Governance and Implementation Challenges for Transit Oriented Developments: Findings from a Comparison of South East Queensland and Perth Region

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Abstract: Both South East Queensland and metropolitan Perth region have urban management strategies in place that promote transit oriented development (TOD). The key objective of this paper is to conduct an exploratory comparative assessment of TOD planning policies and implementation mechanisms in two metropolitan regions. The paper also examines the existing governance mechanisms for TOD development in two regions, using content analysis of key planning documents and conducting key informant interviews with selected planners and urban designers from two city regions.

There is much that can be learned from experiences of TOD initiatives in the two metropolitan regions. West Australian state government has taken a more proactive role in implementing TOD projects through LandCorp and area redevelopment authorities that facilitate public-private partnerships and land assembly. South East Queensland, on the other hand, has focussed more on the statutory policy instruments such as the Regional Plan and local growth management strategies, with a greater reliance on market forces for the realisation of TOD projects.

INTRODUCTION

Transit Oriented Developments are higher density mixed use developments set within walking distance of key public transport nodes around activity centres such as major shopping centres/offices (Calthorpe and Fulton, 2001; Cervero, 1998). While higher densities are encouraged close to transit nodes, lower density developments are allowed further away. The major aim of transit oriented developments is to efficiently integrate land use and transport, to encourage increased public transport patronage, and to create liveable communities (Dittmar and Ohland, 2004; Denphy et.al, 2004; Gilbert and Ginn, 2001).

Transit oriented developments have been part of the strategy to manage rapid growth of both South East Queensland and Perth metropolitan region. In South East Queensland, the Queensland state government has recently developed a new regional plan which specifically advocates the policy of promoting higher density development around major transit nodes (OUM, 2005). The Western Australia government has also developed a cross-portfolio program to promote and implement TOD in Perth (PIA, 2005). The program works at a strategic planning level to identify broad TOD opportunities as well as at the site planning level of individual transit nodes to enhance public transport patronage.

This paper looks at the policy initiatives and implementation mechanisms for transit oriented development in South East Queensland and Metropolitan Perth region. It discusses the governance mechanisms for promoting TOD projects in the two rapidly growing regions. TOD initiatives and challenges in SEQ and Perth are analysed under following broad headings:

- Strategic planning
- Governance frameworks for TOD
- Implementation issues
- Findings from a comparison of the two states’ approach to TOD
We begin with a discussion of the key TOD initiatives in South east Queensland followed by discussion on TOD initiatives in Perth. We then compare and contrast the key issues and lessons learned from TOD initiatives in the two metropolitan regions.

TRANSPORT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

Strategic Planning

Regional planning initiatives in South East Queensland in the 1990’s were based on voluntary partnerships between State government and local governments, producing non-statutory plans such as the Regional Framework for Growth Management. To provide more effective implementation mechanisms and resources, a new Office of Urban Management (OUM) was established in 2004. The OUM produced the first statutory SEQ Regional plan 2006-2026 under the new Integrated Planning Act 1997 to manage the rapid growth of its south east region.

The plan proposes to limit ad hoc ‘greenfield’ development at the urban fringe by identifying an urban footprint and setting dwelling targets (for ‘greenfield’ and infill development) for each local government area. A more compact form of development has been promoted by increasing net residential density of major new urban development and by focusing higher density residential development within and around regional activity centres and public transport nodes and corridors (OUM, 2005a). As a part of managing growth in SEQ, the newly released regional plan has proposed the promotion of TOD to increase residential densities around both existing and proposed public transit nodes. It also argues for the development of two types of TOD — larger regional activity centres and smaller local transit oriented communities in line with Calthrope’s typology of Urban TOD and Neighbourhood TOD respectively.

Statutory Local Growth Management Strategies

The SEQ regional plan envisages active involvement of local councils in identifying potential TOD sites. It proposes that the specific scale, intensity and land use mix of each TOD to be determined through local growth management strategies (LGMS) and detailed structure planning processes. LGMS will seek to identify opportunities for infill and redevelopment; review land and infrastructure availability; accommodate targets for dwelling types, jobs etc.; and propose planning scheme amendments to ensure effective local growth management. LGMS identify core matters to be dealt with and suggest ways of achieving them. They involve the assessment of housing needs and required densities; the potential for infill, redevelopment and greenfield development; the potential for creating transit oriented communities; and the need for infrastructure extension. LGMS serve to establish the development intent for identified growth areas. Upon obtaining approval from the Regional Planning Minister, LGMS are to be attached as part of SEQ Regional Plan.

