

# MARTIN LUTHER KING (MLK) BOULEVARD TOD STATION AREA PLAN



City of Austin  
Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Austin would like to thank the following for their contribution to the MLK Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Station Area Plan:

All participants in the planning process who live, work, and own or rent property in and around the MLK TOD District.

Other interested individuals who came to learn about transit-oriented development and give feedback on this citywide initiative.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## MLK JR. BOULEVARD TOD STATION AREA PLAN





# MLK JR. BOULEVARD TOD STATION AREA PLAN

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

The first Capital MetroRail line is under construction with passenger service to begin at the end of 2008. The 32-mile Red Line will connect downtown Austin to Leander on existing rail tracks with nine initial stations planned. The City, in support of the Capital Metro “All Systems Go!” Long Range Transit Plan, initiated a broad public engagement effort to develop station area plans around several of these future MetroRail stops. The first station areas to undergo the station area planning process were Plaza Saltillo, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (MLK), and N. Lamar Boulevard/Justin Lane (a.k.a. Crestview Station).

New development that takes advantage of its location near transit is often referred to as “Transit-Oriented Development” (or TOD), and it is an important part of the City’s goal to manage growth in ways that reduce reliance on automobile use, promote transit use, walking and biking, and create lively and safe areas around transit stations. The City of Austin developed the TOD station area plans to leverage this significant public transit investment to achieve these broad community goals.

To realize these benefits, the City first adopted a TOD Ordinance, which identified specific station area boundaries, interim land use and design requirements, and a commitment to develop station area plans. Planning for the MLK TOD was begun in February 2007 by a team of consultants led by PB Americas. Public education and involvement meetings were held over the course of the next ten months to draft a plan that incorporated TOD principles and best practices and was shaped by the community input gathered throughout the planning process. The planning work was integrated with a professional assessment of market conditions and finance, affordable housing, and basic public infrastructure and facility needs. The plan includes recommendations for open space, street and other infrastructure improvements, and affordable housing and is intended to guide future development and the provision of public improvements.

The implementation strategy describes a variety of key actions that will contribute to the successful redevelopment of the station area. The responsibilities for implementation not only rest with the City, but its agency partners, development community, and citizens. A primary element of the implementation program is the MLK TOD Station Area Regulating Plan. It is based on *Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use* of the Austin Code, which applies citywide. The Regulating Plan provides development standards with a specific focus on the context of the MLK Station Area and the vision articulated in this plan.

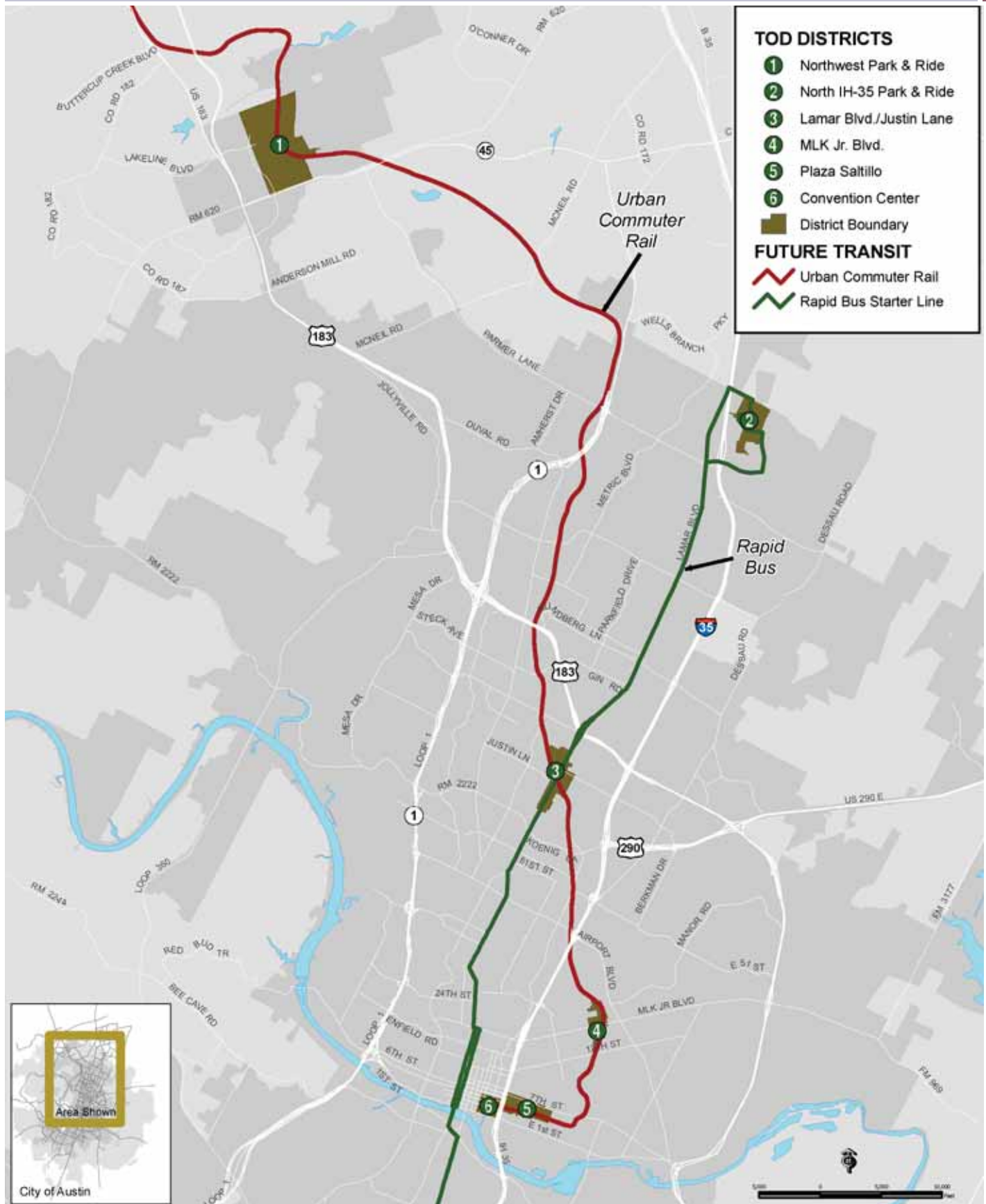


FIGURE ES.1: TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) DISTRICTS

Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (MLK) station planning area was identified in the TOD Ordinance to include the Boggy Creek flood plain and the area to the west along Manor Road and MLK Jr. Boulevard. During the development of this plan, the planning area was expanded to include land around the Airport Boulevard intersections with Manor Road and MLK Jr. Boulevard. It includes portions of four neighborhood planning areas - Chestnut, MLK, Rosewood, and Upper Boggy Creek, and several neighborhoods within these.

## PLAN ORGANIZATION

The consultant team, informed by community input throughout the planning process, developed the MLK TOD Station Area Plan, which

- Followed transit-oriented design principles and Austin planning policy as described in Chapter 1;
- Is summarized below and described in more detail in Chapter 2;
- Includes an implementation strategy described in Chapter 3;
- Featured an inclusive public involvement process as described in the Appendix; and
- Utilized background information and studies presented in a series of appendices.

## PLAN SUMMARY

The MLK TOD Station Area Plan includes three primary elements:

- **Land Use and Design Concept Plan**, which describes the desired land uses and development characteristics in the TOD.
- **Circulation Concept Plan**, which identifies the functional and design elements for streets and walkways.
- **Open Space and Trails Concept Plan**, which describes the important open space components of the TOD.

The concept plan maps and summary of the key elements are presented on the following pages.



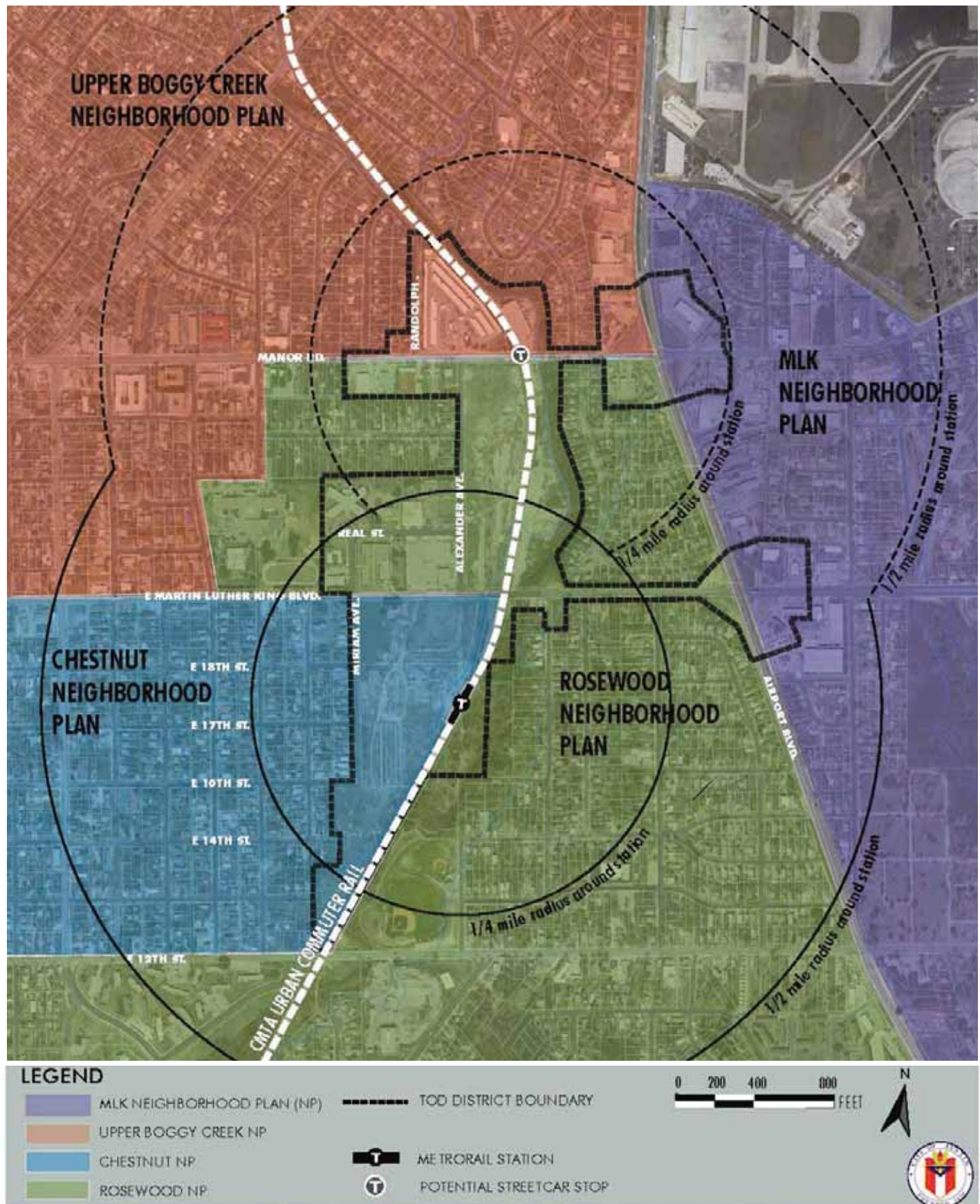


FIGURE ES.2: LOCATION MAP OF MLK TOD WITH NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREAS

## LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN

The Land Use and Design Concept for the MLK TOD Station Area Plan includes five land use designations:

