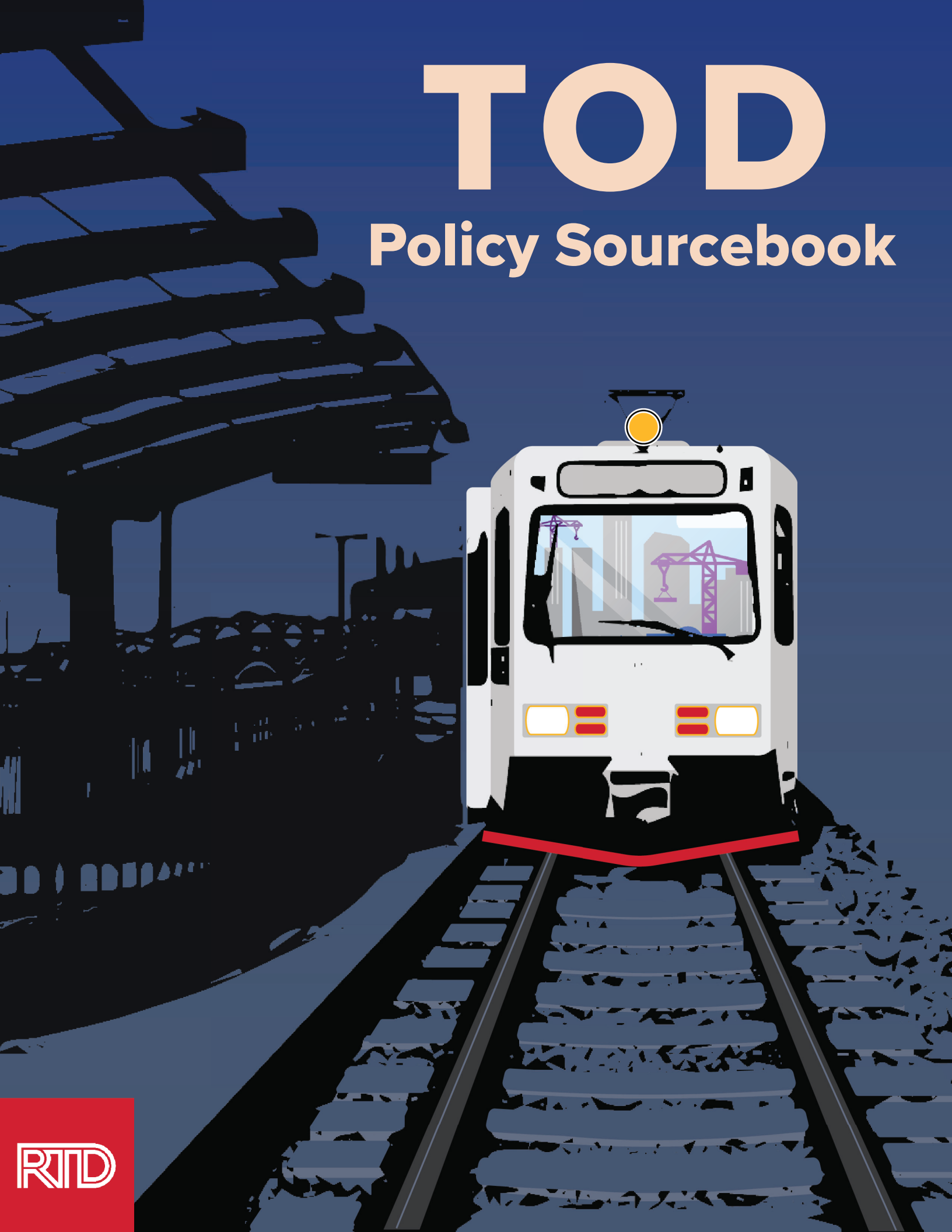


TOD

Policy Sourcebook



A mixed-use community within walking distance of a high frequency transit stop that includes residential, retail, employment, open space, and public uses in a way that makes it convenient to travel on foot, bicycle, or by public transportation and reduces reliance on the car.

Transit Oriented Development





TOD projects can transform underperforming and underutilized assets, increase transit and passenger rail ridership and revenue, facilitate office-to-residential conversions, and support affordable, equitable, multimodal access to opportunities and services.

- Morteza Farajian, Ph.D.,
Executive Director, Build America Bureau

TOD = “creating vibrant, compact, mixed-use, economically successful communities near public transportation”

- Federal Transit Administration Guidance on Joint Development 7050.1C

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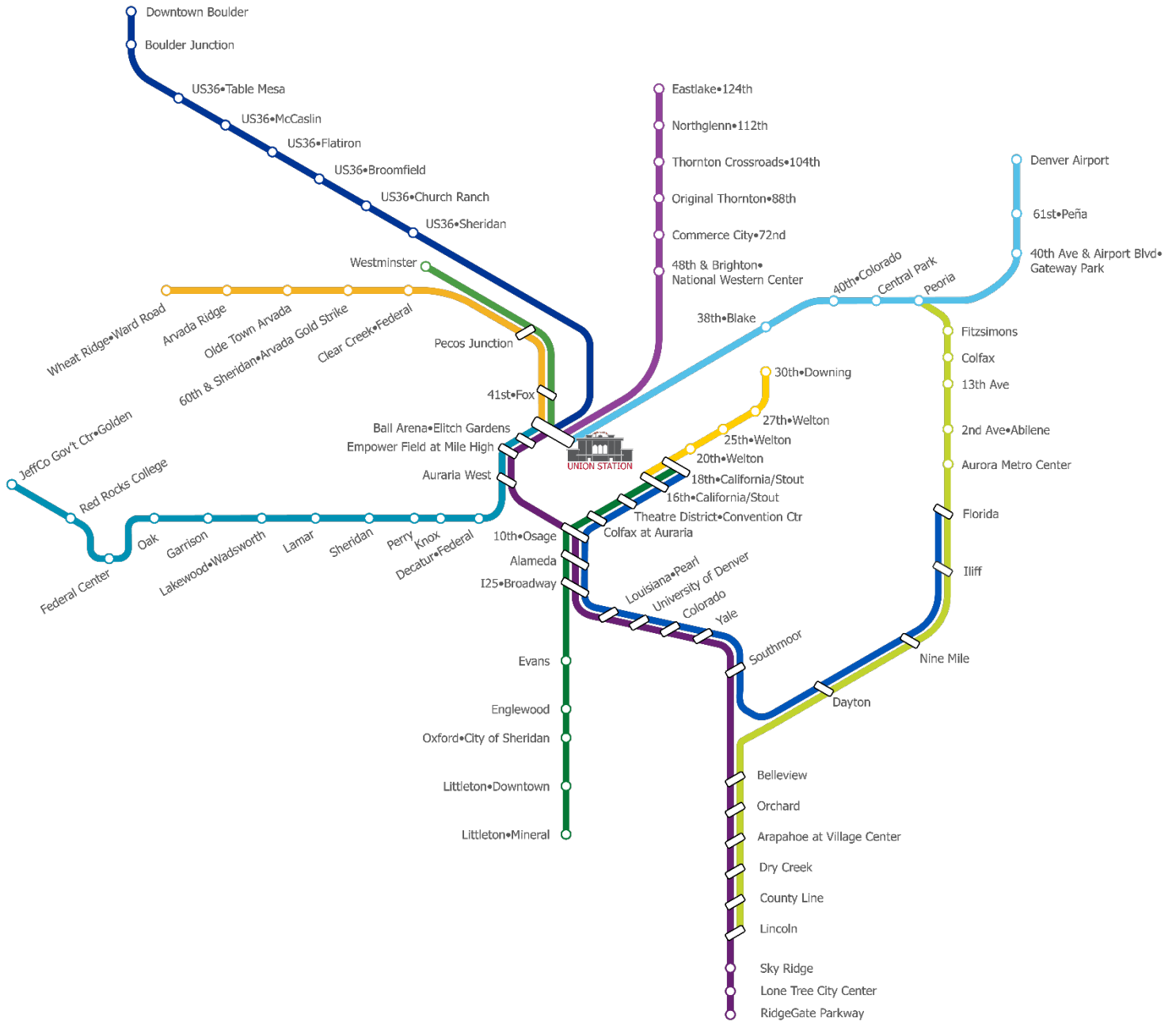
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Introduction