The Office of Urban Management (OUM) has accordingly been entrusted to provide guidelines to local councils for the preparation of local growth management strategies (LGMS) as well as TOD guidelines.

Governance Framework for TOD

The Office of Urban Management (OUM) works under the Department of Infrastructure and is responsible for managing TOD initiatives in the region. A TOD Task Force has been set up by the Queensland Government to advise OUM in the implementation of transit oriented development in SEQ. The task force focuses more on operational and technical matters. OUM also receives advice from the Regional Coordination Council (RCC), a higher level body comprising of the State’s and local government’s political leadership (e.g., comprising six Queensland government ministers and four local government mayors). OUM also interacts with the Integrated Transport and Planning (ITP) Division which looks after the railway corridor development and related matters such as those related to land purchase for TOD and station development. The ITP Division operates under Queensland Transport and liaises with Queensland Rail. (Refer Figure 1)
The OUM guides local councils through the statutory regional plan, providing design guidelines and technical assistance to facilitate the designing of TOD projects. At the implementation level, local councils prepare the local government management strategy (LGMS) and are responsible for identifying Activity Centres. They are also guided by the Department of Local Government and Planning (DLGP) which is primarily involved in local government issues and implementation of Integrated Planning Act.

When the Office of Urban Management (OUM) undertook the production of a Regional Plan in 2004, it was under the leadership of the Deputy Premier who was also the Treasurer. It has since been moved to Coordinator General’s office and is currently under the new Department of Infrastructure led by Treasurer and Minister of Infrastructure who is also responsible for urban management in SEQ. State government priorities for the region can be assessed by the fact that while regional planning for the rest of Queensland is conducted under the auspices of the Department of Local Government and Planning (DLGP), regional planning for SEQ falls under the purview of Department of Infrastructure.

### Transit Oriented Development Taskforce
Currently, this task force draws membership from representatives of state and local government departments (Queensland Transport, Queensland Rail, Office of Coordinator General, Queensland Treasury, Office of Urban Management), academia and the planning and development industry (Planning Institute of Australia, Property Council of Australia, Urban Development Institute of Australia).

One of the initiatives undertaken under the advice of the Taskforce includes the preparation of a *Transit Oriented Development Resource Manual* to assist local councils and developers in achieving best practice TOD outcomes. Another initiative has been the development of an information paper on *interim criteria for identifying potential TOD locations* (Queensland Government, 2006a). Some of the criteria identified are the quality of transit node; transit frequency; infrastructure capacity; land availability; market interest and amenity; and the role of the node within the broader network. These criteria have been developed as general considerations for local councils rather than precise criteria to follow in identifying TOD locations. Similarly, in collaboration with the University of Queensland, it has produced an *urban housing capacity template* to assist local councils in determining increased housing densities at selected locations (Queensland Government, 2006b).
Issues with TOD Initiatives in SEQ

Land Assembly

Land assembly for creating viable TOD projects is shaping to be a major challenge. The inability to assemble sufficiently large parcels of land is likely to preclude potential sites of infill development or ‘brownfield’ TODs, particularly in inner Brisbane suburbs. With the exception of large institutional landholders, the existing land ownership in established suburbs is likely to be too fragmented to allow assemblage of sufficiently large land parcels for investors. Government agencies involved in promoting TOD seem to have limited powers to effect land consolidation around potential TOD sites. This view is supported by the evidence of some very small TOD projects conceived within built up areas of Brisbane.

Because of a less proactive State government, the realisation of TOD projects at the local level in SEQ, has been left largely to market forces. This has sometimes resulted in piecemeal approach to TOD implementation by investors. A private developer FKP, for example, has proposed development of TOD projects around railway stations in the inner suburbs of Milton and Albion. However, the proposed TOD projects cover small areas, with a greater focus on designing individual building sites rather than effecting an overall integrated land use development for the larger area around train stations. In another case, South Bank Corporation attempted to initiate a TOD around the train station in South Bank with the involvement of the community and relevant state government departments. After much deliberation, however, the scale of the proposed TOD had to be revised and considerably down sized. Rather than a substantial TOD development as originally envisaged, the resultant proposal is largely limited to converting SBC’s car park into more intensive land use.

