Capital and Strategic Planning Committee

Item III - B

April 12, 2018

WMATA's Transit-Oriented Development Objectives

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Board Action/Information Summary

◉ Action ○ Information	MEAD Number: 201975	Resolution: ◉ Yes ○ No

TITLE:

WMATA's Transit-Oriented Development Objectives

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Staff will present three proposed transit-oriented development (TOD) objectives which can be enacted upon by private entities, jurisdictional partners, and in some cases, by Metro.

PURPOSE:

Staff requests Board approval of the proposed transit-oriented development objectives.

DESCRIPTION:

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is a general term to describe intermodal, compact, mixed-use, and pedestrian-friendly development within proximity to a fixed-rail station and a major bus corridor. There is general concensus and support for TOD across the region, which is reflected in the Washington Metropolitan Council of Government's "Region Forward" goals: "the region seeks transit-oriented and mixed-use communities emerging in Regional Activity Centers that will capture new employment and household growth." However, each of the local jurisdictions manage and approve their local land use plans, which provide specific guidance on how development occurs within the jurisdiction.

Through the adoption of TOD objectives, Metro would like to share its perspective on which land use policies and infrastructure improvements increase Metro ridership and contribute to Metro's long-term financial health. TOD directly benefits Metro because residential and commercial proximity to transit services correlates with higher usage of transit services by residents and workers living and working near Metrorail and Metrobus stations. Specifically, the TOD policies that promote transit ridership the most are density, mix of uses, and walkability. While Metro does not have a direct role in local land use policy-making, Metro can be helpful to the region with TOD objectives that provide guidance to jurisdictional partners on what would be most beneficial to the Metro system over the long-term.

Key Highlights:

- Metro has proposed TOD objectives for areas in proximity to Metrorail stations and major bus corridors.
- The direct benefits to Metro of TOD include: increased bus and rail ridership, improved bike and pedestrian connections to transit, and integrated transit services within local communities.
- The specific objectives for properties around Metrorail stations and along major bus corridors include: achieving higher densities of development and a mix of uses; increasing investment in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure; and encouraging development at Metro's suburban Metrorail stations.

Background and History:

Metro has evaluated the transit-oriented development strategies that most support transit ridership, the most impactful of which are: (1) addressing underutilized development capacity by working with jurisdictions as they pursue land-related actions that will result in ridership growth; and (2) working with local jurisdictions to develop policies and plans that support TOD and balance travel demand.

The proposed TOD objectives advance the aforementioned strategies into actionable guidance, which can be used by members of the Board when advocating for TOD in their respective jurisdictions, as well as by Metro staff when coordinating with the local jurisdictions and providing input to local land use plans, small area plans, and comprehensive plans. The proposed TOD objectives should serve as clear guidance on the investments or land use policies that would maximize transit ridership for Metro.

Discussion:

Transit-oriented development around Metrorail stations on both private and public land has direct benefit to Metro. Specifically, the greater the density and walkability of development near and around transit, the greater the ridership and revenue potential for Metro, because people living and working within walking distance of a fixed-rail station and major bus corridors tend to use transit more frequently and consistently.

Metro has seen the direct impacts of TOD on its ridership. For example, the joint development of Rhode Island Ave Metro Station with 274 residential units and 68,000 square feet of retail has increased ridership at Rhode Island Ave Metro Station by 617 boardings per year (comparing 3,405 average daily boardings in 2011 to 4,022 average daily boarding in 2016). Striving to maximize development potential around each and every Metro station, as well as connect development by safe pedestrian and bicycle paths, will generate new ridership for Metro.

If adopted and implemented throughout the region, the three objectives

that support transit ridership the most are:
(1) Updating local zoning codes and ordinances to achieve higher densities of development, mix of uses, and lower parking requirements;
(2) Investing in pedestrian and bicycle improvements to Metrorail stations and major bus corridors; and
(3) Encouraging counter-commuting strategies, such as developing employment centers, commercial, retail and other uses that draw transit riders to suburban Metrorail stations.

The above objectives are not actions that Metro can achieve on its own, nor does Metro own most of the land that surrounds Metro stations. Instead, the TOD objectives are Metro's guidance to the local jurisdictions, local planners, developers, and internal staff on the land use policies and infrastructure investments that support transit ridership the most. Also by articulating specific TOD strategies, Board members and Metro staff will have clarity as to what maximizes benefit to Metro as they are advocating for TOD.

FUNDING IMPACT:

The Board action is a policy action, not a project or operational action with budgetary consequences. The result of the proposed Board policy could increase transit ridership (and therefore fare revenue) over time, but the Board policy does not incur any immediate expense or cost, nor produce any immediate revenue.	
Project Manager:	Nina Albert
Project Department/Office:	CFO/LAND

TIMELINE:

Previous Actions	2013 - Board adoption of Metro's Strategic Plan, 2013-2025
Anticipated actions after presentation	No specific actions

RECOMMENDATION:

- Board approval of the proposed transit-oriented development objectives.

