ORDINANCE NO. _____________

AN ORDINANCE to approve an Amendment to the Land Use Element of the Omaha Master Plan to include Transit Oriented Development.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OMAHA:

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Section 3. The said proposed amendment to the City’s Master Plan, as set forth in the attached Exhibit “A” is hereby approved.

Section 4. That this Ordinance shall be in full force and effective fifteen (15) days from the date of its passage.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER

__________________________________  APPROVED BY:

__________________________________  MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OMAHA DATE

PASSED

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF OMAHA DATE

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_________________  8/7/19

CITY ATTORNEY DATE
Contents

Introduction 4
Vision and Goals from the Concept Plan 5
Vision and Related Statements 5
Goals 6
Current Conditions, Trends and Issues 7
Land Use and Consumption 7
Effects of Urbanization of Existing Farmland 8
National Trend for Floodplain Safety 10
National Mandate for Water Quality Protection 11
Issues 13
Omaha lacks an "image center" 13
Loss of Downtown property value and role as city’s image center 13
High cost of public services associated with low-density development 13
Increased strip commercial 14
Development patterns designed solely for the automobile 14
Loss of housing units in the older areas of Omaha 14
Lack of commercial services in older areas 14
General design quality 15
Lack of large scale industrial sites 15
Many of our unique natural features have been destroyed 15
Environmental costs of low-density development 15
Sustainable development in the Papio Creek watershed 16
Environmental quality and safety 17
Lack of large-scale parks in West Omaha 17
Deterioration of Omaha’s historic park and boulevard system 17
Quality of the streetscape 17
Growth/Development Pattern 18
Contiguous development 18
Land Use Classification System 19
Low-density development 19
Ponca/Elkhorn Special Redevelopment Zone 19
High-Density Mixed-Use Areas 19
Convenience Mixed-Use Areas 20
Neighborhood Mixed-Use Areas 21
Community Mixed-Use Areas 22
Community (165) Mixed-Use Areas 22
Community (80) Mixed-Use Areas 23
Community (60) Mixed-Use Areas 25
Metro Mixed-Use Areas 26
Regional Mixed-Use Areas/Downtown 27
Specialty Mixed-Use Areas 27
Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Node 27
Variance Procedure 28
Medium/High-Density Residential 29
Civic/Institutional 32
Parks/Open Space 32
Industrial 33
Highway Commercial 33
Areas of Existing Development 34
The Mixed-Use Concept and Existing Development 35
Street-Car Era Commercial Areas 35
Post WWII Era Auto-Oriented Areas 36
General Criteria for All High-Density Mixed-Use Areas 37
Exceptions to Criteria for High-Density Mixed-Use Areas 37
Image Center/Downtown 41
Downtown Facilities 41
Land Use Considerations Related to Transportation 43
High-Density Mixed-Use Areas 43
Railroad Service and Land Use 43
Reverse Commuting 44
Arterial Access Policy 46
Three Through Routes per Mile 46
Alternative Modes 46
Pedestrian System 46
Bike Routes 47
Mass Transit  47
Metropolitan Area Transit  47
Density Transit Corridor  48

Urban Design  49
Architecture and Site Design  50
General Design Quality  52
Streetscape  52
Signs  52
Major Entries to the City  53
Neighborhood Conservation  54
Historic Preservation  55

Community Development and Revitalization  56
Innovative Residential Site Planning  57

Environment  58
Protection of Natural Features  60
Preserve, Protect and Enhance Environmental Safety and Quality  62

Appendix  65
Density/Land Consumption Calculations  65
Calculation for 2040 Development Line  66
Master Plan as a Guide  66
"Box Stores"  66
Future Land Use Map  67
Mixed Use Area Map  68
Industrial Map  69
Bicycle Facility Map  70
Amendments to the Land Use Element  71
**Land Use Classification System**

The Future Land Use Plan is based on the concept that the majority of development in the city will fall into one of the following broad land-use categories (See Map 1-Future Land Use Map):

