

The Forefront at Thompson's Point | Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan

September 13, 2011



Project Description

The Forefront at Thompson's Point is a unique project proposed for the City of Portland. It consists of a transit-oriented mixed-use development whose program elements range from Class A office space, a 125-room hotel, an event center that will be the new home of the Portland Red Claws NBA D-League team, a concert hall, a restaurant, a sports medicine facility, a parking garage, and various public amenities such as pedestrian/bike trails and access to the Fore River. The Forefront will pursue a minimum of LEED-Silver certification, and is intended to be a gateway development that will bring life to an under-utilized part of the City—a place as well as a project.

As part of its approvals for this project, the City of Portland will require the creation and issuance of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan; given the pivotal role that efficient public access to and from the Forefront will play in its commercial success, a thoughtful approach to TDM is crucial. What follows is a Transportation Demand Management Plan that addresses and the City's sustainability goals by outlining and committing to a series of measures that encourage and promote bicycling, walking, carpooling, and use of public transit.

Given both the scope of this mixed-use project, and the necessity of having buy-in from our prospective tenants, the proposal that follows contemplates a two-tiered approach to the TDM, consisting of:

- (a) Macro TDM: an overall approach to TDM for the Forefront, consisting of TDM goals, the proposed methodologies for undertaking them, including steps for implementation, approaches to staffing, modes of monitoring and assessing successes and areas for improvement, and proposed frameworks for more tenant-specific plans, and:
- (b) Micro TDM(s): tenant-specific plans, the “DNA” of which is articulated in the Macro TDM but which are to be more fully elaborated in dialogue with the Forefront’s respective tenants (namely, office users, hotel operator, restaurant operator, sports medicine facility operators, event center operator, concert hall operator, parking garage operator), each of whom will have different constituencies with varying travel patterns and habits, and who will thus require different approaches which must nevertheless be well orchestrated. Although it is not practicable to outline these plans in substantive detail until more formal agreements with tenants are in place, it is important to stress that tenants are expected to be active participants in the overall TDM goals and measures elaborated here, and to take active roles in defining their own mechanisms for participating in these goals; this expectation will be outlined in lease arrangements with tenants.

In its utilization of this tiered approach (“macro” and “micro”), the proposed framework effectively functions as a project-wide Transportation Management Association, linking the various operating businesses in a set of shared strategies, and ultimately coordinated by the TDM Coordinator, of which more below.

The Forefront will be a major employer as well as a major draw for visitors, from Portland and beyond. Thus its approach to TDM represents a significant opportunity to reduce the number of Single Occupant Vehicles (SOVs).

Proximity to Transit

The Forefront is a unique project in the City of Portland, and for that matter, the state of Maine. Thompson’s Point lies adjacent to the Portland Transportation Center, which hosts the following transit services:

- *Downeaster (AMTRAK)*: This intercity passenger rail service provides connections from Portland to Saco, Old Orchard Beach, and other southerly stops including Boston’s North Station. The service will connect northerly to Freeport and Brunswick, providing a direct link to the Maine Eastern Railroad, which provides seasonal service as far as Rockland in 2012. The service currently runs five round trips to and from North Station, with an additional trip anticipated following the opening of the extension to Brunswick.
- *Concord Coach (Formerly Concord Trailways)*: This intercity bus service provides non-stop service to South Station in Boston, and northerly both to Augusta and Bangor, Maine, as well as the mid coast region. During the day, buses arrive and depart about once per hour. This service allows for connections to various intercity buses, Amtrak and MBTA commuter rail services at South Station, as well as direct connections to all terminals at Boston’s Logan International Airport. In addition, the Bangor bus allows for a connection to the Cyr Bus service, providing a once-daily connection to several destinations in Aroostook County.
- *Metro Route #5, Maine Mall*: Portland METRO provides twice an hour service to the Portland Transportation Center with other major stops including the Maine Mall and

UNUM. It also allows for access to the Portland International Jetport and the Elm Street METRO facility. A limited service combining Routes 1 and 5 is provided on Sundays.

Given its adjacency to these amenities, the Forefront is uniquely suited to take advantage of non-motorized vehicle trips, especially transit trips.

