

City of Des Moines - Planning Study

<i>Primary Sponsor</i>	Des Moines
<i>Study Title</i>	Transit Oriented Development Zoning Overlay Regulations Planning Study
<i>Total Estimated Study Cost</i>	\$65,000
<i>Federal Fiscal Year 2019 STP Request</i>	\$50,000
<i>Total Funding Secured</i>	\$15,000
<i>Source of additional funds and local match?</i>	The secured funding is included in the existing City of Des Moines budget to develop a new Comprehensive Plan and rewrite the Zoning Ordinance. Please refer to the City of Des Moines Capital Improvement Program 2015-2020, Miscellaneous Improvements, Page 6. While \$600,000 of local funding is provided, up to \$300,000 from other sources is necessary to complete the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance Project.
<i>The Federal Highway Administration requires STP funds to be used towards regionally significant projects. Please describe how this study fulfills this requirement.</i>	<p>The Tomorrow Plan, which was adopted in November, 2014, focused on the sustainable development of Greater Des Moines. Structured around four goals, the plan envisions a future with a resilient regional economy; greater environmental health and access to the outdoors; the maintenance of the existing quality of life; and, an increased level of regional cooperation. Building on the first goal of creating a resilient regional economy, a primary strategy is to develop a vibrant, walkable system of employment and residential activity centers with access to public transportation (commonly referred to as the nodes and corridors initiative). Activity centers and nodes are areas of concentrated mixed use development - economic and cultural focal points. Corridors are circulation routes that connect them. The Plan identifies several different levels of nodes within the City of Des Moines: Downtown, Regional, Community and Neighborhood. The Plan encourages development in areas of maximum impact and connect these areas to one another with multimodal corridors.</p> <p>The DART Forward 2035 Transit Services Plan provides a long range vision for how the regional transit system will develop and offers step by step directions for meeting that goal. Bus transit routes, emphasizing proposed Bus Rapid Transit routes (BRT) combined with other major streets provide the primary corridors to connect nodes envisioned by The Tomorrow Plan. Specific corridors proposed for BRT service within Des Moines include a University / Ingersoll Avenue loop, University Avenue, Douglas / Martin Luther King Jr. Way, 6th Avenue and SW 9th Street. The University Avenue and Douglas Avenue corridors extend far into the western suburbs.</p> <p>The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Des Moines, PlanDSM - Creating Our Tomorrow, is the City's implementation of the Tomorrow Plan and builds on The Tomorrow Plan, the DART Forward 2035 Transit Services Plan and Capital Crossroads Vision. Focusing on nodes that are connected with a multi-model transportation system of streets, transit corridors, sidewalks and bike lanes, PlanDSM will recommend the development of a transit oriented development (TOD)</p>

<p><i>Describe how this project impacts other city/county goals, plans, and projects.</i></p>	<p>As noted above, this project will be an implementation tool for planning policies directing growth and redevelopment to specific areas of the City, will encourage the use of alternative transportation modes and will be one element of providing for the sustainability of neighborhoods. Encouraging mixed use development at nodes and along corridors will enhance access to the transit network, provide for more walkable and healthy neighborhoods, reduce transportation costs and help create a sense of community and place.</p> <p>Additionally, this project will directly related to other ongoing efforts: -The Housing Tomorrow Plan, being developed by the Polk County Housing Trust Fund includes an objective to encourage development near nodes and along transit corridors. A TOD district encourages higher residential density as well as nonresidential development around nodes and provides the option of increasing residential density along transportation corridors. -AARP is actively assessing communities accessibility for residents in areas such as walkability and accessibility to transit as well as accessibility to amenities via transit. TODs enhance walkability of neighborhoods by providing easy access from higher density residential to non-residential amenities as well as increasing options for accessibility to transit.</p>
<p><i>Describe any work previously completed (or underway) that this project complements or is recommended in other planning studies/construction projects</i></p>	<p>This project will implement key strategies of The Tomorrow Plan and the Mobilizing Tomorrow Plan: the development of a vibrant, walkable system of employment and residential activity centers with access to public transportation (nodes and corridors). It will also assist in creating the vision of the DART Forward 2035 Transit Services Plan to provide increased access to transit and encourage its use to travel between economic and cultural focal points. Additionally, this project will complement provisions of the Capital Core portion of the Capital Crossroads Vision as it addresses providing neighborhood access to public transportation. This project will be completed in such a way to be adaptable to other communities in the region. Included in the process to develop the new district is a proposed peer review composed of staff from surrounding communities, MPO and DART.</p>
<p><i>Additional information you would like to share:</i></p>	<p>On Monday, January 12, 2015, City Council passed a resolution authorizing submittal of STP grant applications. The resolution will be sent along with other applications later this week.</p>
<p><i>Provide a brief description of the proposed project (include a timeline showing anticipated beginning and end dates):</i></p>	<p>The project will include consulting services to develop a Transit Oriented Development zone district or overlay zone and accompanying development regulations. This would be accomplished as part of the development of a new Zoning Ordinance to implement PlanDSM. The district will be applied at select nodes and along transit corridors identified in The Tomorrow Plan and PlanDSM.</p> <p>Work on this project will begin early 2016 as consulting assistance is recruited for the rewrite of the City's Zoning Ordinance. The TOD district will be integrated into the Zoning Ordinance with expected adoption in Spring, 2017.</p>
<p><i>List the deliverables for the project:</i></p>	<p>This project will create a new Transit Oriented Development zone district or overlay district and development regulations to be adopted as part of the new Zoning Ordinance</p>