- Low-density residential
- Ponca/Elkhorn Special Development Zone
- High-density mixed-use areas
- Convenience mixed-use area
- Neighborhood mixed-use area
- Community mixed-use areas
- Metro mixed-use area
- Regional mixed-use area (Downtown)
- Specialty mixed-use area
- Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Node
- Medium/High Density Residential
- Civic/Institutional
- Parks/open space
- Industrial
- Highway commercial
- Areas of existing development
- Office/commercial
- Medium/high-density residential

**Ponca/Elkhorn Special Development Zone**

These are ecologically sensitive areas containing a preponderance of steep slopes, wooded hillside and ravine areas, and soils that are prone to severe erosion. They are not likely to receive full urban services in the foreseeable future. Development must depend on the carrying capacity of natural systems to avoid problems with drainage and sewage treatment and to minimize damage to the environment. As a result, normal urban development densities are not appropriate in these areas.

**High-Density Mixed-Use Areas**

Mixed-use areas are to contain commercial, office, multi-family and civic uses in areas that are designed to function in an integrated way. All new office and commercial uses proposed for suburban, undeveloped parts of the city are to be located in high-density mixed-use areas. While it is preferred that medium- to high-density residential be located in mixed-use areas, it will also be allowed in the density transit corridors shown on the Land Use Map along West Maple, West Dodge and West Center Roads and around most Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Nodes. The goal is to have a balanced, high-density mix of uses within walking range of each other and the surrounding low-density residential areas. Open space, such as small parks or plazas, are to be an integral part of each mixed-use area. Pedestrian pathways are encouraged in order to provide internal circulation within mixed-use areas as well as to serve as connections between mixed-use areas. Pedestrian connections should tie into the city’s overall trail network whenever possible.

Several sizes and types of mixed-use areas have been defined. Areas vary primarily according to their size, density, allowed building types and the classification of the streets that serve each mixed-use area. The sizes indicated for each mixed-use area are general guidelines. Variances in size may be allowed for mixed-use areas that are exceptionally well designed and meet the goals of the Master Plan to a high degree. Following is a description of each type of mixed-use area:

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Omaha Master Plan - Land Use Element

**Growth/Development Pattern**

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19
Regional Mixed-Use Area (Downtown/Old Market/Riverfront)

The Downtown Old Market/Riverfront area is unique as the only area identified as a regional mixed-use area. Downtown is to be the “image center” for the city and is to contain a wide range of activities, but the primary focus is to serve as the location for major institutions and facilities that have city-wide importance. The Downtown/Old Market/Riverfront area is to be the city’s dominant mixed-use area serving as a center for the region. More detail concerning the role of Downtown can be found in the Guidelines for Downtown on page 41.

Specialty Mixed-Use Area

Specialty mixed-use areas are areas that contain a truly unique mix of office, commercial and residential uses that can be clearly distinguished from the standard goods and services offered throughout the city. These areas, such as the Old Market or One Pacific Place, often contain a high percentage of one-of-a-kind facilities that are not available in any other part of the city. Additional commercial space may be allowed in specialty mixed-use areas when the retail is one-of-a-kind shops. In the case of specialty retail in these areas, no individual building is to exceed 25,000 square feet.

*Note: Due to the unique nature of specialty mixed-use areas, they are not shown on the Land Use Map as a separate land use category. Locations for future specialty mixed-use areas will depend on market demand.*

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Nodes

Transit Oriented Development (TOD), discussed further in the Transportation Element page 54 and Urban Design Element page 47, is development centered around or located within walking distance of a transit station. TOD includes quality connections, mix of uses, greater density, and pedestrian scale design. The scale of development around Transit Oriented Development Nodes should be tailored to each individual station. In general, the scale should transition from most dense and intense nearest the transit station and transition into the surrounding lower scale residential neighborhoods. Uses should further walkability, transit use, and pedestrian activity and safety. Design should create and / or reinforce a safe and comfortable pedestrian oriented environment. Key components of a pedestrian oriented environment include wide sidewalks, landscaping, buildings and entrances fronting sidewalks, facades of quality durable materials and windows, active ground floor uses, and limited conflict points between pedestrians and automobiles.

