

Southeast Florida TOD Working Group

Meeting Summary

February 6, 2015 (9:00AM – Noon); SFRTA Board Room

The Southeast Florida Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Working Group is an informal group of members from 22 agencies and organizations with the purpose of working together to foster the creation of TOD in Southeast Florida in a cooperative, collaborative, effective, and efficient manner. New members are welcome to join. The Working Group meets quarterly for 3 hour sessions.

The Working Group met on February 6, 2015 to share TOD-related activities in a roundtable discussion, to view a presentation by Nilia Cartaya on Miami-Dade Transit TOD, and to discuss a proposed Work Plan for the TOD Working Group.

KEY THEMES AND TAKEAWAYS

Miami-Dade County has been successful in achieving TOD and offers several **lessons to learn from**. The county has taken advantage of tax credit financing for affordable housing developments near some of its Metrorail stations. Miami-Dade Transit has staff whose responsibilities include station area planning and joint development. The county operates the transit service, owns property in station areas, and has land use authority over that property which makes facilitating joint use development more seamless. Having fewer players in TOD joint development projects removes layers of complexity and increases the likelihood of achieving TOD. The importance of land ownership is a recurring theme. Public agencies who own land can use it as leverage in the negotiation process. This introduces complexity into project negotiation, and depending on the circumstances, may either help or hinder the project's advancement.

Several discussion points included **ways in which the Working Group can grow and evolve**. Greater involvement from municipalities in the Working Group is needed because they are "in the driver's seat" for negotiating the development process. Based on the success of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact, several participants expressed interest in exploring a regional TOD compact to identify common interests and areas for collaboration to promote effective implementation of the TOD in Southeast Florida.

Southeast Florida has several **regional visions**, including the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Transit Vision and the Seven50 Plan for Prosperity. Effort now needs to shift towards implementing these visions. Successful regions around the country provide financial resources for implementing regional plans, and this region should do the same. The group considered the role the TOD Working Group could play in implementing the regional visions.

The group voiced several critical principles to **maximizing the potential** for TOD. The construction of a transit station alone does not create a market for development. Location is still the dominant factor influencing favorable market conditions. While there is a significant amount of vacant land around the existing Tri-Rail stations, much of this land is located outside of downtowns, in industrial areas, or in other areas that are not prime for TOD. Rail transit stations are not the only areas where opportunities for TOD exist. Express bus services and cross-county connections may also provide opportunities for TOD. Financing is essential to a successful project; if you can get financing, you can get projects built.

Requirements attached to public funds, particularly funds from the federal government, can limit possibilities.

The Working Group identified several **challenges** and ways the Working Group can respond to those challenges. Local governments and others may not be aware of the full extent of available TOD resources. A roadmap of these resources and examples of what other partners in Southeast Florida have done could be helpful. The region faces challenges in implementing transportation plans and studies, particularly from the land use perspective. Members of the Working Group stated that there are many studies and recommendations for enhanced transit, but the next steps of incorporating supporting land uses for successful enhanced transit service are not materializing. Local governments are the partners to carry these plans and recommendations forward, particularly with implementing the complementary land uses, and greater coordination among city staff and other partners during plan development is needed. The region is making progress, demonstrated by the Transit Village in downtown West Palm Beach, but more efficient implementation is still desired by some members. There is also a need to market and educate both the public and elected officials on TOD, and the Working Group may be the appropriate entity for taking on this role.

ACTION ITEMS

- The facilitator team will compile the feedback from the Working Group on the proposed Work Plan and Action Items and will provide the results to the Working Group.
- The facilitator team will plan a TOD tour of Miami for the May Working Group meeting.
- The facilitator team will invite Florida East Coast Industries (FECI) to present on TOD station area planning for All Aboard Florida at the August TOD Working Group meeting.
- The facilitator team will explore and identify the best opportunities to engage developers and lenders (e.g. a panel or other venue for dialogue).