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

WMATA's Transit-Oriented Development Objectives

Capital & Strategic Planning Committee

April 12, 2018

Purpose

Request Board approval of transit-oriented development objectives

Background

Transit-Oriented Developments are compact nodes of development within a 10-minute walk of transit

Basic TOD principles: intermodal, mixed-use, density, pedestrian-friendly

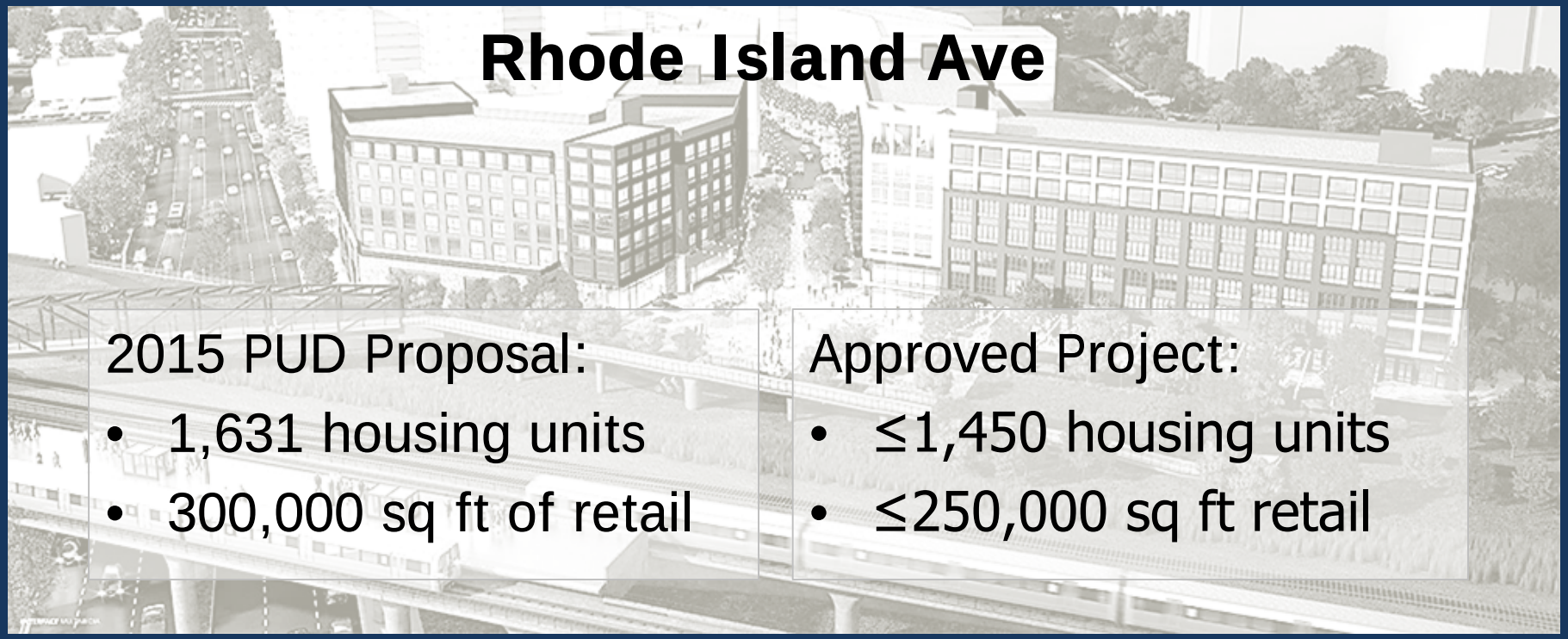
Precedents Supporting TOD

- Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments' "Region Forward" Goals
  - Region seeks transit-oriented and mixed-use communities emerging in Regional Activity Centers that will capture new employment and household growth
- Metro's Strategic Plan 2013 – 2025 (Momentum)
  - Strategies for Goal 3: Improve Regional Mobility and Connect Communities
  - Address underutilized capacity by working with jurisdictions as they pursue land-related actions that will result in ridership growth
  - Work with local jurisdictions to develop policies and plans that support TOD and balance travel demand

Direct Benefits of TOD to Metro

- Increases bus and rail ridership and fare revenue
- Maximizes bike and pedestrian connections to transit
- Integrates transit services within communities
- Supports the jurisdictions that support Metro by delivering multiple benefits, such as:
  - Increased economic activity and tax revenues
  - Maximizes use of existing infrastructure
  - Environmental sustainability benefits
  - Congestion management benefits
  - Cost of living choices and benefits