- **TOD Mixed-Use.** This is the highest density designation, which encourages urban-style development including active ground floor uses with commercial, office, or residential uses on the upper floors. Residential densities may exceed 45 units per acre if a specific level of affordable housing is provided. Moderate height bonuses allowing a total building height of 60ft may also be granted with additional affordable housing. These areas are located in the closest proximity to transit and are intended to become neighborhood centers.



- **Corridor Mixed-Use.** This allows a slightly more liberal mix of uses compared to TOD Mixed-Use. These properties are farther from the transit station and have less of an urban character compared to TOD Mixed-Use. Normal residential densities may reach 45 units per acre, and additional density may be permitted when affordable housing is provided.





- **Live/Work Flex.** This encourages ground floor business activity with residential units on the upper floors. Residential uses are required and a ground floor business is optional. Residential densities range from 17 to 45 units per acre, and additional density may be permitted when affordable housing is provided.



- **Medium Density Residential.** This designation is found outside of the mixed-use areas and is intended to provide a transition into the surrounding neighborhoods. Residential densities range from 17 to 45 units per acre.



- **Low Density Residential.** This designation also provides a transition between the higher density center of the station area and surrounding neighborhoods. Residential densities range from 9 to 16 units per acre.



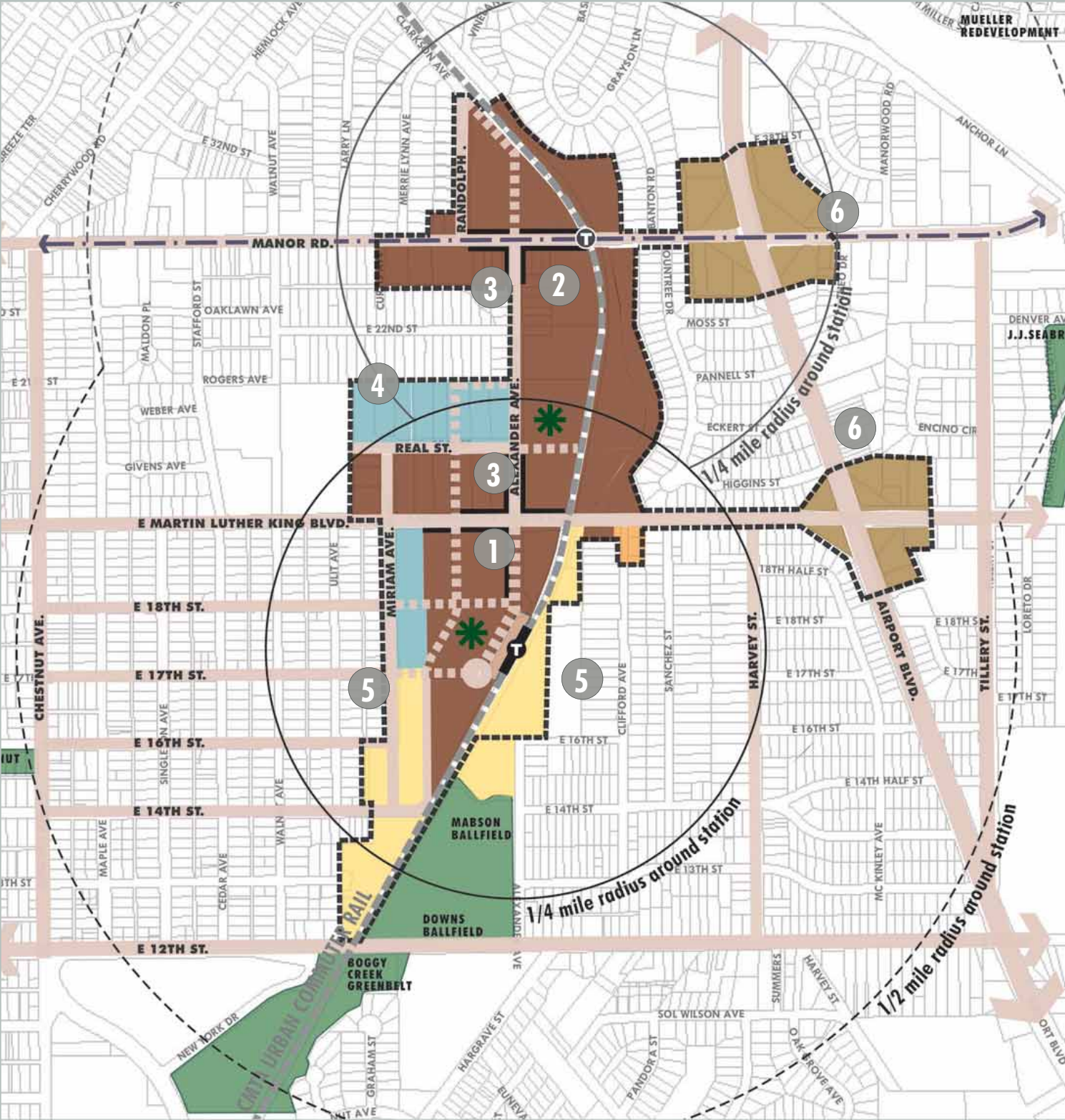
## LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN

The Land Use and Design Concept Plan includes the following primary elements:

1. **High density mixed-use development** concentrated near the Capitol Metro station on Alexander Avenue, south of MLK Jr. Boulevard. This would be the primary activity area in the station area.
2. **A secondary concentration of high density mixed-use development** is located along Manor Road and Alexander Avenue to take advantage of the planned streetcar line on Manor Road, and the potential additional Capitol Metro stop on Manor.
3. **Active edges**, which create a more lively and pleasant pedestrian environment by requiring buildings along specific street frontages to be built up to the sidewalk with the ground floor designed to accommodate active business uses. The active edge designation is only used with the TOD Mixed-Use designation.
4. **Live/work uses** where small businesses would be allowed with residential units above. This is in response to neighborhood support for this type of use and for creating a transition between the higher density core and the lower density neighborhoods surrounding it.
5. **Low and Medium Density Residential** uses in selected transition areas adjacent to existing neighborhoods.
6. **Gateways** at the intersections of Airport Boulevard with Manor Road and MLK Jr. Boulevard, which feature improved pedestrian facilities and amenities as well as a more urban character to signify entry into the MLK station area.



# LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN



## LEGEND

- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- TOD MIXED USE (showing active edges)
- CORRIDOR MIXED USE
- LIVE/WORK FLEX
- EXISTING CITY PARKLAND
- POTENTIAL PARKLAND

- EXISTING STREETS
- POTENTIAL NEW STREETS
- TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- POTENTIAL STREETCAR ROUTE
- METRORAIL STATION
- POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOP
- TRANSIT PLAZA





## CIRCULATION CONCEPT PLAN

The Circulation Concept for the MLK TOD Station Area Plan includes the following primary elements:

1. **An integrated street and pathway network** to provide safe and convenient travel for all modes of transportation.
2. **TOD Core Transit Corridor** design standards for Manor Road and MLK Jr. Boulevard, which require wider sidewalks and enhanced pedestrian facilities to support the existing and planned transit service.
3. **TOD Pedestrian Priority Streets**, which are also required to have enhanced pedestrian facilities because they will serve as the primary pedestrian routes in the station area. Alexander Avenue and portions of E. 17th Street and Real Street are so designated.
4. **New pedestrian connections** from Pannell Place and E. 16th Street to provide easier access between the station and these neighborhoods.
5. **New local streets** as properties redevelop to provide smaller, more walkable blocks.
6. **A trail system along Boggy Creek** and/or the rail line with possible on-street connections to provide enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access and recreational opportunities through the station area. There are different trail proposals that could be realized and they are not mutually exclusive of each other. The community expressed a desire for both a natural trail system along the creek for mainly recreational purposes and also a multi-use "Rails with Trails" pathway generally along the rail line that could serve both recreational and functional transportation needs.
7. **On-street bicycle facilities** to encourage bike riding and make it safe and efficient to ride around and through the TOD.