PARTICIPANTS

- Steve Anderson, Palm Tran
- Lois Bush, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 4
- Nilia Cartaya, Miami-Dade Transit
- Kesha Davis, Broward County Transit (BCT)
- Jessica Dimmick, Renaissance Planning Group
- Alex Hansen, City of West Palm Beach
- Larry Hymowitz, FDOT District 4
- Shi-Chiang Li, FDOT District 4
- James Murley, South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC)
- Valerie Neilson, Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization
- David Orshefsky (remote), Urban Land Institute (ULI)
- Rob Piatkowski, Renaissance Planning Group
- John Ramos, BCT
- Deanne Von Stetina, Broward County Planning Council
- Lynda Westin, South Florida Regional Transit Agency (SFRTA)
- Marianne Winfield, Smart Growth Partnership

AGENDA

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements
2. Roundtable and Discussion: Attendee's reports on TOD-related work, successes, and challenges
3. Presentation on Miami-Dade Transit TOD by Nilia Cartaya
4. TOD Working Group Proposed Work Plan: Introduction and presentation
5. Wrap Up and Next Steps

DISCUSSION

1. Roundtable & Discussion

After an initial overview of the purpose of the TOD Working Group, participants shared updates on TOD-related work, successes, and challenges, as well as TOD-related events and meetings. Participants discussed some topics in depth, sharing similar experiences, ways of overcoming challenges, and lessons learned.

Palm Tran – The Transit Village development at the West Palm Beach Intermodal Center is moving forward. The development, which includes the wedge shaped parcel on Tamarind Avenue will anchor to downtown West Palm Beach. The development will impact the Intermodal Center, requiring minor adjustments to bus bay locations. The site plan includes 2,000 parking spaces in excess of City code requirements. The additional parking is necessary to meet the requirements of the County in the development.

City of West Palm Beach – The developer recently submitted the site plans for the Transit Village to the City. The review of site development documents is underway. Some issues exist that will need to be worked out. The City is also coordinating with All Aboard Florida including negotiating development plans for the area surrounding the station. Phase 1 of the All Aboard Florida project in West Palm Beach will consist of the station itself. Phase 2 will consist of development surrounding the station, most likely residential with ground floor retail. The station is expected to be completed by Summer 2016 with operations beginning in October of the same year. The City is not requiring an affordable housing component, but the County's requirements will result in the designation of 11 to 12 percent of the residential units as affordable units.

Members of the Working Group thought it would be interesting to compare the number of parking spaces proposed for the Transit Village to the amount of parking provided at developments in Miami-Dade County. Similarly, some Working Group members expressed an interest in how many of the proposed parking spaces were requested or required by each party involved in the Transit Village development.

Smart Growth Partnership – The update to the Broward County Comprehensive Plan may add 5,000 units to downtown Fort Lauderdale. A conversation with an owner of property near a proposed TOD in Fort Lauderdale provided insight into the property owner perspective. Some of the questions the property owner had include:

- If the 5,000 additional units are approved, can the property owner get more density?
- What will the effect be on property values?
- Should the property be sold now or should it be held on to longer?

SFRTA – SFRTA is waiting to hear back from FTA on the TOD Planning Pilot Program grant application for TOD Planning for the Tri-Rail Coastal Link, which was a collaboration with SFRPC and TCRPC. SFRTA recently presented to their Board on the topics of TOD and density. SFRTA will share this presentation with the Working Group.

Broward County Transit (BCT) – Construction of Phase 1 of the Metropica project adjacent to the Sawgrass Mall is about to get underway. BCT is continuing their coordination with the City through which the City will add shuttle services as part of the DRI agreement. Phase 2 of the project will add offices and the transit terminal. From the transit agencies' experiences working on potential TOD projects, the banking industry creates complexity and hoops to jump through in the negotiation process. One particular example was the potential TOD site at the southeast corner of Pines Boulevard and US 441. In the end, the developer did not see the profitability of developing the site as a TOD and developed it instead as a typical big box project.

Broward County Planning Council – BCPC is undertaking a 2-year process to update the Land Use Plan and Comprehensive Plan (Broward NEXT). Transportation has been the number one subject in feedback from the public outreach effort. BCPC is considering focusing density at major transit corridors and consolidating the five existing mixed-use future land use designations into one.

ULI – Recent research from Smart Growth America shows that property value premiums extend beyond the standard ¼ mile and ½ mile TOD radii, suggesting that TOD travel sheds may actually be larger. Mr. Orshefsky suggested that the Working Group should take a broader look at the planning areas for TOD to reflect a true travel shed. North Miami Beach is planning to include a kiss and ride lot at the potential Tri-Rail Coastal Link station. Mr. Orshefsky will forward the report to the Working Group.