Further, the Forefront has the opportunity to pursue water shuttle and water taxi service from the site to downtown Portland and other locations in Casco Bay. The Forefront will partner with Portland Trails to upgrade the existing public trail around the Thompson's Point peninsula; working collaboratively with the City, the PTC, Portland Trails, MDOT and others this trail may be able to be better linked with the larger trails network. The use of bicycles and other non-motorized modes of conveyance by employees and visitors is something the Forefront will encourage (of which more below).

Purpose of Plan

The City of Portland requires the creation of a Transportation Demand Management Plan for all projects in excess of 50,000 square feet, or with 100 or more employees or students. The Forefront at Thompson's Point meets both of these criteria. However, in the case of this project, the TDM Plan serves a series of important needs. Given the designation of the Forefront as a Transit Oriented Development (TOD), a TDM plan is key to maximizing the synergies between the project and the transit modes (existing and not yet existing) adjacent to it. "Transit Oriented Development," as the Federal Transit Administration defines it, is "compact, mixed-use development within walking distance of public transportation," and TOD is "a key element of livable and sustainable communities." As the TFA notes, there is a well-documented symbiotic relationship between economic development and transit, and a convergence of public and private interests around TOD, which "increases transit ridership and reduces automobile congestion, providing value for both the public and private sectors."

To this end, the objectives of the Forefront's TDM plan are:


- Make maximum use of existing transit infrastructure adjacent to the project
- Propose partnerships with the City, MDOT and others aimed at increasing transit opportunities and, in the words of MDOT, contribute to providing "a safe, efficient and reliable transportation system that supports economic opportunity and quality of life."
- Reduce peak hour trip impacts to, and the effects of traffic congestion upon, adjacent roadway infrastructure
- Reduce the amount of needed parking on-site, and thus the amount of land that could have a higher and better use than surface parking
- Encourage healthy activities such as biking, kayaking, and walking among Forefront employees and visitors

It is important to note that this Plan should not be viewed as a series of fixed strategies. Rather it is a living document intended to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis as the Forefront works with its tenants to address changes in local transportation patterns, preferences, and prices; by means of effective coordination, goal-setting, and goal-monitoring measures the Forefront will endeavor to reach the goals articulated in this Plan in a way that is not financially or operationally burdensome to the tenants who ultimately must support the Plan. Ultimately, the goal will be to make significant reductions in peak hour single-occupancy vehicle (SOV)

activity on the local street network as well as the need for on-site parking in a way that is financially and operationally sustainable for all concerned.

Employee Transportation Coordinator (TDM Coordinator)

The Forefront at Thompson's Point will employ a TDM Coordinator, charged with coordinating the TDM plan. The TDM coordinator will liaise with the chief operating officers of each of the Forefront's tenant organizations in order to create an effective overall approach to the following goals:

- Coordinate and promote rideshare opportunities
- Coordinate and promote the use of the following alternatives to SOV travel:
 - AMTRAK
 - Concord Coach and other bus lines as may be applicable
 - METRO
 - U Car Share
 - Car rental companies
- Monitoring parking usage in conjunction with parking facility management
- **Overseeing event scheduling** 
- Encouraging the greater use of bicycling, walking, and bus-based transit
- Overseeing ongoing monitoring and updating of the plan
- Convening a committee, ideally comprised of decision-makers representing each of the tenants/users at the Forefront, who will assist the coordinator in TDM planning and assessment
- Filing annual reports with the City

Given the centrality of the event center to the overall success and vitality of the project; given that the majority of traffic demand will be attributable to this and the adjacent concert hall; and given that the success of the event center depends upon efficient management of traffic and parking use by all the various uses (including parking use by visitors to the Portland Transportation Center), it is anticipated that the TDM Coordinator for the project will be a staff member of the event center's operating company.

The TDM Coordinator will work with tenants at the MICRO TDM level to explore how to create effective partnerships and incentive packages with AMTRAK, Concord Coach, and METRO; the Coordinator will liaise with tenants and help them identify strategies such as incentives (free or subsidized bus passes for employees, gift coupons or periodic prize drawings to foster use of alternative modes) and how to establish subsidies and payroll deductions for employee transit passes where this is appropriate for a tenant.