The Denver metropolitan area is home to about half the population of Colorado. Metro Vision, the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) 20-year plan for growth and development, projects the region to grow by more than 40 percent to a total of 4.3 million residents by 2040. This growth will place a tremendous strain on the region's already congested transportation system.



The Regional Transportation District (RTD) provides public bus and rail transit service to one of the geographically largest transit service areas in the United States. The District is over 2,342 square miles and serves a population of over 3 million within 40 municipalities in six counties



plus two city/county jurisdictions. The size of the service area, population density, and nature of the roadway network have led to the creation of a transit system with a wide range of service types intended to most effectively bring mobility to this large and diverse region. RTD provides service with four commuter rail lines, five light rail lines and more than 100 bus routes.

In addition to fixed route service, RTD also provides two types of demand response service, FlexRide to the general public in areas where the density is not high enough to support fixed route transit service, and Access-a-Ride, which is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit service for the District. The RTD system also includes 96 Park-n-Ride facilities with over 36,000 parking spaces primarily serving rail and commuter bus service.

As the regional transit agency, RTD's primary role is to develop and operate this public transit system. Local government jurisdictions play a key role in supporting transit by using their power to regulate land use and development. Private developers, in turn, propose new development projects and provide their financing knowledge and construction muscle to develop real estate at and around transit facilities that fuels ridership and regional connectivity. Community stakeholders prepare the canvas for this development by articulating a vision for their neighborhoods for which transit can act as a catalyst to achieve.

Beyond providing transit service, RTD has the ability to play an expanded role in helping deliver livable communities as a partner with local governments, developers, and community stakeholders. At and around RTD stations, staff encourage the density, design, walkability, and affordability that define good transit-oriented development (TOD).

TOD Vision

RTD's Board-approved vision for TOD is to encourage compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, high-quality development at and around transit stations consistent with federal requirements, regional goals, and community objectives—including sustainable growth—in partnership with stakeholders while operating an attractive, comfortable, and convenient transit system for the residents of the district. Since there is no one-size-fits-all approach to TOD, RTD has identified four guiding principles to best achieve success:

1. Promoting multi-sector, cross-jurisdictional partnerships;
2. Encouraging livable communities and sustainable development that support the transit system;
3. Ensuring a hierarchy of multimodal access; and
4. Protecting and enhancing RTD's transit assets.



I. What is TOD?

While TOD can have many physical forms, it generally includes the following design principles:

- More compact and dense development within a 10-minute walk or ½ mile distance
- A mix of uses—either horizontal or vertical—usually including residential, retail, and office employment; around transit facilities compared to existing development patterns in the same area;
- High-quality, pedestrian-oriented urban design and streetscapes.

Every development opportunity site has unique qualities that ultimately determine a range of feasible build-out scenarios. Being located at or near a transit station does not inherently make a development transit-oriented. TOD has to have a relationship to the transit facility, which is usually achieved by a pedestrian design orientation and a land-use program supportive of transit ridership. Development that is truly oriented towards transit:

- Is denser than existing development patterns in the area
- Contains a mix of uses
- Has a compact and attractive urban design
- Promotes multimodal access so individuals need not rely on single occupant vehicles and allows easy pedestrian access to transit facilities
- Supports a diversity of housing choices, including choices for low- and moderate-income individuals
- Incorporates sustainable development strategies such as renewable energy, sustainable building materials, and stormwater management
- Does not oversupply parking

By focusing compact development around transit stations, TOD capitalizes on the value of public infrastructure investments and promotes sustainability. These development synergies promote increased transit ridership and an integrated station environment with more passenger amenities. In addition to increased ridership and more passenger amenities, TOD is also a successful tool for promoting local economic development, helping communities plan for sustainable growth, and increasing the overall quality of life in a region.

TOD is a specific approach to developing the built environment—not a style of urban design or a description of physical location. At its essence, TOD means development with a functional relationship to transit, allowing it to achieve synergies that enhance the value of both. For example, TOD can make transit systems more efficient and cost effective by increasing off-peak ridership. In addition, studies have shown that proximity to transit can yield a premium for property values. In most cases, successful TOD requires collaboration among the parties whose interests converge at transit facilities: the transit agency, local government, private developers/property owners, and community stakeholders. A combination of macro and microeconomic forces must also be present for development to be possible.



What enables TOD?

- Real estate market - creates greater demand for development
- Zoning - higher densities allow more people to live & work near transit
- Infrastructure/Access - critical for all developments
- Jurisdiction Interest/Incentives - local governments can incentivize TOD by providing financial incentives, density bonuses, or infrastructure
- Lot size and ownership - larger lots & fewer landowners facilitate TOD
- Time - station areas may need time to mature

Basis for TOD Policy

TOD's ability to increase transit usage while achieving valuable ancillary benefits for the region means that it plays a crucial role in fulfilling RTD's organizational mission: "Making lives better through connections." RTD is first and foremost a transit service provider, and RTD recognizes that other public agencies and private developers are responsible for the region's built environment. However, RTD believes that increased coordination among public and private organizations in promoting TOD through land use planning, zoning, and the development process will result in higher-quality, sustainable communities that meet the varying objectives of all parties.