# CIRCULATION CONCEPT PLAN



## LEGEND

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| STREETS   | EXISTING BIKE LANES                           |
| TOD CORE TRANSIT STREETS                                    | RECOMMENDED BIKE FACILITY IN AUSTIN BIKE PLAN |
| TOD PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY STREETS                             | POTENTIAL 'RAILS WITH TRAILS' ROUTE           |
| TOD LOCAL STREETS   | PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS                        |
| POTENTIAL NEW STREETS                                       | POTENTIAL STREETCAR ROUTE                     |
| POTENTIAL TOD LOCAL STREETS                                 | TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY                         |
| DESIGN STANDARDS CORE TRANSIT/FUTURE CORE TRANSIT CORRIDORS | METRORAIL STATION                             |
| BOGGY CREEK TRAIL   | POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOP                      |
| POTENTIAL TRAIL EXTENSION                                   |   |

0 200 400 800 FEET



## OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS CONCEPT PLAN

The Open Space and Trails Concept Plan for the MLK TOD Station Area Plan includes the following primary elements:

1. **Boggy Creek** and the area along its course are restored providing a natural open space area for local residents that could include space for community gardens. The pedestrian connections and potential trail extension in the Circulation Concept Plan will improve access to this area.
2. **Pocket park between Manor Road and MLK Jr. Boulevard** to provide convenient recreation opportunities for local residents. The park is recommended to be a minimum of one-half acre.
3. **Pocket park south of MLK Jr. Boulevard** to provide convenient recreation opportunities for local residents. The park is recommended to be a minimum of one-half acre.
4. **A trail system along Boggy Creek** and/or the rail line with possible on-street connections to provide enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access and recreational opportunities through the station area. There are different trail proposals that could be realized, and they are not mutually exclusive of each other. The community expressed a desire for both a natural trail system along the creek for mainly recreational purposes and also a multi-use “Rails with Trails” pathway generally along the rail line that could serve both recreational and functional transportation needs.

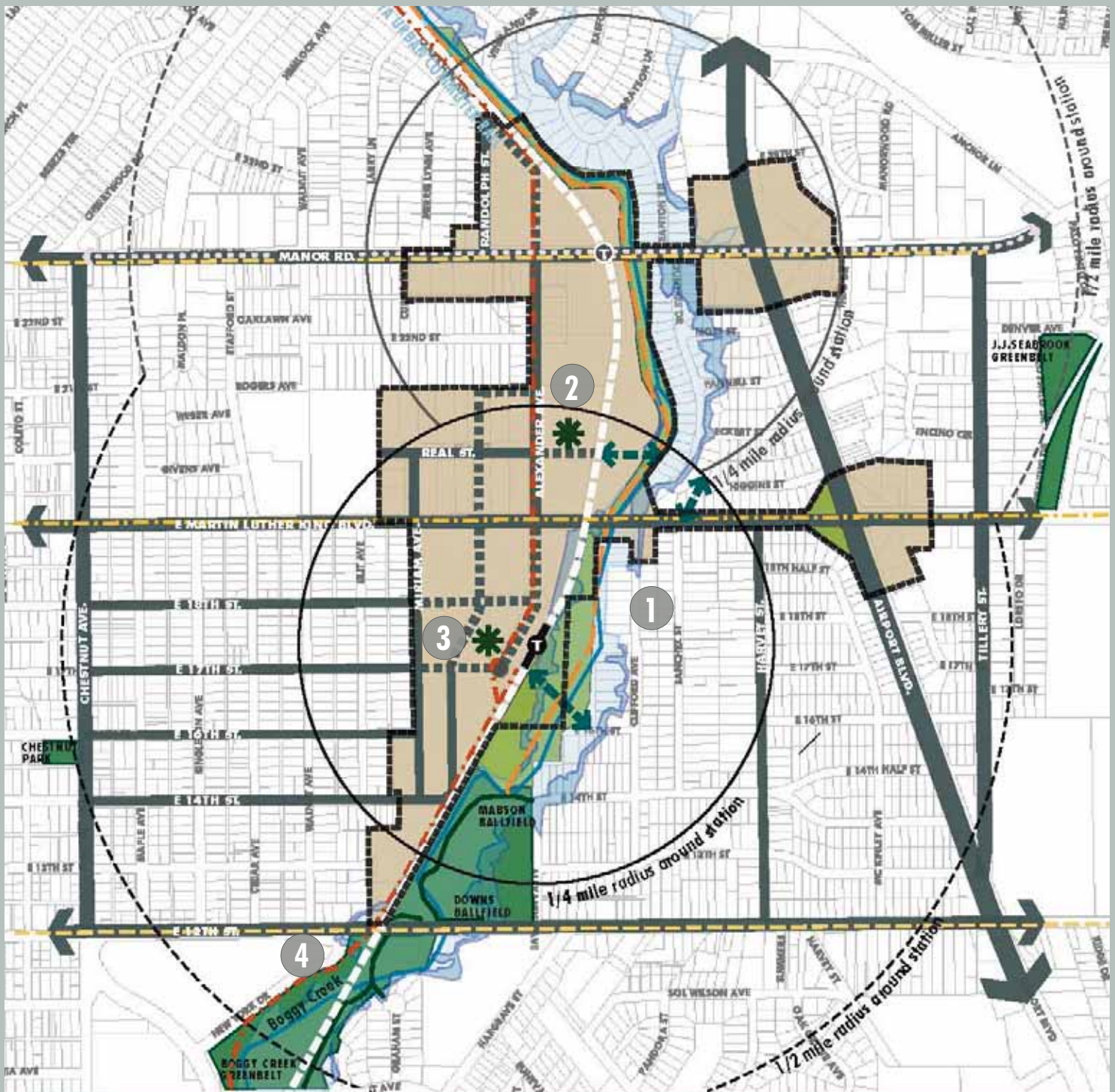
## IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 3 Implementation describes a variety of important steps the City, its agency partners, and development community should take to realize the full potential of the station area:

- **Planning and Administration.** The critical element is the formation of an inter-agency working group and designated staff to oversee all implementation activities.
- **Transit-Oriented Development Catalyst Projects.** Catalyst projects, both public infrastructure and private development, will be necessary to stimulate market and development interest in the station area.
- **Circulation and Streets.** Street improvements, including pedestrian facilities and amenities, can have a dramatic positive impact upon a place’s identity and can create the framework for creating a truly transit-oriented development that is less auto-dependent.
- **Open Space and Trails.** Building upon the natural resources in the area, integration of the Parks and Recreation Department in planning and development review decisions, and creation of usable open spaces are essential.
- **Supporting Infrastructure.** Key public-private investments will need to be made to support the development proposed.



# OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS CONCEPT PLAN



## LEGEND

- EXISTING STREETS
- POTENTIAL STREETS
- EXISTING CITY PARKLAND
- POTENTIAL PARK / OPEN SPACE
- 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN
- 500 YEAR FLOODPLAIN
- BOGGY CREEK TRAIL
- POTENTIAL BOGGY CREEK TRAIL EXTENSION
- EXISTING BIKE LANES
- RECOMMENDED BIKE FACILITY IN AUSTIN BIKE PLAN
- POTENTIAL 'RAILS WITH TRAILS' ROUTE
- PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
- TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- METRORAIL STATION
- POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOP
- POTENTIAL STREETCAR ROUTE

0 200 400 800 FEET







# CHAPTER 1

## TOD PRINCIPLES AND PLANNING POLICY





## WHAT IS TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)?

TOD is a strategy available to help manage growth and improve the quality of life in Central Texas. TOD provides communities with an alternative to low-density suburban sprawl and automobile-dependent land use patterns.

TOD seeks to align transit investments with a community's vision for how it wants to grow, creating "livable" mixed-use, denser, walkable "transit villages." A successful TOD will reinforce both the community and the transit system.

In general, people living and working in TODs are more likely to walk, use transit, and own fewer cars. TOD households are twice as likely to not own a car and own roughly half as many cars as the "average" household. At an individual station, TOD can increase ridership by 20 to 40 percent and even cause significant change at a regional level. People who live in a TOD are five times more likely to commute by transit than other residents. Locations next to transit can enjoy increases in land values over 50 percent in comparison to locations away from transit stops.

*"Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is moderate to higher density development, located within an easy walk of a major transit stop, generally with a mix of residential, employment and shopping opportunities designed for pedestrians without excluding the auto. TOD can be new construction or redevelopment of one or more buildings whose design and orientation facilitate transit use."*

*California Department of Transportation TOD Study Technical Advisory Committee, January 2002.*

## TOD DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The City of Austin Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department prepared a TOD Guidebook to create a shared understanding of TOD and also to identify the major design principles and factors for success. Transit-oriented development may be summarized by using four key principles, which define the essential characteristics of all successful TODs:

1. **Greater density than community average**
2. **A mix of uses**
3. **Quality pedestrian environment**
4. **A defined center**

These four principles directly influence the land use, circulation, and design concepts of the Austin station area planning as well as the Regulating Plan elements that support it.

A common thread running through the TOD principles is the importance of establishing a unique neighborhood identity that is memorable. Improvements in public spaces, ranging from civic buildings, plazas, and streets to street signs, light fixtures and standards, specific street tree species, and pedestrian area paving materials can be used to create a unique sense of place for different city neighborhoods. Austin has many historic and emerging areas that are known for their physical character and design sensibilities. The TOD is intended to enhance the character of the overall area and the neighborhood plans that the MLK Station Area is a part of will be very informative in this regard.

1. Orenco Station. Hillsboro, OR
2. Miami, FL
3. Biscayne Blvd. Miami, FL

## 1. Greater Density than the Community Average

A key ingredient for walkable communities and support for transit is having sufficient residential densities to reduce walking distances between residences and other destinations, including commercial services, schools, parks, and transit. The following elements contribute to appropriate density for transit supportive land uses:

- Densities that are higher than the community norm are located within  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of transit.
- Structured parking is used rather than surface lots in higher density areas.
- Site design for major projects allows for the intensification of densities over time.

Although one may read about desired density numbers based on ridership levels needed to support certain types of transit service, there is not one-standard density level appropriate and suitable for TOD. What is critical is that the development and transit are linked and that it is convenient and safe for pedestrians to move throughout the TOD. A very dense yet poorly designed development is not a successful TOD.