Surveys - Employees

Six months after initial occupancy of the Forefront facilities, and annually thereafter, Forefront employees will be surveyed regarding their transportation choices such as automobile/bicycle/

motorcycle-scooter ownership, parking demand, and the frequency of trips using bicycling, walking, U Car Share, carpool/vanpool, and the bus. The survey will follow the format of the “TDM2go Employee Survey”, a copy of which is attached hereto, but may be expanded from time to time by the TDM Coordinator. The surveys will be conducted to determine:

- Mode of travel to and from work (car/carpool/biking/walking/bus)
- Preferences or concerns with model of travel
- The flexibility and receptivity of employees to utilizing various travel modes to access Thompson’s Point (and, crucially, to ascertain whether individual employees make use of multiple modes during the course of a given year, or a given season)

Various questions will be created in the survey to determine which measures to encourage increased use of transit, for example, either via costs for parking or stronger subsidies of METRO passes, etc. The TDM Coordinator may seek to partner with the academic and/or the public sector, and public funding, to increase the efficacy of these surveys and mine the information contained therein.

Surveys - Visitors

For visitors to the Forefront, surveys will also be included. These will be provided in the following manner:

- Conference packet for convention employees
- With ticket receipt for concert goers
- Inside game pamphlet for Red Claws fans

The surveys will be conducted to determine:

- Mode of travel to and from a conference, concert or game (car/carpool/biking/walking/bus)
- Preferences or concerns with model of travel
- The flexibility and receptivity of visitors to utilizing various travel modes to access Thompson’s Point.

Surveys will need to be simple and convenient; they could be filled out at a Red Claws game, or completed with a link on-line (such as Survey Monkey) to do it afterward. Hotel guests may represent an important source of survey information. Various questions will be created in the survey to determine measures to encourage increased use of transit, for example, either via costs for parking or greater promotion of transit uses. The TDM Coordinator will work with the tenants at the MICRO TDM level to determine what kinds of incentives could elicit consistent and engaged participation in these surveys.

Car Pooling and Sharing

Through various promotional strategies (flyers, email blasts, web updates, social media, and occasional gatherings) the Forefront TDM Coordinator will make visitors, workers and guests aware of and encourage use of these services,

U Car Share/Rental Cars

Portland is one of 20 cities in the United States served by U Car Share. In Portland, the service currently provides a total of four vehicles. These vehicles are available on an hourly or daily basis. It is recommended that the Forefront negotiate the use of two additional vehicles with U Car Share for visitors to use on an as-needed basis, as well as traditional rental cars. This will allow for the use of a car for certain trips, which can aid in a traveler to or from the Forefront to choose transit for a mode. Information will be provided to hotel guests, office workers, and convention attendees. Following the first survey, additions to U Car Share may be made if employees desire their use in significant numbers; U-Car share may be an attractive option for local residents who are employed by one of the various tenants at the Forefront.

- Primary User: Visitors, Employees (if found desirable)
- Responsibility: Forefront, U Car Share, Rental agencies

Carpooling/Vanpooling

The TDM coordinator, working in conjunction with the GO MAINE Commuter Services Program, will work with the employers located at the Forefront to locate employees with similar schedules and home addresses to create a carpooling or GO MAINE vanpooling plan. Working with the employers, the TDM coordinator will serve as a resource in devising incentives for those employees who participate. A reasonable portion of the preferred parking spaces to be established shall be dedicated to U-Car Share/carpool/vanpool parking in order to incentivize these alternatives, and shall be designated as such by means of signage.

- Primary User: Employees
- Responsibility: Forefront

Education for Visitors

As discussed, the Forefront's TDM coordinator will provide transit route maps, schedules, and ticket information in packets for visitors. There will also be a travel kiosk in the event center offering interactive Google-based travel planning with various vehicular modes; in addition, maps, routes, and ticket information will be posted clearly in the entry areas at the event center and the office buildings. The TDM coordinator will be available, in person and/or virtually, to assist visitors and employees who have questions about travel tips and ideas.

- Primary User: Visitors
- Responsibility: Forefront

Submission of Monitoring Information/Updated TDM Plan

Based upon the results of the monitoring, the Forefront will update the TDM Plan and submit a draft plan to the City's TDM Manager for review and comments.

The primary goal would be to reduce employee and visitor SOV trips to 80 percent of the total trips, at a minimum, within the first five years of the project.

