



**Red Line Transit Oriented Development**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**

A COMPONENT OF THE LAND USE AND HOUSING ELEMENTS  
THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF INDIANAPOLIS AND MARION COUNTY  
2015-CPS-R-001



# Station Area Needs

## Mixed Uses and Building Types

During the last 50+ years, land planning activities have generally segmented uses and users into categories of residential, retail, office and others that are located in separate areas. This segmentation creates a limited portfolio of users for transit station locations. To be successful, transit stations need a mix of uses and users. Land Use policy at transit station areas cannot be an afterthought. It is imperative to unlock the economic development potential of the transit system. Key principles of best practice land use policy include:

### PROVIDE MIXED-USE AREAS AND MIXED USE BUILDINGS

Mixing land uses along streets is a good planning practice, yet providing mixed-use buildings is most effective in creating walkable environments. Work and employment related development, coupled with residential users and others create a mix of people that are likely to activate and environment for longer durations. There may be a minimum planning standard that requires at 50 employees per acre in Primary Focus Areas, when appropriate.

### HOUSING DENSITY SHOULD INCREASE PROPORTIONATELY WITH TRANSIT INVESTMENT

There should be a mix of housing densities and unit types within the Primary Focus Area. Some suggested average densities are: 7 units per net acre along frequent or local bus routes, 15 units per net acre along bus-rapid-transit routes, and 25+ units per net acre along dedicated rights-of-way for rail or bus. Additionally, an average minimum density of 5 to 10 units per net acre in the secondary focus area, is suggested.

### A MIX OF HOUSING TYPES AND COSTS

Promote a mix of housing types: small-lot, single-family (some with ancillary dwelling units), townhouses, duplexes, apartments and condominiums. There should be offerings for both owner- and renter-occupied living. There should also be a mix of housing costs: market-rate, workforce and affordable housing.

### PROVIDE REQUIRED DRAINAGE AS AN OPEN SPACE AMENITY

It is necessary to capture stormwater drainage on-site at transit station areas to avoid polluting local water bodies. Instead of creating large drainage ponds, stormwater should be captured in multiple, smaller green spaces that provide public amenities throughout the area. Land is critical and large drainage ponds should be avoided.

### DISCOURAGE CAR-ONLY USES

Discourage or otherwise prohibit uses that rely solely on automobile trips, such as gas stations, car washes, storage facilities, motels, or low-intensity industrial uses, or any other such use that is not likely to contribute to the pedestrian environment. These facilities should be located outside the primary focus area to the extent possible.

### DENSITY VISUALIZED

This diagram visualizes the increase in building scale recommended near stations.

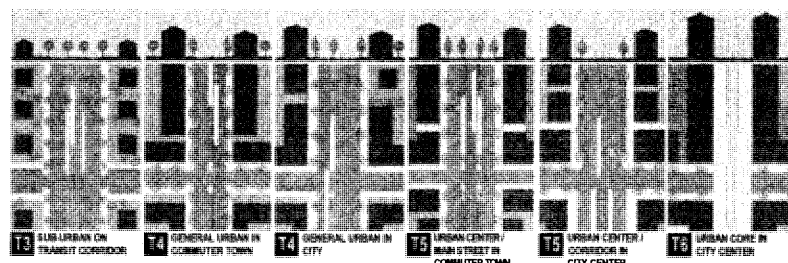


Image Courtesy of the TOD Transect from Hank Dittmar with Laura Pinzon, PFBE, and CTOD

# TOD TYPOLOGY MATRIX

## Defining Characteristics

The matrix below gives development standards for station areas based **on the desire for their future land use, not based on current land use or existing market conditions**. These standards are generalizations and there is flexibility within each typology. Parking maximums are encouraged to replace parking minimums as parking should be minimized in TOD areas.