The Federal government has articulated support for transit agencies engaging in TOD through its Guidance on Joint Development: "FTA encourages project sponsors to undertake joint development, and promotes the project sponsor's ability to work with the private sector and others to pursue joint development," (FTA Guidance on Joint Development, Circular 7050.1C). The FTA's Pilot Program for TOD Planning grants have provided millions of dollars in federal funding to support planning work along potential TOD corridors. Partnering with the City and County of Denver, RTD has won two such grants: one for East Colfax and one for Federal Boulevard.

State and local legislation and ordinances also promote TOD in the District. In recent years, parking requirements, density bonuses, development review policies, and funding for affordable housing have all moved the needle in the direction of supporting TOD. In 2024, a new Colorado state law (HB 1313) required jurisdictions to raise zoning potential along high frequency corridors in order to increase housing supply and affordability in TODs.

A 2024 DRCOG study found that the region needs more than half a million new housing units by 2050 and that the largest share of these units must be for households earning less than 60 percent of the area median income. As a major landowner at high frequency transit stations, RTD is uniquely positioned to be part of the regional housing conversation.



II. Roles and Responsibilities

Joint Development

When private development occurs on RTD land, the FTA calls the project “Joint Development.” The purpose of RTD engaging in joint development is to increase ridership, provide an opportunity for enhanced transit infrastructure, and support the development of livable communities. When proposed for facilities in which the FTA has an interest (i.e., federal funding was involved with land acquisition or transit facility construction), joint development must conform to federal guidelines, which are laid out in FTA Circular 7050.1C: Guidance on Joint Development.

Roles

Transit-oriented development can be difficult to implement. It takes true collaboration between the transit agency, local government, and real estate developers to overcome the sometimes substantial regulatory, market and political hurdles. Each party plays a unique role: the transit agency as the transit infrastructure builder and landowner, local governments as the development approval entity, and real estate developers as the actual builders and financiers. Because of the regional nature of mass transit systems, a number of regional stakeholders can play key roles as well, including the metropolitan planning organization DRCOG, regional chambers of commerce, and planning and development research institutes and professional organizations. The local community plays a key role in providing input and feedback to development plans and proposals.

RTD’s Role

- Landowner – RTD owns rail right-of-way, transit stations, parking facilities, access routes, and—in some cases— vacant or unused property. RTD’s primary responsibility is to ensure safe operations of and access to its transit facilities, adhering to local, state and federal standards, for all modes. While TOD principles generally enhance station access and safety, RTD will only encourage development outcomes that benefit its riders and promote efficient transit facility operations.
- Development Partner – RTD may entertain development proposals for the joint use of its transit facilities or property with an incidental (non-transit) use, including use of air rights. In the case of property not currently used for transit purposes, RTD may entertain offers to become a development partner, enter lease agreements, or sell such property outright, as long as it does not limit RTD’s access and operations if such property would be needed for future transit purposes. As a development partner, RTD will coordinate the integration of incidental uses with existing or planned transit infrastructure, but will not have a role in the physical development of non-transit uses. In cases where there is an active transit facility, RTD will balance an outcome which meets its transit requirements and results in the development of a livable community. RTD will consider joint development in situations where the resulting development adequately addresses the operations of and access to the transit facility, provides rider amenities and aids in achieving livability principles.
- Planning Partner – RTD partners with local governments to develop station area plans that support TOD. RTD supports station area planning by sharing information about its



facilities and plans, facilitating collaboration among local governments along the same transit corridors, sharing national best practices and expertise, and providing matching funds in certain instances. RTD shares information with local jurisdictions on developer inquiries and plans for areas around stations. RTD coordinates between a developer’s contractors and RTD’s construction contractor when transit and TOD improvements are either adjacent to each other or being jointly pursued.

- Staff Roles and Responsibilities – The table below highlights the different functional groups within RTD and their roles in the TOD process.

DISCIPLINE	ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES
Transit Oriented Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary point of contact • Coordinates internal review and evaluation and screens proposals for fatal flaws and missing components • Determines ridership impacts based on changes to land use and density
Real Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide details on how site was acquired • Identify existing real property issues, such as licenses and easements • Determine price for any land transactions
Facilities Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on proposed landscaping and hardscaping designs; mechanical and electrical parameters • Agreement on maintenance costs and responsibilities
Rail Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on solutions for any rail facility impacts
Bus Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on solutions for any bus transfer facility impacts
Service Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on site layout for pedestrian, auto, rail, bus and bicycle connections • Agreement on any temporary accommodations needed for construction
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on ridership impacts • Agreement on quantity of bicycle and auto parking • Determines need for separate bike/ped connections (e.g., paths, bridges, underpasses)
Civil Engineering/ Urban Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on site layout for location of transit facilities and access • Agreement on urban design elements including landscaping, lighting and style and manufacture of site furnishings style • Agreement on improvement costs & responsibilities • Agreement on life cycle costs and maintenance needs • Define separate utility needs for RTD owned and operated facilities (e.g., driver relief stations, irrigation, electrical, etc.)



Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and address potential implications related to tax-exempt financing, voter-approved debt authorization, overall FasTracks financial plan and state TABOR constraints
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft and finalize legal documents
Safety/Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement on any safety/security issue in accordance with RTD design criteria and supporting documentation.