There is also a need felt among relevant practitioners for a specialised entity within the state’s institutional framework to serve as the main driving force in TOD promotion. The main task for such an entity would be to facilitate the negotiation and execution of land assembly projects. Such an entity could also investigate possible impacts of TOD initiatives on the local and regional property markets and also facilitate decision-making about the type and timing of infrastructure provision. Such an entity could also be legislated with the powers of land acquisition.

While the above functions could be accommodated within a revamped TOD Task Force, there also seems to exist an alternative proposal. As reported by James (2005) there is a proposal by the Australian Property Council to set up a TOD Corporation. Such an entity could identify potential TOD sites and also facilitate land assembly agreements. A sufficiently empowered corporation could explore the possibility of public-private partnership in land assembly projects so that costs and benefits of development could be shared between the development industry and the community.

TOD Initiatives by Queensland Transport

The Office of Urban Management is not the only proponent of TOD initiatives within the South East Queensland region. For example, Queensland Transport (QT) has recently bought land adjacent to Reedy Creek rail station at Varsity lakes to extend the Gold Coast rail line from Robina to Reedy Creek. QT has also completed a feasibility study to develop Maroochydore as a TOD site in partnership with the local council. Recently, QT in association with Caloundra city council and Stockland has conducted workshops to investigate the development of Kawana Town centre as a TOD with a multi modal transit corridor linking Caloundra to Maroochydore. The active involvement of QT in TOD initiatives seems to represent some level of competition rather than coordination between State government agencies and OUM.

TOD Manual

Design guidelines and manual for TOD projects would help remove uncertainty among practitioners involved in TOD related projects, including those working for government agencies, local councils or the private sector. Access to such resource would facilitate planners by enabling them to work out the opportunities and limitations that TOD projects at particular sites could offer. This information would help in the decision-making with regard to the preparation of their local
growth management strategies. The timely availability of TOD manuals could help local councils better identify potential for local TODs.

**Draft LGMS documents**

A review of draft local growth management documents prepared by councils such as Brisbane city, Logan city and Gold coast city show that they do not necessarily follow similar or comparable format (Brisbane City Council, 2007; Gold Coast City Council, 2007). The LGMS of Brisbane city council, for instance, does not discuss potential TOD sites within its boundaries except for those identified as major regional and activity centres in the SEQ Regional Plan. There is much focus on how to accommodate growth in the city by identifying housing targets in different areas of the city. Gold Coast city council’s draft LGMS, on the other hand, identifies a number of TOD sites within its boundaries. There is, however, little focus on the quality of the TODs in terms of land use mix and urban design. Lastly, with the recent Queensland government’s move to merge the local councils for efficiency gains, the LGMS produced by various local councils will have to be reviewed again in the light of restructured super councils.

**TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT IN PERTH**

**Strategic Metropolitan Planning**

There has been an amalgamation of portfolios within the Western Australian planning framework over the years, with the merger of Planning and Land ministries in the 1970’s. In 2001, transport planning and land use planning functions were merged into a uniform Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DPI). Perth also has a history of the enactment of redevelopment authorities including the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority, which is widely hailed for delivering a successful inner city TOD. Examples of suburban TOD initiatives include those undertaken at Midland and Armadale. Some essential infrastructure projects have been materialised through collaboration between local councils and the public transport regulator, such as the relocation of a train station into the revamped town centre of suburban Gosnells, reported by Newman (2005).

Planning and Development Act 2005 consolidates three separate planning Acts - the Western Australian Planning Commission Act 1985, the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act 1959 and the Town Planning and Development Act 1928 into one. It aims to provide “greater consistency and certainty in planning decision-making” and to “streamline procedures for the preparation and amendment of region schemes, the review of local schemes and the subdivision of land.” While it “requires the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) to give local planning schemes more weight”, it clearly defines the circumstances that would allow such schemes to be overridden to ensure State objectives are met (WAPC, 2006).