|                                      | DESCRIPTION + DESIRED LAND USE MIX   | DESIRED HOUSING TYPES   | COMMERCIAL / EMPLOYMENT TYPES  | PROPOSED SCALE / DENSITY  | PEDESTRIAN + VEHICULAR ACCESS   | TRANSIT SYSTEM FUNCTION  |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| CBD<br>CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT     | <p><b>THE MOST DENSE CORE OF THE CITY WITH HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS + ACTIVE PUBLIC SPACES</b></p> <p>Mix of office, entertainment, civic, retail, active public space and residential is desired</p> <p>Off-street parking should be avoided</p>   | <p>High-density mixed-use and multi-family</p> <p>Residential density: <b>&gt;25 du/acre</b></p>  | <p>Prime office spaces, with some retail + shopping</p> <p><b>Commercial FAR &gt;10</b></p>  | <p>Buildings: <b>5+ stories</b>, with taller structures encouraged</p> <p>Station site &lt;1 acre</p>                                       | <p>Pedestrian access: <b>12-foot+ contiguous sidewalks</b></p> <p>Vehicular access: Major + Minor arterials</p>                     | <p>Large to Medium-sized multi-modal stations</p> <p>Major regional destinations with high quality feeder bus connections</p>                    |
| DC<br>DISTRICT CENTER                | <p><b>WALKABLE AREAS OF MULTIPLE CITY BLOCKS, SERVING AS CULTURAL + COMMERCIAL HUBS FOR MULTIPLE NEIGHBORHOODS</b></p> <p>Mix of office, retail, entertainment, and residential with higher densities at center desired</p> <p>Off-street parking is discouraged and should be limited to garages</p>  | <p>Mixed-use and multi-family at center with single-family attached and detached beyond</p> <p>Residential density <b>&gt;15 du/acre</b></p>                      | <p>Limited office (less than 250,000 square feet), and some retail (more than 50,000 square feet)</p> <p><b>Commercial FAR &gt;2.5</b></p> | <p>Buildings: <b>3+ stories</b></p> <p>Station site ½ - 2 acres; more if part of master planned project</p>                                 | <p>Pedestrian access: <b>8-foot+ contiguous sidewalks</b></p> <p>Vehicular access: Minor arterial + Urban collector</p>             | <p>Medium-sized multi-modal stations with small park-n-ride, if any</p> <p>Connections to local bus service + circulators</p>                    |
| CC<br>COMMERCIAL CENTER              | <p><b>A RANGE OF COMMERCIAL TYPES - AGING TO NEW STRIP COMMERCIAL + OFFICE, SHOPPING MALLS + BIG BOX</b></p> <p>Conversion of commercial centers to walkable developments - growing density of commercial and residential infill with enhanced walkability is desired</p> <p>Existing surface parking is often abundant and should be reduced or consolidated to allow for new development</p> | <p>Clusters of multi-family, with some single-family attached + detached</p> <p>Residential density <b>&gt;15 du/acre</b></p>                                     | <p>Mix between local and commuter-serving retail, provided there is no more than 50,000 square feet</p> <p><b>Commercial FAR &gt;4</b></p> | <p>Buildings: <b>2+ stories, heights vary widely</b></p> <p>Station site varies; 2-6 acres depending on parking needs and configuration</p> | <p>Pedestrian access: <b>Added connections are critical</b></p> <p>Vehicular access: Major arterials</p>                            | <p>Medium capture stations for in-bound commuters with large park-n-ride</p> <p>Regional destinations with circulator and express feeder bus</p> |
| WM<br>WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOOD          | <p><b>WALKABLE AREAS THAT ARE PRIMARILY RESIDENTIAL, BUT MAY HAVE A COMMERCIAL NODE OF ONE TO TWO CITY BLOCKS</b></p> <p>Mix of uses at station with stabilized residential beyond is desired</p> <p>Off-street parking is discouraged and should be limited to garages</p>  | <p>Primarily small lot single-family attached or detached, with some mixed-use and multi-family at center</p> <p>Residential density <b>&gt; 8 du/acre</b></p>    | <p>Neighborhood retail, but no more than 50,000 square feet</p> <p><b>Commercial FAR N/A</b></p>   | <p>Buildings: <b>2-3 stories; more if neighborhoods are amenable</b></p> <p>Station site ½ - 1 acre</p>                                     | <p>Pedestrian access: <b>6-foot+ contiguous sidewalks</b></p> <p>Vehicular access: Urban collector + Local Road</p>                 | <p>Small basic stations with very small park-n-ride, if any</p> <p>Local bus service connections</p>   |
| REG<br>REGIONAL CAMPUS / OFFICE PARK | <p><b>OFFICE PARKS, UNIVERSITIES, INSTITUTIONAL OR MEDICAL CAMPUSES OR LARGE APARTMENT COMMUNITIES</b></p> <p>Infill development with increased walkability and varied land uses is desired</p> <p>Existing surface parking is often abundant and should be reduced or consolidated to allow for new development</p>   | <p>Clusters of high-density multi-family at center, with single-family attached beyond</p> <p>Residential density varies - clustered at <b>&gt;25 du/acre</b></p> | <p>High-density office or medical + educational buildings with some mixed-use retail</p> <p><b>Commercial FAR Varies</b></p>               | <p>Buildings: <b>heights vary widely</b></p> <p>Station site varies</p>   | <p>Pedestrian access: <b>Contiguous walks and trails - enhance connections</b></p> <p>Vehicular access: Major + Minor arterials</p> | <p>Large to Medium-sized multi-modal stations with large park-n-ride</p> <p>Regional destinations with circulator and express feeder bus</p>     |
| ACC<br>ACCESS                        | <p><b>STATIONS THAT ARE PRIMARILY BASED ON TRANSIT ACCESS, SUCH AS TRANSFERS AND FREQUENT BOARDINGS</b></p> <p>Future potential to become Commercial Center Typology stations. Suburban zoning and parking is discouraged to maintain land for future development.</p>   | <p>Future goal - see Commercial Center</p>  | <p>Future goal - see Commercial Center</p>   | <p>Buildings: Future goal - see Commercial Center</p> <p>Station site 5+ acres</p>  | <p>Pedestrian access: <b>Added connections are critical</b></p> <p>Vehicular access: Major arterials + Highways</p>                 | <p>Largest capture stations for in-bound commuters with largest park-n-ride</p> <p>Connections to circulator and express feeder bus</p>          |

