

# **Public Transport Orientated Development: Lessons from North America and Asia**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Faced with the need to address issues like urban sprawl, traffic congestion, accessibility and climate change, a broad range of policy options must be considered in order to reach a sustainable future. One of these opportunities brings residences, shops, jobs and leisure closer together by locating them in close proximity to a network of rapid, reliable and high capacity public transport corridors.

Public transport oriented development (PTOD) and its associated policy tools are a way of generating a critical mass of traffic that can justify the large-scale investments that need to be made in rapid transit networks. By attracting an intense level of mixed-use activity within a five-minute walk of stations, it is possible to greatly reduce the need for car use, which is more attractive when daily activities are dispersed. As a larger number of stations generate PTOD, the network becomes highly interconnected, and a greater proportion of daily activities enter the catchment of a node on the network.

This paper discusses the policies that can be used to increase densities, provide public amenities, reduce parking and provide strong linkages between the station and surrounding areas. A partnership between the public and private sector is required. The public sector must be willing to invest in a system that is capable of reducing the need for new road infrastructure and reducing crime by presence. The private sector can benefit by providing a more desirable location for its workers and potential cost savings through the reduction of parking provision.

One of the keys to promoting PTOD is by connecting its local objectives to strategic regional and national objectives. By intensifying station precincts with mixed-uses, it can be demonstrated that congestion growth, carbon emission growth, social exclusion and crime can be reduced. Additionally, accessibility and community vitality can be increased.

Policy tools like “eminent domain” (compulsory purchase), “density bonusing”, “public sector coordination”, “tax increment financing” and “joint ventures” will be reviewed, as a means of overcoming the many barriers that restrict the widespread

implementation of PTOD. These barriers include NIMBYism, a lack of public sector financial and policy commitment, complicated land acquisition and planning processes, financing and marketing with the perception of risk, and the accommodation of multiple transport modes in station areas.

A review of international best practices presents empirical evidence of the implementation of various policy tools for the successful development of specific PTOD projects in the developed and developing world. The creative adaptation of various planning tools to local circumstances has been proven to succeed in places as diverse as Portland, USA and Hong Kong, China. In the current context of urbanisation and climate change, PTOD becomes increasingly important. By clearly articulating how its success has been achieved it will be possible to make PTOD a part of mainstream planning, rather than a selectively implemented idealistic alternative.

**Key Words:** public transport orientated development, transport and land use integration, sustainable transport