

# **Transit Oriented Development**

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REFERENCE:

DATE APPROVED: Nov 10,  
2011

ADOPTED BY: EFCL Board

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## **Position Statement:**

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The EFCL supports the City of Edmonton's vision of a more compact, transit oriented and sustainable city, where more people walk, cycle and use transit more than they do today.

The EFCL supports the development of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) areas which concentrate housing, shopping, services and employment along a network of walkable and bikeable streets within a five minute walk of transit stations.

The EFCL supports the development of City guidelines to encourage and guide the type of development that can occur in neighbourhoods near transit stations over the next 30 years.

The TOD Guidelines should foster the development and redevelopment of neighbourhoods which are:

- Demographically *balanced* with suitable housing options for all ages and incomes
- *Stable* with the majority of housing attracting long-term residents, encouraged by the availability of family-oriented housing and a balance of rented vs. owner-occupied dwellings
- *Complete* with schools, child care services, public play areas, community gathering and meeting places, recreation opportunities, parks, food sources, as well as daily shopping and employment opportunities
- *Healthy* with insignificant noise, light, water and air pollution, and with abundant opportunities to connect to nature and to have access to sunlight
- *Safe* with complete streets and buildings designed to increase safety, especially for pedestrians, cyclists, children, seniors and persons with cognitive and physical challenges
- *Redeveloped with respect* for the neighbourhood's unique architectural characteristics, environment, and history, and
- *Redeveloped with community input.*

In brief, the TOD areas should be developed to enhance the quality of life of residents and the experience of visitors. The TOD Guidelines should incorporate best practices in urban planning and design, and incorporate a strong commitment to community involvement in the redevelopment process.

Recommendations to the City of Edmonton:

1. To achieve demographically balanced TOD neighbourhoods, with a stable residential population, we recommend that the TOD Guidelines require the majority of higher density housing in the TOD areas be family-oriented, and be quality homes attractive to people seeking long-term residency.
2. To ensure complete communities, we recommend the TOD Guidelines strongly encourage the retention and development of schools, play areas, food stores and daily services within TOD neighbourhoods.
3. To ensure public realm improvements, including enhanced walkability, bikeability, and park spaces, we recommend the TOD Guidelines require the development of enhanced public realm improvements prior to or concurrent with the application of the Intensity Guidelines which allow higher density.
4. Similarly, the Intensity Guidelines should be applied concurrent with an LRT level of transit service to serve an increased population.
5. To enhance the environmental health of the TOD neighbourhoods, the TOD Guidelines should incorporate directions from the “Way We Green”. A higher standard of environmental attention should be given to TOD areas.
6. To respect the unique characteristics and history of neighbourhoods, the TOD Guidelines should clearly state that historic sites, buildings, and features must be maintained and that developments around the historic sites must be sensitive to the scale and character of the historic building(s). Similarly, new developments should be sensitive to the scale and character of adjacent buildings through enhanced transition regulations.
7. EFCL believes that community leagues and citizens have a right to be involved and partner in the planning and development process. They should be allowed to provide input on any development that affects their neighbourhood. As such, we recommend that community leagues and citizens in the TOD neighbourhoods be given opportunities to have input into comprehensive plans for their neighbourhood. This would include initiating a process to amend the existing Area Redevelopment Plans of TOD neighbourhoods, in consultation with the communities.
8. To create certainty and consistency, we recommend the Intensity Guidelines apply only to areas along roads defined in Bylaw, i.e. along arterial roads and not collector roads, unless defined in Bylaw.

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**The purpose and or rationale:**

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Successful TOD areas will increase transit ridership and reduce the number of automobile miles travelled, which will have environmental and health benefits. Even more important from a community perspective, the compact, mixed-use TOD areas will give people more opportunities to do more close to home, thus providing more opportunities to get to know their neighbours and volunteer in their community.

TOD developments, if done with the interests of the local community in mind, could provide opportunities to revitalize neighbourhoods along the LRT routes, and make the best use of existing infrastructure by bringing more people and activity to the neighbourhoods.

To ensure that TOD redevelopments benefit neighbourhoods, the redevelopments need to be focused on improving the quality of life in neighbourhoods. The new, more compact housing stock must attract a significant portion of long-term residents, including families with children. Redevelopments need to increase the availability of amenities and services, including the availability of schools, parks, community buildings and food sources. Enhanced public realm (safe streets for all, parks/plazas) must go hand in hand with increased intensity.