

Fresno County Measure C Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Program Policies and Guidelines

The TOD program was created in the 2006 Measure C Extension Plan. The goals of the Measure C Transit Oriented Infrastructure for In-Fill allocation are to support community-based transit projects that:

- Are developed through an inclusive planning process with broad private-public partnerships and outreach;
- Improve the range of transportation choices by supporting transit facilities and improving links between facilities and activity nodes; and
- Support well-designed, high-density housing and mixed uses near transit.

In addition to encouraging transit supportive land use surrounding the high-capacity transit corridors to boost transit ridership in the Fresno County region, the Measure C TOD program also strives to support livable, viable and sustainable transit oriented healthy communities that promote walking, biking, and the use of public transit and reduce private vehicle dependence. Such TOD communities promote health and well-being and reduce risks for chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. The projects funded by the TOD program serve as models that reduce vehicle trips, improve air quality and provide access to physical activity opportunities through integrated land use and transportation planning.

As described in the 2007 Measure C Extension Local Agency Handbook, revised February 28, 2008, the TOD program provides funding to 3 types of projects/programs that are competitive-based:

- A. Transportation infrastructure improvements to transit facilities to encourage safety and access to transit facilities, support in-fill development or revitalization, reduce traffic congestion at transit stations, and provide for a wider range of transportation choices and improved internal mobility. Funds could be used for preliminary design and environmental studies, engineering, land acquisition, and construction;
- B. Planning Program or matching money to identify nodal transit sites on transit corridors for transit oriented development, planning retrofit for existing neighborhoods, downtowns, commercial cores, and transit station areas and stops in order to create access to transit and mixed use development in transit friendly environments. The community planning process would result in transportation / land-use concept plans; streetscape design concept plans, environmental studies,

Funding Cycle

Call for projects will be issued annually. Eligible projects could apply up to the maximum amount available for the funding cycle for the entire TOD program. Funding will be awarded to the best-qualified project(s) based on the amount available. If there is no qualified project submitted in a given funding cycle, the amount will be rolled into the subsequent year's funding pool. The Fresno COG Policy Board reserves the right not to fund any projects or to fund less than the amount available for a given funding cycle.

Project Selection Process

A panel that includes Fresno COG staff, representatives from the TOD Technical Advisory Committee and COG member agencies will evaluate, score and rank the proposed projects. The selected project(s) will go through Fresno COG Transportation Technical Committee, Policy Advisory Committee, and Policy Board for endorsement, and will be presented to Fresno County Transportation Authority for final approval.

The scoring committee consists of one representative from the each of the following entities:

1. Fresno Council of Governments
2. Fresno County Transportation Authority
3. Fresno Area Express
4. City of Fresno
5. City of Clovis
6. Eastside Cities
7. Westside Cities
8. County of Fresno
9. the public – development community
10. the public – environment/health
11. the public – other sectors

residential density, employment intensity, as well as the level of mixed use in the surrounding areas. Projects must support development with a minimum residential density of 18 units per acre.

4. Transportation Characteristics

The applicant will demonstrate how the project will improve accessibility to transit, and connectivity of trips by alternative mode such as walking and bicycling in the TOD areas the project serves. An exemplary project will support multi-modal access to transit service and enhance bicycle and pedestrian travel to facilitate non-auto trips within the TOD area.

For projects that are not directly related to transportation, the applicant will identify the existing or planned conditions of transit accessibility as well as the bike/pedestrian environment in the areas that the project supports.

5. Urban Design

The purpose of transit oriented development is to create vibrant and livable places/communities around transit stations. Urban design contributes significantly to the attractiveness of a place. The highest scored projects would be those that would likely bring positive impacts to the physical appearance of the project area; or where there are already urban design principles in place to guide the development in the project area.

6. Parking

The applicant will provide the existing parking inventory in the project area, and identify existing and future parking policies in the area. A project will be scored favorably if there are existing or planned parking policies in the project area that would provide for TOD friendly parking. Examples of such TOD friendly parking policies include but are not limited to: reduced parking requirements, shared parking, reciprocal access agreement, transit friendly parking design, transit supportive zoning, etc.

7. Green Buildings

Green building is the practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life-cycle from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation and deconstruction.

Green buildings are designed to reduce the overall impact of the built environment on human health and the natural environment by:

- Efficiently using energy, water, and other resources

Scoring Criteria

I. Project Location (maximum 15 points)

1. *Downtown Fresno as shown in Exhibit A (max 15 points)*
2. *Within ½ mile of a BRT station along the Blackstone and Ventura-Kings Canyon corridor as shown in Exhibit B (max 10 points)*
3. *Within ½ mile of a BRT station on Shaw Avenue between SR. 99 and SR 168 –BRT Stations to be determined (max 5 points)*

II. Land Use Characteristics in the Project Area (max 20 points)

1. *Residential Density (max 5 points)*
Projects supporting development with a residential density of 30 units per acre and above will receive a max of 5 points. The minimum required density is 18 units per acre.
2. *Employment Intensity (max 5 points)*
Projects supporting development that brings higher concentration of jobs will be scored more favorably than low employment intensity development.
3. *Mixed-uses (max 5 points)*
Projects that support a variety of land uses, and internalize non-commute trips through walking and biking, will be scored favorably.
4. *Affordable Housing (max 5 points)*
Projects that support or provide affordable housing will receive maximum 5 points.