TOD Policies that Matter: Density and Walkability



Rhode Island Ave

2015 PUD Proposal:

- 1,631 housing units
- 300,000 sq ft of retail

Approved Project:

- ≤1,450 housing units
- ≤250,000 sq ft retail

Estimated Impact to Metro:

-200 trips per weekday

-$121,500 annual revenue foregone

Metro's Role in TOD

- Planning support: Provide data to the jurisdictions as they develop their policies and plans for TOD and balance travel demand
- Advocacy and collaboration: Advocate for WMATA's TOD objectives and collaborate with local governments in the region to achieve these objectives
- Joint Development: Apply WMATA's TOD objectives for its own joint development projects

Proposed Transit-Oriented Development Objectives

1. Zoning codes and ordinances

   Metro encourages jurisdictional partners to update local zoning codes and ordinances to achieve higher densities of development, mix of uses, and lower parking requirements around Metrorail stations and along major bus corridors

2. Pedestrian and bicycle access

   Metro supports investment in pedestrian and bicycle improvements to better connect the areas in proximity to Metrorail stations and major bus corridors

3. TOD in less developed areas

   Metro encourages employment centers, commercial, retail, and other uses that draw riders to all suburban Metrorail stations

Recommendation

Board approval of transit-oriented development objectives

SUBJECT: WMATA TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Board of Directors has determined that transit-oriented development within ½-mile of Metrorail stations and ¼-mile of major bus corridors produces substantive benefits for WMATA and the communities it serves when local zoning codes and ordinances achieve higher densities, mixed uses, lower parking requirements, and when investment is made in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors desires to articulate its objectives for transit-oriented development; NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors has set forth the policies for transit-oriented development within WMATA's transit zone in Attachment A; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this Resolution shall be effective 30 days after adoption in accordance with Section 8(b) of the WMATA Compact.

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,

Patricia Y. Lee
General Counsel

WMATA File Structure No.:
21.9.5. Joint Development Policy

PROPOSED

WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY'S

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority ("WMATA" or "Metro") encourages transit-oriented development around its stations (whether on Metro-owned property or property owned by others) to increase transit ridership, thereby furthering Metro's mission. This document defines WMATA's transit-oriented development objectives for the Washington region, understanding that achieving these objectives requires the local jurisdictions to implement them and that WMATA's role is one of support and advocacy.

1.0 Definition. "Transit-Oriented Development" or "TOD" includes a mix of commercial, residential, office and entertainment uses within a safe walking distance of Metrorail stations and of major bus corridors. TOD includes higher density, walkable, mixed-use development near transit that attracts people and contributes to vibrant, connected communities.

2.0 Direct Benefits of TOD to Metro. TOD has direct, measurable benefits to Metro and its communities. These include but are not limited to:

A) Increases to the number of and frequency of use by transit riders, which strengthens Metro's fare revenue and financial position;

B) Maximizes safe bike and pedestrian connectivity to transit, thereby reducing the total amount of parking required at a station for an equivalent or higher amount of ridership;

C) Integrates transit services within communities, making transit more accessible and easy to use;

D) Directly supports the jurisdictions that support Metro by delivering:

- Increased economic activity and tax revenues
- Maximized use of existing infrastructure
- Multiple environmental and sustainability benefits
- Congestion management benefits
- Cost of living choices and benefits

3.0 WMATA's Role

A) Planning support. WMATA will work with local jurisdictions to support their policies and plans for TOD and balance travel demand.

Proposed

B) Advocacy and collaboration. WMATA will advocate for the TOD objectives in Section 4.0 and collaborate with local governments in the region to achieve these objectives.

C) Joint Development. WMATA will apply these TOD objectives for its own joint development projects.

4.0 WMATA's TOD Objectives

A) Zoning codes and ordinances. WMATA encourages jurisdictional partners to update local zoning codes and ordinances to enhance TOD around Metrorail stations and along major bus corridors. In those areas, WMATA supports higher density of development, a mix of uses, economic development incentives, context-sensitive parking requirements, and increased investment in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

B) Pedestrian and bicycle access. Successful TOD depends on seamless and safe access to transit. More than 60% of Metrorail's current riders walk to their Metrorail station. WMATA supports investment in pedestrian and bicycle access improvements that maximize quantity of safe walking and biking connections to Metrorail stations and major bus corridors.

C) Promoting TOD in less developed areas. WMATA encourages daytime employment centers, commercial, retail, and other uses that draw riders to suburban Metrorail stations. This strategy also supports WMATA's Board-adopted priority action of generating counter-commuting riders.

Proposed