



TOD PRIORITIZATION TOOL

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

The Transit Oriented Development Prioritization Tool (TOD Prioritization Tool, previously called the TOD Classification Tool) is a general guide for prioritizing TOD implementation activities. [Reconnecting America](#) developed the TOD Prioritization Tool in partnership with the Metropolitan Council, with funding by the [McKnight Foundation](#). It may help planners and others determine the type and timing of investments and other activities needed for different types of station areas. The TOD Prioritization Tool can also help planners re-assess existing strategies for TOD.

IMPLEMENTATION NEEDS

The TOD Prioritization Tool identified five types of station areas along existing or planned transitways. For each type of station area, the TOD Prioritization Tool identified what may be the most effective strategies for implementing TOD. These are general recommendations that may be refined to fit local needs, conditions, and opportunities. Many communities have more detailed implementation planning under way. Using the TOD Prioritization Tool can further efforts to coordinate investments, prioritize investments, and inform local strategies.

TRANSIT ORIENTATION AND MARKET POTENTIAL

To identify types of station areas, the TOD Prioritization Tool combined information on transit orientation (urban form) and market potential (real estate market). Measures of transit orientation and market potential use 2013 data, and the Metropolitan Council's TOD Office plans to update this data every five years.

Transit orientation measures how easy it is to get around by transit, walking, and biking and to access nearby services for daily needs. Measures of transit orientation include: number of residents and workers; access to amenities and services; intersection density; transit frequency; and people dependent on transit.

Market potential measures the existing market for TOD, how transit may affect market potential, and development opportunities. Market data measures land value and sales activity for the existing market. Market potential measures increased access to jobs with transit investments. Development potential uses information on underused land, planning readiness for TOD, and zoning.

TYPES OF STATION AREAS

For each type of station area, the TOD Prioritization Tool identified priorities for implementing activities. For example, cities with strong real estate markets and easy access to transit may apply strategies to retain affordable housing and strengthen walkability and access to open space. Communities may benefit by looking at implementation activities for not only their type of station area, but also strategies recommended for other types of station areas. The [TOD Prioritization Tool User's Guide](#) provides additional information, including detailed maps and charts.

- **Raise the Bar:** strong market + strong existing transit orientation
- **Catalyze:** cool or emerging market + strong existing transit orientation
- **Connect:** warm market + moderate existing transit orientation
- **Transition:** cool market + moderate existing transit orientation
- **Plan and Partner:** cool market + limited existing transit orientation

RAISE THE BAR

Strong market + strong transit orientation

In these station areas, conditions already strongly support TOD. Investment is not needed to spur the market, so much as to “raise the bar” to maximize the potential of TOD. Many station areas are in downtown locations or other major urban job centers where investments can build upon existing infrastructure. Several station areas overlap areas of concentrated poverty.

Implementation Priorities

- Increase densities and introduce parking caps
- Make placemaking investments in both infrastructure (such as parks, trees, and street lights) and programming (such as farmers markets or festivals)
- Strengthen pedestrian environments and improve connections between transportation modes to support development of affordable and mixed-income housing

CATALYZE

Cool or emerging market + strong transit orientation

In these station areas, public and private sector investments can significantly affect the feasibility of development and spur private development. Many of these station areas are near major regional or sub-regional job centers. Affordable housing strategies may prioritize mixed-income housing, particularly in neighborhoods with areas of concentrated poverty.

Implementation Priorities

- Support projects to demonstrate the demand for TOD in untested markets
- Make public investments to spark revitalization in station areas with no recent activity in the private market
- Use public financial tools, such as land assembly, tax increment financing (TIF), tax abatement, special assessment bonding, joint venture investment, and cleanup of polluted land
- Make placemaking investments, such as parks, streetscapes, or plazas
- Identify opportunities to improve multimodal connections
- Support affordable housing, including mixed-income housing in areas of concentrated poverty
- Link lower-income residents to opportunity (for example, schools and employers)

CONNECT

Warm market + moderate transit orientation

In these station areas, urban form is more auto-oriented than transit oriented. Suburban activity centers may require significant investments to add pedestrian and bicycle connections or new streets. Redevelopment may be challenging in residential markets with high land values. Infrastructure investments, such as those made to improve connectivity, could make these places more transit oriented.

