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**Urban Developmentsin Beijing, London, Mexico City Set New Standards as Real Estate Developers Increase Human Footprints and Lower Carbon Footprints**

***ITDP Releases New Guide to Transit-Oriented Development;
Leading Real Estate Projects Embrace Mass Transit, Pedestrians and Sustainability***

**New York, NY (November 21, 2013)—**A new movement in green living—eschewing the automobile-based lifestyle for walking and public transit-oriented cities—is being reflected in recent developments in cities around the world, according to a new scorecard produced by the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP). Among many others, fashionable real estate projects designed by leading architects for London, Beijing, and Mexico Cityembrace the concepts highlighted by ITDP’s new publication, the Transit-oriented Development (TOD) Standard.

“Building next to mass transit is a terrific first step,” said Walter Hook, ITDP’s Chief Executive Officer, “but genuine transit-oriented development also needs to be completely walkable, cycle-friendly, and to make car-free lifestyles not merely possible but highly attractive. Increasingly, these concepts are being embraced by development projects and districts around the globe, making for cleaner air and more livable and sustainable cities. We salute them and intend to reinforce it with our TOD Standard.”

The TOD Standard is based on ITDP’s [*Eight Principles of Transport in Urban Life*](https://go.itdp.org/display/live/Eight%2BPrinciples):

* **Walk**: Develop neighborhoods that promote walking by shortening street crossings, emphasizing pedestrian safety and convenience and creating animated spaces for pedestrians.
* **Transit**: Locate developments near high-quality public transport so that homes, jobs and services are within walking distance of transit stations, and then ensure robust ridership numbers able to support high quality transit service.
* **Cycle**:Prioritize non-motorized transport networks by designing streets that emphasize bicycle safety and convenience and provide secure parking for bicycles.
* **Connect**: Create dense networks of streets and paths that ensure short and direct routes for pedestrians and bicycles.
* **Mix**: Provide a combination of activities along the streets and paths, balancing housing, jobs, commerce and services with parks and open spaces so that many daily trips are short and walkable and neighborhoods remain lively during extended hours.
* **Densify**: Build vertically with taller buildings around quality transit instead of outwards with sprawling suburbs, so that more people can access more activities through walking and transit.
* **Compact**: Make for shorter commutes by focusing new development in urbanized areas with transit options
* **Shift**: Limit road space and parking to discourage driving during peak traffic periods.

“In this day and age, automobile traffic should not have such a stranglehold on city streets around the globe,” said Luc Nadal, ITDP’s Technical Director for Urban Development and the lead author of the report. “The principles we have been promoting are the basis fora paradigm shift in urban and transport planning that focus on the movement of people, not cars. The TOD Standard fleshes out these principles with specific performance objectives and measurable indicators.”

Nadal pointed to three developments—in London, Beijing, and Mexico City—that showcase many of ITDP’s TOD principles.

**Definingthe TOD Trend in London**

In 2002, the financial services firm Legal & General, which owned a mundane 1950s office development, once occupied by the UK Ministry of Defense near the Tottenham Court Road Underground station in central London, worked with developer Stanhope PLC and architect [Renzo Piano](http://www.rpbw.com/project/60/central-st-giles-court-mixed-use-development/) to create a new development that would revitalize the neighborhood. The development, called Central Saint Giles Court, in many ways embodies the standards for TOD.

Central Saint Giles Court is a distinctive brightly colored mid-rise development that mixes class A office space with large floor plates and luxury and affordable residential units. At the ground level, the site is organized around a public plazaanimated by restaurants and retail stores and traversed by numerous public walkways. While providing more than 66,000 square meters of floor space, it has only ten parking spots, reserved for disabled people. For access, it relies onthe Underground less than 250 meters away, multiple bus routes, and walking and cycling. 200 bike racks are available in the basement as well as a bikeshare station.

The list of high-profile corporate tenants, including Google, NBC Universal, and Burson-Marstellar, and of premium restaurateurs such as Jamie Oliver and Oliver Peyton, suggest that car-free development is fully compatible with commercial success.

**Moving Beyond The Gated Superblock in Beijing**

A characteristic trait of recent urban development in China is large high-rise developments protected by secured gated and surrounded by overlywide roads. SOHOChina, one of China’s largest real estate firms, chose to move against this trend with a series of pedestrian and cyclist-friendly, high-density and mixed use developments in Beijing with their grounds fully open to the public.

The JianWaiSoho development, for example, is located in the heart of Beijing’s Central Business District, opposite the China World Trade Center, a little more than 250 meters from the Guomaosubway station where two lines connect. Multiple bus routes also serve the site. Designed by [Riken Yamamoto](http://riken-yamamoto.co.jp/index.html?page=ry_proj_detail&id=72&lng=_Eng), the development features 11 white rectangular towers composed of work-live units, and 2 office towers. 3 to 4 storey-high retail and restaurant bases surround the site and are criss-crossed by publicly accessible open space and pedestrian walkways .Both the internal street and the public streets on the site’s periphery have protected cycleways. Free bicycle parking is provided underground, protected from the elements.

“The developers and the architect did a great job at incorporating walking, cycling and public transportation access. They also succeded in building a quite dense and mixed use development that feels light, airy, and lively. JianWaiSoho has quickly become a Beijing icon,” noted Luc Nadal. “The project loses points on the TOD Standard’s scoresheet mainly due its large underground garage. Obtaining a variance from the parking minima imposed by the city regulations might have been challenging but would have secured full score and probably not affected the projects marketability, given its first rate accessibility.”

**Building into Mexico City’s New Transportation Networks**

[Reforma 222](http://www.reforma222.com/index.php), designed by Teodoro González de León, is a smaller project that has also embraced many of the elements in the TOD Standard. Built on AvenidaPaseo de la Reforma, Mexico City’s premier boulevard, the complex has become a staple of Mexico City’s skyline.

Reforma 222 contains 173,000 square meters of retail, offices and living space. Retail in the development is anchored by a glass-enclosed shopping street that stretches the length of the complex, with benches, fountains and other public spaces throughout.

The transportation elements of the development are superb. Reforma 222 is situated next to a Bus Rapid Transit stop on Calle Insurgents Sur on the south side. On the north side is Paseo de la Reforma, with its wide walkways and bike lanes—and no motorized vehicles on Sundays. Automobile parking, as with JianWaiSoho, has been relegated to the basement levels of the development.

“In these and other world-class projects, leading architects have embraced the spirit of Transit-Oriented Development with tremendous success,” concluded Walter Hook. “Together, these principles foster high-quality lifestyles that are less dependent on cars, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide a modern face to sustainable urban development.”

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The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) is a global nonprofit that helps cities design and implement high-quality transit systems to make communities more livable, competitive and sustainable. ITDP works with cities worldwide to bring about transport solutions that cut greenhouse gas emissions, reduce poverty, and improve the quality of urban life. Please visit [www.itdp.org](http://www.itdp.org) for more information.