



**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members of the  
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

**FROM:** Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

**DATE:** February 4, 2014

**TITLE:** Resolution to Approve an Update to Downtown Master Plan to Incorporate  
Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines - Case 11T13

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the City Commission adopt a resolution approving an update to the Downtown Master Plan to incorporate Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines.

**Background**

The Fort Lauderdale City Commission adopted the Downtown Master Plan on November 18, 2003 after broad input from various stakeholders, including residents, business leaders and in partnership with the Downtown Development Authority and other organizations. The Plan currently serves as a blueprint for the future development of Downtown Fort Lauderdale, by guiding and promoting an urban center with a variety of public spaces and a mix of uses, including housing, shopping, employment and entertainment opportunities. The expansion of transit and multi-modal circulation were also original key goals in the 2003 Downtown Master Plan. The Downtown Master Plan currently envisions multimodal transportation options including transit, walking and biking in order to keep pace with the Downtown's growing residential population, better connect neighborhoods, improve Downtown connections to mass transit infrastructure and reduce sprawl. (See Downtown Master Plan pages 1.5 through 1.9, and pages 2.8 and 3.34.)

The Master Plan was amended in 2007 to emphasize high quality architecture, improvements to streetscape design, and the public realm. The Downtown Master Plan's successful implementation has been driven by the cooperation between the public and private sectors and has resulted in many significant projects to date; totaling approximately 8,500 approved units that help carry out this vision.

After a period of stagnant growth caused by the 2009 global recession, Downtown Fort Lauderdale has experienced an influx in new residential development applications. As Downtown Fort Lauderdale continues to grow and mature as the County's regional

metropolitan area, protecting and enhancing the quality of life for our neighbors and visitors and offering a combination of mobility options are essential components of future planning efforts.

Investments in multimodal transportation options and creating a safe and walkable city were identified as top ranked priorities of the City's adopted 2035 Vision Plan. Multimodal transportation options not only provide the ability to keep people moving but reduce the impact on auto-dependency, furthering the goal of protecting the environment, and having a significant role in the continued economic health and vitality of the Downtown. There are several recent transformative projects that have been initiated that will help support the growth of Downtown Fort Lauderdale, while ensuring safe and efficient mobility. These projects include the addition of Tri-Rail Coastal Link commuter rail and All Aboard Florida intercity passenger rail on the FEC railway, as well as the future implementation of the Wave Streetcar in Downtown Fort Lauderdale.

The purpose of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) guidelines is to guide and encourage future development within proximity to premium transit stations, while aligning the current Downtown Master Plan design guidelines with current and planned transit initiatives. The proposed guidelines define TOD as the functional integration of land use and transit via the creation of compact, walkable, mixed-use communities within walking distance of a transit stop or station. A TOD brings together people, jobs, housing and services and is designed in a way that makes it efficient, safe, and convenient to travel on foot or by bicycle, transit, or car. (See Exhibit 1 for the draft TOD guidelines.)

The proposed TOD guidelines aim to create pedestrian-friendly, vibrant station areas to support the continued growth of the Downtown as a live, work, and play environment. They are intended to complement the Downtown Character Areas, accommodating the continued existence of compatible uses and transitioning out uses that are incompatible with the City's vision of having multimodal transportation options and streets that are safe and walkable. They also address design, density and parking standards in order to create a more compact development pattern that supports transit, walking, and biking.

The proposed update is consistent with the City's Downtown Master Plan and Comprehensive Plan in that Downtown Fort Lauderdale is the urban center of the City and was designated as a RAC in order to encourage more intense development, while discouraging suburban sprawl. The City's Downtown Master Plan (last updated in 2007) envisions the Downtown RAC as a truly livable urban center with diverse, healthy residential neighborhoods and an urban fabric consisting of a walkable pattern of streets, public spaces and buildings. Goal 4 (page 3.34) of the Downtown Master Plan also envisions an expansion of user-friendly mass transit as a critical component. The proposed Downtown Master Plan update will help guide future growth in the Downtown RAC in proximity to transit, while supporting Downtown Fort Lauderdale as a vibrant, active urban center with a walkable pattern of streets and connected neighborhoods.

The proposed Downtown Master Plan update is consistent with Comprehensive Plan Objective 1.43: Transit Oriented Development, which encourages mixed-use TOD in areas served by regional transit stations, such as Tri-Rail stations, major transit hubs, and neighborhood and regional transit centers. The proposed update is also consistent with the Comprehensive Plan policies 1.43.1 through 1.43.7, which discourage auto-oriented land uses and promote transit oriented design principles, vehicle parking strategies that encourage and support transit usage, pedestrian and transit amenities and connectivity and access to transit stations and stops, and an urban form with well-integrated land use combinations, balanced intensities and densities, uses compatible with surrounding uses, and mobility through safe and convenient interconnectivity or vehicular, transit, pedestrian and other non-motorized modes of travel.

The Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) recommended approval of the TOD guidelines by a vote of 6-1 on January 15, 2014 with the following conditions, which have been addressed in the draft guidelines:

1. Remove references to discouraging non-transit supportive individual retail store uses over 30,000 square feet that are not part of a mixed-use development.
2. Replace “shall” with “may” in Note 2 of the Parking Standards Table - Exhibit 1, Page 13, as it relates to active uses on upper floors of a parking garage.

The PZB staff report is attached as Exhibit 2, while the PZB meeting record is attached as Exhibit 3, respectively. As part of the City’s public outreach for the project, Department of Sustainable Development staff presented the proposed guidelines to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) on October 10, 2013. The DDA supported the project at the PZB meeting with minor revisions. On December 4, 2013, the City also hosted an Open House conversation with neighbors to obtain input on the draft TOD guidelines. In addition, staff reached out to the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations, Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce and City of Fort Lauderdale Sustainability Advisory Board to advise of the effort.

The City Commission is asked to consider the record and recommendations forwarded by the Department of Sustainable Development and the PZB and hear public comments when determining whether the proposed Downtown Master Plan update meets the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, intent of the Downtown Master Plan, and whether the guidelines further advance the City’s 2035 Vision Plan and Strategic Plan.

### **Resource Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

### **Strategic Connections**

This item is a *Commission Annual Action Plan* priority, included within the Management Agenda, advancing the Wave Streetcar Project and other multimodal transportation options in the City.

This item is a *Press Play Fort Lauderdale Strategic Plan 2018* initiative, included within the **Infrastructure Cylinder of Excellence**, specifically advancing:

- **Goal 1:** Be a pedestrian friendly, multi-modal City.
- **Objective 2:** Integrate transportation, land use and planning to create a walkable and bikeable community.
- **Initiative 7:** Develop and implement a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) ordinance.

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Connected*.

Attachments:

Exhibit 1 - Draft TOD Guidelines

Exhibit 2 - 1/15/14 PZB Staff Report

Exhibit 3 - 1/15/14 PZB Minutes

Exhibit 4 - Resolution

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