Currently regional strategies are governed by the State Sustainability Strategy (SSS), the Metropolitan Regional Strategy (MRS) and Network City policy. While Network City, has evolved within the context of ‘Hope for the future: The Western Australia State Sustainable Strategy’ (WAPC, 2004, p.3), it is primarily a product of extensive community consultation and a mega interactive forum of 1100 citizens. The Network City is a 25-year a spatial framework for metropolitan Perth integrating landuse and transport networks both within developed and new areas (Curtis, 2006). It focuses on the Perth and Peel region and is the main source of promotion of TOD. Network city can also be seen as the extension of Liveable Neighbourhoods, a planning code for new greenfield areas on trial since 1997. It is based primarily on AMCORDER (1995), promoting new-urbanist principles with emphasis on the development of ‘walkable communities’ (WAPC,1997).

Network City was adopted by the State government in 2004 as the metropolitan planning strategy for Perth and Peel region for the 2004 to 2029 period. It presents a framework for managing growth by means of assigning ‘activity centres’, ‘activity corridors’ and ‘transport corridors’. ‘Activity centres’ represent locations for a range of activities such as employment, retail, residential and entertainment, while ‘activity corridors’ house a variety of land uses that support
public transport. ‘Transport corridors’ are seen as high speed access routes including freight lines. (WAPC, 2004)

One of the seven components Network City strategy specifically deals with transport, while others also deal with integration of transport network and land use planning. Strategy 6.7 in the chapter on transport lists the option of realising TODs (WAPC, 2004, p.77). The document recognises that TOD may not deliver upfront infrastructure cost savings, justifying that with the resulting net community benefits (WAPC, 2004, p.106). Within this approach, the inner city TODs offer a chance to introduce higher density mixed land use integrated with the transport network – the aim of the policy. Fringe TODs are also promoted if they can support the cost recovery component for the extension of infrastructure.

Network City emphasises the need to look beyond localised concerns and rise above the NIMBY mentality towards greater sustainability goals. However, it recognises that the debate in the community about the merits of urban consolidation and setting up and enforcing growth boundaries is still on-going. It also recognises the ambiguity regarding the benefits of infill development in terms of savings in infrastructure costs. In recognition of these factors, Network City document presents itself more as a guide for an evolving strategy rather than a blueprint for development.

**Governance Framework**

The State’s peak strategic planning agency is the Western Australia Planning Commission (WAPC) which provides policy overview and develops strategies for the various regions in the WA including the Perth and Peel region. The Department of Planning and Infrastructure works under the WAPC and operates at the planning level. Local Councils also operate at this level and DPI receives input from them in terms of local planning schemes. (Refer Figure 2) There is also significant interaction with local councils whereby DPI facilitates the implementation of Integrated Transport Plans (ITP), the setting up of TravelSmart programs as well as the inception and implementation of TOD projects.

Other State government agencies involved such as Public Transport Authority, Department of Main Roads. ITP looks at improving the modal split and the physical facilities. Liaises with PTA/ Main Roads e.g. about the specific location and design of bus stops.

![Figure 2: Governance Framework for TOD Creation in Western Australia](image-url)
There are a number of agencies that operate at the implementation level which includes entities such as the Public Transport Authority (PTA), Department of Main Roads, LandCorp and area development authorities. Serving as an interface between planning and implementation, the TOD Coordination Committee is essentially a reference group with no decision making or enforcement powers. Chaired by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, it is comprised of senior and committed representatives from the key government agencies. The commitment and influence of its membership enables the effective coordination among the various agencies responsible for the creation and implementation of TODs.

The TOD Coordination Committee is considered to be very effective and it is widely believed among local planning professionals that Perth won PIA’s Urban Planning Achievement award because of it. The award recognises the practical mechanism of Perth’s TOD program for the delivery and implementation of TOD and especially acknowledges the “effective role of innovative leadership in urban planning to achieve the TOD objectives of the Network City” (PIA, 2005).