1



2



3





1. Vancouver, B.C.
2. Santana Row. San Jose, CA

### 2. A Mix of Uses

One of the most visually distinguishable features of a TOD is the active streetscape, which is oriented towards pedestrians. A mix of uses is required to create multiple destinations around the transit station, which helps to generate pedestrian traffic. An active, lively environment can change the perception of distances, making destinations seem shorter and more walkable. A transit-supportive environment includes a mixture of residential, commercial, service, employment, and public uses making many trips between destinations shorter and more walkable. In addition:

- First floor uses are “active” and oriented to serve pedestrians.
- Multiple compatible uses are permitted within buildings near transit.
- A mix of uses generating pedestrian traffic is concentrated within walking distance ( $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile) of transit.
- Auto-oriented uses, such as service stations and drive-through facilities, are limited or prohibited near transit.



### 3. Quality Pedestrian Environment

Vibrant communities, with or without transit, are always convenient and comfortable places for pedestrians. There are a number of components that contribute to a quality pedestrian environment:

- Buildings and primary entrances are sited and oriented to be easily accessible from the street.
- Buildings incorporate architectural features that convey a sense of place and relate to the street and the pedestrian environment.
- Amenities, such as storefront windows, awnings, architectural features, lighting, and landscaping, are provided to help create a comfortable pedestrian environment along and between buildings.
- The site layout and building design allow direct pedestrian movements between transit, mixed land uses, and surrounding areas.
- Most of the parking is located to the side or to the rear of the buildings.
- Sidewalks are present along site frontages, which connect to sidewalks and streets on adjacent and nearby properties.
- Street patterns are based on an interconnected grid system that simplifies access for all modes.
- Pedestrian routes are buffered from fast-moving traffic and expanses of parking.
- Trees sheltering streets and sidewalks are provided along with pedestrian-scale lighting.
- Buildings and parks are used to provide a focal point or anchor for key areas or intersections.
- Secure and convenient bicycle parking is available.

1. New York City, NY
2. City Place. West Palm, FL
3. Ft. Lauderdale, FL
4. Orenco Station. Hillsboro, OR



2



3



1



4



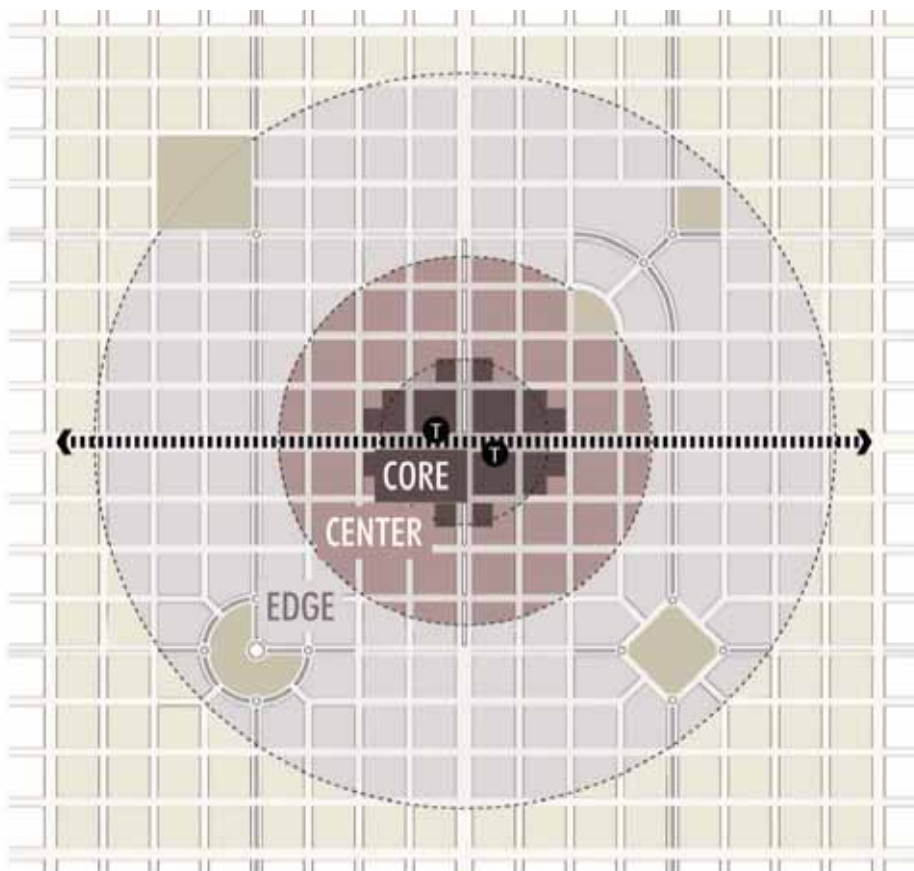


1. Birkdale Village, Charlotte, NC
2. Clarendon, Arlington, VA
3. Addison Circle, Dallas, TX
4. Core Center Edge Diagram - Illustrates development patterns in a TOD

## 4. A Defined Center

Transit is particularly successful in communities and neighborhoods that have defined centers, offering multiple attractions and reasons for pedestrians to frequent the area. Having different zones with distinct characteristics also helps to create a sense of place. This sense of place may be created by including at least several of the following attributes:

- The density and buildings are highest in the core near the transit station, moderating somewhat in the center that is within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of the transit station, and ultimately transitioning in the edge to match the character of surrounding development approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the station.
- Buildings are located closer to the street and are typically taller than the surrounding area.
- Buildings are primarily oriented to the street with windows and main entrances.
- Parking is less predominant, being located to the rear and in parking structures. Parking requirements are reduced in close proximity to transit, compared to the norm.
- Sidewalks are wider than in lower density areas, and offer pedestrian amenities, such as street trees, benches, kiosks, and plazas.



## BENEFITS OF TOD

By implementing TOD and coordinating investment in transportation and land use projects, communities can make significant progress toward improving their quality of life. The extent to which this progress is made depends largely on the type and quality of transit service available as well as the primary characteristics of the TOD. Ten major benefits from TOD are:

- 1. Providing mobility choices.** By creating “activity nodes” linked by transit, TOD provides much needed mobility, including options for young people, the elderly and people who do not own cars or prefer not to drive.
- 2. Increasing public safety.** By creating active places, which are busy through the day and evening and providing “eyes on the street”, TOD helps increase safety for pedestrians, transit users, and many others.
- 3. Increasing transit ridership.** TOD improves the efficiency and effectiveness of transit service investments by increasing the use of transit near stations by 20 to 40 percent, and up to five percent overall at the regional level.
- 4. Reducing rates of vehicle miles traveled (VMT).** Vehicle travel has been increasing faster than population growth. TOD can lower annual household rates of driving by 20 to 40 percent for those living, working, and/or shopping within transit station areas. Recent research shows that automobile ownership in TOD is approximately one-half the national average.
- 5. Increasing disposable household income.** Housing and transportation are the first and second largest household expenses, respectively. TOD can effectively increase disposable income by reducing the need for more than one car and reducing driving costs, saving households \$3,000-4,000 per year.
- 6. Reducing air pollution and energy consumption rates.** By providing safe and easy pedestrian access to transit, TOD can lower rates of air pollution and energy consumption. TOD can also reduce rates of greenhouse gas emissions by 2.5 to 3.7 tons per year per household.
- 7. Helping protect existing single-family neighborhoods.** TOD directs higher density development to appropriate areas near transit, thereby reducing pressure to build higher density development adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods.
- 8. Playing a role in economic development.** TOD is increasingly used as a tool to help revitalize aging downtowns and declining urban neighborhoods and to enhance tax revenues for local jurisdictions.
- 9. Contributing to more affordable housing.** TOD can add to the supply of affordable housing by providing lower-cost and accessible housing, and by reducing household transportation expenditures. It was recently estimated that housing costs for land and structures can be significantly reduced through more compact growth patterns.
- 10. Decreasing local infrastructure costs.** Depending on local circumstances, TOD can help reduce infrastructure costs (such as for water, sewage, and roads) to local governments and property owners by up to 25 percent through more compact and infill development.



## AUSTIN'S TOD POLICY CONTEXT

### The Transit-Oriented Development Ordinance

Station area plans are influenced by existing plans and policies adopted by the Austin City Council. Most important is the Transit-Oriented Development Ordinance adopted by the City Council in May 2005. The ordinance established a two-phased implementation process for TOD districts. The first phase, now completed, accomplished the following:

- Created four TOD types and designated a TOD type for each of the stations;
- Developed TOD districts around the stations to delineate between areas appropriate for redevelopment and established neighborhoods that would be protected;
- Created a TOD overlay zoning district for each station area;
- Adopted interim development regulations relating to use, site development standards, and parking as part of the TOD overlay zone; and
- Established a station area planning process.

The second phase involves the creation of station area plans that, when adopted, will replace the interim TOD Ordinance regulations. The MLK Jr. Boulevard station area is designated as a Neighborhood Center TOD. This type of TOD is located at the commercial center of a neighborhood(s).

The TOD Ordinance requires a housing affordability analysis and feasibility review as part of all station area plans, which describes potential strategies for achieving specified affordable housing goals. A housing affordability analysis was undertaken concurrent with the station area planning, and it is summarized in Chapter 2.

### City of Austin Design Standards

In addition to the TOD Ordinance, the Austin City Council amended the City's *Land Development Code* in 2006 to add *Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use*. This portion of the *Land Development Code*, which applies city-wide, includes design standards, which "aim to strengthen Austin's unique character and help buildings to better function in Austin's environment." The majority of the design standards are based upon several defined roadway types to help ensure a cohesive development pattern along city streets, and reduce the inconsistent development form that can be the product of various zoning districts, which abut them. Subchapter E includes standards for site development, building design, and mixed-use.



As a first step towards implementing the MLK TOD Station Area Plan, a Regulating Plan was developed with a specific set of land use and urban design standards. Because the current Design Standards share many of the land use and design objectives of the TOD station area plans, such as creating a more enriching pedestrian environment and ensuring that buildings relate better to the street, it provided the foundation for the MLK TOD Regulating Plan. The MLK TOD standards in the Regulating Plan are tailored to help implement the land use, circulation, and urban design elements of the station area plan and replace the citywide Subchapter E standards within the TOD planning area.

