The built environment is a key determinant of transit success. Central neighborhoods (1890-1940) are densifying. But elsewhere, entitlement and public policy in Austin continues the pattern of suburban development and sprawl. Austin’s challenges of mobility and housing have brought TOD into the conversation.

The TOD Priority Tool focuses on the relationship between transit ridership and land use decisions to inform and promote TOD. Done by Capital Metro with the experts at AECOM, we included a steering committee of City of Austin and CAMPO staff to ensure consistency with Imagine Austin and CAMPO 2040 comprehensive plans.

The full report and the web tool are designed for access by a broad audience to sell TOD and define measures with benchmarks to achieve it. The web product is designed to adapt to mobile use, see at www.capmetro/tod

The Tool takes a fine-grained approach that focuses on each of 41 rapid and 9 rail stations and ½ mile around them.

It organizes data collected from the region into one place that is easy to access, read, and apply: including demographics, GIS mapping, field analysis, market trends, and capital investments.

Typologies and their scoring are based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures. 1 of 5 context-related TOD Typologies is assigned around each station based on a collection of predetermined metrics.

Scoring elements for TOD readiness mark the current maturity level of TOD at each station. Determining readiness uses 4 categories with 17 elements for an even grading methodology, and a clear guide to raising each stations’ level of readiness.

Typologies put TOD in context; Readiness score focuses on each stations’ level of maturity as a TOD

The Tool has informed Austin’s CodeNEXT process, a rework of their land use code, and has been used by the private sector in their analysis of the code drafts, including Austin’s ULI, Housing Works, Downtown Austin Alliance, and other working groups. Other cities’ in our service area have applied the Tool to their planning efforts. Marketing the tool to the business community and the public is underway.

The Tool has informed our Connections 2025 Plan and Project Connect, including elements of the Tool to evaluate systems and locate potential stations. The Tool has influenced internal agency land use policy and development plans.

The City of Austin has included our mapping and field work analysis as they prioritize Active Transportation capital improvements, some already underway, stemming from a $720m Strategic Mobility Bond approved last fall.

The Tool presents national best practices for Strategic Implementation of TOD.
We believe the Tool has proactively informed better development policy/development decisions at all levels. We expect it to translate into more entitlements for TOD, more value in places, and a more vibrant transit system.