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## PRESERVING AND ENHANCING AFFORDABILITY TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC MOBILITY

The introduction of rapid transit to Marion County will link not just the northern and southern bounds of the county, but universities and anchor institutions, unique and lively neighborhoods, and most importantly people to one another. The need to promote economic mobility, catalyze neighborhood reinvestment, and in support of neighborhood and Quality of Life Plans, necessitates implementing a strategic plan for affordable housing, mixed-income housing and mixed-use facilities. Though the residential market in Marion County is often touted as affordable compared to other national city-peers, there remains a disconnect between residential and employment opportunities.

Economic mobility is of the utmost importance to both maintain and create access for all Indianapolis residents. The Equality of Opportunity Study, commissioned by Harvard University, found cities with greater economic mobility tend to have less segregation, less income inequality, better quality schools, greater social capital and more stable families. Within the study of the upward economic mobility of the largest 50 metropolitan areas in the U.S., Indianapolis ranked 46th of 51; the odds of persons in the metro region from reaching the top fifth quintile from the bottom fifth quintile was only 4.9%.

Unemployment and housing cost burden are intrinsically linked to availability of transit; limited physical connectivity to educational opportunities, centers of small business development, and places of economic growth hamper the ability of the residential market to grow, and catalyze development. The introduction of the Red Line provides an opportunity to address these gaps throughout Marion County and strategize how current and future investments in targeted affordable housing development can aid in enhancing equity.

The below sections outline available data on the current affordability of the housing market along the proposed Red Line, through the use of various federal, local and private data sources, to document both the current affordable market, link the market to economic opportunity and identify the affordable housing needs.

This strategy, focused solely on the affordability of housing along the proposed Red Line, serves as an interim strategy for Marion County. This study and approach should be identified as an initial step to a planned, more comprehensive and detailed Countywide housing strategy that will outline a robust residential strategy across the full housing spectrum to best serve all persons choosing to live in Marion County.

### ◀ OPPORTUNITY ▶

“Transportation plays a critical role in connecting Americans and communities to economic opportunity.”

~ Anthony Foxx, Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation

## DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOODS, DIFFERENT STRATEGIES

The proposed Red Line runs through a spectrum of Marion County neighborhoods, each with unique strengths and challenges. Utilizing data on various affordable housing investments, unemployment, and housing cost burden, four different typologies emerged for neighborhoods along the line that require further delineation.

In this analysis, affordability is defined as the percentage of housing units affordable to a household earning less than 80% of the HUD Area Median Income, and cost burden is defined as a household paying more than 30% of its income on housing. Both of these data sets are provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and are standard measures of affordability.

Each of these typologies represents a different affordable housing strategy briefly identified in the below chart below.

### HIGH AFFORDABILITY LOW COST BURDEN

This typology has a healthy supply of affordable homes, and households have incomes to afford them.

- Preserve affordability.
- Increase moderate income affordability.

### HIGH AFFORDABILITY HIGH COST BURDEN

This typology has a healthy supply of affordable homes, but households still struggle to afford them. This typology acknowledges a need to address underlying economic opportunity and employment challenges.

- Increase economic mobility to jobs and training.

### LOW AFFORDABILITY LOW COST BURDEN

This typology has a limited supply of affordable homes, and households have incomes to afford them. This is typically higher income neighborhoods.

