What is Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)?

“A type of development that maximizes the amount of residential, business, and leisure space within walking distance of a public transit hub. The goal is to promote sustainable growth by increasing walkability and usage of public transit, while reducing dependence on private vehicles.”

- Maine Mall TOD Concept Plan
What is the purpose of this plan?

To develop a conceptual vision for what the Maine Mall could look like in 10-20 years if redevelopment is guided by TOD principles.
About this Plan

**TIMELINE:** Nov. 2018-Jan. 2020

**BUDGET:** $20,000 (no match)

**DELIVERABLES:** Final plan/presentation; conceptual site rendering and visualizations.

**DESIRED OUTCOMES:** To demonstrate the value of TOD planning; serve as a resource for South Portland, PACTS, other Greater Portland municipalities.

**TEAM:** GPCOG/PACTS, South Portland, Maine Mall, Long Creek Watershed Management District, and MaineDOT.

**DISCLAIMER:** Plan/renderings are conceptual only.

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**Study Area**
Why Transit-Oriented Development?
The Greater Portland Region is Growing

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

+17,000

New residents by 2026.

SOURCE: MAINE STATE ECONOMIST
“MAINE POPULATION OUTLOOK 2016-2026”
The City of South Portland is Growing

SOUTH PORTLAND

+1,300 to 3,800

New residents by 2022.

SOURCE: CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
Where this growth occurs has major implications for our quality of life and the environment.

**Suburban and Rural Sprawl**

- Difficult to serve by public transit
- Reliance on vehicle travel
- Creates more congestion
- Longer and more expensive commutes
- Increase air/water pollution
- Degradation of rural landscapes and open spaces
- Weakening of town/city centers

**Why transit-oriented development?**
Where this growth occurs has major implications for our quality of life and the environment.

Why transit-oriented development?

Compact, Mixed-Use Development

- Easier to serve by public transit
- Ability to walk/bike most places
- Less reliance on vehicle travel
- Opportunity to live/work in close proximity
- Attractive/vibrant places
- Reduces development pressure on rural areas
Why transit-oriented development?

The market is trending in this direction

Rock Row, Westbrook

- 450,000 sq. ft. retail
- 750 residential units
- 300,000 sq. ft. office space
- 100,000 sq. ft. of med. office
- 26-acre recreational quarry
- 12 screen movie theatre
- 8,200-person capacity concert venue
The Downs, Scarborough

- 70-acre innovation district
- 48 apartment units
- 48 condo units
- 30 single-family houses
- Athletic complex w/ice rink and pool
- 10-miles of recreation trails
- 200-acres of open space
Why transit-oriented development?

The market is trending in this direction

Mill District Biddeford/Saco
- 270,000 sq. ft. of retail
- 800 residential units
- Riverwalk Trail
- New parking garage
- Much more in the works...
How is PACTS planning for the future?
How is PACTS planning for the future?

PACTS Priority Centers

• Targeting planning and resources to places with the most promising opportunities for future population and job growth

• Over 50 “Priority Centers” identified in the PACTS Long Range Transportation Plan “Destination 2040”
How is PACTS planning for the future?

PACTS Priority Centers

• Most Priority Center are well situated to take advantage of existing transit routes

Regional Transit

- Casco Bay Lines
- METRO
- South Portland Bus
- Shuttlebus-ZOOM
- Lakes Region Explorer
- Downeaster
Why is the Maine Mall a good site for TOD?
Why is the Maine Mall a good site for TOD?

The Maine Mall is already a thriving center

SOURCE: STREETLIGHT INSIGHTS (2018)
It’s convenient to major roads and highways
Why is the Maine Mall a good site for TOD?

It’s already a transit hub
Why is the Maine Mall a good site for TOD?

It has underutilized space (vacant parking lots)
Why is the Maine Mall a good site for TOD?

To improve environmental impacts

IMPERVIOUS SURFACES AT THE MAINE MALL.
SOURCE: MAINE OFFICE OF GIS

TOP: GRAVEL WETLAND
BOTTOM: UNDERSIZED CULVERT
Why is the Maine Mall a good site for TOD?

Growing demand
The key ingredients to successful TOD at the Maine Mall.
The key ingredients to successful TOD at the Maine Mall.

Increase density

Higher densities of people, jobs, or building units per acre support greater levels of transit service since there are more potential riders in the same amount of space.

- Maine Mall TOD Concept Plan
Increase diversity (mix of land uses)

“The key ingredients to successful TOD at the Maine Mall.

“Mixed land use means having a complementary and context appropriate combination of shops, services, housing types, offices, and employment opportunities within the same area that allow people to meet most of their daily needs nearby.”

- Maine Mall TOD Concept Plan
The key ingredients to successful TOD at the Maine Mall.

Increase diversity (mix of land uses)

Most of the land west of I-295 is devoted exclusively to commercial or industrial use.

