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| Reviewer comment | Response |
| Reviewer A:This paper explores an interesting topic about the role of state policy in implementing TOD in Western Australia.The paper's title is a bit misleading because it does not explore how to deliver development in TODs as much as it explores the extent that local land use plans across the Perth metropolitan region are consistent with state policy for TOD. A key question not addressed by the author(s) is the role of state government in TOD planning and implementation.  The integration of land useand transportation planning at the state level has been the subject of numerous "smart growth" studies and to a lesser extent, some literature has addressed the role of state government policy in TOD.  American examples include examples published by TRB, state TODs in places such as California, Oregon, Maryland, New Jersey and some recent articles that have compared TOD policies across states.An important question not clear to the reader is the extent that Western Australia is unique and what lessons are generalizable from this study. From my limited knowledge of the Australian planning system, just as in most countries, the extent to which states can implement TODs varies from state to state. Furthermore, the author(s) notes that Western Australia uses redevelopment agencies (created by the state) to implement TOD.  Wouldn't this factprovide evidence, at least to some degree, in the ability for the state to implement TOD?  The point is this:  even in a state where controls are extensive the success for implementing TOD attributed to state powers remains limited.  While the article provides detailed evidence about how many local zoning plans conform to state policy, is state policy anotherlevel of bureaucracy?  Even in this heavy-handed state, it appears that the state is not any more successful in implementing TOD as compared to otherstates without such policies (this of course would be a good discussion for the author to address in the paper).  Thus, what is the role of the state versus the local government in implementing TOD?  Should the state better spend their time providing other incentives, as addressed in the 2002 California Statewide TOD study, Factors for Success?Here are more specific comments:-no page numbers-1st sentence of the paper is awkward-5th para of Introduction, last sentence: what about the role of the local market?-4th para of Implementation: Local planning policy intentions: sentence says "other than retail." Should this be "other than residential."-Figure 3 appears to be unnecessary.  This data could be stated in the text as 2 of 5...-1st para of Implementation: On ground development change: "average an eight to ten year lead time between policy development and developmentcompletion."  What is this information based on?  Please cite if it comes from another study. -1st para of Discussion: "It is shown that there is a clear national and state..." When was "national" discussed?-2nd to last para of paper: "If local planners are to produce the required planning schemes attention must be paid to how State government can supportthis process."  This paper did not really discuss state supportive policies of TOD beyond state policy mandates for residential densities throughzoning.  Many other factors are important when implementing TOD, such as the cost of infrastructure, cleanup of brownfields, etc.  This paper didnot really discuss how the state can support implementation of TODs as it pertains to many of these key problems facing TOD implementation.Finally, one of the most difficult challenges for TOD is local opposition for higher densities and/or multifamily (including affordable housing). The author does not address this important point.  Does the state ofWestern Australia override local opposition?  If yes, please give some examples.  If no, then what is the use of state land use policies suggesting a min. density if the local powers are not going to allowdevelopers to adhere to the state policies.  This is a key question that should be addressed further.  The answer to this question could allow a more generalizable article that would appeal to planners across the globe. | Addressed – Paper’s title changed to more accurately portray focus, abstract also emphasises this.The paper does address the role of state government – page 4 describes State planning policy, page 6 describes how State implements policy.Addressed – added text to make clear that Perth is a case study and rationale for its use as a model (p 3), positioned Perth amongst approaches taken in other Australian cities (p 1) and amongst international experience (p1).Addressed - agree that this is the case and emphasised this throughout paper more clearly. Added use of incentives (p 15).Addressed – now inserted.Added the missing word ‘where’.Addressed (p3).Corrected.Agreed - Deleted.Addressed – see footnote 3. Addressed – ‘national’ was discussed in Introduction – now made clear that DoTARS policy is national policy.Now addressed – see discussion section.I agree that there are other factors – I have picked these up in the discussion section – however taking on board Reviewer C’s request to distinguish clearly between the empirical research (direct evidence) and discussion (hypothesis on explanations) I have referred to these issues in discussion as issues given that I have not researched them in this paper. |