## Neighborhood Plans

Surrounding the MLK TOD are several neighborhoods that form four separate neighborhood planning areas. The four neighborhood plans that intersect the MLK TOD and specific goals of each plan that relate to transit-oriented development are highlighted below:

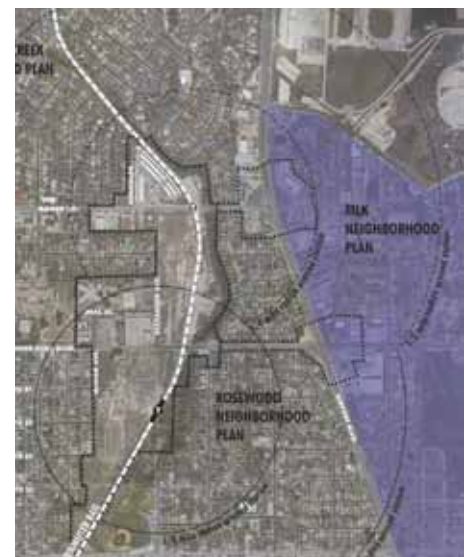
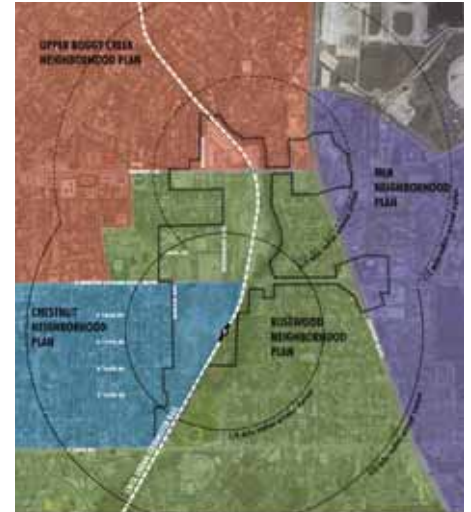
**Chestnut Neighborhood Plan** has four goals, which relate to this plan:

- Goal 1 – Revitalize the historic, residential and pedestrian-friendly character of Chestnut.
- Goal 2 – Environment and Parks: Improve the environmental quality of the neighborhood.
- Goal 3 – Housing: Promote the rehab of existing housing and new, infill housing compatible with the old style of the neighborhood.
- Goal 4 – Economic development: Improve the business climate of Chestnut.

**East MLK Combined Neighborhood Plan (MLK Planning Area)** has ten goals, which relate to this plan:

- Goal 1 – Preserve established residential areas and improve opportunities for home ownership by promoting the rehabilitation of existing housing and new, infill housing compatible with the existing style of this neighborhood.
- Goal 2 – Promote a mix of land uses that respect and enhance the existing neighborhood and address compatibility between residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
- Goal 3 – Preserve existing small businesses and encourage new neighborhood-serving commercial services in appropriate locations.
- Goal 4 – Promote the development and enhancement of the neighborhood's major corridors.
- Goal 5 – Provide housing that helps maintain the social and economic diversity of residents.

1. Neighborhood Plans around the MLK TOD district.
2. Chestnut Neighborhood Plan.
3. East MLK Neighborhood Plan.





1. East MLK Neighborhood Plan.
2. Rosewood Neighborhood Plan.

1



- Goal 6 – Protect and enhance historic resources and structures and preserve the area’s historic and cultural character.
- Goal 7 – Create a transportation network that allows all residents to travel safely throughout the neighborhood by improving safety on major arterials and neighborhood streets.
- Goal 8 – Provide access to, from, and through the neighborhood for all residents by promoting a neighborhood-friendly system of transportation.
- Goal 9 – Improve bicycle and pedestrian traffic safety on neighborhood streets.
- Goal 13 – Create more public open space, including parks and green spaces, improve existing parks and increase recreational amenities in the neighborhood.

2



**Rosewood Neighborhood Plan** has five goals, which relate to this plan:

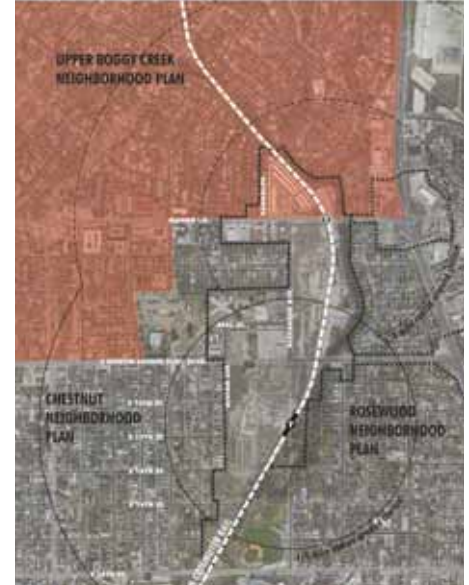
- Goal 1 – Make the Rosewood Neighborhood Planning Area a more attractive, cleaner and safe place to live.
- Goal 2 – Promote affordable housing options while reducing the number of vacant lots.
- Goal 3 – Create a transportation network that allows all residents to travel safely throughout the neighborhood.
- Goal 4 – Promote commercial uses that serve the needs of residents (e.g., a grocery store).
- Goal 5 – Preserve and enhance the character of the Rosewood Neighborhood.



## 1.Upper Boggy Neighborhood Plan.

**Upper Boggy Creek Neighborhood Plan** has five goals, which relate to this plan:

- Goal 1 – Preserve the character of each neighborhood in the UBC Planning Area.
- Goal 2 – Ensure that new business and commercial development is neighborhood-appropriate, neighborhood-scaled, neighborhood-friendly, and serves the nearby neighborhoods.
- Goal 3 – Promote the rehab of existing housing and construction of new housing to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and architecture for a variety of income levels.
- Goal 4 – Improve the quality of residential streets and commercial corridors to make them safe, accessible, and attractive to all forms of transportation. Residential and commercial streets and transit should:
  - Emphasize pedestrian and bicycle safety
  - Serve pedestrian and bicycle convenience
  - Encourage public transit use
  - Allow residents ready ingress and egress from the neighborhood
  - Limit through-traffic to roads designated for the purpose
  - Be compatible with the residential/mixed-use character of the neighborhoods
- Goal 5 – Achieve and maintain a healthy, sustainable, robust, functional, and aesthetically beautiful parks and green space system that provides active and passive recreational opportunities for all residents.



The above neighborhood plans will be amended when the MLK TOD Station Area Plan is adopted by the City Council to reflect the most recent planning effort that has occurred for the properties within the MLK TOD District.



# CHAPTER 2

## MLK JR. BOULEVARD TOD STATION AREA PLAN





## *The Vision for the MLK Jr. Blvd. TOD Station Area in 2020..*

*The commercial area and neighborhoods surrounding the MLK Jr. Blvd. Station are vibrant, green, and attractive. The area derives its unique character from the juxtaposition of three distinct elements: an enhanced and green Boggy Creek corridor, historic and stable single-family neighborhoods, and a vibrant and attractive center with an active streetscape, local-serving retail, and quality mixed-use development.*



*MetroRail provides frequent all-day service between downtown Austin and Leander. A streetcar on Manor Road serves the neighborhood and provides direct connections to the University of Texas and the Mueller redevelopment. The transportation system is well integrated and provides easy transfer between commuter rail, streetcar, buses, and bicycles. Direct and safe walking routes along streets and multi-use paths are provided. New development is oriented to the pedestrian.*







*Buildings closest to the station reach heights of six stories and gracefully step down towards the older single-family neighborhoods. The buildings are made of quality materials and are visually interesting with balconies, generous windows, and a diversity of styles. Along major streets, the buildings include active uses on the ground floor such as restaurants, coffee shops, stores, and offices. Parking is screened from view behind buildings and in parking structures.*



*MLK Jr. Boulevard and Manor Road are attractive and safe streets with sidewalks wide enough for outdoor seating, new lighting fixtures, streets trees, marked crosswalks, and on-street parking to serve the retail. Ecologically-friendly approaches to storm water management such as landscaped swales are used throughout the area.*

*Finally, the natural environment is seamlessly integrated into the district. Boggy Creek is restored, healthy, and accessible to the public, providing a green spine running north and south through the district. Street trees and pocket parks continue the green character of Boggy Creek into the neighborhoods.*





# CREATING THE MLK JR. BOULEVARD TOD STATION AREA PLAN

## THE DESIGN CHALLENGE

During a public meeting, one participant described the MLK TOD district as “the hole in the donut.” This was in reference to the large undeveloped portion of the site at the center of the district, which was formerly occupied by the Featherlite concrete plant and other industrial uses. Indeed, this former industrial land provides a huge opportunity as it is essentially a blank slate for redevelopment adjacent to the future rail platform. The design challenge for this station area is to create a vital and active center near the station while protecting and enhancing the single family neighborhoods and the natural resources surrounding the site.

## THE VISION

The MLK Jr. Boulevard TOD Station Area Plan will lay the foundation for achieving the MLK Station Area vision and realize the mixed-use environment and atmosphere desired by the Chestnut, Rosewood, Upper Boggy Creek, and East MLK Neighborhood Plans. The Vision Statement on the previous pages was crafted from the major themes discussed during the public workshops.

Images showing the existing area around the MLK TOD Station





## EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING

Currently, the majority of the MLK TOD is comprised of undeveloped or vacant property. A significant amount of land was part of the former Featherlite Corporation, which operated a concrete operation, hence the multiple concrete slabs left on some of the parcels. The northern part of the TOD is largely occupied by a vacant commercial parking lot that used to serve the former Robert Mueller Municipal Airport. The central part of the TOD is primarily undeveloped with the majority of existing businesses located off of Real Street and MLK Jr. Boulevard. The eastern portion of the TOD is bordered predominantly by Boggy Creek and its floodplain. The southwestern most corner of the TOD is currently being developed as a single-family residential development called Chestnut Commons, at approximately 16 units per acre.

As a result of the various neighborhood planning processes that have occurred in the recent past, the vast majority of the properties within the MLK TOD have either commercial mixed-use or industrial zoning. The majority of the land was also designated as mixed-use during neighborhood planning. Single-family residential is the predominant land use surrounding the TOD with some City of Austin parkland at the southeastern edge as well as to the south.