The secondary goal for the initial year will be to reduce the parking demand five percent from the calculated demand, with additional annual reductions of five percent, until parking demand is reduced by a minimum of twenty percent (e.g. 290 vehicles out of an original 1,450). This aggregate targeted reduction shall also include individual targets for the following alternative modes: increase use of transit by employees and visitors by 5% annually; increase carpooling and vanpooling by employees and event attendees by 5% annually; increase bicycle and pedestrian trips by employees and visitors by 5-7% annually; until the overall goal of a 20% reduction is reached. The goal will be to achieve this overall 20% reduction by the end of the fifth operating year. At this point, it would be appropriate to reassess the ways in which the TDM plan should be recast in order to set additional goals for the sixth operating year and beyond. Each monitoring period will be accompanied by a parking count of the Forefront's facilities, in accordance with the methodology discussed in the parking count section.

In our amended Traffic Impact Study, with an addendum dated 30 August 2011, we have noted this reduction goal of 20%, which we feel is an ambitious albeit achievable goal.

An important responsibility for the TDM Coordinator will discuss future options as they become available with the City of Portland and GO MAINE, an organization charged with finding transportation options for the state.

Transit TIF Opportunities for Single Occupancy Reduction

The City of Portland designated the Thompson's Point Transit-Oriented Development and Tax Increment Financing District and adopted a development program therefor pursuant to Chapter 206 of Title 30-A of the Maine Revised Statutes, as amended, by action of the Portland City Council on June 20, 2011; the City submitted the resultant Credit Enhancement Agreement to the Department of Economic and Community Development for its review and ultimate approval, creating the Thompson's Point Transit-Oriented Development and Tax Increment Financing District and Development Program. The City designated the Thompson's Point Transit-Oriented Development and Tax Increment Financing District, adopted the related Development Program, and entered into the related Credit Enhancement Agreement in order to induce the Developer to redevelop Thompson's Point into a gateway destination in a manner that includes a substantial investment in infrastructure, including a large above-ground parking structure, transportation improvements, creation of an at-grade public rail crossing, extensions of public roads, utility investments and expanded walking and biking trails, and to support the Developer's investment into the Project by enabling the City to contribute toward the capital cost of the Project in the amounts contemplated by the Development Program and the Credit Enhancement Agreement; and the City Council voted unanimously to capture one hundred percent of the net new tax revenue generated by the Forefront and to dedicate its share of said revenue to funding alternative transportation.

The City may wish to consider utilizing its portion of net new tax revenue generated by the Forefront, and captured by means of the Transit TIF, to fund the following initiative:

Funding of METRO Route 5E

Forefront will explore with METRO and the City of Portland the feasibility of an additional bus service running mainly on the Route 5 route. Potentially called Route 5E, this bus would serve as

an express service and would run seven days a week. It would stop at the Portland Jetport, Portland Transportation Center, the Forefront, the Greyhound Terminal at the intersection of St. John and Congress Street (inbound only), and the Metro Pulse Center on Elm Street. It would be clearly marked as an express bus to major transit hubs. The provision of a single bus would allow for hourly service, and would be in addition to the existing Route 5. Those visitors arriving at the Portland Jetport will be given passes for two rides on the 5E service (or the 5). The Forefront will work with METRO to explore the potential for a stop at the Forefront for the 5 line.

- Primary User: Visitors
- Responsibility: City of Portland (Transit TIF)

Additional Transit Opportunities

The Forefront will generate substantial tax revenue that will be used by the City for transit funding. The City has requested that the Forefront play an integral role in working with the City to define and establish “Transit TIF”-funded programs.

Program Elements

The following components are to be incorporated into the Forefront’s development program:

Bicycle Parking

In addition to the standard bicycle racks provided outside of the buildings at the Forefront (anticipated to include 88 bicycle spaces in racks distributed around the site per site plan requirements), the developer will endeavor to incorporate secure storage for up to 150 bicycles inside the facilities for tenants who wish to have them. These spaces are envisioned to be wall-mounted lockable racks within controlled-access rooms. This configuration will provide for bicycle security, convenience, and protection from the weather. Similarly to carpoolers, bicyclists will be given stickers for their bicycles that would have matching numbers with a specific bicycle locker, which would come with a locker-specific bicycle lock. The space would either be in the office component or the convention facility component, depending upon the work location of the employees.

- Primary User: Employees
- Responsibility: Forefront

Scooter/Motorcycle Parking

50 spaces are recommended for this use, with the potential for more in the future. Those using scooters or motorcycles will also obtain a ticket to be matched with a specific space in the Forefront garage. These spaces may be subject to random compliance checks.