| Reviewer C:Dear Editor and Author,This is potentially an interesting and relevant contribution for the journal. It focuses on the implementation issues surrounding TransitOriented Development (TOD) policies. Do TOD policies, and in particular their spatial components, get implemented as intended? The author researches this question in the case of TOD policies in Perth, Australia. The case is appropriate as it is one of the most deliberate attempts worldwide to move from car to transit oriented development patterns. However, there are some basic inconsistencies in the relationship between theory, evidence and outcomes that need to be dealt with before the paper can be published. I suggest a revised submission is invited addressing the following points.Major pointsTheory evidence relationshipIn the section “The TOD concept and implementation concerns” the author fist discusses literature on TOD implementation, then more general theory onthe policy implementation gap, and, finally, how both are translated in the research design. These three parts should be better articulated and integrated.First, when moving form the first (TOD literature) to the second (general literature), some lead in the text should be provided, as it is now a quiteabrupt transition.Second and more importantly, in the general theory part, the implication of and relationship between a ‘conformance’ and ‘performance’ view ofimplementation should be discussed. Are these alternative or rather complementary views? In which sense?Third, the author says that he/she will address both these aspects in the empirical research. However, this double perspective gets a bit lost because of the way the findings are presented and discussed. I suggest this is clarified by (a) - in the ‘Findings’ section - being more explicit about which findings are about conformance and which about performance and(b) - in the ‘Discussion’ section – more explicitly discussing the implications of each type of finding.Institutional context In the section “Planning Policy Capacity for TOD: Perth, Western Australia” there is a useful introduction to land use planning but there is hardly any mention of transport planning. TOD being all about theintegration of transport and land use planning this is an important omission. Transport, and particularly transit planning should be discussed, as well as its relationships with lands use planning. Furthermore, the paper is surprisingly silent on the role of market actors, and on the relationship between land use planning/planners and property market/developers. Is implementation of land use policies just a matter ofgovernment coordination? Or is coordination with the property market and its actors also important? How does this essential relationship unfold in the Perth context?Drawing conclusionsIn its empirical part the paper does not give direct evidence of what the reasons of the implementation gap are, it just identifies it. Of course, onthe ground of this description, hypotheses on explanations can be made, but they should be identified as such (as hypotheses, that have yet to betested). However, in the “Discussion” section the author tends now to ‘jump to conclusions’ and not only state with certainty what the explanations of the implementation gap are, but even what the solutionsshould be. For instance the author states:“Revisions of State policy over time have seen a shift from clear prescription to a period where density was ill-defined and this has proven counter-productive for the translation of state policy to the local level(the first stage of implementation).”But how do we know that this is the reason? It could, for instance, also be that the State is just not able to enforce its policies.There are more examples. I have for instance similar problems with the following passage, where a solution is also advanced: “This poses two challenges, first in conformance at the local planning level and second in the pace of change likely to be achieved. The aboveanalysis would suggest that there is little prospect of either occurring very quickly without the introduction of more rigorous assessment processes and the resources provided to local government to enable an expedited planning scheme review.”How sure can we be about this?But, on the basis of the evidence provided, also the following contention, while certainly a sensible hypotheses, does not seem the irrefutable truthit is contended it is:“It appears that only where Redevelopment Authorities are established that TOD policy gains most traction in relation to zoning …” and later:“These cases highlight the case that implementation is being achieved by the proactive actions of development agencies rather than through theconventional town planning process.”Thus and more in general, in this section the author should either (a) provide more compelling evidence for his/her statements, or (b) be more cautious in drawing conclusions. Furthermore, if the evidence remains what it is now, I suggest that the emphasis in the final discussion be above all on the recognition and articulation of the implementation gap, and only inthe second place on possible explanations of this gap, and on the need (and perhaps ways) of further researching them, in order to then explore potential solutions.Minor pointsOn p. 2 the author contends “The central question in this paper is