



# TOD Toolkit: Glossary

**AA** — See *Alternatives Analysis*

**ADA** — See the *Americans with Disabilities Act*.

**Affordable housing** — Housing that costs no more than 30 percent of a household's annual income. Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.

**Alternatives Analysis (AA)** — The official first phase of study of a Federally-funded transportation project. The Alternatives Analysis examines different options to improve mobility in a given corridor. The product of an Alternatives Analysis is a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

**American Public Transit Association (APTA)** — A national membership organization comprised of transit agency and industry representatives and advocates.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** — A wide-ranging civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability and requires many public facilities, including transit, to accommodate people with disabilities.

**AMI** — See *area median income*.

**APTA** — See *American Public Transit Association*.

**Area Median Income (AMI)** — State and MSA-level calculations of median income, completed on a year-by-year basis by HUD, to establish maximum income limits for affordable housing programs.

**Assessment districts** — District created by local jurisdiction or businesses to collect taxes or other fees; many different types of assessment districts

**BID** — See *business improvement district*.

**BRT** — See *bus rapid transit*.

**Bus rapid transit (BRT)** — Buses running in dedicated lanes that have increased station visibility and specific Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) capabilities.

**Business improvement district (BID)** — See *assessment districts*.

**CBD** — See *central business district*.

**CDBG** — See *Community Development Block Grant*.

**CDC** — See *community development corporation*.

**Central business district (CBD)** — Downtown, the area in a city or town with the largest concentration of employment, retail and civic uses.

**Charette** — A collaborative community planning and design process that brings stakeholders together in intensive work sessions to develop plans for their neighborhoods or regions.

**Choice rider** — Transit riders who could afford to own and operate a personal automobile but choose to take transit.

**Circulator** — Term describing the transit function of streetcars, which often circulate people through a district rather than providing point-to-point transportation.

**CMSA** — See *consolidated metropolitan statistical area*.

**Community benefits agreement** — Legally binding contracts between developers and community coalitions that describe community benefits that the developer has committed to provide as part of a development project. Benefits are designed by local residents to meet community needs. See also developer agreement.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** — The largest Federal source of financial assistance for supporting neighborhood revitalization, housing rehabilitation and economic development activities; program is administered by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**Community development corporation (CDC)** — Non-profit entities that provide benefits and services to surrounding communities such as affordable housing, job training, or economic development projects.

**Commuter rail** — Class of transit vehicle; these passenger vehicles are required to be larger than light rail or heavy rail by the Federal Railroad Administration because they run in similar right of ways as freight lines.

**Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA)** — A geographic entity designated by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for use by Federal statistical agencies; an area becomes a consolidated metropolitan statistical area (CMSA) if it qualifies as a metropolitan area (MA), has a census population of 1,000,000 or more, has component parts that qualify as primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs) based on official standards, and local opinion favors the designation. CMSAs consist of whole counties except in New England,

where they consist of county subdivisions (primarily cities and towns).

**Context sensitive design** — An interdisciplinary design that involves all stakeholders to develop a multi-modal transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while promoting pedestrian safety and mobility.

**Corridor** — The area served by a transit line from end to end. In the context of transportation planning studies, the corridor may be very broad and may include several possible end points.

**CTOD** — Center for Transit-Oriented Development. A national non-profit dedicated to supporting development-oriented transit and transit-oriented development through research, best practices, and technical assistance.

**Developer agreement** — Legally binding contracts between developers and public agencies that set out benefits and/or amenities a developer will provide as part of a new project. May be required as a condition of development approvals. See also community benefits agreement.

**Displacement** — A process where land values increase in an existing neighborhood to the point that existing residents can no longer afford rents, sales prices, or taxes and are forced to seek housing elsewhere.

**DUA** — See *dwelling units per acre*.

**Dwelling units per acre (DUA)** — A measure of density; the number of housing units per acre of land area.

**Economic development corporation (EDC)** — A non-profit entity that promotes economic development within a region

**EDC** — See *economic development corporation*.

**Entitlement process** — The steps a developer must complete to obtain legal permission to begin construct of a proposed development; for instance, one step in most entitlement processes is obtaining public approval of a site plan.