FDOT District 4 – FDOT is coordinating with SFRPC to create a temporary TOD Working Group webpage on SFRPC's website. Renaissance Planning is coordinating with SFRPC to post the group's materials to the site.

2. Discussion Following the Presentation on Miami-Dade Transit TOD

Miami-Dade County has been a leader in TOD. Today, joint development projects in Miami-Dade County contribute \$3 million per year back to transit. The projects included in the presentation are located on county owned land and were financed through a tax credit program. The program is fairly popular with developers and provides low and moderate income housing units. This program is different from public housing projects in the northern regions of the country, where challenges in maintaining the buildings persist and have often resulted in demolition. The units in Miami-Dade are designed and constructed with top-notch quality and financed through the tax credit program. These units are neither Section 8 nor public housing. One potential issue with the tax credit program is uncertainty on whether it permits ground floor retail uses. From the transit perspective, locating ground floor retail in a joint development TOD is preferable to ground floor residential uses, because retail will generate more revenue for the transit agency.

Two example joint development projects in Miami-Dade County include Brownsville Station and West Brickell Village. The Brownsville development has a subsidiary property management company. Recently, a Wal-Mart opened up next to the project, demonstrating the development's success in garnering market interest for nearby development. West Brickell Village is a five building, tax credit

financed development. Each building is 15-20 stories, and the development has a good combination of market rate and affordable units. It is not yet 100% occupied and does have some seasonal residents.

The 79th Street corridor has a lot of TOD potential because of its proximity to both Metrorail and Tri-Rail at the transfer station. The corridor is included within a County designated Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). The 79th Street Collaborative, a local grassroots non-profit organization, is leading the effort to improve the corridor with funding from the Citibank Foundation. The Collaborative approached SFRPC to conduct a planning study for the corridor which is now wrapping up.

While there has been much discussion about TOD around Metrorail stations, the Metromover system has also generated as much development activity as the rail system.

A key takeaway from the Miami-Dade experience is that joint development TOD projects are easier when fewer parties are involved. Development deals consist of many layers of funding, each with its own requirements. Simplifying the number of parties involved minimizes uncertainty for developers, which is their main deterrent.

In Miami-Dade County, joint development projects occur on County-owned land adjacent to County-owned transit stations. Furthermore, the County has zoning authority at Metrorail station areas through overlays.

The Community Planning Section of the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources (RER) has an exemplary process for combining corridor planning and community center planning. RER hosts design charrettes in interested communities. The charrettes are available to areas specified within the Land Use Plan and include Regional, Metropolitan, and Community place types, and are not limited to Metrorail and Metromover station areas. RER compiles the results from the charrette into a report for the station area. The city or county council reviews these reports and decides whether to change the zoning code to promote the designs from the charrettes. This process provides the appropriate zoning changes necessary to encourage TOD before transit service begins.

3. TOD Working Group Proposed Work Plan

The facilitation team introduced the concept of the Work Plan. The facilitation team summarized five challenges that are inhibiting the implementation of maximum orderly TOD in Southeast Florida, based on a synthesis of the Working Group's efforts to date. The Work Plan proposed five corresponding objectives for overcoming the challenges, and activities for each objective. Participants individually reviewed the activities and selected a priority (high, medium, or low) for each objective. The Working Group then discussed the proposed Work Plan.

General Comments on the Work Plan

Some of the proposed activities to achieve success are similar. Ranking the proposed activities resembled ranking the objectives.

The Group discussed the activities to achieve success and noted that there are a variety of scales (station, corridors, system). A means of measuring success needs to be defined for each scale. There also needs to be recognition that different types of TOD are appropriate for the three scales and at different locations.

The Working Group can also prioritize locations for where it can help advance TOD.

Agency & County Challenges

The public agencies in each county tend to work in silos, but Miami-Dade County may offer a good model for better integration. The three counties in the region are at different levels for implementing TOD based on existing transit infrastructure. The transit agencies desire retail in joint development TOD projects, but lack experience with managing landlord responsibilities. All three counties are heavily developed and existing corridors, such as Okeechobee Boulevard, may be difficult to change.

City Government Participation

Greater involvement from municipalities in the Working Group is needed because they are “in the driver’s seat” for negotiating the development process.

Political Opportunities & Challenges

TOD projects can encounter a variety of political opportunities or challenges depending on the situation.