whether the conventional planning system can implement transit oriented development.” It should, I guess, be “this” (i.e. Perth’s) ratherthan “the conventional” planning system. What is conventional? This can be different in different contexts, which are not researched here.After the section “Introduction” a paragraph summing up the steps in the research and the sections in the paper would be useful.The legend of figure 6a is not readable.An abstract is missing. | Addressed – these sections are now restructured to improve narrative.Thank you for this valuable question - Addressed – see section ‘Conceptual framework’.Agreed – new paragraph added to above section (p 3) and returned to in the Discussion section.Addressed (transport planning - p 6; markets - p3 and p4 and concluding paragraph – bearing in mind final point/response made by Reviewer A above).Addressed all points below – now clearly distinguished between research evidence and hypotheses requiring future research.As above – restructured paper as per point (b).Addressed – the three approaches to town planning are now clearly explained (p 4 – para 1 of research approach).Addressed (p4, following para 1).Agreed – can be resolved for publication.Added. |
| Reviewer D:Recommendation – C Resubmit: This article needs major changes and editing, but in general should be ready for publication after these changesare implemented.Review Summary The paper offers a quantitatively sound critique of implementation progress based on established TOD policy. It suffers from being primarily targeted ata local readership, and needs to broaden its appeal substantially before publication. The overt focus on a “town planning” perspective is another weakness.ReviewIs the paper appropriate for the Journal? Yes – the paper is generally appropriate for the Journal of Transport and Land Use, although would recommend the author needs to take time to consider the concept of  “integrated urbanism” and attempt to develop a more multi-disciplinary and even-handed discussion. The paper often seems to over-emphasize a “town planning” or “land use planning” point of view. Roughly equal emphasis needs to be given to the perspectives of urban disciplines including: real estate development, urban design and architecture, public transport planning etc. The author also needs to tryand project a more sophisticated and worldly perspective in the paper – this would include re-orienting the paper to an international audience, andre-engaging with a longer-term view of urban evolution. This may involve introducing references to classic urbanist texts (see recommended reading).What is the contribution of the paper? Does the article provide a critical evaluation of its subject?The primary contribution is the provision of a straight-forward and effective quantitatively-based analysis of whether a highly-promoted planning concept (TOD) is actually being implemented effectively in a particular location. The method of tallying-up density-based TODimplementation outcomes throughout the rail network in a particular city is useful - and assists to cut-through a lot of the self-promotion and deception that can surround urban planning policy discussion at thebureaucratic and political level, as well as among certain practitioners.The paper contributes by making an unambiguous, quantitatively rigorous, yet easy-to-understand assessment of failure-to-deliver on a key policydirection. This willingness to provide a clear critical perspective on a somewhat politically sensitive question should be supported by the journal and by serious researchers.As stated above, the paper does however need to re-orient itself to provide findings and recommendations that are of interest to a broad and sophisticated international audience. The research into the situation in Perth needs to be utilized as a “case study” that is relevant to practitioners and researchers outside of Perth and Australia.Is the paper ready for publication?No, not at this stage. The paper would benefit substantially from a sustained period of revision work. Revisions are needed to: •       Substantially shorten the overall length to around 12 pages (at current formatting). 15 pages absolute maximum•       Provide better emphasis to the visual/graphic elements of the paper. This would include additional photographic evidence of some of the precincts described, and some sense of the general state of the Perth rail network via photographic means.•       Completely re-write the introductory and concluding sections of the paper to address a sophisticated international audience. Perth must be used as a case study to provide recommendations and lessons that are relevant to a much broader audience.•       Condense the background discussion of planning in Perth considerably. A short summary of the past 10-20 years of planning change in Perth is appropriate, but detailed discussion of minor changes in public policy should be avoided. The overall discussion of the background in Perth should be far punchier, in something of a “summary form”, and very high-impact.•       Focus greater time and attention on the critique of policy and outcomes in Perth – this is the strongest part of the paper.