

# Redefining Transit Oriented Development for Rural Areas

Creating a new model for the provision of transportation alternatives in rural areas

Deborah Carpenter

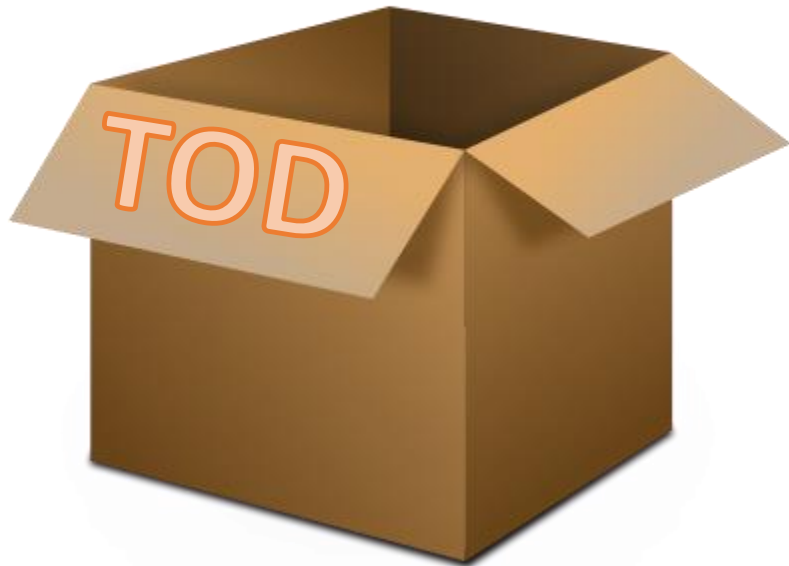
Director

Garrett County Planning & Land Management

# Infrastructure Needs – Transportation

- Transit Oriented Development
- Defined in State of MD statute as:

**a dense, mixed-use deliberately-planned development within a half-mile of transit stations that is designed to increase transit ridership**



# Benefits of TOD:

- Supports the use of transportation alternatives including transit accessibility by bicycles and pedestrians
- Increases transit ridership, thereby supporting broader transportation network efficiencies and reducing congestion
- Promotes community safety, convenience and economic development objectives
- Supports land use and environmental conservation efforts by helping minimize air and water quality impacts
- Enhances accessibility to jobs, housing and other destinations for all residents
- **MDOT is authorized to use departmental resources, including land, funds, and personnel, to support “designated” TOD projects**

# The Question of Density

- MDOT website –

**Density** – relatively higher density development within walking distance of transit service, with highest intensity land uses located closest to transit

A good candidate for a TOD will have ‘appropriate density for the locality and site’.

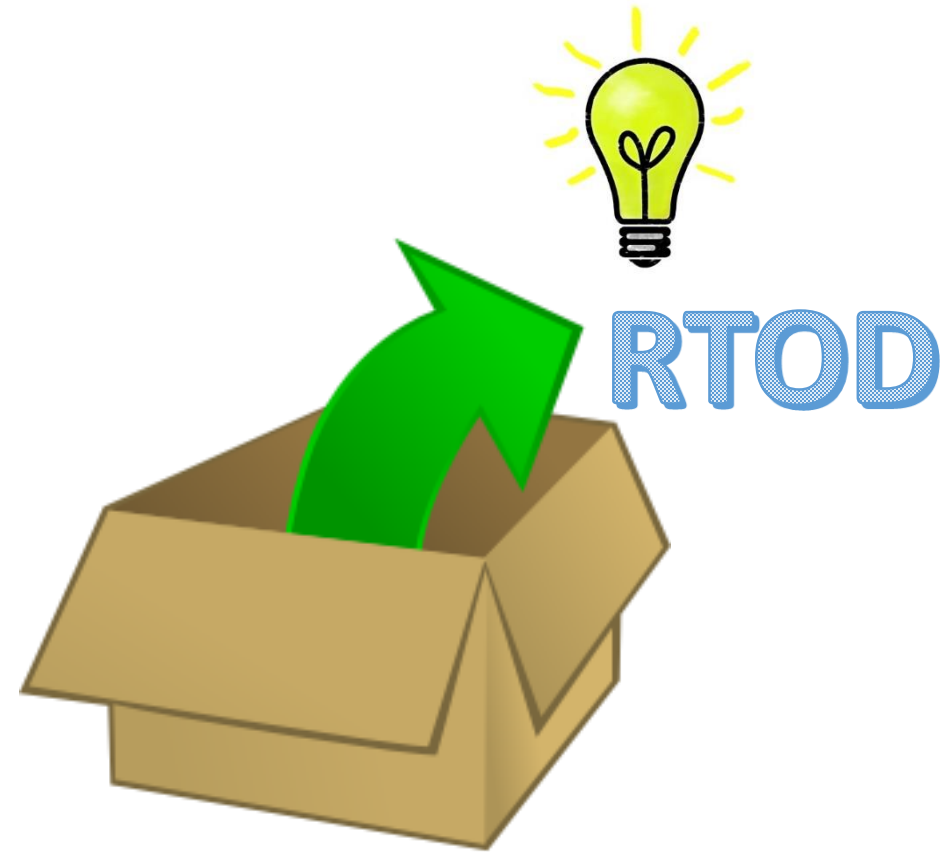
- However, though no specific density numbers seem to be required, it is generally known that rural towns and villages cannot meet the density requirements for TOD

# What is Transit?

- 2008 legislation defines a transit facility as a “...transit service by any means, including rail, bus, motor vehicle, or other mode of transportation, but does not include any railroad facility”
- Typically in practice it is rail, light rail or subway stations
- In a rural jurisdiction transit is usually bus service or a ride share facility or parking lot.

Solution?