**Euclidian zoning** — Zoning that promotes the separation of different types of land use. Named after Euclid, Ohio, the community that brought the supreme court case that established the legality of this type of land regulation.

**FAR** — See *floor-area ratio*.

**FD** — See *Final Design*.

**Federal Transit Administration (FTA)** — The division of the U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that oversees Federally mandated transit planning processes and manages Federal grants that support the operation and construction of transit systems and acquisition of transit vehicles and equipment.

**FFGA** — See *full-funding grant agreement*.

**Final Design (FD)** — The last phase in the New Starts project development process before construction. Includes right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and the preparation of final construction plans.

**Fixed-Guideway Transit or Fixed-Route Transit** — Transit vehicles operating in a separated grade, as when rail tracks are elevated above or sunk below surrounding land, or in a right-of-way dedicated to that transportation mode.

**Floor-area ratio (FAR)** — The relationship between the total area of a building and the size of the parcel on which it sits. Often expressed as a ratio such as 3:1 or .5:1.

**Form-based code** — Development Code that prescribes the building types instead of land uses.

**FTA** — See *Federal Transit Administration*.

**Full-funding grant agreement (FFGA)** — An agreement between the Federal Transit Administration and a project sponsor to provide a guaranteed level of funding for a transit project. The FFGA is the culmination of the New Starts project development process.

**Grade separation** — See *fixed guideway transit*.

**Greyfields** — An area that is not yet blighted but is already suffering from excess vacancies that could be redeveloped for multiple uses. Primarily applied to aging retail and commercial sites.

**Half-mile radius** — Typical distance of the impact of fixed-guideway transit; approximately a 10-minute walk, or the distance people are assumed to be willing to walk to access fixed-guideway transit.

**Headway** — The time between buses or trains operating on a single route.

**Heavy rail** — A rapid transit technology that is fully grade-separated and operates using electricity pulled from a third rail. Examples of heavy rail or "metro" systems include the New York City subway, the Washington Metro and BART in San Francisco.

**HOME Grants** — The largest Federal block grant given by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to state and local governments; designed exclusively to produce affordable housing for low-income families.

**Home rule** — The legal tradition of local autonomy in place of state control. Home rule over certain issues may be delegated to local governments by state law or it may be a robust tradition that is politically difficult to break.

**HOPE VI** — A Federal housing program that began in 1992 to transform and replace severely distressed public housing

with innovative urban neighborhoods that tried to lessen concentrations of poverty and promoted mixed-income communities.

**Housers** — Term coined for workers and practitioners in the housing industry.

**HUD** — See *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*.

**Infill** — Redevelopment of underutilized or currently vacant properties in an existing urban environment.

**Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)** — Transportation infrastructure and vehicles that employ information and communications technology to improve capacity, flow, safety and ease of use.

**ITS** — See *intelligent transportation systems*.

**Land assembly** — Acquiring adjoining parcels of land in order to place them under single ownership and make them simpler to develop or redevelop.

**Land bank** — To buy and hold land with the goal of later redevelopment, in order to avoid speculative and developmental pressures or to provide interim maintenance of neglected properties. The land is often intended for a use that benefits the larger public such as affordable housing. Also a public or non-profit agency that acquires and holds land.

**Light rail transit (LRT)** — A range of rail transit modes, encompassing streetcars through heavier weight vehicles on mostly grade-separated systems.

**Local improvement district (LID)** — See *assessment districts*.

**Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)** — The transportation mode and rough alignment selected as the best solution for mobility issues in a given corridor. The locally preferred alternative is the result of an Alternatives Analysis. Once approved by the Federal Transit Administration, the LPA is further studied during the Preliminary Engineering phase of the New Starts process.

**Location efficiency** — The deliberate placement of homes, jobs, shopping, entertainment, parks and other amenities close to transit stations to promote walking, biking and transit use.