Local Government's Role

- Planning, Zoning, Permits – Only local governments are authorized by the State of Colorado to adopt plans, enact zoning codes, implement financing tools, and issue development permits. RTD cannot plan or implement other land-use guidelines for the areas adjacent to its transit facilities. RTD encourages local governments to collaborate with RTD during planning processes to ensure that they adopt land-use guidelines that not only foster TOD, but also discourage development that is unfriendly to or incompatible with transit.
- Community Engagement – Since RTD facilities are located in communities that are part of local cities and counties, it is the role of local government to facilitate interaction with neighborhood-based stakeholders during the planning and development process. RTD, however, will provide any information it can to local governments to assist with facilitating community discussion, and be a willing participant in the process. Local jurisdictions also share information with RTD on developer inquiries and plans for areas around stations.
- Implementation Tools – In addition to adopting plans and zoning to foster TOD, local governments have other implementation tools at their disposal. For example, local governments have the ability to build infrastructure that will support TOD, create urban design guidelines, and assemble land. Local governments also have the ability to manage parking in their rights of way, for which RTD will be a willing partner although it is unable to act in an enforcement capacity. In the case of areas that have been planned for redevelopment, local jurisdictions have the ability to assemble land for economic development and utilize public financing (including tax increment financing (TIF) and metro districts) to build public infrastructure and address project feasibility shortfalls. RTD will support requests by local jurisdictions for the ability to use implementation tools when appropriate.
- Mixed Income Housing Policy and Enforcement – Local governments are responsible for the establishment of policy, regulations, and enforcement related to affordable and/or workforce housing development. RTD strongly encourages a diverse range of housing options, including affordable units, in close proximity to RTD transit service. With that goal in mind, RTD will work with local governments to understand the affordable housing needs of their communities, and will encourage TOD and/or joint development that address affordability goals of local communities and the region, working within all applicable legal limitations and parameters.



Developers' Role

Real estate developers draft and finalize a TOD site plan, obtain the necessary zoning and other approvals, secure financing for projects, complete any needed land assemblages, manage construction and complete the final project. Ultimately, developers need to be able to realize a profit on the development to maintain and grow their private business. For TOD projects that include the use of RTD property, the developer will have a direct relationship with RTD. Under these circumstances the developer will be responsible for:

- Integrating RTD facilities into the development – the developer works with RTD staff to determine impacts to RTD facilities (e.g., transit parking, rail platforms, bus layover facilities, drainage ponds) and the phasing of the development so that it benefits transit riders, and promotes efficient transit facility operations.
- Infrastructure financing – the developer will provide the primary funding for infrastructure associated with the joint development. RTD will only contribute funds for the construction of RTD facilities or other infrastructure that supports RTD's operations and enhances the quality of transit passenger experience. In addition, the developer will be responsible for pursuing the establishment of any urban renewal district or other financing district on RTD land for purposes of gaining access to public financing including TIF.
- Zoning/entitlement approvals for RTD land – prior to the conveyance of any RTD land for joint development, the developer will be required to have all necessary entitlements in place to initiate construction, such as zoning changes and general development plans.

FTA & Other Federal Agencies

The FTA is the federal agency that oversees the planning, construction, and operation of public transit in the US, overseeing transit funding for capital projects and transit operations. FTA participates in the TOD process when there are changes to improvements that are federally funded but not addressed in the project Record of Decision (ROD), or when a proposed development would impact an existing transit facility that was built using federal funds.

FTA relies on the transit agency to determine the appropriate use and disposition of real property used in joint development improvements, and its Board of Directors to certify compliance with federal regulations. Joint development for federally funded facilities requires that there is unimpeded access between the development and the transit facility.

Generally, the project must satisfy five criteria to be eligible for FTA approval:

- Economic Benefit – The project must enhance economic development OR incorporate private investment.
- Public Transportation Benefit – The project must enhance the effectiveness of a public transportation project and relate physically or functionally to that public transportation project OR establish new or enhanced coordination between public transportation and other modes of transportation.
- Revenue – The project must provide a fair share of revenue to RTD. This requirement is typically met through ground lease payments.



- Fee-Collection for Zero-Emission Vehicle Charging – If FTA funds are used to construct, operate, or maintain zero-emission fueling equipment, fees must be collected from users.
- Fair Share of Costs – A person occupying space in a joint development facility constructed with FTA assistance shall pay a fair share of the costs of the facility through rental payments or other means.

For detailed information about joint development on RTD land in which there is a federal interest, see FTA Circular 7050.1C

III. Goals and Requirements

In the simplest sense, RTD seeks two things from TOD projects on RTD land: ridership and revenue. Ridership is generated through increasing the number of people present in the space, which means ensuring residential or commercial density, and comparing that to potential transit parking loss. In the case of residential, ridership is encouraged by constructing fewer parking spaces (which forces self-selection among tenants), providing transit passes, and, most importantly, including income-restricted housing. Revenues are generated through the sale or ground lease of land, with sales only being an option in rare instances where leases are infeasible. In addition to these two primary considerations, RTD must evaluate the development's impacts to transit operations, maintenance, safety, security, and also the local jurisdiction's preferences for the site, as well as its conformance to design best practices. RTD values projects that improve transit infrastructure and reduce RTD's maintenance responsibilities.

Guiding Principles and Strategies for facilitating TOD

Four principles guide staff in supporting TOD at and around RTD stations:

1. To foster relationships with local jurisdictions, regional agencies, private developers, local residents and businesses, and other stakeholders to support transit station area planning and TOD implementation.
2. To encourage livable communities and sustainable development that support the transit system.
3. To support multimodal access to the transit system by all users.
4. To protect and enhance RTD's transit assets and investments.

Principle 1: RTD will foster relationships with local jurisdictions, regional agencies, private developers, local residents and businesses, and other stakeholders to support transit station area planning and TOD implementation.

Strategies to support this principle include:

- Providing RTD staff expertise and resources to local jurisdictions for station area planning and zoning.
- Supporting DRCOG's efforts to encourage TOD, including conducting research, sharing information, and providing planning assistance to connect transit service expansion to



economic and community development that supports sustainable growth consistent with the DRCOG Metro Vision Plan.

- Working with trade and advocacy organizations to promote TOD education and best practices.
- Promoting and developing partnerships with private developers, public agencies and other stakeholders to implement TOD.

Principle 2: RTD will encourage livable communities and sustainable development that support the transit system.

Strategies to support this principle include:

- Collaborating with local jurisdictions on station area planning and TOD for areas within a 10-minute walk of stations or a ½ mile distance.
- Advocating for new development which generally meets the following characteristics in support of federal livability principles:
 - It is denser than existing development patterns in the surrounding area.
 - It contains a mix of uses.
 - It has a compact and attractive urban design.
 - It promotes multimodal access so individuals need not rely on single occupant vehicles and allows easy pedestrian access to transit facilities.
 - It supports a diversity of housing choices, including choices for low and moderate income individuals and families.
 - It incorporates sustainable development strategies such as renewable energy, sustainable building materials, stormwater management, and comprehensive parking management.
- Promoting the development of “transit oriented communities” which embrace livability principles and truly integrate transit facilities with the surrounding community.
- Promoting workforce development to enhance the strength and competitiveness of the local economy.
- Encouraging local jurisdictions to adopt TOD supportive policies, plans and zoning for areas within a 10-minute walk of transit stations within their jurisdiction that provide a flexible framework for TOD and prevent development which does not support transit.
- Participating in joint development projects that provide the opportunity to preserve ridership, build or improve infrastructure to support transit, further local jurisdictions’ goals, and embrace the principles of livable communities.

