been completed for that specific site.
  - Reference document: Transit Oriented Development Lessons Learned, Results of FTA's Listening Sessions With Developers, Bankers, and Transit Agencies on Transit Oriented Development, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, December 2005, [www.fta.dot.gov/documents/TOD Lessons Learned 12 21.pdf](http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/TOD_Lessons_Learned_12_21.pdf)
- ▶ The impact of setting policies and ordinance too soon in the TOD process can actually result in higher costs due to changes that would no doubt need to be made at a later date once specific site design criteria and performance criteria were established and developers shared their input.

## **Additional field research done in October 2006, in Vancouver and Portland, Oregon shows that:**

- ▶ TOD is not a “one size fits all” planning process as each station area and community have unique needs resulting in unique building types and zoning requirements.
- ▶ The LPA is commonly selected based on on transportation-related criteria specified by the FTA and “Transit Authority” with serving existing ridership as a key determinant.
  - The goal of the LPA is to select the best alternative to serve existing ridership, which is reflected in the ridership analysis of alternatives and help shape future growth.
- ▶ Preparation of station area plans and enactment of zoning changes, which normally are enacted in relation to specific areas and parcels, may occur after the LPA is selected.
  - In Vancouver and Portland, specific station area planning and adoption of ordinances did not occur until the station areas were identified.
  - In some cases, station area plans, community involvement, and adoption of ordinances did not occur until construction was underway - Cities where TOD has succeeded did not consider this a negative.

## One way forward

- ▶ Prepare a “expression of policy” or a policy regarding the commitment and priority of TOD, potential locations of transit-supportive growth, and commitment to a planning process including on going meaningful participation of all stakeholders.
- ▶ Benefits
  - Will set the TOD-supportive tone for LPA decision-making.
  - Be considered in the LPA selection process.
  - Show the City is committed to TOD and help attract private industry attention and further strengthen the New Start effort.
- ▶ Risk
  - Some communities which have not been anticipating TOD may misinterpret the policy, and this could reflect on the transit project.