**Long range transportation Plan (LRTP)** — See *metropolitan transportation plan*.

**Low- to moderate-income working families** — Households in which at least one wage earner works the equivalent of a full-time job and earns between \$1,700 per month (the minimum wage) and up to 120 percent of the median income in their area.

**LPA** — See *locally preferred alternative*.

**LRT** — See *light rail transit*.

**LRTP** — See *long range transportation plan*.

**Metro Housing and Redevelopment Authority** — The housing and redevelopment authority for the Twin Cities region of Minnesota.

**Metro HRA** — See *Metro Housing and Redevelopment Authority*.

**Metro Transit** — The transit authority for the Twin Cities region of Minnesota.

**Metropolitan Council** — The metropolitan planning organization (MPO) that makes regional transportation, land use and public housing decisions for the Twin Cities region of Minnesota and operates Metro Transit.

**Metropolitan planning organization (MPO)** — The policy board of an organization created and designated by Federal law to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process. In the Twin Cities, the Metropolitan Council serves as the MPO.

**Metropolitan region** — A major city center and surrounding cities and suburbs, generally defined as the standard, Federally-defined Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) or Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA).

**Metropolitan statistical area (MSA)** — A geographic entity designated by the Federal Office of Management and Budget for use by Federal statistical agencies; An MSA consists of one or more whole counties not closely associated with other Metropolitan Areas.

**Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)** — A Federally-mandated 20-year plan for transportation infrastructure and service. The plan must be updated at least every four years. The MPO is responsible for its preparation. In the Twin Cities, the most recent version of this plan is the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan, which was adopted in 2004.

**Mixed-income** — A single neighborhood or development offering housing in a range of prices.

**Mode share** — The share of people using a particular mode of transportation, expressed as a percentage of all travelers.

**MPO** — See *metropolitan planning organization*.

**MSA** — See *metropolitan statistical area*.

**MTP** — See *metropolitan transportation plan*.

**NDC** — See *neighborhood development corporation*.

**Neighborhood development corporation (NDC)** — Non-profit entities that provide benefits and services to surrounding

communities such as affordable housing, job training, or economic development projects; synonymous with community development corporations.

**New Starts** — The Federal government's primary financial resource for supporting locally-planned, implemented, and operated major transit capital investments, including light rail, streetcars, commuter rail and bus rapid transit systems. May also refer to projects funded with New Starts grants.

**NIMBY** — A resident who opposes development in their area. Stands for "not in my backyard."

**On-street parking** — Parking that is located in the public right-of-way.

**Parcelization** — The division of land into smaller pieces.

**Parking requirements or parking ratios** — The amount of parking required by a development code, expressed as a relationship with the square footage of a space; e.g. one space per 250 square feet of built space. Parking ratios often vary depending on the use and location.

**PE** — See *preliminary engineering*.

**Pedestrian-oriented** — Built to accommodate and cater to the needs of pedestrians. Often used in contrast to transportation facilities built to cater to the needs of motor vehicles.

**Pedscape** — The landscape from the point of view of a pedestrian. Usually refers to a pedestrian-oriented landscape.

**Place-making** — The creation of place through pedestrian orientation and public spaces in the public realm of a district.

**Potential demand** — The projected number of households that are likely to prefer relatively compact housing in a transit zone if such housing exists with the characteristics they deem important, including but not limited to neighborhood amenities such as retail, unit size, and competitive pricing.

**Preliminary engineering (PE)** — The second phase of the New Starts project development process, in which the project sponsor develops and refines the locally preferred alternative with enough specificity to complete an environmental impact statement and to identify all potential impacts and costs.

**Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA)** — A geographic entity designated by the Federal Office of Management and Budget for use by Federal statistical agencies. If an area that qualifies as a metropolitan area (MA) has a census population of one million or more, two or more primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs) may be defined

within it if they meet official standards and local opinion favors the designation. When PMSAs are established within an MA, that MA is designated a consolidated metropolitan statistical area (CMSA).