- Local governments may simply act as a regulator and code enforcer, and TOD may occur where conditions are ripe.
- In some cases, local elected officials may push for changes in regulations to more easily accommodate proposed developments.
- In other cases, good plans may be watered down through the approval process due to politics. Technical assistance programs may be able to help overcome this type of political resistance to TOD.

Implementing the Regional Vision

The region has several regional visions, including the 2040 RTP Regional Transit Vision and Seven50. The region’s effort now needs to shift towards implementing these visions. The regional visions can be linked to the TOD Working Group to assist in implementation. More broadly, resources need to be applied towards implementing the visions. Successful regions around the country provide financial resources for implementing regional plans, and this region should do the same. Adding language about providing financial resources aligned with regional visions to Objective 3 (Develop, maintain, and promote a clearinghouse of resources for advancing the understanding and implementation of TOD) can address this point. A graphic that shows the way partners and funding work together over time to implement regional plans would be helpful.

Market Conditions

The construction of a transit station alone does not create a market for development. Location is still the dominant factor influencing favorable market conditions. While there is a significant amount of vacant land around the existing Tri-Rail stations, much of this land is located outside of downtowns, in industrial areas, or in other areas that are not prime for TOD. There is a need to increase viable locations for TOD.

Technical Assistance & Other Resources

Several members of the Working Group noted that the region already has technical assistance programs (i.e. FDOT’s push button program) and questioned the need for additional technical assistance programs. Instead, participants suggested focusing on financial resources may be more relevant. Working Group members noted that there are a lot of resources available, but perhaps the resources need to be better organized and publicized. Resources may already exist for some local governments who are in need of assistance. Staff may not know where to find the resources that are available and, in general, a better awareness of what is out there is needed more than the creation of a new technical

assistance program. A roadmap of these resources and examples of what other partners in Southeast Florida have done could be helpful.

Opportunities beyond Rail

Rail transit stations are not the only areas where opportunities for TOD exist. Express bus services and cross-county connections may also provide opportunities for TOD. Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) is moving towards Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and nodal development. MDT also operates the South Dade Busway which has good examples of TOD that is not located at a rail station, such as at the Princeton station.

Project Financing

Financing is essential to a successful project; if you can get financing, you can get projects built. Requirements attached to public funds, particularly funds from the federal government, can limit possibilities to just transit and may prevent the option for retail in joint developments.

Implementing Plans & Studies

The region faces challenges in implementing transportation plans and studies, particularly from the land use perspective. Members of the Working Group stated that there are many studies and recommendations for enhanced transit, but the next steps of incorporating supporting land uses for successful enhanced transit service are not materializing. Local governments are the partners to carry these plans and recommendations forward, particularly with implementing the complementary land uses, and greater coordination with city staff during plan development is needed. For example, the local transit agency should proactively approach cities to request land uses supportive of transit during the development of their Transit Development Plan. The MPO should approach city staff to discuss implementation throughout the development of a corridor study. In Broward County, there are several Mobility Hub related planning studies completed or in progress, but questions still remain on how they can be implemented. The proper planning partner for taking the initiative in moving plans and recommendations forward will vary depending on who prepared the plan, study, or recommendation. The partner who prepared it may, but not always, be the best partner for moving the effort forward. The region is making progress, demonstrated by the Transit Village in downtown West Palm Beach and development in downtown Ft. Lauderdale, but more efficient implementation is still desired by some members.

Marketing the TOD Concept (Education & Advocacy)

The Working Group expressed that there is a need to market and educate both the public and elected officials on TOD and that the Working Group may be the appropriate entity for taking on such a role. One participant remarked that the posters on the benefits of TOD and transit located in the SFRTA Boardroom are an example of the type of information to share more broadly and a means for doing so. On a larger scale, TOD forums could be used to present TOD concepts to elected officials. In general, TOD needs to be marketed at more events.

Compacts

There is a direct analogy between the form and function of the Regional Climate Change Compact and the TOD Working Group. The Regional Climate Change Compact is locally implemented and enhanced through regional collaboration. Compacts function as a working agreement towards a shared goal amongst the signatories. Once a compact is established, some elected officials tend to take it on as a “champion” and make advancing it their priority. Compacts can bring together resources and marketing efforts, both of which are topics of interest to the Working Group. A regional TOD compact may be able to achieve multiple desires and objectives of the Working Group. The process of establishing a compact

potentially requires a long time frame to build consensus. A decision must also be made as to whether the compact will be non-binding. In spite of the challenges in creating a compact, similar agreements, such as MOUs for transit projects, have proven to be useful.