III. Transportation Characteristics in the Project Area (max 20 points)

1. *Transit Accessibility (max 10 points)*
Projects that improve transit accessibility in the project area will receive maximum 10 points.
2. *Bike/Pedestrian Enhancement (max 10 points)*
Projects that improve bike/pedestrian environment to facilitate non-auto trips in the project area will receive maximum 10 points

IV. Urban Design (max 10 points)

Projects that support development whose aesthetic design provides a safe and pedestrian friendly environment will be awarded maximum of 10 points. For example, development with doors and windows oriented towards the sidewalk to provide “eyes on the street”.

V. Parking Policies (max 10 points)

Projects that support development with TOD friendly parking policies in place, or development within the area of an adopted plan that provides such policies, will receive maximum 10 points.

VI. Sustainable Green Building Design (max 5 points)

Projects that support development with sustainable green building design as defined in the Project Evaluation section will receive a maximum of 5 points.

B. Planning Program

Eligible Activities

Planning grants award funding to planning activities that will develop station area plans, transit corridor specific plans or any other specific plans that focus on creating vibrant and livable communities through investment on transit oriented development. Applicants should document how the proposed projects will increase “location efficiency” so people can walk, bike and take transit; boost ridership and minimize traffic; provide a rich mix of housing, shopping and transportation choices; generate revenue for the public and private sectors and provide value for both new and existing residents and create a sense of place.

Planning projects include but not limited to:

- Station area plans
- Transit corridor specific plans
- Specific plans that address parking requirement/district, or urban design guidelines in the designated TOD areas

Awards can be used to pay for professional services and project management as required by the planning efforts.

Project Evaluation

1. Project Location

The project must include areas as described in the Program Application Areas section. Planning areas that include downtown Fresno (Exhibit A) will have the first priority, then those that include BRT station areas along the Blackstone and Ventura-Kings Canyon corridor (Exhibit B), and thirdly those that include BRT Station areas along the Shaw Ave. corridor.

2. Nexus to Transit Oriented Development

The application must demonstrate the project’s nexus to transit oriented development. The planning project will be scored based on how the project will advance the TOD principles and how well the project will contribute to a livable and viable community. The exemplary project would help achieve the goal of boosting transit ridership through land use changes, and providing multi-modal transportation access to job, school or recreational destinations.

Scoring Criteria

I. Project Location (maximum 15 points)

Points will be awarded based on the planning areas' inclusion of the following location(s):

1. *Downtown Fresno as shown in Exhibit A (max 15 points)*
2. *Within ½ mile of a BRT station along Blackstone and Ventura-Kings Canyon corridor as shown in Exhibit B (max 10 points)*
3. *Within ½ mile of a BRT station on Shaw Avenue between SR. 99 and SR 168 –BRT Stations to be determined (max 5 points)*

II. Planning Elements (maximum 30 points)

The highest scored project will address the planning elements listed under the Project Evaluation section. A successful project will demonstrate support for transit oriented development through these planning elements.

III. Plan Implementation (maximum 25 points)

A successful project will demonstrate potential of timely implementation of the plan. The project will be scored favorably if it leads to a capital improvement project or other tangible changes such as a general plan amendment.

IV. Local Commitment and Community Support (maximum 10 points)

The high scored project will have broad community support (public involvement to date, letter of support, etc). Demonstration of developers and property owners' support and being part of the planning process will also be strong evidence for local commitment.

V. Affordable Housing (maximum 5 points)

Planning projects that include strategies to promote affordable housing will receive maximum 5 points.

VI. Sustainable Green Buildings (maximum 5 points)

Planning projects that include strategies to promote sustainable green building design will receive maximum 5 points.

VII. Subjective Evaluation (10 points)

The scoring committee may use this category to consider factors of overriding concerns. Examples may include, but are not limited to: the quality of the planning project, how the project addresses issues in the community, how the project will contribute to a livable, viable and sustainable community, economic impact, etc.

- Efficiently using energy, water, and other resources
- Protecting occupant health and improving employee productivity
- Reducing waste, pollution and environmental degradation

For example, green buildings may incorporate sustainable materials in their construction (e.g., reused, recycled-content, or made from renewable resources); create healthy indoor environments with minimal pollutants (e.g., reduced product emissions); and/or feature landscaping that is low-allergen, non-invasive and reduces water usage (e.g., by using native plants that survive without extra watering).

A project will be scored favorably if green building practice is incorporated in development that the projects support.

5. Affordable Housing

A housing project that provides affordable housing will be scored favorably. Affordable housing means housing that has an Affordable Housing Cost or Affordable Rent as described in Section 50052.5 or 50053(a) of the California Health and Safety Code, or any successor section thereto.

6. Project Readiness

For applications that propose to support unspecified future development projects (such as an impact fee forgiveness program), the grantee agency must require building permits to be pulled within 24 months of the project being selected for support under this program. If not, the award will be withdrawn, and the funds will be rolled back into the TOD funding pool. Funds to support a development project will not be disbursed to the grantee agency until the development is complete and receives its certificate of occupancy.

Exhibit A

Downtown Fresno (in green)



Exhibit B

Blackstone and Ventura-Kings Canyon Corridor BRT Stations