## STATION AREA PLAN SUMMARY

The MLK TOD Land Use Concept Plan encourages the creation of a bi-nodal mixed-use district to capitalize on the proximity to future transit services. A variety of mixed-use options are proposed throughout much of the TOD with residential designations in less visible and accessible locations.

Using the TOD principles and the public comments and ideas, land use subdistricts were developed to define the basic land use and urban design character of the station area. To complement the land uses within the TOD, circulation and open space elements were also developed. These three basic components for this station area plan are summarized on the following pages.





## 1. LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN

### Land Use Subdistricts

The Land Use and Design Concept plan consists of two types of zones – mixed-use and residential. Much of the land in the TOD district is designated mixed-use. The plan includes two commercial nodes: a primary mixed-use area along MLK Jr. Boulevard at Alexander Avenue and a secondary node along Manor Road to serve a potential future streetcar line. The plan envisions these mixed-use nodes and the Alexander Avenue corridor, which connects them, as being the most intensely developed with the highest density in the station area. The remaining portion of the station area is devoted to transitional uses of varying densities.

The land use districts are summarized below:

### Mixed-Use Designations

There are three types of mixed-use designations in the plan:

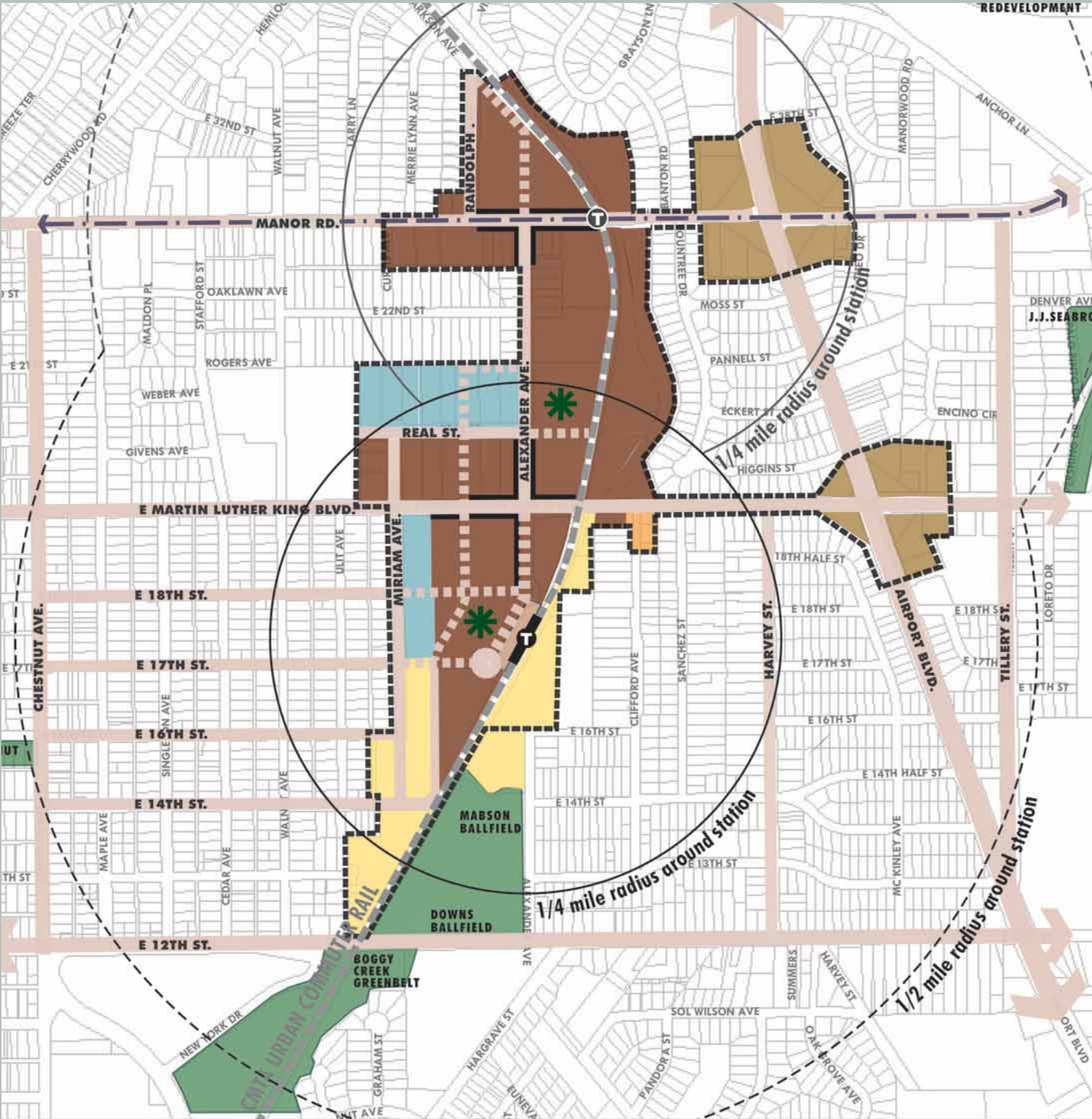
- TOD Mixed-Use
- Corridor Mixed-Use
- Live/Work Flex

### Residential Districts

The MLK station area includes residential zones in several locations. The rationale for residential development is to provide a better transition in specific locations with bordering single family residential areas and promote less development intensity in environmentally sensitive areas. In addition, the market will only support a relatively modest amount of commercial, and these areas do not have good street access or visibility. There are two types of residential designations in the plan:

- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential

# LAND USE AND DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN



## LEGEND

- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- TOD MIXED USE (showing active edges)
- CORRIDOR MIXED USE
- LIVE/WORK FLEX
- EXISTING CITY PARKLAND
- POTENTIAL PARKLAND
- EXISTING STREETS
- POTENTIAL NEW STREETS
- TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- POTENTIAL STREETCAR ROUTE
- METRORAIL STATION
- POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOP
- TRANSIT PLAZA

0 200 400 800  
FEET





1. TOD Mixed Use Zones
2. Corridor Mixed Use Zones
3. Live/Work Flex Zones

### TOD Mixed-Use

TOD Mixed-Use is the most intensively developed land use zone and will typically be expressed as high density residential over active ground floor uses, such as retail or office. This land use designation is concentrated near transit stations and along major streets, generally located near the center of a TOD and along major 'spines' that lead to it. In this plan two commercial nodes are designated TOD Mixed-Use, and due to their high visibility and proximity to transit, they are the two most critical areas to the success of the station area. This land use designation is concentrated near the commuter rail stop south of MLK Jr. Boulevard and near the potential commuter rail/streetcar stop on Manor Road.

### Corridor Mixed-Use

Corridor Mixed-Use allows a similar, but slightly more liberal, mix of uses as the TOD Mixed-Use district. Active ground floor uses or a mix of uses in one development are encouraged, but not required. Retail, office, and higher density residential development are all permitted. This zone is located on major streets farther away from the transit station.

Corridor Mixed-Use is located on Airport Blvd. at the intersection with both Manor Road and MLK Jr. Boulevard. This responds directly to the expressed public interest in pedestrian crossing safety improvements on Airport Boulevard. These intersections are also regarded as distinct "Gateway" locations for the TOD district, which should indicate that visitors and/or passers by are entering a special place.

### Live/Work Flex

Live/work units are a type of mixed-use development, combining commercial, office, or light manufacturing space within the same structure as a residential living space for the business owner. They have similar benefits to mixed-use development and can eliminate the need to commute to work. In addition, they can provide affordable work and housing space, meet the needs of special groups, such as artists, and serve new incubator businesses. This district may serve as a transition zone between the higher density core uses and lower density neighborhoods. Depending upon the context, Live/Work Flex may be designed to either be primarily residential or commercial in character.

Live/work zones are located along the north side of Real Street and along a portion of Miriam Ave. In the context of this plan, this district acts as a transition zone between the higher density core and the surrounding low density residential neighborhoods, and as such, it should primarily be residential in character. Limited non-residential uses are allowed.



## TOD Mixed-Use



Example: Three or four stories of residential units (condos or apartments) above ground floor retail (cafes, coffee shops, boutiques).

## Corridor Mixed-Use



Example: A small-format grocery store that is built up to the sidewalk with parking located behind the building.

## Live/Work Flex



Example: A three story rowhouse with the ground floor used as an artist studio and retail space.



1. Medium Density Residential Zone
2. Low Density Residential Zones



## Medium Density Residential

Medium Density Residential lies outside of the mixed-use areas (which are typically high residential atop retail), and the medium density designation provides a wide range for many housing types including attached row houses and apartment buildings. Commercial uses are not permitted in this zone.

A small Medium Density Residential zone is located on the south side of MLK Jr. Boulevard on the east side of Boggy Creek. It provides a transition between the higher density uses in the central portion of the station area and the low density neighborhoods nearby.

## Low Density Residential

Low Density Residential is considered 'low' in the context of a TOD station area, although it is 'higher' density compared to surrounding detached single family neighborhoods, which are typically around 7 units per acre in older Austin neighborhoods with detached single-family residences (assuming 6,000 square-foot lots). Commercial uses are not permitted in this zone.

A Low Density Residential zone is located south of E.17th Street and east of Miriam Avenue below the live/work zone where the Chestnut Commons residential development is being built. This area is removed from both activity nodes, and it is near existing single family neighborhoods. This low density residential zone provides an appropriate transition between the activity areas and the Chestnut neighborhood to the west.

Another Low Density Residential zone is located south of MLK Jr. Boulevard and east of the railroad tracks. This property was envisioned as open space in the Rosewood Neighborhood Plan and may be a concept supported by the property owner. Given the private ownership status of the land, an appropriate land use designation needs to be applied. This land is largely in 100-year floodplain and has access to a small residential street, E.16th Street, which makes Low Density Residential an appropriate category.