Principle 3: RTD supports multimodal access to the transit system by all users.

Strategies to support this principle include:

- Supporting a hierarchy of access to rapid transit which considers the following modes in order of priority: pedestrians, bus riders, bicyclists, short-term parking vehicles, and long-term parking vehicles.
- Considering access needs beyond RTD property in the planning and design of transit stations and development thereon, including:



- Pedestrian connections to destinations within a 10-minute walk or ½ mile distance
- Regional bus transit and bicycle connections
- Vehicular access for the station catchment area
- Strategically managing RTD parking facilities to balance vehicular access and the opportunity for TOD to maximize ridership at stations and minimize the need for single-occupancy vehicle trips by transit riders outside of their trips to stations.
- Optimizing RTD parking at stations by considering utilization (current, historical, and forecasted), proximity to Downtown Denver (less parking closer in), local feeder bus service (less parking with higher levels of service), and pedestrian connectivity (less parking with good pedestrian connections).

Principle 4: Protect and enhance RTD’s transit assets and investments.

Strategies to support this principle include:

- Where appropriate, pursuing TOD as a means to increase the value of RTD-owned land near stations.
- Encouraging local jurisdictions to support TOD by:
 - Engaging in station area planning
 - Utilizing best practices in TOD planning and implementation around transit stations
 - Implementing local policy that promotes access to affordable housing, more transportation options, and lower transportation costs, while protecting the environment
- Managing RTD parking by:
 - Where appropriate, transitioning surface parking to structured parking, other transit-related facilities, or TOD and, in doing so, preserving the operational efficiency of the existing transit facility.
 - Utilizing shared and joint-use parking when available to reduce parking costs and add ridership, including purchase of parking in private or public parking facilities on a long term lease or other means through a partnership arrangement with local governments or private developers.
- Favoring the retention of permanent rights (i.e., ground leases instead of outright sale) that meet transit requirements to ensure satisfactory continuing control of RTD property.
- Utilizing joint development as a means to protect and enhance station ridership and build or improve infrastructure needed to support transit and the development of livable communities.

TOD Design Principles

1. Organize & Orient the TOD Site Based on the Transit Station
2. Design for Compact and Mixed-Use Development
3. Create a High Quality Pedestrian-Oriented Environment
4. Utilize the Street Grid to Connect and Provide Access

Please refer to appendix for additional details.

TOD Evaluation Guidelines

Approved by RTD Board of Directors on February 27, 2018

A transit-oriented development (TOD) project occurring on or adjacent to RTD property will inevitably affect RTD. When RTD is in a position to influence the TOD project, either by entering into an agreement with the developer or jurisdiction, or through regulatory means, and a decision is required regarding RTD's participation, RTD must consider the value of the TOD project to RTD.

The principles and evaluation factors below were developed to guide RTD staff's assessment of the TOD project's value. As every TOD project is unique, each one will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis according to its total impact (positive or negative) to RTD.

TOD Value Principles

The following principles set clear standards and thresholds for new TOD projects. Every new TOD project is expected to satisfy all six principles.

1. The TOD project must be budget neutral or budget positive for RTD. Evaluations of budget impact should take into account direct revenue to RTD, including property sale or lease revenue, increased fare revenue, or other revenue sources. Replacement, major rehabilitation, maintenance, administrative, and other operational costs, as well as any capital expenditures, should be considered over the long and short terms.
2. The TOD project must be expected to increase ridership. The proposer must demonstrate that ridership is reasonably projected to increase as a result of project implementation including having ridership projections reviewed and approved by RTD staff. Ridership increases over the short and long-term will be considered, but short-term increases are preferred.
3. Where feasible, ground leases of RTD property are preferred over sales. RTD prefers to retain a fee interest in property. In some cases, such as condo development or an unfavorable economy, a ground lease may not be feasible, and a land sale should be considered. In cases where a sale is considered, RTD should take such actions that will preserve RTD's long-term interests.

4. The TOD project must reflect the Parking Guiding Principles (PGP). RTD will evaluate third-party parking operations and parking replacement based on the factors described in the PGP or such other relevant guidance provided by the Board.
5. The TOD project must enhance safety and security. The TOD project must positively contribute to the safety and security of the RTD system by remedying any known problems at the site, as well as by addressing issues of pedestrian safety and walkability, and by increasing “eyes on the street” through activation.
6. The TOD project must have jurisdiction support. The TOD project must be consistent with the local jurisdiction’s plans and the jurisdiction, formally or informally, must demonstrate support for the project.

Evaluation Factors

TOD projects will additionally be measured against the following evaluation factors. Unlike the TOD Value Principles, the evaluation factors should be considered as whole, with the understanding that TOD projects may not satisfy all evaluation factors. In determining the total impact of a TOD project to RTD, Tier One Factors should be given more weight than Tier Two Factors.

Tier One Factors

- Ground Lease/Land Sale – Revenue from a land sale or ground lease should support RTD’s fiscal sustainability.
- Increased Ridership/Fare Revenues – Generating new ridership supports RTD’s mission and directly benefits RTD through increased fare revenues.
- Replacement or New Facilities – Leveraging development to provide new or replacement facilities that are needed for transit operations supports a state of good repair as determined by RTD (the value of the facility may be large, such as for a new parking structure, or small, such as for a Driver Relief Station).
- Outsourced Maintenance – Assigning maintenance responsibilities, such as landscaping, cleaning, general maintenance, snow and ice removal, and graffiti removal, to a third party in a manner that is consistent with RTD standards and does not increase RTD’s administrative burden reduces costs and risks for RTD.
- Jurisdiction Support – Jurisdiction support for a TOD project beyond basic planning demonstrates the importance of the project to the local community. Demonstrations of strong jurisdiction support might include updating zoning, providing financial support, employing Tax Increment Financing (TIF), contributing to capital projects that support the TOD project, or assuming part of the TOD project’s risk.
- Enhanced RTD Operations – Improved transit operations through more efficient routing, more optimal transfers, or other operational efficiencies directly benefit RTD.

Tier Two Factors

- Improved Safety/Security – Addressing safety and security issues such as emergency ingress and egress, fire/life/safety communication, lighting and tripping hazards will positively impact RTD. The activation of previously isolated stations also positively impacts security.