Land Ownership

The importance of land ownership is a recurring theme. The ownership of land is seen as key to a successful TOD project, recognizing the difference between publicly owned and privately owned land. Public agencies who own land can use it as leverage in the negotiation process. This introduces complexity into project negotiation, and depending on the circumstances, may either help or hinder the project's advancement. Miami-Dade County has been able to capitalize on its land ownership as demonstrated in the presentation.

Potential Work Plan Items

- Creating a TOD Compact
- TOD Working Group can Market TOD
- Identify locations for Working Group prioritization
- Targeted approach meetings with partners
- TOD Website
- Bring developers together to discuss TOD

4. Future Working Group Actions and Meeting Topics

The TOD Working Group members at the February 6th meeting reached consensus on the following actions and next steps:

- The May Working Group meeting will include a TOD tour of Miami-Dade County. A shortened regular meeting will take place in Broward County in the morning, followed by site visits by transit to several notable TOD projects in Miami-Dade County.
- The facilitator team will invite Florida East Coast Industries (FECI) to present on TOD station area planning for All Aboard Florida at the next August Working Group meeting.
- The facilitator team will explore and identify the best opportunities to engage developers and lenders (e.g. a panel or other venue for dialogue).

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA TOD WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

The current roster of Southeast Florida TOD Working Group Members is listed below. Participants with a ✓ were in attendance at the Feb. 6, 2015 meeting.

	Kevin Fischer	Broward County
	Sara Forelle	Broward County
	Pete Schwarz	Broward County Planning Council
✓	Deanne Von Stetina	Broward County Planning Council
✓	John Ramos	Broward County Transit
✓	Kesha Davis	Broward County Transit
	James Cromar	Broward MPO
	Peter Gies	Broward MPO
	Jim Carras	Carras Community Investment
✓	Alex Hansen	City of West Palm Beach
	Jason King	Dover, Kohl & Partners
	Kenneth Garcia	Dover, Kohl & Partners
	Eric Dumbaugh	Florida Atlantic University
	Amie Goddeau	Florida Department of Transportation, D4
✓	Larry Hymowitz	Florida Department of Transportation, D4
✓	Lois Bush	Florida Department of Transportation, D4
	Scott Seeburger	Florida Department of Transportation, D4
	Jayne Pietrowski	Florida Department of Transportation, D4
✓	Shi-Chiang Li	Florida Department of Transportation, D4
	Curlene Thomas	Florida Department of Transportation, D6
	Lisa Colmenares	Florida Department of Transportation, D6
	Christopher Dube	Florida Department of Transportation, D6
	Jessica Josselyn	SEFTC
	Marcela Cambor	Marcela Cambor Consultant (Seven50 consultant for SFRPC)
	Garett Rowe	Miami-Dade County Planning (RER)
	Jess Linn	Miami-Dade County Planning (RER)
	Wilson Fernandez	Miami Dade MPO
✓	Nilia Cartaya	Miami-Dade Transit
	Judy Emerson	Miami-Dade Transit
	Froilan Baez	Miami-Dade Transit
	Khurshid Mohyaddhin	Palm Beach County Planning
	Nick Uhren	Palm Beach MPO
✓	Valerie Neilson	Palm Beach MPO
	Fred Stubbs	Palm Tran
	Chuck Cohen	Palm Tran
✓	Steve Anderson	Palm Tran
✓	Jessica Dimmick	Renaissance Planning Group
✓	Rob Piatkowski	Renaissance Planning Group
✓	Marianne Winfield	Smart Growth Partnership
	Karen Hamilton	South Florida Regional Planning Council
✓	James Murley	South Florida Regional Planning Council
✓	Lynda Westin	South Florida Regional Transit Agency
	Kim Delaney	Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
✓	David Orshefsky (remote)	Urban Land Institute (ULI)
	Carla Coleman	Urban Land Institute (ULI)

The Southeast Florida TOD Working Group is open to anyone interested in attending. If you are interested in joining the TOD Working Group, please contact Jessica Dimmick, Renaissance Planning Group at jdimmick@ciesthatwork.com or 561-404-7261x304.