## Planning for Families and Seniors

A desire was expressed by some charrette participants to provide senior and family housing within the MLK TOD. Future development can accommodate the needs of the elderly and households with children by thinking carefully about their space and recreational needs. Projects that provide a variety of unit types and sizes are more likely to attract a range of households from families to seniors wishing to live in a more urban environment. Open space should be provided to meet the needs of these different user groups. Projects that include day care services will potentially enable parents to walk to drop their children off or to use a day care close to work. The integration of residences, daily community services, and employment in a TOD, in addition to creating safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists, is essential to its success.





## Medium Density Residential



Example: A three story apartment building with surface parking.

## Low Density Residential



Example: Cottage-style detached homes with rear lot alley garages.



## DENSITY AND BUILDING HEIGHTS

An important characteristic of transit-oriented development is a residential density that is greater than the community average. The residential density of the existing single family neighborhoods around the MLK TOD district is approximately seven units per acre and somewhat higher densities in areas with multi-family housing. This Station Area Plan assumes a higher density than the surrounding average with the highest intensity proposed in the TOD Mixed Use Subdistrict.

The housing density of each of the land use zones includes a range with both minimum and maximum densities. The following table lists the density by land use zone.

HOUSING DENSITY BY LAND USE TYPE		
LAND USE ZONE	MINIMUM DENSITY	MAXIMUM DENSITY
TOD Mixed-Use	2 stories	45 units per acre*
Corridor Mixed-Use	none	45 units per acre*
Live/Work Flex	17 units per acre	45 units per acre*
Medium Density Residential	17 units per acre	45 units per acre
Low Density Residential	9 units per acre	16 units per acre

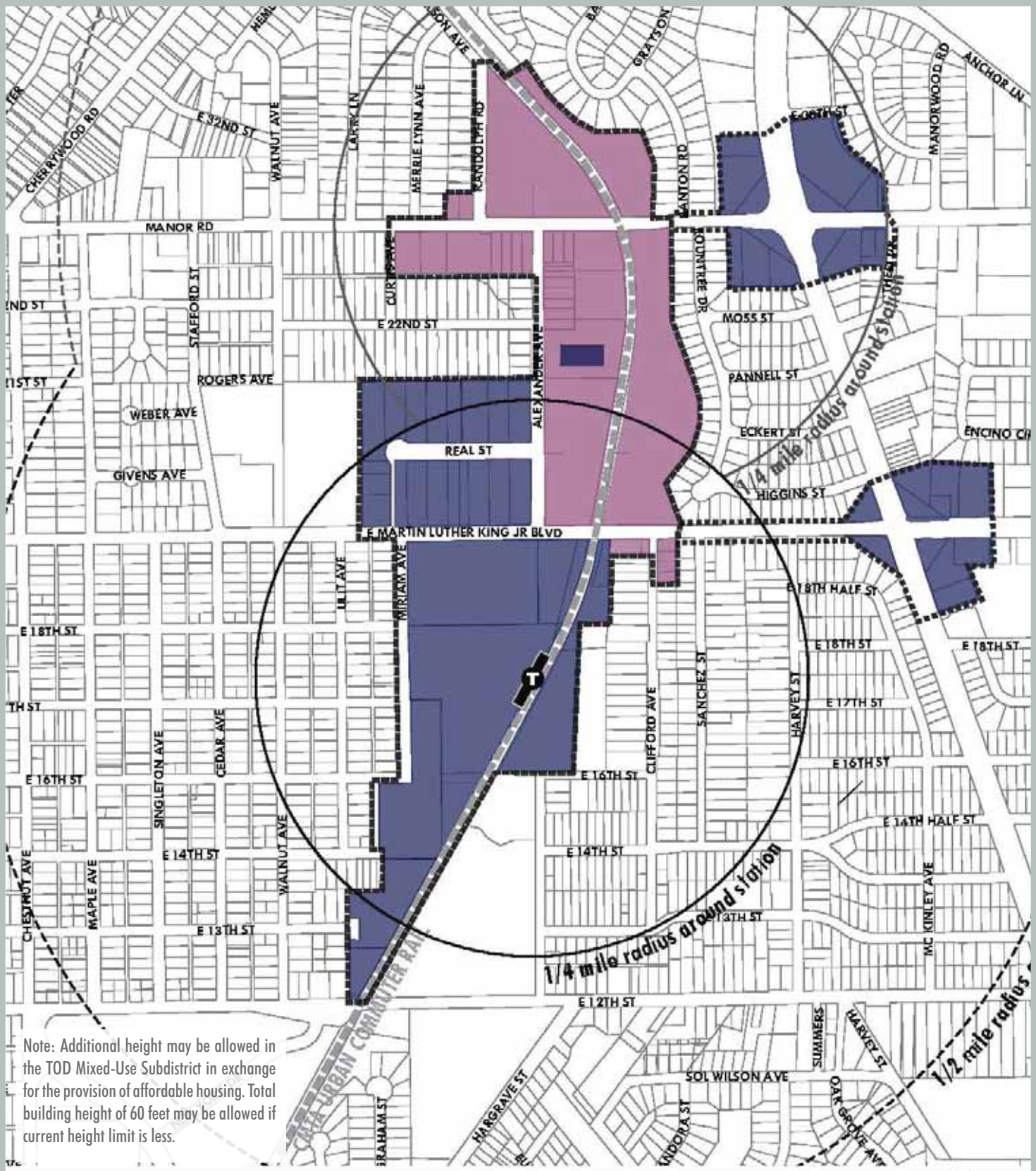
\* Density limit may be removed in exchange for the provision of affordable housing

As a general rule, a 40-foot height limit permits a three-story building and a 60-foot building permits a five-story building. As a base height entitlement, the MLK Jr. TOD Station Area Plan assumes the existing height restrictions of 40 and 60 feet will continue throughout the district. The 40-foot limit generally applies to areas north of MLK Jr. Boulevard and the 60-foot limit generally to areas south of MLK Jr. Boulevard. There was a range of public opinion expressed with respect to appropriate allowable building heights. Generally speaking, three-to-five story buildings were supported throughout the TOD District. Input from the development community indicated that there was little interest in building heights greater than 60 feet as the cost of developing above that (e.g. steel-frame construction) is not financially feasible in this area today.

Minimum densities or building heights have been established in this Plan for certain land use subdistricts. This is an effort to respond to a key TOD principle - to create higher density within the Station Area than the surrounding community average to encourage a concentration of activity (residential and commercial) around transit to promote its use. As a result, minimum densities are included in the primary residential categories: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Live/Work Flex. The TOD Mixed-Use Subdistrict contains a minimum height instead of a minimum residential density to enable a certain amount of flexibility in the type of activity that goes on in these locations, but at the same time, development must adhere to a certain level. A minimum height not only accommodates a traditional mixed-use development that includes both a residential and non-residential component, but also pure commercial and/or office development to support and stimulate employment opportunities and the provision of services within the TOD. Ultimately, the real estate market will determine what developers build within the Station Area as any project must have a market to support it and be financially feasible. The flexibility inherent in the TOD Mixed-Use Subdistrict is designed to respond to a variety of market conditions. The Corridor Mixed-Use Subdistrict contains neither a minimum density nor a minimum height as these areas are further removed from the core of the Station Area where the highest level of residential and commercial activity is intended.



# BASE MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHTS



## LEGEND

- 40 FEET
- 60 FEET

- TOD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- METRORAIL STATION

0 200 400 800 FEET







1. Chestnut Commons. Austin, TX
2. Mixed-Use with affordable housing. Milwaukie, OR
3. Mixed-Use retail and residential. Fort Lauderdale, FL

1



This Station Area Plan recommends that in specific areas of the MLK TOD a density bonus, and in more select locations of the TOD a height bonus, be allowed in exchange for the provision of affordable housing. The intent is to promote denser, mixed income projects to locate in the land use subdistricts designated for higher density development and to encourage the highest levels of activity in areas with good access to transit. As a first step, the density bonus would remove density restrictions, without changing the allowable height, in exchange for a certain level of affordable housing. This type of bonus is allowed in the TOD Mixed-Use, Corridor Mixed-Use, and Live/Work Flex Subdistricts. In addition, a height bonus allowing total building height up to 60 feet is available within the TOD Mixed-Use Subdistrict for those properties that currently have a height limit less than 60 feet. The details of these bonuses and the required levels of affordable housing are established in the MLK TOD Regulating Plan.

2



3



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing is an important component of transit-oriented development. Inclusion of affordable housing in TOD areas can provide lower-income households with improved transportation access to employment and services. Reduced transportation costs can improve the ability of low-income families to afford housing payments. In addition, economic diversity among TOD residents will benefit transit ridership.

However, due to land prices and construction costs, new market-rate developments in the TOD areas are not likely to be affordable to low-income households. Citywide, the median home price of \$180,000 is well above what is considered affordable for a low-income family. The average rent in Austin is \$831, which is not affordable to households at or below 50% of Austin's median family income<sup>1</sup>.

### Housing Goals

To promote the development of affordable units in TOD areas, the TOD Ordinance and TOD Housing Resolution include a goal that 25% of the new housing units in each TOD area should be affordable. The overall affordability goal is as follows:

- Affordable owner-occupied units should be occupied by households with incomes at or below 80% of Median Family Income (MFI) as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and
- Affordable rental units should be occupied by households at or below 60% MFI.
- In addition, the Ordinance provides a specific breakdown of these targets.<sup>2</sup>

The TOD Ordinance establishes more ambitious goals for the two TOD areas located in the Community Preservation and Revitalization Zone (CP&R Zone) - the MLK and Plaza Saltillo TOD Districts. In these two TOD areas, the median income level of surrounding residents is typically lower than the citywide median. The affordability goals for these two districts are as follows:

- Affordable owner-occupied units in the CP&R Zone should be occupied by households at or below 60% MFI; and
- For rental units in the CP&R Zone, the following goals apply:
  - 10% of the units should be occupied by households between 40-50% MFI;
  - 10% of the units should be occupied by households between 30-40% MFI; and
  - 5% of the units should be occupied by households below 30% MFI.