The future land use map shows “Transit Oriented Development Nodes.” Transit Oriented Development zoning is encouraged and will be supported generally within 1/2 mile from the Transit Oriented Development Nodes, pending the finalization and adoption of boundaries with neighborhood and other stakeholder input. TOD zoning should also be explored around historic streetcar nodes and other high frequency transit routes.
**Bike Routes**

The Transportation Plan establishes a future bicycle network for Omaha (See Map 4-Future Bicycle Facility Map), reprinted from Transportation Plan). The intent is to connect mixed-use centers to provide a safe route via bicycle to all the mixed-use centers in Omaha. The routes were chosen based on traffic volume, directness between centers, and topography.

The Transportation Plan defines three classifications of bicycle facilities (refer to the Transportation Plan for more detail):

1. Bicycle trail: An exclusive bicycle facility with cross traffic minimized.
2. Bicycle path: A separate bicycle facility located next to minor and major arterials.
3. Bicycle route: A street that is signed as a bicycle route, but which does not include a separate facility for bicycles. These are normally located on local roads.

**Mass Transit**

Omaha’s reliance on the automobile as space-intensive and expensive is outlined in the Transportation Plan. That plan calls for the City to rethink mass transit’s role and encourage design which makes other options to the car more attractive.

Since a successful transit system depends on concentrated riders and destinations, the Transportation Plan reinforces the concept of high-density mixed-use areas as outlined in this plan and introduces the concept of density transit corridors and Transit Oriented Development. The Future Land Use map indicates the location of mixed-use areas, and also shows three “density transit corridors” (West Center Road, West Dodge Road, and West Maple Road), and Transit Oriented Development Nodes. The intent is to develop with the necessary densities, uses, and design to support transit. (The following guidelines are repeated here from the Transportation Plan)

**Metropolitan Area Transit**

As stated in the Transportation Element, new developments should be consistent with the Metro Transit Design Guide.

1. New developments must be designed to accommodate MAT’s recommended standards for bus traffic (See Transportation Plan).

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Omaha Master Plan - Land Use Element |  | Land Use Considerations Related to Transportation
2. If development proposals consisting of land uses which MAT attempts to serve are located beyond the 20-year service area, the developer should contact MAT to review how to best serve these developments.

These uses are:
- Colleges and hospitals
- Apartment units in complexes of 48 units or more
- Employment sites
- Major shopping centers
- Senior citizen towers/retirement communities

3. Civic uses and day care facilities are strongly encouraged at MAT’s future park and ride lot locations.

**Density Transit Corridor**

As noted previously in the criteria for mixed-use areas, medium- to high-density residential uses will be allowed to be located between mixed-use areas in the density transit corridors shown on the Land Use Map along West Maple, West Dodge and West Center Roads.

1. To support viable bus service, residential densities along the corridor need to average 8 dwelling units per net residential acre (du/ac).

2. To obtain this density, a variety of residential densities should be encouraged within these corridors - apartments in mixed-use areas and a mix of townhomes, duplexes, and single-family homes in the remaining portion of the corridor.

This mix of densities should allow for diverse building types - apartments in the mixed-use centers, and a mix of townhomes, duplexes, and single-family homes in the remaining portion of the corridor.
C3-19-113

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______________________________ APPROVED BY:

PASSED ________________________ MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OMAHA DATE

ATTEST:

______________________________

CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF OMAHA DATE

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

______________________________ CITY ATTORNEY DATE

Plt1431jp
The Dodge Street Transit Guideway Concept

In concert with the premium transit proposals for downtown and North Omaha, the Dodge Street Transitway concept would extend premium bus service westward along the Dodge Road arterial and expressway corridor. It would take advantage of successful express route offerings on this same route, and by improving transit travel times offer a legitimate alternative to vehicle commuting from West Omaha. This concept would need to be further evaluated due to limited rights of way and to demonstrate benefit over costs for development.