**Project Sponsor** — In the New Starts process, the governmental agency responsible for coordinating planning, design, and engineering of a Federally-funded transit project. Usually a transit operator, but may also be a state, regional or local government.

**Public Use Microdata Series (PUMS)** — U.S. Census data specially adapted for easy use.

**Public/Private partnership** — A system in which a government service or private business venture is funded and operated through a partnership of government and one or more private sector companies.

**PUMS** — See *Public Use Microdata Series*.

**Rapid transit** — High-capacity, high-frequency transit operation that often runs in its own guideway or right-of-way.

**Residential density** — The number of housing units in a given area of land, usually expressed in dwelling units per acre (DUA).

**Ridership** — Number of riders on a system, often calculated by year or average weekday.

**Right-of-way (ROW)** — The designated path through which transportation infrastructure passes. May be privately or publicly owned, and can include road, rail, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

**Smart growth** — Development planned and designed to protect open space and farmland, revitalize communities, keeps housing affordable, promote economic development and provide more transportation choices. Smart growth promotes cooperation between often diverse groups to arrive at sustainable long-term strategies for managing growth.

**Streetcar** — A subset of light rail in which vehicles operate primarily on the street, mixing with traffic.

**Streetcar suburbs** — Communities that were shaped and served by streetcars during the late 19th to early 20th Centuries, the time when streetcars were most popular.

**Streetscaping** — The addition of special attributes to a street such as trees, benches and other amenities.

**Surface parking** — Parking located on the surface of a property; a parking lot.

**Tax increment financing (TIF)** — A tool used to capture the future tax benefits of real estate improvements

in a designated area to pay the present cost of those improvements.

**TIF** — See *tax increment financing*.

**TIP** — See *transportation improvement plan*.

**TOD** — See *transit-oriented development*.

**Transit corridor** — See *corridor*.

**Transit region** — A Census-defined metropolitan area with a fixed-guideway transit system. Depending on the region and the size of the system, the metropolitan areas are metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs), or consolidated metropolitan statistical areas (CMSAs).

**Transit station area (TSA)** — A land use category in the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan. TSA's are areas around dedicated, fixed-route transit lines that provide unique opportunities for investment in development that maximizes the use of transit.

**Transit zone (TZ)** — The area within a one half-mile radius of a transit station.

**Transit-oriented development (TOD)** — The whole district surrounding a transit station, comprised of several projects and a mix of uses, the streetscape and walking environment, and integrated design, land use and activity that support transportation choice.

**Transportation improvement plan (TIP)** — A Federally-mandated three-year plan for transportation capital improvements. The TIP must conform with the metropolitan transportation plan and is fiscally-constrained, meaning that funding for included projects must be identified in the plan. The metropolitan planning organization is responsible for preparing this plan and coordinating public participation.

**TSA** — See *transit station area*.

**Twin Cities** — The region including Minneapolis, St. Paul and the surrounding seven-county metropolitan area.

**TZ** — See *transit zone*.

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)** — The Federal agency responsible for administering grants to build and maintain public housing, support individual home ownership, and support community development and redevelopment.

**ULI** — See *Urban Land Institute*.

**UMTA** — See *Urban Mass Transit Administration*.

**Underutilized properties** — Parcels where improvements are worth less than the land on which they are built.

**Urban Land Institute (ULI)** — An association of developers and development professionals.

**Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA)** — The original name of the Federal Transit Administration.

**Value capture** — The capture of increased value or savings resulting from new infrastructure. For local governments, value capture can mean higher tax revenues from increased sales and property values; for the transit agency, value capture means lease revenues from joint development, increased farebox revenues, and lower costs of providing access.

**Vehicle miles traveled (VMT)** — The total number of miles traveled in automobiles and other vehicles in a specified area.

**VMT** — See *vehicle miles traveled*.

**Workforce housing** — Market-rate residential units that are affordable to the typical household with at least one full-time wage earner; often contrasted with luxury housing.