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<sup>1</sup> Sources: Austin Board of Realtors; ALN Apartment Data.

<sup>2</sup> For homeownership units, a goal of providing 10% of the units to households with income from 70-80% MFI; 10% of the units to households with income of 60-70% MFI; and 5% of the units to households with income of not more than 60% MFI. For rental units, a goal of providing 10% of the units to households with income from 40-60% MFI, 10% of the units to households with income of 30-40% MFI; and 5% of the units to households with income of less than 30% MFI.



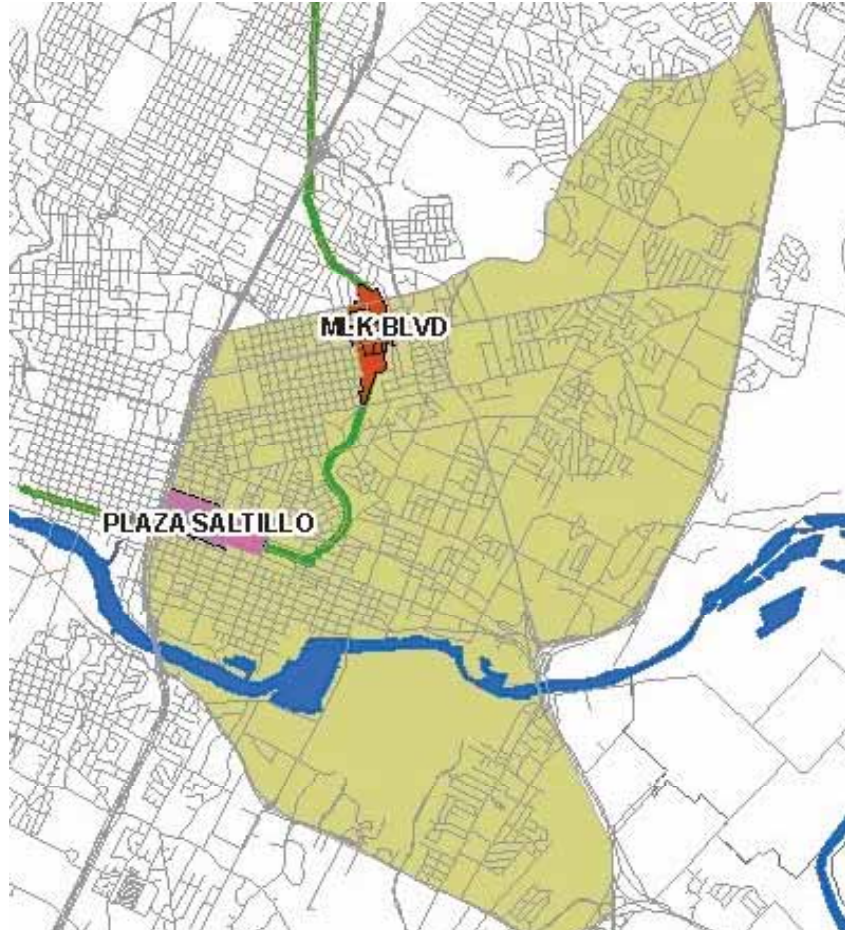
## 1. Community Preservation and Revitalization Zone (CP&R)

### Affordable Housing Analysis

The TOD Ordinance includes a requirement that a Station Area Plan include a housing affordability analysis and feasibility review that describes potential strategies for achieving these goals. The Austin City Council selected the consulting firm Diana McIver and Associates (DMA) to conduct this analysis. DMA has provided several financial models for the achievement of the TOD goals, and has evaluated potential incentives and financing tools for creating housing affordability within the TOD areas; an executive summary of their report can be found in Chapter 3: Implementation.

DMA's financial scenarios demonstrate that the achievement of the TOD affordability goals will be challenging and will require a substantial commitment of incentives and subsidies. While DMA has indicated that there is not one single solution to housing affordability in TOD areas, their analysis shows that a combination of tools can be used to achieve affordability in TOD districts.

1





1. Public gathering space
2. Retail activity on street

## URBAN DESIGN

In addition to the land use districts, there are several important urban design treatments that should accompany land development in the station area. It is particularly important for development to be oriented to the street and pedestrians.

### Roadway Types

Urban design elements are largely guided by three TOD street types – TOD Core Transit Corridor, TOD Pedestrian Priority Street, and TOD Local Street. This is modeled after the approach used in *Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use*, which categorizes all existing and future streets in the City, and then uses these designations as a basis for regulating streetscape, site, and building design. These three TOD street designations trigger specific streetscape and building design requirements within the Regulating Plan. The TOD Core Transit Corridors correspond to the existing and future Core Transit Corridors in Subchapter E. To address the unique issues related to the TOD station planning areas, two additional street designations apply. The three TOD street designations are described below and located in the Circulation Concept Plan:

**TOD Core Transit Corridors.** Citywide Core Transit Corridors are defined and listed in *Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use* of the Land Development Code. They correspond with many of the major city streets. A Core Transit Corridor within the boundary of the MLK TOD is labeled a TOD Core Transit Corridor, whose designation in this Plan was informed by the original Core Transit Corridors established in Subchapter E. In both this Station Area Plan and in Subchapter E, these Corridors indicate a roadway that has, or will have, sufficient population density and mix of uses to encourage and support transit use. TOD Core Transit Corridors are of primary importance as transit and pedestrian places, and therefore, it is essential to create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly places. In addition, design features must include buildings located adjacent to or near the street, parking to the rear or side of buildings, building facades and entrances that are oriented to the street, and amenities, such as shelter, plazas, and seating to create a pleasant environment. The TOD Core Transit Corridor Streets are Manor Road and MLK Jr. Boulevard.



1



2



1. Urban residential street
2. Quieter neighborhood street

1



2



**TOD Pedestrian Priority Streets.** This designation applies to specific existing or future streets within a TOD, which are especially significant as pedestrian routes. Pedestrian Priority Street designations are applied to critical pedestrian connections through the TOD and can provide direct access to transit. These streets complement the TOD Core Transit Corridors to form an interconnected pedestrian network. Because of their significance for pedestrian circulation, TOD Pedestrian Priority Streets are intended to have similar pedestrian facilities and amenities to the TOD Core Transit Corridors. Land uses are often less intense than those adjacent to TOD Core Transit Corridors, and requirements for locating buildings near the street are more flexible. However, proper building orientation to the street and parking lot screening continue to be important. Alexander Avenue and a portion of E. 17th Street are designated as TOD Pedestrian Priority streets because they provide direct connections to the mixed-use nodes and transit services at MLK Jr. Boulevard and Manor Road.

**TOD Local Streets.** These include all other existing or future streets within the TOD. While they are intended to provide comfortable, accessible, and pleasant accommodation for pedestrians, they do not represent the primary walking routes or pedestrian areas. Land uses are often less intense than those adjacent to TOD Core Transit Corridors and Pedestrian Priority Streets, and requirements for locating buildings near the street are more flexible. The remaining streets in the MLK TOD Station Area Plan are TOD Local Streets.

## Active Edges

Having a good pedestrian environment is a key element for important pedestrian and transit streets within the station area. Specific properties along these streets, which have a TOD Mixed-Use land use designation, are required to have active edges. This means that buildings must be next to the street and designed to accommodate retail, entertainment, and similarly active ground floor uses, which are directly accessible to the people walking by. Off-street surface parking may not abut active edge frontages, and driveways are only allowed when no other reasonable and sufficient access alternative is available. This activates the pedestrian zone, and it also improves safety by increasing the potential number of “eyes on the street” to deter crime and vandalism.

Two central locations surrounding the MLK/Alexander and Manor/Alexander intersections are the primary centers for the station area. As such, they are planned to have the highest density, greatest mix of uses, and a vibrant, urban character. While the design requirements summarized above will help shape such an environment, additional urban design standards are essential to establish them as urban centers.

Active edges apply to critical street frontages for properties within these two centers that are designated TOD Mixed-Use. Active edges are along portions of MLK Jr. Boulevard, the new extension of Alexander Avenue leading south to the station platform, and Manor Road. The active edge designation applies only to property design and development, and it does not affect adjoining public street and sidewalk design, which is determined by roadway type.

1. Mix of uses - office and retail
2. Active street
3. Mix of uses - residential and retail



1



2



3



## GREEN BUILDING AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

### Green Building

A primary goal of Transit-Oriented Development within the City of Austin is the promotion of development and re-development in a manner that will help absorb some of the region's expected population growth in areas well-supported by transit. It is important that the development of the built environment involve goals favorable to achieving long-term sustainability. Achieving a sustainable future means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future, and in doing so helping to make more live-able communities. Sustainability in Austin's TOD areas involves taking active measures to protect against negative environmental impacts.

Recognizing the City of Austin has set specific goals in an effort to be a leader in green building, renewable energy, and sustainable technologies, this station area plan includes the following recommendations:

### Recommendations

1. Improve air quality and public health by providing alternative transportation choices. Provide clear alternatives to auto-centric development patterns by providing an environment that is pedestrian, bicycle, and transit-friendly.
2. Encourage all new buildings to meet the goals of the Austin Climate Protection Plan in effect at the time they begin the permit process. Current goals are to make all new single-family homes zero net-energy capable by 2015 and increase energy efficiency in all other new construction by 75% by 2015. Zero net-energy capable means that a building provides enough energy efficiency that all of its energy needs could be accommodated by on-site energy sources such as roof-top solar panels.
  - a. Reduce energy use of buildings through better design and choice of materials and systems. Green buildings can achieve significant energy savings.
    - Buildings should have their longer sides oriented south as much as possible, and should minimize exposure to the west. As much as possible, minimize unshaded glazing on east and west exposures to reduce heat gain. Encourage glazing systems on northern and southern facades that reduce glare and provide opportunities for daylight harvesting (utilizing daylight to provide quality light indoors to minimize electric lighting). Overhangs, balconies, porches etc. should be utilized to provide shading of windows.
    - Buildings should be well insulated and use high efficiency heating and cooling systems. Systems should be sized and installed properly.