Following an Alternatives Analysis and Preliminary Engineering, ORBT (Omaha Rapid Bus Transit) will run from Westroads Mall to downtown Omaha. East of 30th Street, ORBT will run in Business Access & Transit (BAT) lanes. West of 30th Street, ORBT will run in the curb lane, with Transit Signal Priority. Other characteristics differ from the recommended Concept below. However, the text remains unchanged as to honor the original process and recommendations. (Amendment per Resolution #, date: )

The diagram below shows how the Dodge Street Transit Guideway’s will operate. The Guideway will originate in downtown Omaha as a limited-stop bus service, continues west from the University of Nebraska-Omaha campus to I-680 and Dodge running in mixed traffic and taking advantage of queue jumper lanes at major intersections. It then continues west to the 168th/Dodge interchange serving two park-and-ride facilities. It is intended to capitalize on the current popularity of Metro’s Dodge park-and-ride express routes but also to begin establishing early foundations for improved transit offerings on this corridor.

With relatively minor capital investments, this kind of service could be inaugurated quickly and take advantage of the West Dodge Road expressway’s limited access and high speeds to provide automobile-competitive travel times into central Omaha. The key operational characteristics that improve travel time are the queue-jumper lanes and the use of the reversible center lane along Dodge Street from 66th Street to Turner Boulevard.

Shoulder-running transit on the Dodge Expressway could ultimately be replaced with a more formalized guideway, but in the short term this allows transit vehicles a dedicated space in which to bypass traffic congestion, as illustrated in the photograph below.

A key approach to making a case for this concept is the evolution of bus stops to transit stations, raising the pro-

Figure 5.5.1  Operational Characteristics of The Dodge Street Transit Guideway
file of transit’s role in the community, while also improving the aesthetics of the corridor.

The photo to the right and the illustration below (Figure 4.4.3) offer a vision for how these stations might appear, using the Dodge reversible center lane as a dedicated transitway. Successful trial operation of the project should begin dialogue for how the project could be funded and constructed to be a more permanent infrastructure addition.

A later study led by Metro Transit extended the reach of this corridor along Dodge Street as far west as 72nd Street.

**Figure 5.5.2 Conceptual Station Design**
North 24th Street
One of the branches from the Dodge corridor envisioned in the Downtown Master Plan is enhanced transit on 24th Street from Dodge to Lake Streets. This would serve the North Omaha business district along 24th Street and would likely provide a valuable catalyst to economic development efforts in this area.

Dodge Street/West Dodge Road Transitway
Intended as an extension of the Dodge Downtown/Midtown Corridor, this concept was developed during the Transportation Element’s workshops as a way to expand higher-level transit offerings beyond the immediate urban core of Omaha. The prevailing patterns of density in this area suggest that this service is likely to be commuter-oriented in the short term, but the high level of travel demand along the Dodge corridor suggests that this area of Omaha may likely see increased future need for other types of trips.

Future Transit Improvements
Additional transit improvements (more mileage, greater frequency, enhanced service, etc.) are encouraged, as discussed on page 93. Transit Oriented Development is encouraged around Bus Rapid Transit stations, stops on high frequency routes, and historic streetcar stops. See below for more information on Transit Oriented Development.

5.6 Transportation and Land Development Projects
There are many opportunities for enhancements to Omaha’s transportation system through land development. Whether these are contributions made entirely by developers or strategic public investments to encourage development that the City wishes to see occur, they are nonetheless projects that should be pursued as private development occurs.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
One of the most direct opportunities for enhance-ments to Omaha’s transportation system through land development is with Transit Oriented Development. Transit Oriented Development (TOD), is development centered around or located within walking distance of a transit station, and includes:
  • Quality connections
  • Mix of uses
  • Greater density
  • Pedestrian scale design

TOD focuses on the pedestrian environment with design, uses, and density that will support transit ridership. TOD can make the most of transit investment; provide equitable access to jobs, education, housing, and entertainment; provide lifestyle options; and support the fiscal health of the City of Omaha.

According to the Institute for Transportation & Development Policy,

The most successful TOD projects have come out of cities that had strong city planning and transportation departments that worked in close coordination with each another [sic]. The role of a city planning department, with respect to TOD, is generally to approve a vision for the city, make recommendations for zoning changes where they will be most beneficial, and set housing policy...

