

# New rail lines to spur transit-oriented projects

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**RISING DEMAND:** Government can recoup investments through such developments

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THE Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line 2 and Light Rail Transit Line 3 (LRT 3) projects are expected to unlock more transit-oriented development (TOD) opportunities that will help the government recoup large investments made to improve urban rail services.

Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) chief executive officer Mohd Azharuddin Mat Sah said MRT Line 1, also known as MRT SBK Line, had spurred such developments but the TODs would be more extensive for the new lines, which would extend across lesser developed parts of the Greater Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley area.

"We are looking at a significant rise in population in the Greater Kuala Lumpur in the next four to five years. With the extension of our rail network, TODs will allow us to take a more systematic approach in dealing with urban sprawl and its effects, such as congestion," he told Business Times.

"Also, this approach will allow the government to regenerate investments that went into rail infrastructure. With government driving such developments, social aspects such as affordable housing within these modern developments can be given emphasis."

Featuring mixed-use developments, TODs will pave the way to improve livability and quality of life for city dwellers through accessible and efficient public transport facilities that connect people to the city while enabling access to medical and educational institutions, commercial areas and other lifestyle-related amenities within the area.

TOD neighbourhoods are usually centred on a transit station, surrounded by high-density developments and become progressively less dense as development spreads outward from the centre. In general, TODs are located within a 800m radius of a transit stop, or about 10 minutes' walk.



With the extension of the country's mass rapid transit and light rail transit networks, **transit-oriented developments** will allow the government to take a more systematic approach in dealing with the urban sprawl. Pic by Zunnur Al Shafiq

These developments are normally based on light rail or commuter rail services.

TOD land-use planning fully integrates mobility and spatial planning, unlike conventional land planning with transit options.

"SPAD is confident that TOD is a progressive city-planning approach that will lead to increased public transport ridership, less congestion and more business and investment opportunities.

"Such developments usually incorporate features to encourage transit ridership while dissuading

the use of cars," said Azharuddin.

The Netherlands, Denmark and Singapore have adopted similar planning systems which encourage mixed-use developments and pedestrian and cycling facilities.

Malaysia's first TOD is Kuala Lumpur Sentral, which sees a public transport ridership of about 50,000 people per day. Apart from being an integrated rail hub, it also houses four hotels, six condominiums, 18 office blocks and a host of dining outlets.

Learning from this past success and from other cities around the

world, Malaysia will see TODs being built along the MRT routes, including the LRT3 development, Tun Razak Exchange, Merdeka PNB 118, Bandar Malaysia, Kwasa Damansara and D'Sara Sentral.

These, along with the third LRT extension from Bandar Utama to Johan Setia, Klang, will potentially increase ridership to a million a day.

Along the TODs, it is envisioned that more stations will be incorporated to provide seamless connectivity where people can work, live and play, akin to having "a city within a city".