**DPI Supported Programs for the Integration of Land Use and Transport**

In Perth the integration of transport and land use planning involves two major programs in addition to TOD – Integrated Transport Plan (ITP), TravelSmart program. Through ITP the DPI engages with local councils and its relevant agencies to solve conflicts or bottlenecks caused due to a mismatch of transport network and land uses. It involves land use planners and transport planners working with their counterparts in local government. TravelSmart program is aimed at increasing people’s awareness about the choices of various modes of travel available to them.

The DPI has established a TOD Team within its office about a year and a half ago which currently comprises of four to five members, mostly planners with statutory planning experience. Their main role is to facilitate the implementation of TOD, arrange finances, work out statutory plans and development controls. The team is also engaged in looking at potential sites for TOD initiatives using multi-criteria analysis.

**Special Purpose Development Agents**

**LandCorp** - as an entity is similar to VicUrban in Victoria and LandCom in New South Wales. As the State government’s trading enterprise, it is required to turn in profit from its operations unless there are equity objectives involved. Its enabling Act empowers it to acquire planning rights of land similar to those of redevelopment authorities. It uses surplus government land which it may buy from WAPC, State agencies such as Public Transport Authority (PTA) or local government. LandCorp undertakes projects on government owned land to facilitate the achievement of State’s planning objectives. LandCorp has four areas of operation, depending upon the nature of the land, including the Perth and Peel region where the Network City strategy applies.

**Redevelopment Authorities** - A number of area redevelopment authorities have been set up within the Perth and Peel region. Some Activity Centres such as East Perth / Subiaco, Midlands and Armadale include a TOD component within their city centres. These authorities are based on Acts that provide them special planning powers including the power of compulsory purchase of land. The redevelopment authorities take over the area from the local council and assume planning controls for a stipulated time period. These authorities are directed by their Boards of Management which can consist of representatives from relevant agencies and the community.

In the case of Armadale, a recent redevelopment authority on the fringes of the city, the authority has a service provision agreement with LandCorp. However, it is an arms length financing arrangement with the authority run independently under its own Board of Management.

**Synergies between LandCorp and Armadale Redevelopment Authority**

The relationship between LandCorp and area redevelopment authorities in Western Australia has been evolving over time. LandCorp has been involved with the urban development of Joondalup for 30 years and continues to date (LandCorp, 2006). Its relationship with the more recent area redevelopment authorities such as Armadale has been modified from those with the ones before.
with a view to better capture the synergies between the two organisations. In the case of Armadale Redevelopment Authority (ARA), the salary of its core planning staff comes from LandCorp. The ARA also receives human resources and IT staff support from LandCorp.

While both LandCorp and area redevelopment authorities are created through legislative acts, the former focuses on the proper utilisation of government land while the latter operate on local council controlled land including private landholdings. They are expected to operate in a commercially viable manner when entering into a project partnership with other entities including private developers. However, profits can be made secondary to meeting State needs especially in cases involving social equity or net community benefits.

**Issues and Concerns**

In Perth, with relatively more activity going on in terms of implementation of TOD related projects, a different set of issues seem to emerge. These deal with the designing TOD and administration of the TOD areas within redevelopment authority areas.

**Persistence of Car Culture**

Whereas Subiaco TOD is widely seen as a great success, there is scepticism among many planners about its achievements in terms of car trip reduction among its residents. Similarly, while ARA stresses sustainability theme in the design of its various projects within the area, development control within Armadale Town Centre (TOD) specifies minimum car parking provisions rather than maximum. Clearly, while the breaking of car dependence is possibly the most important justification for TODs, this is one area not seriously addressed in TOD design. This issue is now presenting itself as a TOD design issue in the context of car parking provision for TODs.

**Provision of parking within TOD design**

The provision of car parking for commuters is proving to be a major urban design problem around the transit nodes within TOD. Satisfying the demand for park-and-ride facility consumes large portions of the TOD site. This not only reduces the amount of land available for high density development but also creates a partial barrier to the integration of the transit node and associated high density development with its surroundings. It essentially undermines the walkability of the development.

In inner city locations private developers may find the benefit in proposing multi-level lofts for park-and-ride facilities in return for air rights over the rail stations and park-and-ride facilities due to land values. However, the required strength of property market may not yet materialise at too many locations. In cases of TODs on greenfield sites or on the city’s fringe, the land may be available but the reliance on park-and-ride facility may be even higher, leading to massive spreads of car parks right around the transit node.

