

# Transit Supportive Guidelines



## Executive Summary

As our cities grow larger, more opportunities for work, education, recreation and housing become available. However, these opportunities tend to be dispersed across communities, so in many cases individuals are travelling farther for work, school and to spend time with family and friends. As commuting distances increase, efficient, effective transit service becomes increasingly important.

Yet transit is not just about getting people from point A to point B. It is increasingly being recognized as an opportunity to limit our impacts on the environment, better adapt to changing demographics and reduce our overall costs of living. Successfully planned, investment in transit also has the potential to be the launching pad for a wide range of town and city-building initiatives aimed at strengthening communities and increasing economic competitiveness.

There is a strong relationship between transit ridership and land use patterns. If towns and cities grow at low densities, and development is not coordinated with transit, provision of transit becomes difficult and communities become increasingly dependent on the car. In order to make transit efficient and increase ridership, we must reconsider how cities and towns grow. Concentrating densities and a mix of uses in and around transit stops and stations is necessary to place more people close to transit at both ends of their trip.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is updating and expanding the Province's Transit-Supportive Guidelines, first published jointly with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 1992. The 2012 Transit-Supportive Guidelines include over 50 guidelines and almost 450 strategies to assist urban planners, transit planners, developers and others in creating an environment that is supportive of transit and in increasing transit ridership. The 2012 Guidelines also include, for the first time, strategies for growing ridership through a range of tools, management approaches and technologies. The following themes capture the range of transit-supportive strategies covered in detail within the document.

### 1. Create a transit-supportive community structure

Identify places that are suitable for growth and link built form and land use patterns to transit through the designation of mixed use, higher density nodes and corridors. Encourage compact patterns of development at densities capable of supporting transit service.

### 2. Retrofit existing built-up areas to make existing development more transit-supportive

Encourage infill development and enhance street and open space networks to increase the overall density and mix of uses around transit services and make it easier for people to walk and bike to and from stop/station areas.





### 3. Coordinate transit and land use decisions to minimize the need for trips and enhance access to transit services

Transit service should be a primary consideration in all new developments and assessed accordingly. Plan for higher densities and a greater mix of uses in proximity to transit in order to support higher levels of transit ridership and improve access to jobs, housing, goods and services.

### 4. Create a regional and local street and block pattern that supports efficient transit service and maximizes connectivity

Establish a network of streets and blocks that can provide more direct connections between destinations and transit services and minimize travel times for pedestrians, cyclists and transit vehicles.



### 5. Create complete streets that support and balance the needs of all users

Consider the needs of all users when designing streets. Where appropriate, incorporate a range of design elements and features to support walking, cycling and transit. Trade-offs between various features should reflect the long-term objectives for the street and surrounding areas.

### 6. Employ a range of targeted strategies and programs to encourage increased transit ridership

The quality of transit systems, including services, operations, programs and facilities play an important role in enhancing user experience and increasing usage.

### 7. Locate and design transit stations and stops to enhance accessibility and user comfort

Locate transit stops and stations where they are easily accessible to the largest number of people and can contribute to the efficient delivery of transit services. Stops and stations should be designed to accommodate all users and include features to enhance comfort, convenience and ease of use.

### 8. Create a transit-supportive urban form

The layout, design and orientation of buildings and parking should support transit ridership by integrating transit facilities into surrounding areas and contributing to pedestrian-friendly streets and open spaces that enhance activity around, and connections to, stop and station areas.

### 9. Develop a family of transit services that cater to different patterns of land use and commuting needs

Transit service types should provide the capacity and service quality appropriate to the local population and employment densities and be tailored to respond and contribute to the local community context.

### 10. Integrate amenities and services to enhance user convenience and comfort

Improve the comfort and convenience of transit service by providing real-time and static information needed to inform riders' journeys, incorporating features that enhance user enjoyment, and integrating services that enable riders to accomplish personal and business related tasks along their trip.



For more information and to download a copy of the Transit-Supportive Guidelines, please visit: [www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/transit/supportive-guideline](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/transit/supportive-guideline)