- Increase extremely low, very low, and low income housing affordability.

### LOW AFFORDABILITY HIGH COST BURDEN

This typology has a limited supply of affordable homes, and households struggle to afford them.

- Provide subsidies to increasing housing for all incomes.
- Increase economic mobility to jobs and training.

Maintaining and increasing the affordable housing supply is important to increase economic opportunity and mobility for those families and individuals who stand most to benefit from proximity to rapid transit. Within a half -mile of all proposed stations of the Red Line, there are 169,126 current jobs and four major higher educational institutions which serve as vital Anchor Institutions for Marion County – Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana, University of Indianapolis, and Butler University.

Neighborhoods experiencing high affordability, and low cost burden need to preserve affordable housing opportunities, and ensure that persons across the housing spectrum have access to these neighborhoods. Those neighborhoods encountering high affordability of housing, but high cost burden, in comparison will need to address underlying economic and employment challenges limiting residents to afford the housing in those neighborhoods .

The two typologies which identify low affordability as community challenged conditions directly benefit the most from the construction and use of rapid transit. Neighborhoods with low affordability and low cost burden have a limited supply of affordable housing units. Increasing the number of units available to those under 80% AMI and preserving that affordability allows for those neighborhoods to directly address income inequality and help enhance social capital.



The greatest transit oriented potential exists in neighborhoods where a lower percentage of owner units are affordable; a moderate percentage of renter units are affordable; and high cost burdens and high unemployment rates restrict access to economic mobility. Harvard University's Equality of Economic Opportunity suggests the built environmental, through the physical divisions of income and segregation, impact the economic geography of Marion County, through the location of affordable housing to employment. Ensuring a mix of rental and homeownership opportunities supports access to greater economic mobility.

This strategy is further supported by recently completed Quality of Life Plans, which have engaged neighborhood residents to lead and determine community priorities. The Mid-North Quality of Life Plan, for example, outlines plans to provide new housing options for all ages and backgrounds and to improve transportation connectivity for those residents. Through this visioning process, these tenants support the strengthening of Marion County neighborhoods in promoting economic mobility access.

Subsidies through federal, state and local resources should target the development of affordable housing to align closely with both the data on housing cost burden, unemployment and the visioning Quality of Life Plans.

## Affordable Housing Supply Today

Housing supply, household income, and economic opportunity are intrinsically linked, demonstrating the potential of transit oriented development to improve economic mobility within Marion County, especially in neighborhoods experiencing low affordability and low cost burden, or those experiencing low affordability and high cost burden.

To determine the current legally-restricted affordable housing inventory throughout Marion County, multiple affordable housing initiatives including programs through the HUD (Section 202, Multifamily, Public Housing, and the HOME Investment Partnership Program Grant); Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC); and non-profit developers were mapped and analyzed. In this analysis, affordable units were defined as rental units serving persons 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Data indicated approximately 15% of all affordable units in Marion County were within half a mile radius of the proposed of the Red Line.

### TODAY'S PRIMARY AFFORDABILITY TOOLS

The **HOME Investment Partnership Program** is a HUD grant which provides grants to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying and/or rehabilitation affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people.

**Merchants Affordable Housing Corporation** is a 501c3 which develops affordable housing units.

The **HUD Section 202** Program provides finances the construction, rehabilitation or acquisition of structures to serve as supportive housing for very low-income elderly persons, and provides rent subsidies for projects to help make them affordable.

**Project-based Section 8** are a component of public housing agencies (PHA) housing choice voucher program. A PHA can attached up to 20 percent of its voucher assistance to specific housing units.

**Low Income Housing tax Credits (LIHTC)** gives states the authority to issue tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation or new construction of rental housing targeted to lower-income households.

**Public housing** provides decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly and persons with disabilities. Public housing comes in all sizes and types, from scattered single family houses, to high rise apartments.

# DMD Investment Priorities

## Focusing Affordable Investments

The Sustainable Communities Program, a federal grant program created in partnership between HUD, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), developed six livability principles to support locally led-collaborative efforts to aid in determining how to target housing economic and workforce development and infrastructure investments.

These principles, coupled with strategies outlined by Quality of Life Plans, were integrated into Marion County's HUD Entitlement Grants Request for Proposal priorities. Since 2014, the Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) has targeted these investments specifically through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the HOME Investment Partnership Program to encourage improved accessibility to transit oriented development along the Red Line, principally for households at or below 80% AMI. These priorities for housing, economic, and infrastructure development -identified as Development, Access, Neighborhood and Capacity priorities include the following:

### AUGMENTATION OF TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

Promoting of the use of, and access to current and proposed transportation options, with a preference for projects within half-mile of proposed transit stations.