- Primary User: Employees
- Responsibility: Forefront

Bus Shelter

The Forefront is willing to locate a bus shelter on site, for those coming on and off the 5E bus (discussed above), which will further encourage use of buses by visitors and employees alike.

- Primary User: Visitors, Employees
- Responsibility: Forefront

Peninsula Shuttle

On days with conventions, should attendee demand warrant it, the Forefront may operate a van-based shuttle that will take visitors to major points of interest on the Portland Peninsula, including Congress Square, Monument Square, and Commercial Street. This shuttle will run regularly as may be warranted by demand, and shall be free of charge for conference attendees. Following an initial survey, if it is determined that employees at the Forefront would strongly desire to have access to a shuttle, a reduced service during lunch hours may also be provided.

- Primary User: Visitors, Employees (if found desirable)
- Responsibility: Forefront

Parking Demand and Supply

As discussed in the parking calculations, based on shared parking calculations, and without accounting for access to transit, the Forefront will typically incur a peak weekday parking demand of approximately 1,450 spaces, and up to 1,900 spaces during special concert events. Proposed for the facility will be a 700-space parking garage and surface parking, potentially for a total of 1,450 spaces.

The Forefront proposes to provide:

- 1,400 automobile parking spaces (a portion, to be determined, will be dedicated for the preferred use of hybrid/electric vehicles)
- 150 bicycle parking spaces (with secure facilities, contingent upon tenant interest)
- 50 motorcycle/scooter parking spaces

Parking for Special Events

The concert hall / event center can support seating for 4,500 to 4,800 people. In the event of a full concert, the demand may exceed supply by approximately 450 spaces, or possibly less depending upon the success of the TDM measures. Indeed, to the degree that the TDM measures do succeed, it may be determined that the existing surface and structured parking spaces are adequate to support the demand created by these concerts. However, these events will be in the evening. Significant parking exists in lots for Norway Savings Bank, Rheumatology Associates, and others off of Sewall Street and the drive connecting Sewall Street to Massachusetts Avenue and Congress Street, as well as along the Fore River Parkway and other locations in proximity to Thompson's Point which may be suitable. It is understood that the existence of leases, or other satisfactory arrangements that reliably provide for off-site parking during these larger concerts, shall be a requirement of site plan approval.

It is recommended that the Forefront explore agreements for utilizing these lots for overflow during events, providing that it does not open doors to concerts until after 6:00, when the employee and customer demand at adjacent facilities has greatly diminished. Forefront can employ individuals to control traffic and collect parking fees for use of these lots based on a revenue-sharing agreement. In addition, the peninsula shuttle will be repurposed for these evening events to travel through these lots and to the concert hall.

The Forefront has developed an Event Management Plan, submitted together with this TDM Plan, which more fully discusses the proposed approach to handling traffic flow in and out of the site during mid-sized events (upwards of 2,500 attendees).

Monitoring

Parking Counts

As part of its TDM Plan monitoring program, the Forefront TDM Coordinator will oversee assessment of the use of its various operational components, starting one month after the opening of the event center and annually thereafter. As one critical component of the TDM program will be to reduce parking demand, the first part of each monitoring effort will include an hourly parking count of the facility from 11:00 AM to 11:00 PM on a weekday and a Saturday (this will require evening events, preferably concerts, as this will generate the greatest parking demand).

Timetable for Action Items

Action Item	Timeframe for Implementation
Finalize TDM Funding Package based upon City of Portland's priorities for funding from its share of Transit TIF revenues generated by the Forefront	Fall 2011
Provide update to City regarding progress on TDM plan implementation and status of TMA ("macro TDM")	Fall 2012
Appoint/Confirm TDM Coordinator	6 months prior to opening of the Forefront Event Center, anticipated to be spring 2013
Assemble "Micro TDM" plans with tenants and create TDM Packets; share complete TDM plan, including Micro-TDM targets and proposed monitoring, with City	Summer 2013
TDM Plan Implementation / On-site Parking Monitoring	Anticipated for Spring 2014, assuming final occupancy Summer/Fall 2013
Assess success of first six months of TDM Program and Report to City on initial effectiveness	Fall 2014

Submit Year Two TDM Program with needed modifications (and annually thereafter)	Spring 2015
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