Implementation Priorities

- Invest in pedestrian, bicycle, and street improvements
- Make multimodal transit connections work effectively
- Use TIF districts, public improvement districts, or other tools so developments that benefit from investments contribute to those investments.
- Encourage a mix of uses in station areas and use zoning and design guidelines to reduce parking requirements and increase density.
- Make public investments in infrastructure, placemaking, and amenities, such as parks.



Downtown Minneapolis, METRO Green Line / Blue Line Nicollet Mall Station. High-density mixed-use development integrates into the station, “raising the bar” for TOD.



St. Paul, METRO Green Line Western Station. Public investments in adaptive re-use, such as housing at the historic Old Home Dairy processing plant, can help catalyze an emerging market for TOD.



Bloomington, METRO Blue Line Central Station. Infrastructure investments including new streets and public plazas help improve the South Loop area’s transit orientation.

TRANSITION

Cool market + moderate transit orientation

These station areas are more auto-oriented than Catalyze or Raise the Bar station areas. Transitioning from planning to implementation requires smaller-scale investments in infrastructure, planning, and zoning. These efforts can set up larger-scale investments in connectivity and development. In initial stages of planning and visioning, getting ready for TOD investments is a priority.

Implementation activity examples

- Plan and implement zoning and design elements to get ready for TOD development
- Engage the community and build support for TOD
- Complete station areas planning or TOD feasibility studies

PLAN AND PARTNER

Cool market + limited transit orientation

In these station areas, there is limited infrastructure to support walking and bicycling. Investment in transit may have little impact on the market without additional public investment in infrastructure and redevelopment. Efforts may focus on how and when to address the most significant barriers over the long term. Another approach is to respond to development or redevelopment opportunities in the short-term in ways that are consistent with long-term goals for TOD.

Implementation Priorities

- Develop support for a long-term vision of how TOD can develop
- Address barriers to TOD and identify infrastructure needs during local comprehensive and station area planning
- Set expectations for short-term development opportunities that will be consistent with the long-term vision and improve conditions for future TOD
- Identify types of public investments that could make station areas more transit oriented over the long term

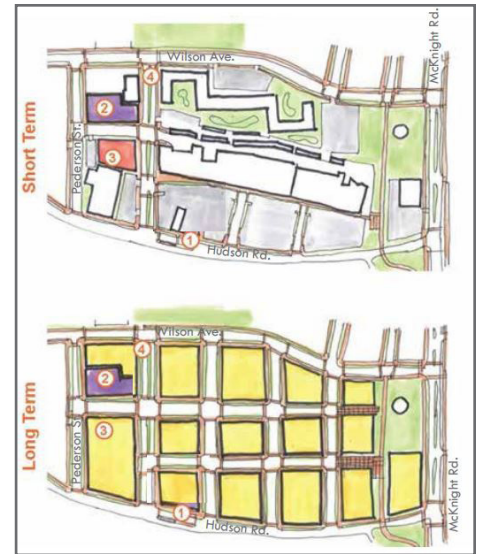
LEARN MORE

TOD Classification Tool User's Guide

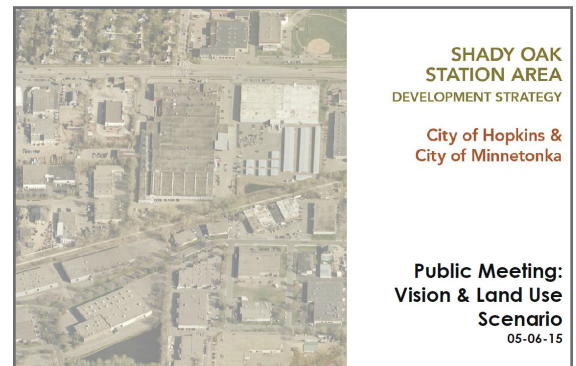
To request data on the TOD Prioritization Tool, contact Metro Transit's TOD Office at tod@metrotransit.org.

Staff Contact

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St. Paul, Future METRO Gold Line Sun Ray Station Area. The adopted station area plans envision transitioning from an auto-oriented shopping center to a more urban pattern.



Hopkins / Minnetonka, Future METRO Green Line Shady Oak Station. Hopkins and Minnetonka are developing a joint process for development review.