### LINKED RESIDENTIAL + COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Supporting the revitalization of lower-income communities, including mixed-income, mixed-use developments in neighborhoods where both small locally-owned businesses and low to moderate income residents exist.

### DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTHY + SAFE COMMUNITIES

Creating housing to support built environments that enhance community health through provision of and access to public amenities.

### COMPREHENSIVE REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES

Supporting and implementing a multi-faceted redevelopment approach, to integrate other neighborhood stabilization programs, private market activity and promising trends, linking multiple activities strategically into a comprehensive effort.

### SUPPORT OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Demonstrating the project enhances the character and history of the neighborhood, supports existing revitalization development plans, strengthens the physical texture of the neighborhood and creates new residential and commercial opportunities.

### COORDINATED AND LEVERAGED INVESTMENTS

Aligning policies and projects through the synchronization of federal funds with public and private funding streams and partnerships with Anchor Institutions to enhance the financial feasibility and provide cost-effective measures to projects within the neighborhood.

Funding through these various programs have been used to rehabilitate or newly construct affordable rental housing for both seniors and families; provide owner occupied rehab; promote accessibility to waterways; and enhance public green space. These funding sources, coordinated with other federal grants, such as the Continuum of Care, local grants such as the Housing Trust Fund, and local economic development-oriented, such as Tax Increment Financing underline the current affordable housing financing toolkit available for the County and nonprofit and private partners. The technical assistance provided through DOTs Ladders Step Transportation Empowerment Pilot will provide additional tools to encourage greater economic mobility through the emphasis of community transportation projects to revitalize, connect and enhance access to economically and physically distressed neighborhoods through the development ofreliable transportation.

## INTRODUCTION

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Central Indiana residents are happier than the average American with their quality of life. Although many say they'd prefer a different type of community, overall ratings for quality of life are so strong that they remain extremely satisfied. These strong numbers – indicating a stable, happy population – lay the foundation for solid economic growth for the region.

What drives these high ratings and what leads people to make specific housing decisions? Access to work, entertainment and quality schools; the neighborhood culture and amenities; the amenities of the house; affordability; and sense of place all play a role. It's a question real estate professionals, city planners, elected leaders and developers must better understand in order to meet current and future resident needs.

In order to tap into the answers, the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of REALTORS® (MIBOR) and the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) embarked on a region-wide study to discover what factors central Indiana residents consider most important when making their housing decisions, what their future aspirations are related to housing and how satisfied they are with their communities and overall quality of life.

When asked about overall quality of life satisfaction, the study found that central Indiana residents are satisfied with the amenities and qualities of their communities. Moreover, central Indiana residents are less likely than Americans as a whole to report that their quality of life has decreased over the last three years. When asked about satisfaction of specific amenities and community assets, regional and demographic differences arose. Additionally, a striking gap between where people currently live and where they want to live became evident.

The survey findings serve as a platform for the future. A central question becomes: How do we retain and build upon the high level of satisfaction felt among residents while accommodating the inevitable changes that a metro area of Indianapolis' size will encounter? U.S. Census Bureau statistics predict the Indianapolis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) will grow by 35 percent by 2040.

- How should residents, policy makers and real estate industry professionals plan for this growth while taking into account what people want to retain about their communities and housing lifestyles?
- Equally important, how will attitudes and behaviors need to adjust to accommodate what is ultimately best for a growing region to thrive?

## METHODOLOGY

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The following observations are based on a telephone survey among 1,502 central Indiana residents. Respondents were selected based on random digit dialing to both landline and cell phones in the following counties: Boone, Brown, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Montgomery, Morgan and Shelby. Interviews were conducted by professionally trained callers during the evenings of Dec. 12 through Dec. 19, 2012. Counties were sampled to be proportionally representative of the region as a whole, with an oversampling in smaller counties to ensure sufficient representation. Results were weighted against figures from the 2010 Decennial Census to ensure proportional representation with respect to county, age, income and gender. Based on this sample size and weighting, one can say with 95 percent confidence that the maximum error attributable to sampling is +/- 3.7 percent. The margin of error is larger for results based on subsets of respondents, such as those living within a particular county. In addition to sampling error, question wording and other practical difficulties in conducting telephone surveys can introduce error or bias into these findings. Specially, respondents self-identified their community as a "rural" or "suburban". Surveyors did not provide a uniform definition.