

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Zoning Strategy and Process

City and County of Honolulu

The City and County of Honolulu is constructing a 20-mile rail line from East Kapolei to Ala Moana Center. Of the 21 rail station areas, 19 are under City jurisdiction (two are under the jurisdiction of the Hawaii Community Development Authority). Honolulu City Council Ordinance 09-4 directed the Department of Planning and Permitting to develop neighborhood transit-oriented development (TOD) plans for each of these rail station communities. In each of these plans "... a general land use scheme must be created that provides for a deliberate, inclusive process to plan for TOD so that well-defined, meaningful, and appropriate regulatory and incentive programs can be adopted for each area around a transit station or type of station."



Land Use Planning: The City's eight neighborhood TOD plans each cover one to three rail station areas. The plans address land use, circulation, urban design, housing, community facilities, parking, pedestrian amenities, historic and cultural enhancements, and infrastructure. Each plan also identifies opportunities for new development, orderly growth, and improved accessibility around the rail stations. The plans are aligned with the General Plan and regional development plans.

As of August 2017, the Waipahu, Aiea-Pearl City, and Kalihi Neighborhood TOD Plans have been adopted by the City Council. The remaining plans have been drafted, subject to public review; the Downtown and Ala Moana Neighborhood TOD Plans are under consideration by the City Council. Following adoption of each plan, and based on its recommendations, new TOD land use regulations will be proposed around the rail stations. The TOD zoning and development standards for the Waipahu station areas are currently under consideration by the City Council. These new regulations will facilitate implementation of the neighborhood plans.

Regulatory Programs: The TOD Special District and zone changes will help direct and manage growth around the rail stations. An important regulatory change involves rezoning from single uses to mixed uses within ¼- to ½-mile of the rail stations. The City-initiated zone changes will expand the types of allowable uses, and are intended to stimulate mixed-use development activity around the rail stations. The zoning maps also include revised height limits, with the potential for additional height and density in return for community benefits.

In addition to mixed-use zoning, properties in the TOD areas will be regulated by a new TOD Special District. The TOD Special District will apply to each rail station area as the zoning is adopted around each station. The TOD Special District is designed to supplement or modify the underlying zoning district regulations to promote TOD, while providing opportunities for review and comment on major projects. It specifies site layout and ground-floor building design

requirements to promote walkable, active streetscapes and usable public space. These development standards are intended to improve the pedestrian experience around the rail stations, particularly along designated "key streets," which are expected to experience the most pedestrian and business activity. The TOD Special District will be part of the Land Use Ordinance (LUO), and it will need minor revisions as each rail station neighborhood is added incrementally to the TOD Special District.

Prior to applying the TOD Special District boundary to a rail station area, qualifying properties may seek an Interim Planned Development—Transit (IPD-T) permit, designed to spur development along the rail corridor through catalytic projects that provide exceptional community benefits, such as improved connectivity, affordable housing, and quality gathering spaces. Five IPD-T project applications have been received as of August 2017.

There are other ways to ensure that station areas are equitable, walkable, and vibrant. For example, the City is proposing a variety of ways to create and/or preserve affordable housing in accordance with the City's *Affordable Housing Strategy*. An inclusionary affordable housing requirement is currently under review by the City Council. LUO amendments will rely, in part, upon the *Affordable Housing Strategy* for guidance regarding the implementation of certain TOD community benefits.

The DPP will also be proposing amendments to existing regulations governing sidewalk areas to provide opportunities for property owners to pave their private front yards as extensions of the public sidewalk; create opportunities for canopies and awnings to extend over pedestrian zones; and provide incentives for improving sidewalk areas in the TOD Special District. These amendments are consistent with the City's new Complete Streets Design Manual.

Incentive Programs: Various incentives will stimulate, and help ease the burden of, implementation. The construction of the rail system is already a major incentive for private developments, as is the City-initiated TOD zoning. Besides reducing parking requirements and allowing for more extensive and varied use of private property, the TOD Special District will allow for increased height and density, commensurate with community benefits. For larger projects that seek more flexibility than a TOD Special District permit can provide, a Planned Development—Transit permit option will function similarly to the existing IPD-T permit (i.e., it allows modified development standards for projects that provide additional community benefits).

Other design and financial incentives are also being planned. A series of financial incentives for the construction of affordable housing is being considered by the City Council, and the City is proactively pursuing infrastructure improvements to support TOD.

Participatory Process: The neighborhood TOD plans were created through extensive community engagement, including public workshops, advisory committee meetings, community needs surveys, and business and media outreach. All drafts, data, and final reports are available online. A similar process, involving community meetings and property owner notification, will continue for the TOD zone changes and adoption of the TOD Special District.