Agencies dealing with transport planning seem to attach a greater importance to locating the park-and-ride facility close to the transit node. They seem to relate public transport ridership directly to the availability of ample and conveniently located park-and-ride facility. Urban designers or physical planners, however, tend to believe that the ridership could be generated by providing the right amount, intensity and mix of land uses around the transit node. From this perspective, park-and-ride facility could be moved some distance away for the transit node. However, nobody seems to be certain what the right mix of land uses could be.

**Handing over the area back to local council by ARA**

When a redevelopment authority takes over an area it not only deals with planning permissions for various land uses but also takes over the urban design and site development of public spaces. These special purpose agencies have a mission to attract investment into the town centre which. They can facilitate this by insisting on quality development of the area. In the absence of any binding requirement to justify the expenditure to the council’s rates base, it could end up committing to maintenance costs that the council may not be able to afford once it re-assumes
An over-riding concern for high quality development may also take away the focus from affordable housing provision within the town centre.

Figure 3 provides a snap-shot comparison of the context under which TOD is implemented in the two regions of South East Queensland and the Perth and Peel region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Government’s approach towards TOD</strong></th>
<th>PERTH AND PEEL REGION</th>
<th>SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A more proactive role of state govt in TOD developments through LandCorp and area redevelopment authorities</strong></td>
<td>Greater dependence on guiding private sector investment through statutory instruments: Regional Plan and LGMS</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Governance Framework for TOD</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Major players: Dept of Planning &amp; Infrastructure (DPI), LandCorp, area redevelopment authorities, other State agencies (PTA, Dept of Main Roads, DWH, WALGA)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Major players: Office of Urban Mgmt (OUM), Queensland Transport, local councils, Department of Local Govt and Planning, local councils</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOD Coord Committee – DPI chaired, reference group only. But highly effective due to motivated representatives from key government agencies – cross-portfolio approach</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOD Task force – advisory committee with representatives of state and local government, development industry, academia</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOD Team at DPI</strong></td>
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<th><strong>Implementation of TODs</strong></th>
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<th>SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Area redevelopment authorities – with power of compulsory purchase, take over planning powers for the area for fixed time period from local council</strong></td>
<td><strong>Statutory local growth management strategy (LGMS) developed by local council</strong></td>
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<td><strong>LandCorp – identifies potential TOD projects on government owned land; in various partnerships with private sector</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOD Task Force – advice on preparation of resources/ reference material:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DPI’s TOD Team – facilitates site identification, design, statutory planning provisions, financing arrangements, etc.</strong></td>
<td>• guidelines for preparing LGMS</td>
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<td><strong>Initiatives supported by State government:</strong> Travel smart; Integrated Transport Plan (ITP)**</td>
<td>• TOD resource manual for TOD design</td>
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<td><strong>Redevelopment authorities usually can access funding for high quality urban development.</strong></td>
<td>• Interim criteria for identifying potential TOD locations</td>
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<td><strong>Urban housing capacity template</strong></td>
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<th>SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Land assembly by ARAs through negotiation / facilitation or compulsory purchase</strong></td>
<td><strong>No major land assembly initiative by State government for TOD in Brisbane</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LandCorp can similarly consolidate land owned by various government agencies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Qld Transport purchased land for Reddy Creek railway station in Gold coast</strong></td>
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<th><strong>Supporting programs</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Redevelopment authorities usually can access funding for high quality urban development.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Incentive system by BCC for sustainable design in terms of energy efficiency, water sensitive urban design, public transport linkages, affordable housing etc.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Incentive system by WAPC for sustainability measures</strong></td>
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**Figure 3: TOD Implementation Context: South East Queensland and Perth & Peel Region**
FINDINGS FROM A COMPARISON OF THE TWO STATES’ APPROACH TO TOD

Policy Settings

Strategic Planning incorporating TOD
There seems to be some similarity between Brisbane City Council’s City Shape LGMS document and Perth’s Network City’s strategic plan as both focus on activity centres and corridors to manage urban growth. Both envisage the creation of TODs at inner city and Greenfield locations.