Re-define what we consider TOD and create a new concept: RTOD – Rural Transit Oriented Development



# Reinvest MD

**In targeted areas that have few transit opportunities, especially in towns in more rural areas, Smart Growth Subcabinet agencies should work with the local government to enhance pedestrian and bicycle activity and growth of alternative modes of transportation, including but not limited to increased bus service and car sharing, with incentives targeted to these communities.**

# So what exactly does RTOD look like?

- Parking areas (transit hubs) with bus service and ride share parking
- Parking area includes pavilion, visitor kiosk, bike racks, bathroom facilities, etc
- Built in PFA municipalities and rural villages
- Within a few blocks of a Main Street community designated for revitalization
- Linked by pedestrian and bike paths – RTOD to Main Street to school facility to housing projects to parks
- Transit hubs linked via bus routes and bike & pedestrian paths



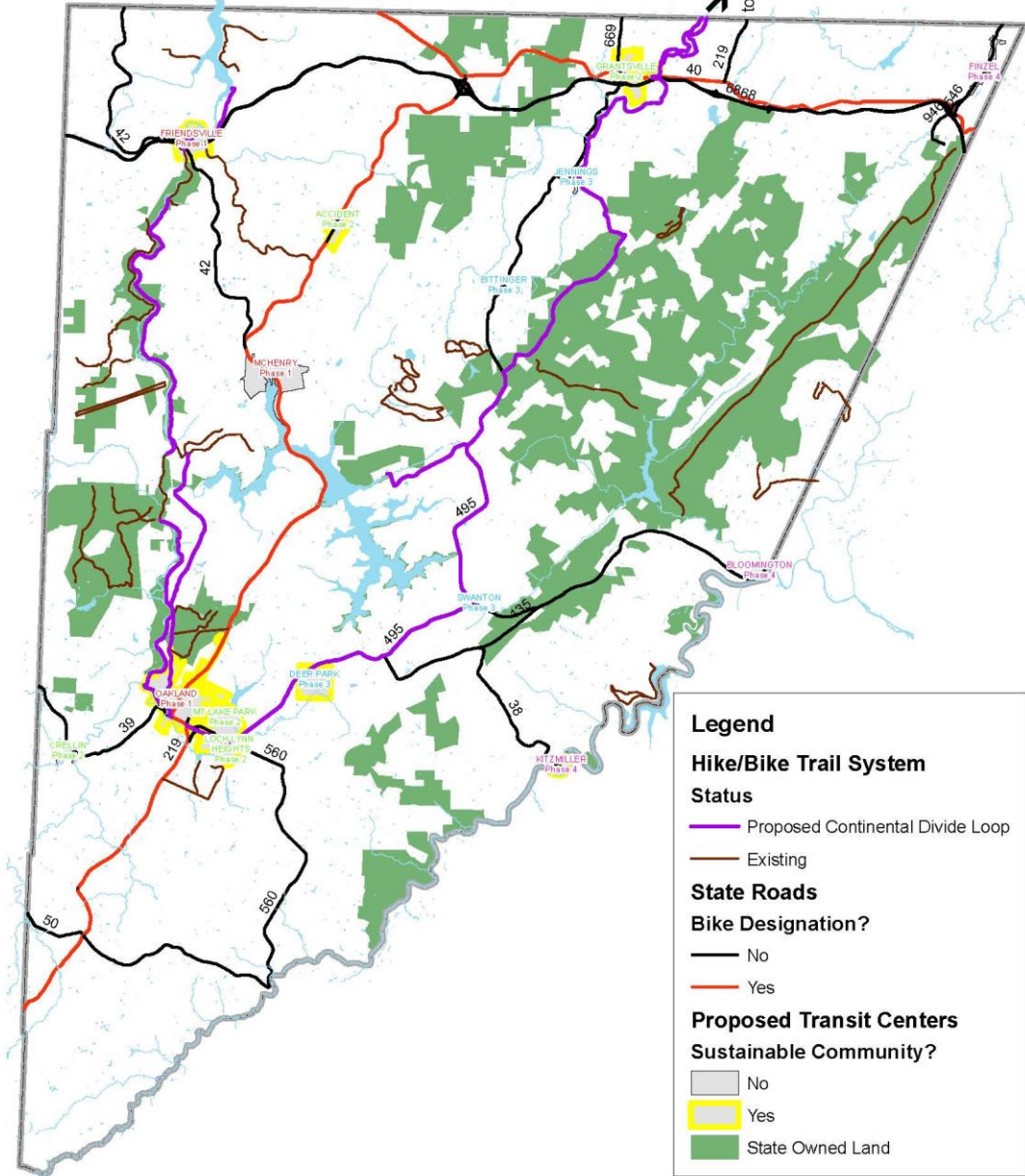
# Transit Proposal County View

Connections with the Great Allegheny Passage



to Confluence PA  
via ferry

to Meyersdale PA



**Legend**

**Hike/Bike Trail System Status**

- Proposed Continental Divide Loop (purple line)
- Existing (brown line)

**State Roads**

**Bike Designation?**

- No (black line)
- Yes (red line)

**Proposed Transit Centers Sustainable Community?**

- No (grey box)
- Yes (yellow box)

State Owned Land (green area)

# What do we need to succeed?

- VISION – countywide
- Community buy in and character
- Economic Incentives
- Zoning Incentives
- Transportation Support – fixed bus routes
- Community programming and promotion
- Healthy Communities Programs to include organized bike rides, benefit walks or races, helmet safety events, etc
- State, County, Local Support and Cooperation

# Questions?

Deborah A. Carpenter

Director

Garrett County Department of Planning & Land Management

203 S. Fourth St, Rm 210

Oakland MD 21550

(301)334-1920

[dcarpenter@garrettcountry.org](mailto:dcarpenter@garrettcountry.org)