<p><i>List any participating governments/partners/agencies (provide a brief explanation of their involvement):</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -City of Des Moines - The City will manage the project and expenditure of grant monies. The new TOD district will be incorporated into the new Zoning Ordinance and will be adopted by City Council. -Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): The MPO is the sponsor of the grant program and will award funding for this project. Along with monitoring expenditures of grant funding, MPO staff will participate in the development of the new district through interviews and discussions with consultants, participating in any focus groups, assisting during the proposed peer review of new development regulations associated with the district and, ultimately, making the district available to MPO communities as a possible template to establish their own TOD districts. -DART: DART staff will participate as part of the proposed peer review of the proposed TOD district. -Staff from surrounding communities and other organizations: These organizations will be primary peer reviewers of the new district.
<p><i>Explain the problems/issues this project will address:</i></p>	<p>One of the key steps the MPO has identified to implement the Nodes and Corridor initiative is the development of sample codes to help communities achieve vibrant, mixed use, walkable environments. While this project will create a new zone district for the City of Des Moines implementing PlanDSM, it will also be available for other communities to adapt it for their own use.</p> <p>Additionally, this project will directly address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Enhance the viability of DART's proposed bus rapid transit (BRT) -Provide additional housing options for City residents -Increase accessibility to transit -Provide additional mixed use development and living opportunities -Increase foot traffic for local businesses -Provide opportunities for mixed income housing helping to disperse low income housing -More efficiently use existing infrastructure -Creation of a possible economic revitalization tool for neighborhoods and neighborhood centers
<p><i>List any work previously completed (or underway) that this project compliments (include the relationship of this project to other planning studies/construction projects):</i></p>	<p>This project directly relates to three planning efforts, two that have been adopted and one in process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Tomorrow Plan and Mobilizing Tomorrow Plan (adopted) -DART Forward 2035 Transit Services Plan (adopted) -Capital Crossroads, Capital Core (adopted) -PlanDSM - Creating Our Tomorrow (in process)

<p><i>Identify project stakeholders and list strategies used to engage the stakeholders during project development:</i></p>	<p>Stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -City of Des Moines City Council -City of Des Moines Plan & Zoning Commission -City of Des Moines Community Development Staff -Metropolitan Planning Organization -Developers -Lenders -Neighborhood Organizations <p>Likely strategies for engaging stakeholders might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Initial interviews of City and MPO staff, developers, lenders -Workshop(s) with City Council and Plan & Zoning Commission -Public open house for neighborhood organizations -Presentation to Plan & Zoning Commission and City Council for review and adoption
<p><i>How does this project relate or promote the MPO's Horizon Year 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (provide references to goals and objectives of the Horizon Year 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan):</i></p>	<p>During the public participation process for The Tomorrow Plan, there were recurring statements about the desire to take transit to important destinations. To accomplish this, Mobilize Tomorrow recognizes the need to align transit routes based on existing and planned densities of residents and employees. It is also important that transit stops are accessible by bicycle and by foot.</p> <p>The development of a TOD ordinance and associated development regulations implements The Tomorrow Plan's goal of creating a resilient regional economy and the following Mobilizing Tomorrow Plan goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Enhance multimodal transportation options: shifting from the historical model of expanding roadway capacity to a model that supports a greater mix of transportation choices and land use and design that support walkability is supported by Transit Oriented Development districts. -Manage and optimize transportation infrastructure and services: Increasing residential densities along transportation corridors and at activity center nodes optimizes the use of transportation corridors as opportunities for walking, bicycling and walking, as well as using private vehicles are available. -Improve the region's environmental health: Opportunities to use transportation facilities other than private vehicles will lower environmental impacts associated with emissions and resulting pollution resulting in better air quality in the City. -Further the health, safety and well-being of all residents: the availability of pleasant, and safe walking and bicycling routes in reasonable proximity to daily destinations encourage residents to walk and bike instead of using cars encouraging a more healthy lifestyle.
<p><i>Explain how the project will be carried forward and implemented once completed:</i></p>	<p>The TOD ordinance and development regulations will be adopted as part of a new Zoning Ordinance that will be developed after PlanDSM is finalized. As a new regulatory district, implementation will occur in one of two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The City will proactively rezone properties at identified nodes and along connecting corridors; or, -The district will be available for developers to request in order to build in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. <p>Additionally, the extent that this district will be used as a template for other jurisdictions use will be determined by them individually.</p>