

NODAL AND TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

NODAL DEVELOPMENT

Description

Nodal Development involves concentrating development in existing or new centers and around planned roadway and intersection improvements at a higher density than the surrounding area. This allows the land between nodes to be used for lower density, lower traffic land uses.

Key Components

Nodal development is generally found in more suburban/urban locations and provides a mix of residential, commercial, and service opportunities in a compact walkable area. Nodes are often located at existing intersections or community centers. The land between the nodes remains relatively rural with limited commercial sites and access points.

Benefits/Applications

One of the key benefits of nodal development is reduced automobile trips by providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks, visible crosswalks, streetscape improvements, and street furniture. Nodal development can enhance community character and sense of place by minimizing the spread of generic sprawl and unifying development, making it easier to achieve consistent design themes. Safety is also improved by concentrating access points within the nodes and limiting them along major corridors to minimize potential conflict points.

Example

The aerial photo below (left) shows nodal development patterns in El Paso, TX. Note the large tracts of rural, undeveloped land between and around the nodes. Closer to home, the Maplewood Development in Nashua (right) is an excellent example of Nodal Development, providing residents with the opportunity to walk or bike to a variety of uses, including a preschool, dry cleaner, and restaurants.



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Description

Transit Oriented Development creates mixed-use, dense, walkable communities that encourage citizens to live, work, and shop near transit, decreasing their dependence on cars. Communities within NH vary in their access to public transportation opportunities. Even if your community does not have an established public transportation system you can still incorporate several of the Transit Oriented Development design components to create a vibrant, pedestrian friendly community.

Key Components

- Walkable layout with pedestrians as the highest priority
- Inclusive design for non-motorized transportation (ex. bikes, scooters, rollerblades)
- Public transit station as prominent feature of town center
- Collector support transit systems, including trolley, streetcars, light rail, buses
- Reduced and managed parking within close proximity to town center

Benefits/Applications

- Reduced need for driving and burning of fossil fuels
- Higher quality of life, better places to live, work, and play
- Greater mobility and increased transportation options
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Improved public health by promoting walking, better air quality
- Increased economic vitality, higher property values

Making it Happen ~ characteristics that support transit oriented development

- Supportive market conditions—station areas must have development potential
- Commitment to transit—state & local officials must demonstrate clear, long term commitment to high quality transit service and local policies must support & encourage transit use
- Strong & respected local leadership—must come from both the public & private sector
- Supportive public policies & tools—regulatory & incentive based strategies must direct development into transit corridors or encourage redevelopment that generates pedestrian activity. Policies can include station area plans; higher density, mixed use zoning; design standards/guidelines; public investment policies; and incentives

(Source: MA Smart Growth toolkit)

Example

Maine Street Station, in Brunswick, ME (bottom left) is a transit oriented development project that combines smart growth principles with brownfields redevelopment. The “preferred master plan,” which was approved by the Town Council, would include 122 units of housing, offices, retail space, a hotel, and movie theater, in addition to a train station and parking garages for commuters. In MA, the Green Line MBTA T station in Newton Center (bottom right) anchors a vibrant downtown retail district. An old station building now serves as a coffee shop.

