



Regional
Transportation
District

1660 Blake Street
Denver, CO
80202
303.299.6000

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**City of Littleton
2255 W. Berry Ave.
Littleton, CO 80120**

Subject: Proposed Development at the Southwest Corner of Santa Fe Drive and Mineral Ave

As an adjacent property owner, RTD recently received a referral from the City of Littleton regarding the proposed RiverPark development, across Mineral Ave from Littleton/Mineral Station. RTD welcomes the prospect of more development near the station and the associated transit ridership that is likely to accompany it. Consistent with the City of Littleton's 2019 comprehensive plan, RTD encourages opportunities for transit-supportive land use that leverage the agency's transit investment and increase ridership. The RTD Strategic Plan for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) defines the ideal growth model as:

- More compact and dense development within a ten-minute walk or half-mile distance around transit facilities compared to existing development patterns in the same area;
- A mix of uses, usually including residential, retail, and office employment; and
- High-quality, pedestrian-oriented urban design and streetscapes.

RTD believes that the proposed development is not transit supportive and does not reflect the identified TOD principles described above. RTD encourages City staff and the developer to consider the following:

- This location is unique in the region: station-area property accounts for only 0.6 percent of land area in the Denver and Boulder metropolitan statistical areas. Development in these uniquely transit-rich locations should include compact, dense development to optimize use of the valuable area. Therefore, the proposed development should accommodate additional residential and/or employment density overall, particularly near the intersection of Mineral Ave and Santa Fe Dr closest to Littleton/Mineral Station.
- The development proposal appears to dedicate more square footage to parking than to development, which likely will induce additional automobile congestion in a congested area. RTD research suggests that the proposed development's proximity to transit may allow for less parking provision than anticipated. Recent RTD research of peak-hour parking demand at 86 residential TOD apartments in Metro Denver found that properties provide 1.20 spaces per unit but residents use only 0.7 spaces per unit – a utilization rate of only 58 percent. The development proposal's transit-orientation likely could benefit from less parking.
- Including affordable housing in the proposed development could reduce parking demand further and increase transit use. The research noted above finds that residents use only 0.36 parking spaces per unit at peak demand, as 61 percent of surveyed low-income

residents do not own a vehicle. Additional RTD research shows that low-income households use transit: 63 percent of low-income households ride the bus once a week or more, while 88 percent of market-rate households ride the bus once a week or less; and 57 percent of low-income households ride the train once a week or more, while 73 percent of market-rate households ride the train once a week or less. Insofar as the City intends to reduce congestion and encourage transit-supportive land use, it should encourage RiverPark to include affordable housing.

- The proposed development should improve pedestrian connectivity between buildings and to/from the site through design that encourages, rather than accommodates, pedestrian mobility. Enhancements to connectivity and multimodal mobility include but are not limited to short pedestrian crossing distances, wide detached sidewalks, and landscaped buffers with shading.

The City of Littleton is an important partner to RTD and both the City and RTD have much to gain from the development of this site. RTD thanks the City for inviting our comment and looks forward to coordinating on this and future proposals.

Sincerely,

Bill Sirois

Bill Sirois
Senior Manager, Transportation Oriented Communities

cc: Chessy Brady, Manager, Transit Oriented Development
John Hersey, Sr. Associate, Transit Oriented Development
Charlie Stanfield, Transportation Planner, Planning