- Upgraded Rider Amenities/Access – Upgraded rider amenities or increased options or access to RTD transit improve the rider experience and may include improved seating, vending, walkways, open space, wayfinding, and First Mile/Last Mile solutions.
- Community Facilities/Affordable Housing – RTD supports and benefits from community facilities and/or affordable housing at TOD projects that are consistent with local jurisdiction policies.
- Brand Image Enhancement – RTD's brand is enhanced and RTD benefits as a whole when RTD is positively associated with a TOD project that supports community objectives.

Parking

TOD functions best when parking has been optimized and managed, and non-vehicular modes take a larger share of trips than is typical in the immediate and secondary station areas. TOD Parking must be considered through two lenses. First, when development is considered on RTD Park-n-Rides (PnRs), the potential reduction of customer parking spaces or PnR closure must be evaluated. Second, new development must account for the parking needs of its own users. This section will cover each type of parking separately.

From the mountains to the suburbs, RTD operates more than 80 PnRs that have varying levels of utilization and management attention. PnRs provide an important connection to transit customers who lack access to buses or trains via bike or foot. RTD tracks utilization of PnRs through a variety of methods and analyzes utilization trends year over year. In cases where joint development will have an impact on existing or planned parking spaces, RTD will evaluate parking replacement considering the following factors, according to the *RTD Parking Guiding Principles*.

- Current parking-facility utilization
- Opportunities to increase station area density based on local land-use plans
- Distance from mixed-use, transit oriented urban centers
- Connectivity to other modes of access
- Potential for increased transit ridership
- Obligations on or limits to the quantity of parking due to legal restrictions or federal funding requirements
- Other relevant factors

The complete RTD Parking Guiding Principles are available in the appendix.

As every PnR is unique, staff will review requests for PnR reductions or closures on a case-by-case basis. Parking reductions can be considered where high density development is allowed (and feasible), alternative modes are prevalent, parking utilization is low, and transit parking is available at alternative stations within the same corridor. Shared parking may also be considered. Replacing RTD commuter parking and developing higher densities of TOD plays a large role in changing the function of a station without reducing ridership levels.

When it comes to user parking for new residential or commercial buildings at transit stations, the developer must provide a data-informed proposal for the number of parking spaces. RTD

research shows that residential development in station areas typically builds 40-50% more parking spaces than are needed at peak times. As such, the developer should not build too many spaces. On the other hand, RTD will not accept spillover parking from the new development into existing PnRs, as this reduces the spaces available to RTD transit customers.

Furthermore, RTD provides the following guidance for residential and commercial parking:

- Parking access shall not conflict with pedestrian flow or transit (bus) circulation.
- Structured parking on the ground floor shall be wrapped with activated uses or appropriately screened in a way that engages the public realm.
- Surface parking between the front of a building and the street is not permitted.
- In high-density areas, structured parking is encouraged or below-grade where feasible.
- Shared parking between complementary uses, such as office and movie theaters, is encouraged.
- A Travel Demand Management (TDM) Plan should be developed to address parking reductions.

Equitable TOD: RTD's eTOD Policy

TOD that incorporates income-restricted housing builds equitable communities, maximizes ridership, and serves RTD's core market. Transit increases access from residential to job centers. Essential workers rely heavily on transit, especially bus service, as seen during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The RTD Board of Directors approved the [Equitable Transit Oriented Development \(eTOD\) Policy](#) in February 2021. The policy encourages affordable residential development for low-income households on RTD property at and along high frequency transit stations and corridors. Staff developed the policy in consultation with jurisdictions, developers, CHFA, and members of the board of directors at the time. The policy is an opportunity to encourage ridership, gain revenue, and be responsive to community concerns through inclusive joint development. Unlike other agencies, RTD cannot acquire land for development and does not have financial resources to support eTOD directly. The policy therefore focuses on reducing the costs of development by:

- Reducing the number of transit customer parking spaces developer must replace
- Considering the potential for shared parking
- Expediting internal reviews of developer proposals
- Encouraging RTD-led site planning and entitlements
- Considering the development's full benefits when calculating sale/lease price

The 2021 eTOD Policy was a first step in signaling RTD's commitment to partnering on regional issues. Updates to the policy are expected to be brought to the Board of Directors in future, as needed.

The policy has 5 elements:

1. Affordability Goal – Across RTD's portfolio, and over the next 10 years (from 2021 to 2031), staff shall endeavor to reach the goal that **35 percent** of the total residential units developed on RTD property will be affordable to low-income households (as defined by Colorado Housing and Finance Authority). This goal is aspirational and non-binding.



2. Parking Replacement – Park-n-Rides provide crucial access to transit. Replacement of RTD parking is expensive and reduces potential revenue for lease/sale of land. Where a new development will be located on an existing Park-n-Ride, RTD will determine the quantity of replacement parking required based on projected future parking utilization, among other agency considerations.
3. Shared Parking – RTD may consider opportunities for shared parking between transit customers and non-transit customers.
4. Expedited Administration – Staff may waive internal processing and development review fees, minimize review times, and entitle agency property to attract developers and reduce development uncertainty, costs, and schedules.
5. Negotiated Land Price – The cost of land is a common barrier to affordable housing development. Reductions in purchase price or rent may be permitted in exchange for affordable housing development or other benefits to the agency.

Affordability Goal Determination for Individual Projects

Where RTD land is being considered for residential uses under a sale or lease, staff will adhere to the following process for determining an affordability goal. For the purposes of this process, “affordable housing” will be defined by the local government and may include rental or for-sale housing that is deed-restricted to maintain long-term affordability for a range of households. Affordable housing designation will be based on percentages of the Denver Metro Area Median Income as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and adjusted annually.

1. Prior to issuance of an RFQ/RFP, RTD and the local governmental entity will collaborate to evaluate the subject parcel for an affordability goal. RTD and the staff/designees of the local governmental entity will consider the following when evaluating the parcel for an affordability goal:
 - a. The parties shall consult any existing plans for affordable housing the community may have adopted as well as census or other available data demonstrating housing needs in the local jurisdiction. The affordable housing goals shall conform to the local governmental entities’ adopted plans, zoning or regulations governing the parcel. Also taken into consideration will be the potential for the proposed project to receive any necessary financing.
 - b. Any affordable housing goal established will identify the level of affordability desired, as well as the number or percentage of units to be provided. In addition, other desired criteria will be considered, including but not limited to particular populations to be served such as seniors, families, etc.
 - c. Any affordable housing goal established by the various parties to the transaction could vary from goals established on other parcels based on the nature of the specific property. Examples include but are not limited to: For larger parcels that may accommodate several phases of development, goals might seek to achieve mixed housing types serving a variety of income levels. For smaller parcels, a goal might seek to achieve a stand-alone affordable housing outcome for the subject property. If it is determined that affordable housing is not feasible or contradicts a local governmental entities’ adopted plans, zoning or regulations, no goal for affordable housing would be established.

