

# Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines



TRANSIT SERVICES OF FREDERICK COUNTY  
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## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines



Due to rapid growth and development, Frederick has been facing many of the same challenges other communities in our region face, including:

- Sprawl development and
- Traffic congestion



## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines



### **Typical residential development:**

- Occurred on the outskirts of, or outside the current transit service area;
- Featured primarily low-density development; and
- Featured disconnected, curvilinear street networks.

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### **Typical retail/commercial development:**

- Featured strip malls constructed side-by-side (but disconnected) along major arterial roads;
- Building entrances separated from street with large parking lots;
- No sidewalks or pedestrian crossings between street and buildings;
- To provide safe and convenient transit service, transit buses must (and do) enter each shopping center;
- Results in added running time and less convenient service; and
- Increases potential interaction between transit vehicles and private vehicles, as well as pedestrians.

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### **Typical office development:**

- Featured buildings set far back from the street;

- Provided no sidewalks connecting the street to the building's entrance;
- Provided no crosswalks; and
- Provided no passenger shelter areas.



## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

Frederick County's 1999 Transportation Development Plan (TDP) recommended the following goals:

- Encourage transit-friendly design for residential, commercial, and employment development that provides convenient access to transit for pedestrians and persons with disabilities; and
- Establish design standards and site plan review criteria for the County and the City of Frederick to ensure that new developments within the transit service area will accommodate transit vehicles.

## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

In October 2001, TransIT prepared, printed and distributed the Transit-Oriented Design Guidelines:

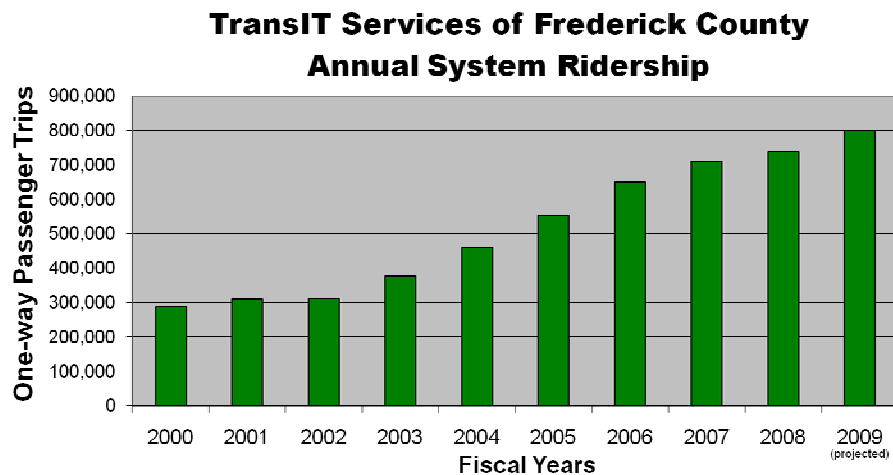
- Presented to and endorsed by the Frederick County and City of Frederick Planning Commissions;
- Distributed to County, City, and other local municipal planners; and
- Distributed to local engineers, architects, planners, developers.

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Typical post-2000 development featured mixed-uses and higher densities, but continues to ignore the needs of pedestrians and transit users.



## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines



## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

Local Codes and Comp Plans currently under review/revision:

- City of Frederick's Land Management Code and Comprehensive Plan; and
- Frederick County's Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan

## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

### Researched:

- Transit-friendly design;
- Transit-oriented design;
- Pedestrian-friendly design;
- Walkable communities;
- Liveable communities;
- Sustainable communities;
- Traditional neighborhood design; and
- Complete streets

## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

### Enlisted the expertise of transportation and planning professionals:

- TSAC (Transportation Services Advisory Council) subcommittee included:
  - × City transportation planner
  - × County transportation planners
  - × Transit planning consultant
  - × Transportation consultant

## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines



What's in a name?

The 2001 “Transit-Oriented Design Guidelines” became the 2009 “**Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines**”

## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines



“Transit-friendly design (TFD) integrates elements of land use and transportation planning to promote higher-density, mixed-use development in an interconnected street network that is safe, accessible, and convenient for all users, including pedestrians of all ages and abilities, bicyclists, motorists, and transit vehicles.”

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### Referenced:

- TransIT's Transportation Development Plan
- City of Frederick's Draft 2010 Comprehensive Plan
- Frederick County's Draft 2009 Countywide Comprehensive Plan
- Maryland's Smart Growth Initiatives
- Maryland's 2002 Twenty-Year Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Master Plan
- 2009 Maryland Transportation Plan
- USDOT/FHWA policies

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### Described the benefits of TFD:

- Provides transportation options;
- Improves operating efficiency and safe vehicle access for transit systems;
- Improves pedestrian access/safety/amenities;
- Improves bicycle access/safety/amenities;
- Improves access to employment/goods & services;
- Improves mobility for transit-dependent population;
- Promotes "complete streets";
- Reduces infrastructure costs for developers, operating costs for public services, and cost of future retrofits;
- Enhances and stabilizes existing communities;
- Maximizes public investment in transit;
- Improves quality of life for all



## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

### Described the Elements of TFD:

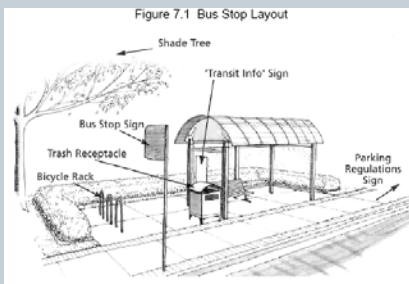
- Pedestrian and bicycle accessibility;
- Interconnected vs. disconnected street patterns;
- Land use:
  - Density
  - Mixed-use development
- Site design
  - Commercial and office
  - Typical and preferred



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### Described Transit Access Design Standards:

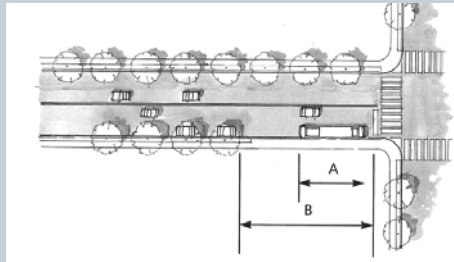
- Vehicle specifications; and
- Bus stops and passenger shelters



## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

### Appendices include:

- Transit accessibility checklist;
- Bus turning template; and
- Bus stop length specifications:
  - Nearside
  - Farside
  - Midblock
  - Pull-Off



## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

### Also included:

- Implementation strategies;
- Status report; and
- Action plan

## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

### Action Plan:

- Distribute copies to planners, developers, and elected and appointed officials;
- Seek endorsement by the Frederick County and City of Frederick Planning Commissions;
- Encourage incorporation of transit-friendly design into the revised zoning and land management codes, subdivision regulations, and design manuals; Encourage inclusion of public transportation improvement in the local adequate public facilities ordinances; and
- Encourage development review staff to consider transit accessibility.
- Encourage use of the TFD Guidelines as a reference tool until such time as the guidelines have been incorporated into development regulations.

## Developing Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines

Copies of the 2009 Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines can be downloaded at:

[www.co.frederick.md.us/transit](http://www.co.frederick.md.us/transit)

(click on Other TransIT Information, then click on Transit-Friendly Design Guidelines)