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
The key ingredients to successful TOD at the Maine Mall.

Scale parking to meet reasonable demand

“Large expanses of surface parking lots tend to erode an area’s overall sense of place and contribute to a pedestrian environment that is less safe, convenient, or attractive.”

- Maine Mall TOD Concept Plan

SOURCE: STREETLIGHT INSIGHTS (2018)
Invest in transit service

Transit service should be competitive with vehicle travel.

The key ingredients to successful TOD at the Maine Mall.
The key ingredients to successful TOD at the Maine Mall.

Improve Design
The key ingredients to successful TOD at the Maine Mall.

**Improve Design**

“In the context of TOD, design primarily refers to the elements that make for an attractive, interesting, and pedestrian friendly place.”

*Maine Mall TOD Concept Plan*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example improvements:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Sidewalks</strong> (appropriately scaled, continuous, buffered from traffic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Enhanced crosswalks</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Pedestrian-scale lighting</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Comfortable / safe places to wait</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Street trees and landscaping</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Parks and green space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Connected streets / short blocks</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Street oriented buildings</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What the Mall could look like in 10-20 years.
If development is guided by TOD principles.
Highlights:

1. New Main St.
2. Transportation center
3. Parking garages
4. Restored South Branch
5. Diverse housing supply
6. Connected street grid
7. Year-round open-air market
8. Recreation and open space
Next Steps
Adopt a city-wide TOD vision
Adopt a city-wide TOD vision to send a clear signal to developers and residents about future development priorities and to establish a mandate for other regulatory changes required.

Measure access to transit and set city-wide TOD targets
Evaluate existing access to transit and set quantifiable TOD targets. Example targets could include percent of population (or new development) within a certain distance of transit; and/or percent of population living in TOD zones.

Establish TOD Overlay Districts
Establish TOD (or “Smart Growth”) overlay districts to provide incentives for appropriate development, or redevelopment, within areas identified for future growth by the City.
Engage property and business owners

The City should continue to engage property and business owners in the Maine Mall area to understand their needs and future development desires.

Develop an area-wide master plan

Develop a master plan for the western side of the City in which the Maine Mall is the primary anchor. A master plan could also include a market analysis to determine what types of mixed-uses the market can support.

Amend zoning at the Maine Mall

Amend zoning at the Mall site to align land use regulations with TOD strategies. Zoning should allow for higher density residential and mixed-use development that supports active, pedestrian-friendly streets and careful transit integration.

Acquire municipally-owned property

The City should seek to acquire property in, or near, the site to use for public purposes (parks, open spaces, parking garages, public buildings, etc.)
Transportation & Mobility

Next Steps

Develop corridor studies for all major roads in the Maine Mall area.

Improve mobility, safety, and accessibility in the Maine Mall area for all users by developing detailed corridor studies for all major roads.

Improve existing transit facilities

Transit service could be improved in the short-term by providing more amenities at existing stops. At the main stop by JC Penney, benches and shelters could be installed and a real-time display provided inside the lobby. At other stops, benches could be installed and accessibility issues reviewed.

Coordinate transit improvements with new development

As the site evolves, conduct periodic transit level of service evaluations to explore the feasibility of increasing transit frequency, or adding new routes (such as bus rapid transit or an internal Mall circulator) to ensure a high level of transit service is provided.
Next Steps

Transportation & Mobility

Review and revise parking regulations
Review, and consider revising, existing parking regulations so available parking is appropriate to average demand.

Improve and expand the trail network
Continue to partner with the South Portland Land Trust, Portland Trails, and other relevant groups to improve and expand the local trail network.
Environmental Planning

Next Steps

Explore South Branch Restoration

Make initial inquiries to the Long Creek Watershed Management District, the MaineDEP, and other relevant agencies to explore the feasibility of restoring the South Branch of Long Creek to its original source.

Reduce environmental impacts

Continue to incorporate best management practices (BMPs) for reducing environmental impacts at the Mall and in the Long Creek Watershed. Possible BMPs include: heated sidewalks, pervious pavement, stormwater recapture, green infrastructure, and green roofs, among other projects.

Coordinate improvements with the goals and actions identified in the City’s “One Climate Future” initiative and forthcoming final plan.
Funding

Next Steps

Review and update the Transit TIF

Review and update (if appropriate) the City’s existing Transit-Oriented Development Tax Increment Financing District (Transit TIF). The City’s Transit TIF captures 25% of the increase in value of real property located in the TIF District.

Promote the Opportunity Zone Incentive

Promote the Opportunity Zone incentive to prospective developers, as well as other state incentives and programmatic resources. The Opportunity Zone is a community investment tool established by Congress to encourage long-term investments in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide.
THANK YOU

Rick Harbison, Senior Planner
Stephanie Carver, Planning Director