2. RFQs/RFPs will include any affordable and/or mixed-income housing goals established for the property in accordance with the above process, or such goals will be communicated to the developer in writing in the case of an unsolicited proposal. Evaluation of RFQs/RFPs will utilize a pre-existing scoring systems prepared by RTD, and, as to those projects that have a goal, will include additional points for projects in alignment with the affordability goal and demonstrated ability to execute.
 - a. Consideration will be given to proposers experienced with affordable housing projects when specific mixed-income housing goals are established.
 - b. Proposals will be evaluated with practical feasibility in mind and also with a specific emphasis on the assumptions for the project completion timeline and for the projections for affordable housing resource allocations that can be met.
3. Once a joint development proposal has been selected, the accepted proposal shall be embodied in documents associated with the real estate transaction and contingent upon securing any financing necessary for production of the affordable units if a mixed-income housing component has been included.

IV. TOD Processes

Joint developments may be approached either through a solicited proposal process initiated by RTD through a Request for Qualifications (RFQ)/Request for Proposal (RFP), or an unsolicited process that is initiated by a private developer or a public entity. Both solicited and unsolicited joint development proposals need to be closely coordinated with local jurisdictions. The steps for both processes are discussed in detail below.

Unsolicited Joint Development Proposal Process

RTD is open to receiving unsolicited joint development proposals. Since every development opportunity is unique, unsolicited proposals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Consistent with RTD's TOD goals, any proposal must clearly state the benefit to and impact on the transit facility and system, and describe how the proposal follows TOD best practices. Proposals should also provide an evaluation of the trade-offs for RTD comparing what the agency would give versus what it would receive, as relevant over the short-, medium-, and long-term timeframes. Any unsolicited joint development proposal should be consistent with the local government jurisdiction's neighborhood, comprehensive and/or station-area plan. Like any private property owner, RTD is subject to local land-use regulation on property beyond its transportation infrastructure. Joint development does not exempt a developer from the local government development review process. RTD will not entertain proposals that are clearly inconsistent with adopted or expressed local land-use plans. The eight steps of RTD's Unsolicited Proposal Procedure (UPP) are outlined below; additional information and the required forms are available at www.rtd-denver.com/doing-business-with-rtd/unsolicited-proposal-procedure-for-real-property.

Step 1: Initial Request and Information Exchange

The goal of this step is to create an information gathering opportunity and for RTD to provide technical and process details, as available. The applicant will submit information through the



Initial Request Form and the TOD Case Manager will review the form, consult with others at RTD, and provide a written response.

Step 2: Technical Review

The goal of this step is to identify fatal flaws early in the Joint Development process. From the applicant's submission of the Technical Review Form, RTD staff will review the technical merit of the proposal and determine if there are any fatal flaws that would prevent a project from coming to fruition. The applicant receives a written list of concerns or items to be addressed if the project moves forward.

Steps 3a & 3b: Unsolicited Proposal Submission and Determination of Merit

This step constitutes the formal submission of the joint development concept to RTD staff. The concept should be submitted by the proposer to RTD Procurement, who will forward the proposal to the TOD Manager. At this point, a formal procurement process has been initiated and the applicant may only communicate with RTD Procurement staff and not directly with the TOD Manager or any other RTD staff.

The proposal must include clear identification of a point of contact and members of the proposer's joint development team. Formal submission should consist of the Step 3 Form and a preliminary proposal with a conceptual level of detail similar to what is customary in a preliminary sketch plan proposed to local jurisdictions. The Step 3 Form and concept proposal will generally include the following elements:

- Land-use program – the proposed type and intensity of land uses.
- Affordability, if applicable.
- Transit interface – how the proposal development interfaces with transit (i.e., will the RTD facility need to be reconfigured or redesigned, will transit passes be provided to future residents or employees, etc.).
- Local government Support – Identify proposal's consistency with local plans, need for entitlement changes, and level of support by the local jurisdiction as defined by RTD's TOD Manager and the local jurisdiction.
- Plans for staging construction and phasing development (when necessary) – if an existing RTD facility will be redesigned, identify what steps will be taken to minimize the disruption to RTD operations.
- Benefit to RTD – identify the benefit to RTD in terms of increased ridership, revenue, infrastructure improvements or advancement of livability principles that support local and regional community objectives.
- Control of adjacent property – if applicable, demonstrate a controlling interest in the property sought for joint development adjacent to RTD property, either through fee simple ownership, a partnership title, option on the land, development easement, or other documentation.
- Financial Framework – identify proposed real estate transaction structure (sale, lease, etc.) and other financial elements of deal (payment for infrastructure or other relevant elements). Please note that RTD's Board of Directors has a strong preference for leases rather than land sales.

The UP is evaluated by a committee of RTD staff for financial and technical merit, including effects on RTD's facilities and transit system, and for applicant's financial capacity. The Committee also evaluates whether the proposal meets local jurisdictional requirements, plans and policies. Should the proposal have merit, the process proceeds to the fourth step.

Step 4: Request for Alternate Proposals

If the UP has merit, RTD will publish a Request for Alternate Proposals to ensure a fair and competitive process for Joint Development. Both the original proposer and other interested applicants must respond to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to be considered as RTD's future development partner.

Step 5: Determination of Merit of Unsolicited Proposal for Joint Development

A committee will review all of the proposals and discuss their individual strengths and weaknesses. Proposers may have the opportunity for an interview with the Review Committee. The TOD Case Manager may discuss the proposals with other stakeholders, including the Federal Transit Administration, partner agencies, and the local jurisdiction. The Review Committee will select a preferred developer.

Step 6: Approval of Selected Developer

Once a preferred developer has been selected, the TOD Case Manager will create a Recommendation Report that incorporates staff comments from the technical review and impact analysis. The Report will outline next steps and detail outstanding issues and concerns to be mitigated or corrected during the exclusive negotiation. The Committee will review the Report for completeness before it is submitted to the General Manager. The General Manager will review the Report and determine whether he/she consents to moving into an Exclusive Negotiation Period.

If approved, the developer will provide an Audited Financial Statement for RTD to review. If the developer's finances are deemed suitable by RTD Finance, the TOD Case Manager will present the proposal to the Board. The Board will make the final determination of whether RTD should enter into an Exclusive Negotiation Agreement with the developer. If the Board does not approve the ENA, the Unsolicited Proposal Process for this project is concluded.