Proactive-ness of State Government
The WA state government oversees regional planning within Perth assuming a more proactive role in the implementation of TOD projects as compared to its counterpart in South East Queensland. The WA government’s trading enterprise, LandCorp, and the various area redevelopment authorities enacted over time, take on an activist role in promoting higher density mixed land use development fully integrated with the transport network. While LandCorp seizes initiatives for development on government owned land by bringing together the various government land owning agencies, the area redevelopment authorities serve similar role where local schemes with private land ownership are involved.

In SEQ, there is a greater reliance of market forces for the realisation of TOD projects at the local level due to a less proactive State government. This has resulted in some half-hearted attempts as well as lost opportunities for creating effective TOD within Brisbane. It appears that without the provision of a robust land assembly mechanism such as that operating in Perth, opportunity for comprehensive development of TODs in SEQ will remain limited. Clearly the challenge of land assembly and facilitation of TOD inception could prompt the enactment of State government entities. These could be along the lines of those in Perth or in the shape of a TOD Corporation as suggested by the Property Council of Australia as reported by James (2005).

Statutory instruments
The SEQ state government’s proactive-ness is evidenced in the shape of statutory instruments such as the regional plan and LGMS to implement TOD. This seems to be in contrast to Perth where the Network City that practically oversees all strategic planning in the Perth and Peel region is not only seen to be flexible but is still evolving. Statutory tools promise to provide certainty for developers and communities about the nature of proposed development which can be positive incentive for developers to work on. Because it is still early stages of implementation, the merits of statutory instruments cannot be established. While monitoring the performance and effectiveness of these measures over time, it could be useful to explore the possibility of perhaps combining the use of such instruments with entities like LandCorp and redevelopment authorities like those operating in Perth.

Overcoming Local Politics
In the case of SEQ, although the document SEQ 2006-2026 provides a statutory basis for the region’s urban growth management, the process of identifying local TOD sites is controlled more by local councils through the preparation of LGMS. The problem with the LGMS prepared by the local council is there may be too much community pressure on the local government regarding higher density development. The lack of evidence of a strong commitment for implementing TOD projects within the LGMS may be partly explained by community concerns as well as time and resource limitations faced by local councils in preparing LGMS.

The fear of density which remains high on the list of challenges in promoting TOD is felt the greatest at the local level of government which is the closest level to the community. In the case of Perth, the creation of area redevelopment authorities provide State the option to wrest away much of the planning powers from local councils. Area redevelopment authorities take over the planning decisions process from the local councils for a specified time period which allows state
government to buffer the local councils from local political pressure. This seems to support Newman’s contention that the implementation of TODs cannot be left to local politics alone and that TODs require regional planning resources (Newman, 2005)

**Implementation**

**Cross-Portfolio Approach**

The current TOD Task Force in South East Queensland as well as the TOD Coordination Committee in Perth are both essentially reference groups. Neither of them have decision-making or TOD implementation powers. They both play an advisory role.

While the Task Force (in SEQ) is largely seen as a committee with the huge task of identifying and facilitating potential TOD projects, it seems to lack any force in the shape of planning or decision-making powers. On the other hand, the TOD Coordination Committee (in Perth) is widely seen as an effective entity within the Perth context. It provides an effective mechanism for the State government planning agency, DPI, to liaise across all key State government agencies and the key implementation agencies i.e. LandCorp and redevelopment agencies. With its membership drawn from across all major players in the implementation of TOD projects, it could be credited with overcoming the lack of coordination among government agencies as well as liaising with the development industry. This role for the Committee has been facilitated by the fact that the Planning ministry includes all key government agencies in one portfolio. As acknowledged by the recent PIA award, this committee provides the required leadership through a cross-portfolio approach to TOD implementation. The Taskforce (in SEQ) can thus be remodelled along the lines of the one in Perth to facilitate a cross-portfolio approach to TOD identification and implementation.

**Design Manuals**

In the case of SEQ, a number of guidelines are being finalised by the TOD Task Force. These seek to establish the locational criteria for TODs and provide a basis for the estimation of the extent of land uses to be supported by TOD. Such TOD design manuals would provide useful guidance to both developers and local councils. There is also talk about looking into creating design guidelines for climate responsive and distinctive TODs.