•       Move away from language that positions the paper into a “town planning” perspective. The paper needs to offer an urbanist perspective, not a town planner’s viewpoint. The town planning aspect of transit oriented development is among the most straight-forward of the disciplinary factors – it is literally a matter of planners zoning appropriately in theright locations. The design, public transport planning, and real estate development components of TOD are generally far more complex and challenging than the tasks which are allocated to the town planner’sskill set. As far as the focus remains on town planners, the paper needs to develop a more robust critique of the implementation success delivered by the members of this disciplinary field. The paper seems to be implying that it is the lack of appropriate zoning (a town planner’s responsibility) as much as any other factor that is contributing to non-delivery. If this isthe case, the critique of the planning discipline and of local planning professionals needs to become clearer and more robust.•       Similarly – the paper needs to engage with a healthy amount of urban design and public transport planning discussion in particular. This is absolutely necessary in order to have a balanced “urbanist”perspective, and especially in a TOD context.•       Try and synthesize the main factors contributing to “non-performance”. This might be best delivered in a tabular format which summarises the main quantitative evidence, while also providing spacefor brief qualitative commentary•       Try and include at least a brief discussion of local industry competency and skills for TOD, and the impact this may be having on implementation progress.What are the strengths and weaknesses of the article?Main strengths:•       The quantitative analysis method employed•       Does provide a critique of TOD implementation outcomes, rather than avoiding difficult issues as so much of the commentary on TOD in Australiaor the USA tends to doMain weaknesses:•       Needs to be more selective about the information and discussion provided. A paper that is 40-50% shorter than the current paper will be a far better paper.•       Needs to be stronger visually, including a sense of what TOD, station precincts, and public transport in Perth actually look like. Suggest spending time capturing the city and its transit infrastructurephotographically for the benefit of a sophisticated international audience of urbanists – and then presenting some of that in the paper.Does the author use, acknowledge, and document sources appropriately?Yes, generally. More references, and a greater diversity of literature would improve the paper.Are appropriate illustrations provided? Is the illustrative material of good quality and related well to the text?As discussed above – the paper needs to be far stronger visually, including better use of current visual and graphic resources, plus the inclusion of new photographic images of high quality.Other issuesDelete the appendix entirely – does not add anything substantial. | Paper is deliberately focussed on the town planning perspective. His approach is supported by the other two reviewers. Further explanation now added (p. 4) – thus: “As noted above, implementing TOD requires the actions of many public agencies, both land use planning and public transport. The role of market actors (property market/developers) and local community are also key factors for successful implementation of TOD. It is not the intention of this paper, however, to examine all actors; instead this paper plays a deliberate role in examining one dimension – town planners. There is a need to provide an in-depth critique of the contribution of town planning to TOD. Rigorous monitoring of the implementation of town planning policy is rarely undertaken and the findings will show that changes to town planning practice are needed if effective and timely implementation is to occur.See response above – other actors in TOD are acknowledged. Positioning of the Perth case to international experience is present in paper.Agreed – this is why this paper is needed in current form – this sort of rigorous evaluation is rare in TOD and in town planning literature.Agreed – addressed in Research approach section. Research also positioned relative to international experience in Introduction.Addressed – paper substantially re-structured and revised.Addressed - Three photographs now added.Addressed.Addressed – see table 1.Addressed – reformatted to address advice from Reviewers A and C.Discussed above. The notion that town planners simply zone development in the right locations is not supported – town planners have many roles (see last para p2/ p3.). Critique of relationship between public transport planning and land use planning is provided (last para p 8).Critique of successes and failures of different planning approaches now emphasised.Discussion section addresses this – but as advised by other two reviewers clear distinctions made between what has been researched and there is evidence for and what is hypothesized for future research.Not researched – but added as an item for further research in final paragraph.Addressed – see above.Addressed – see above.Seminal authors are included and a diverse range of literature - more references have been added where appropriate.Discussed above.Disagree – Appendix now Table 2 – it is important that evidence for findings presented in this paper is given – this is valuable for future/further research by others. Very little of this kind of research has been carried out – often due to lack of data. |