The City Planning Department should recommend zoning and other regulatory changes to support and encourage TOD, with the following goals:
  • Maximize the use of the major infrastructure investment.
  • Respect neighborhood context.
  • Efficiently build Omaha’s tax base.
  • Support equitable access to housing, jobs, education, and entertainment.
  • Provide urban living, working, and entertainment options that people increasingly desire.
  • Create, reinforce, and enhance the pedestrian environment and community at BRT stops.
  • Streamline the development review process for projects that meet or exceed the TOD goals, guidelines, and regulations.
Site-Specific Development Opportunities

The transportation opportunities presented in this section are within the context of several different site-specific development opportunities. These sites were selected by the Transportation Element planning team after a city-wide analysis of land uses that demonstrate redevelopment potential. During the course of the Transportation Element’s March 2011 design workshops, conceptual master plans were developed for these sites as a means of illustrating reasonable potential for development yield, and for identifying the necessary transportation system improvements.

These projects are conceptual and do not indicate any final alignments or specific transportation improvements. They are illustrative concepts intended to provide the City with a head-start in positioning areas for redevelopment in coordination with transportation enhancements.

Crossroads Mall and the Nebraska Furniture Mart

One of the most significant opportunities for redevelopment inside the Interstate 680 loop is around the intersection of Dodge and 72nd Streets, a longtime concentration of retail uses that features the Crossroads Mall, the Nebraska Furniture Mart, and an assortment of large-lot and small-lot retail properties.

The conceptual master plans for this area developed at the Transportation Element’s design workshops focus on the Crossroads Mall and the southern end of the Furniture Mart site. They feature a series of street network enhancements and a land use pattern that focuses on mixed uses around the Dodge/72nd intersection to capitalize on its prominent location. There is also a series of open space additions designed and located to take advantage of the existing Keystone Trail on the west side of the site.

Map 5.6.1 identifies several key design and transportation enhancements, including candidate project NS-PUB-017, an extension of Howard Street on a bridge across the Little Papio Creek. This is an example of a project with public benefit that is not central to the development of a site but that would not happen prior to the site’s development. Figures 5.6.1a and 5.6.1b illustrate the possible changes in the local street network as the result of the area’s redevelopment.
A successful transit system depends on a concentration of riders and destinations. Potential transit riders are less likely to walk to a transit stop if it is more than one-quarter mile from their home. New construction is currently not being built at high enough densities to provide a pool of riders or allow a bus to operate efficiently. The future land use map shows three “density transit corridors”: West Center Road, West Dodge Road, and West Maple Road and Transit Oriented Development Nodes. The purpose of these transit corridors areas is to develop the necessary densities and walkable, pedestrian friendly environment to support transit.

This high-density development will have other benefits besides increased transit ridership. Transit supportive and transit oriented development is a more efficient use of land and may curb the need to move the sewer boundary further and further out. Also, attractive transit will reduce household travel costs and auto expenses as well as provide a range of affordable and diverse housing stock. Business in the corridors will benefit since employees and customers will enjoy less congested streets.

To support viable transit service, residential services along the West Maple, West Dodge and West Center corridors need to average eight dwelling units per net residential acre (du/ac). To obtain this density, a variety of residential densities should be encouraged within these corridors: apartments in the mixed-use areas, and a mix of townhomes, duplexes, and single-family homes in the remaining portion of the corridor. In addition, high-density housing outside of these corridors should be limited, not only to reduce traffic congestion but to help encourage high-density housing development within these corridors.

**Metro Transit**

1. New developments should must be designed to accommodate METRO’s recommended standards be consistent with the Metro Transit Design Guide.

2. If development proposals consisting of land uses which METRO attempts to serve are located beyond the 20-year service area, the developer should contact METRO to review how to best serve these developments. These uses are:
   - Colleges and hospitals
   - Apartment units in complexes of 48 units or more
   - Major Employment sites
   - Major shopping centers
   - Senior citizen towers/retirement communities

3. Civic uses and day care facilities are strongly encouraged at METRO’s future park and ride lot locations.

4. Developers of mixed-use projects should contact METRO to review the need for including park and ride stalls.

5. Mass transit service should be provided between the airport and Omaha’s major hotels, Downtown and the zoo.

**Intercity Passenger Rail**

The City should coordinate with the State of Nebraska and Iowa to accommodate higher speed rail service connecting Omaha to other metropolitan regions.