While WAPC’s Development Control Policy 1.6 in the case of Perth region specifically addresses TOD planning, it takes a “generalised rather than geographically place-based approach” (WAPC 2006a). This makes it too generic for practitioners to benefit from. Currently, work seems to be well underway for the publication of a ‘metro centres’ policy which will focus on establishing guidelines for the design of strategic activity centres within the Network City framework. It is hoped that this would serve to provide relevant guidelines for practitioners with respect to the required land use mix and densities in the shape of target ranges.

There seems to be a realisation of the need for resources that can provide practical and useful information to planners and practitioners dealing with the identification and creation of TOD projects in both states. Currently there seems to be uncertainty among practitioners, including those working for government agencies and private consultants, about the right mix of land uses for an effective TOD. Another major issue shaping up in the design of TODs is the accommodation of park-and-ride facility. While park-and-ride facilities are seen essential to guarantee the desired public transit ridership, they are also land consuming elements and can potentially hinder the integration of the transit node with the surrounding TOD. This is one aspect where both Perth and South East Queensland can learn from each other and perhaps undertake collaborative research.

**Conclusion**

A comparison of the two contexts has shown that even when the elements of strategic plans – activity centres and corridors – are similar, their presentation can be quite different. Compared to SEQ Regional Plan which emphasises statutory provisions, the Network City is presented in a more flexible manner, as an evolving strategy rather than a blue print. While both approaches to
regional planning may have their merits, the real difference between the two contexts comes from
the SEQ’s reliance on market mechanisms – having put in place statutory planning controls - to
deliver TOD. This approach does not seem be as effective as Perth’s approach of employing
special purpose development agencies. It could thus be concluded that there is merit in State
government taking a proactive stance in the promotion and realisation of TOD initiatives.

A comparison of the two governance structures reveals that TOD initiatives in the Perth region
are planned and implemented within a clearly defined governance framework. The active liaison
between the various government agencies, local councils and the DPI both operationally and
through the TOD Coordination Committee at the implementation level represents a cross-portfolio
approach to TOD implementation. The Perth model allows synergies to be created through
coordination and collaboration between the key players, and the avoidance of duplication of
effort. By comparison, the SEQ model presents a less integrated framework with apparently
lesser coordination between the OUM and Queensland Transport for example. The advisory
committee can play a crucial role as a reference group. Even without any decision-making
powers, it can still provide valuable leadership through active liaison and the generation of
information.

On a more specific and local level the facilitation of land assembly poses to be as a major
problem. This problem has been dealt with more effectively within the Perth region because of
the operation of special purpose agencies as well as an effective governance framework. These
are some examples of learning from experiences of TOD developments in two regions.

Postscript
A few weeks after this paper was submitted to the SOAC 2007 conference, some important
developments have taken place in South East Queensland that are compatible with the
conclusions drawn in this paper regarding TOD initiatives. (We have mainly argued in our paper
that, based on Perth’s experience, the State government in South East Queensland could take a
more proactive stance and move towards more integrated governance structures to ensure TOD
implementation.)

As part of its affordable housing strategy, the Queensland Government announced the
establishment of an Urban Development Authority tasked with acquiring and consolidating land
suitable for new housing and bringing the land quickly to the market. The authority has identified
two sites in inner Brisbane - Bowen Hills and Woolloongabba – as sites for demonstration
projects of transit oriented development providing mixed use and affordable housing near bus
and train stations. The authority has expressed its resolve to require developers to include
affordable housing on these designated TOD sites. To facilitate implementation, the State
government intends to establish a TOD Coordination Unit within the Office of Urban
Management.

A reshuffle of ministerial portfolios has also taken place, with the establishment of a newly
created Department of Infrastructure and Planning. This new department, headed by the new
Deputy Premier (formerly Minister for Transport and Main Roads), will bring together a number of
planning functions at the State level. While the exact scope is not known at this stage, the new
department will bring together the Office of Urban Management (SEQ Regional Plan) and the
Sustainable Planning division including its Regional Planning unit (formerly part of the
Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation).

These new developments will hopefully provide a sound basis for building viable TODs in South
East Queensland.
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