

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, entitled *Optimizing Transportation Infrastructure through Effective Land Use: Opportunities for Transit Supportive Development in the Greater Rochester Area*, is a review and assessment of infrastructure conditions and municipal land use planning and regulatory documents along three regionally significant public transportation corridors in the Greater Rochester Area. This report provides recommendations for municipal boards and officials to draw upon in order to encourage transit-supportive development (TSD) along these corridors.

TSD is a land use technique that calls for focusing public and private investment into clearly defined areas where several transportation options are readily available to the people who live, work and recreate within those areas. Typically, TSD projects consist of mixed-use (some combination of residential, commercial, institutional, and recreational land uses) developments that are designed to provide their inhabitants with a range of viable transportation options.

In addition to offering local boards and officials a list of recommendations for encouraging TSD projects in their municipalities, this report includes site-specific analyses of twenty-one “Nodal Points,” or key locations, along the three public transportation corridors. These Nodal Points represent regionally and locally significant residential, commercial, educational, institutional, and recreational centers of activity. This report offers several planning recommendations for each Nodal Point that, if implemented, would improve the sustainability of TSD projects in these locations.

The report is organized into six chapters, with appendices at the end. The individual chapters are laid out as follows:

Chapter 1, *Introduction*, includes a brief introduction to this report and an explanation of its development and background. The introduction provides an overview of what this report aims to accomplish, namely the presentation of TSD planning concepts as a viable option for municipal officials and local developers. It also discusses the value of TSD concepts as a response to changing demographics and housing interests, and lastly provides an overview of the process by which the project’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) selected the three public transportation corridors and the Nodal Points examined in this report.

Chapter 2, *Transit Supportive Design (TSD): An Overview*, provides a brief explanation of what Transit Supportive Design (TSD) is. It discusses the basic importance of the connection between land uses and transportation systems, the uses of built form to support pedestrian and transit use, ways in which transit can be used as an asset for communities, development/market issues and transit service, and obstacles to coordinated region-wide transit-supportive planning including automobile oriented land use patterns and municipal land use policies and regulations. This chapter is designed to provide the reader with basic background knowledge of what TSD is, what its benefits to a community are, and what some of the obstacles to implementing TSD projects may be.

Chapter 3, *Transit Supportive Development Guidelines*, includes a detailed list of actions and recommendations that any municipality can use when revising and updating its land use plans and regulations. This chapter is organized into four sections, including a short introduction, which cover comprehensive plans, zoning codes, and design standards/guidelines. Each section consists of a list of potential revisions and considerations for local boards and officials to consider when revising and updating the local planning and regulatory documents. This chapter, the “heart” of this report, provides local boards and officials with an easy-to-use guide for TSD planning, zoning, and urban design concepts. It discusses the many ways in which TSD concepts can be integrated into comprehensive plans, and follows through with recommendations on how TSD concepts outlined in comprehensive plans can be

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implemented through zoning laws and design standards/guidelines. This chapter is essentially a synthesis of nation-wide best practices for TSD projects; in addition, it draws heavily on existing comprehensive plans, zoning regulations, and design guidelines that are currently in use in the Greater Rochester Area.

Chapter 4, *Corridor A Nodal Points: Descriptions, Assessments, and Recommendations*, includes detailed information about the Nodal Points in Corridor A. The chapter is organized into nine sections, one for each Nodal Point; each section consists of three components: a short narrative description of current land use and infrastructure conditions along each of the three mass-transit corridors, an assessment of the current status of land use planning and regulatory documents with regards to TSD, and a list of recommendations as to how transit-supportive design concepts can be integrated into both infrastructure and local plans and studies. Photographs and aerial views of the Nodal Points are used to clearly illustrate the potential infrastructure improvements that can be made within the nodal points. The contents of this chapter build on the recommendations provided in Chapter 3, and are mostly planning and design recommendations that focus on improving pedestrian connections within and around Nodal Points; encouraging higher density, mixed-use development projects in the Nodal Points; and general urban design recommendations aimed at improving the functionality and appearance of the streetscape of pedestrians and public transportation users.

Chapters 5 (*Corridor B Nodal Points: Descriptions, Assessments, and Recommendations*) and 6 (*Corridor C Nodal Points: Descriptions, Assessments, and Recommendations*) are essentially the same as Chapter 4 in terms of organization, but they focus on the nodal points in Corridors B and C respectively.

At the end of the report are four Appendices. Appendix A lists the members of the project's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Appendix B provides information on ridership figures for the bus routes that follow the transportation corridors, Appendix C includes the schedule of municipal outreach events, and Appendix D lists a variety of potential funding sources for land use and infrastructure projects that are related to TSD.

Overall, the findings of this report indicate that in most locations along the three corridors, the basic infrastructure and land uses for transit-supportive development are currently in place and encouraged under local comprehensive plans. In many areas, including cities, villages, inner suburbs, and designated hamlet areas, the basic infrastructure and land uses needed to encourage TSD projects is already in place. However, there are many opportunities for improvement. This report provides a starting-point to consider TSD projects by offering local officials information they can use if they would like to revise their land use plans and regulations to further encourage transit-supportive development projects.