**Developing and Redeveloping Areas**

In order for transportation investments to not be reactive and counter-productive, it is important that the City and the region begin from a common vision of future growth. Transportation improvements may be necessary in developing or redeveloping areas to ensure that adequate infrastructure is constructed to accommodate development. At the same time, transportation improvements need to be coordinated with other public facilities such as sewers, parks,
C10-19-113

ORDINANCE NO. _____________

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INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER

______________________________

APPROVED BY:

______________________________

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OMAHA DATE

PASSED _______________________

ATTEST: _______________________

______________________________

CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF OMAHA DATE

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

______________________________  8/7/19

CITY ATTORNEY DATE
Urban Design Element
Goal 10: Transit Oriented Development

Background

With the introduction of Bus Rapid Transit into the community, it brings Goal 10 Transit Oriented Development. Transit Oriented Development melds previously mentioned Civic Omaha Goal 4 (Major Commercial Corridors and Intersections) and Goal 5 (Pedestrian Oriented, Mixed-Use Centers) and focuses around transit stations.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is development centered around or located within walking distance of a transit station. Transit Oriented Development includes quality connections, mix of uses, greater density, and pedestrian scale design.

As stated in Smart Growth America's TOD Analytical memo for Omaha, Nebraska,

TOD naturally generates more riders, and therefore more financial support for the transit system, making it more successful. TOD is associated with increased private investment, property values, and property tax revenues, which means it provides outweighed returns for the city and the economy. It also provides a mix of housing and transportation choices for city residents that are scarce in many markets—allowing people who want to, and people who must, live more walkable, less car-dependent lifestyles. And, when done with intention and foresight, TOD can also increase access to opportunity for lower income households. As a result, TOD is competitive and desirable in the marketplace, with cities across the country seeking to attract talent and businesses into walkable centers and neighborhoods.

With over $30 million invested in ORBT (Omaha Rapid Bus Transit), millions (one study predicted $450 million) in economic development is forecasted. ¹ To ensure the City makes the most of this investment, Transit Oriented Development is needed. Transit Oriented Development could increase site utilization, thereby increase property tax revenues, reduce environmental impacts associated with greenfield development, reduce transportation costs, and increase housing affordability.

Goal 10 Statement
Development within walking distance of transit stations is transit oriented.

Objectives:

1. The City, with neighborhood associations, property owners, designers, and other stakeholders and partner agencies, should delineate the recommended scales of development around Transit Oriented Development Nodes.

2. The City should adopt Transit Oriented Development zoning to regulate use and design within the delineated areas discussed in Objective 1.

¹ HDR, Forecast of Development Impacts for BRT Extension, 2013.
Policies:
1. The City should facilitate and promote Transit Oriented Development.
2. The City should use its zoning and redevelopment powers to facilitate Transit Oriented Development.
3. Development in Transit Oriented Development areas should be designed primarily for the pedestrian, while accommodating the automobile.
4. Uses in Transit Oriented Development areas should further walkability, transit use, and pedestrian activity and safety. Automobile focused uses in Transit Oriented Development areas should be discouraged.
5. The scale of development in Transit Oriented Development areas should be tailored to each individual station. In general, the scale should transition from most dense and intense nearest the transit station into the surrounding lower scale residential neighborhoods.

Implementation:
1. The Zoning Ordinance of the City of Omaha should include a zoning designation for Transit Oriented Development.
2. Development and new uses within a Transit Oriented Development area should be governed by regulations in the TOD Zoning Ordinance. These regulations should address uses and such design issues as: parking quantity and location, site layout, massing and scale, materials, transparency, facade articulation, parking structures, and landscaping, and screening.
3. The Transit Oriented Development zoning ordinance should provide clear, easy to understand regulations and review process.