Step 7: Exclusive Negotiations

Once the ENA is executed, RTD staff will begin negotiations with the selected developer on the joint development. The negotiation process will involve extensive discussions on the structure of the joint development deal including, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Preliminary design plans which provide a detailed site layout and identify the relationship between RTD facilities and the development,
- Formal assessment of transportation benefits including an analysis of the physical or functional relationship to the transit facility (i.e., distance to transit facility, access, trip generation impact),
- Infrastructure financing responsibilities,
- Market and financial assessment with sources and uses of funds including pro formas showing initial and projected cash flows,



- Details of any proposed land transactions (leases or sales of property), maintenance responsibilities, and
- Other issues pertinent to the joint development.

For RTD facilities that involve the use of federal funds, additional requirements may be necessary.

Step 8: Approval of Business Terms

When the joint development agreement (typically a ground lease) is finalized, RTD staff will develop a Board Report with the terms of agreement attached for Board approval. The report and terms will then be formally presented to the RTD Board for approval. Members of the proposer team will be asked to participate in the presentation to the Board. The Board may request changes to the terms.

Step 9: Design and Construction

The final design and construction of the joint development will occur following Board approval of a joint development agreement, completion of any required entitlement changes within the local jurisdiction, and confirmation of a project financing package. In cases where the joint development project will occur on an existing RTD facility, construction phasing plans must be put in place to allow for the continued operation of the RTD facility with minimal disruption. This may include the temporary and/or permanent relocation of parking or bus operations.

Solicited Joint Development Proposal Process

Step 1: Site Evaluation

The TOD group will conduct detailed analysis of potential development sites, reviewing them for feasibility in terms of market readiness, zoning, infrastructure needs, community interest, RTD parking needs, and impacts to transit facilities. The TOD group will propose sites for joint development to departments with oversight and the GM/CEO. If approved, the TOD group will work with Procurement to begin drafting an RFQ/RFP.

Step 2: Determine Affordability Goals

Before issuing an RFQ/RFP for property that is expected to include a residential component, RTD will work with the local jurisdiction to determine the affordability goals, if any, according to the process described in Section III. These affordability goals will be included in the RFQ/RFP that is subsequently issued.

Step 3: Publish RFP

The TOD group will initiate RFQs/RFPs for joint development. The RTD Board of Directors will be briefed on the contents and the intent of the RFQ/RFP prior to issuance. The issuance of the RFQ/RFP will follow RTD's standard procurement process. Generally, the RFQ/RFP will contain a schedule for the selection process including due dates for written proposals, oral interviews, and final selection; requirements for the submittal; specific proposal evaluation criteria; and required forms and other materials to be submitted with the proposal.

Step 4: Evaluate Proposals

RFQ/RFP proposals will be evaluated by RTD staff in coordination with others outside of RTD including staff from the local jurisdiction. Proposals will be evaluated on specific criteria that are



consistent with the general evaluation topics discussed earlier in this document. The selection committee will evaluate the proposals and request authorization from the RTD Board to enter into an Exclusive Negotiation Agreement (ENA) with the selected developer.

Step 5: Exclusive Negotiations

Once the ENA is executed, RTD staff will begin negotiations with the selected developer on the joint development. The negotiation process will involve extensive discussions on the structure of the joint development deal including, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Preliminary design plans which provide a detailed site layout and identify the relationship between RTD facilities and the development,
- Formal assessment of transportation benefits including an analysis of the physical or functional relationship to the transit facility (i.e., distance to transit facility, access, trip generation impact),
- Infrastructure financing responsibilities,
- Market and financial assessment with sources and uses of funds including pro formas showing initial and projected cash flows,
- Details of any proposed land transactions (leases or sales of property), maintenance responsibilities, and
- Other issues pertinent to the joint development.

For RTD facilities that involve the use of federal funds, additional requirements may be necessary.

Step 6: RTD Board Approval

When the joint development agreement (typically a ground lease) is finalized, RTD staff will develop a Board Report with the terms of agreement attached for Board approval. The report and terms will then be formally presented to the RTD Board for approval. Members of the proposer team will be asked to participate in the presentation to the Board. The Board may request changes to the terms.

Step 7: Local Entitlement Approval (if necessary)

Zoning changes and other entitlement approvals that may be required may be completed either prior to, in conjunction with, or following negotiations with the selected developer. Not all situations require zoning changes or other entitlement approvals by local jurisdictions. If required, the timing of the local entitlement process will be dependent upon the situation and the prior level of station area planning completed by the local jurisdiction. For situations where entitlements are required, all approvals must be completed prior to the conveyance of any RTD land to a public or private entity for joint development. In most cases, the costs associated with the entitlement approval process will be the responsibility of the private developer or public entity that is partnering with RTD on the joint development.

Step 8: Design and Construction

The final design and construction of the joint development will occur following Board approval of a joint development agreement, completion of any required entitlement changes within the local jurisdiction, and confirmation of a project financing package. In cases where the joint development project will occur on an existing RTD facility, construction phasing plans must be

put in place to allow for the continued operation of the RTD facility with minimal disruption. This may include the temporary and/or permanent relocation of parking or bus operations.

V. TOD Workplan

The TOD Workplan focuses staff efforts on Park-n-Rides with high development potential. To determine which sites have the greatest potential, TOD staff consider site size, zoning, PnR utilization, infrastructure availability, local market conditions, community interest in redevelopment, and any unique site attributes or challenges. Staff generally follow the steps below to divide PnR sites into prioritized tiers. This assessment is typically repeated annually.

1. Eliminate ineligible PnRs
 - Non-BRT bus service only
 - On-site development in progress/complete
 - Insufficient property/existing PnR structure
 - Irremediable local or site restrictions
 - N Line/Newly constructed stations
2. Classify PnR utilization by count or %
 - Disqualify sites with moderate utilization
3. Categorize remaining PnRs
 - Tier 1 – Top Sites
 - Strong/moderate development potential
 - Low parking utilization
 - Jurisdiction interest
 - Tier 2 – Sites with potential
 - Same as Tier 1, but with complicating factors
 - Tier 3 – More research needed
 - Same as Tier 1, but more info needed
 - Tier 4 – On hold
 - Unique challenges prevent development at this time

Once sites have been prioritized, staff pursue four or more areas of inquiry before considering the issuance of a Request for Proposals/Qualifications. Those areas of inquiry may include:

1. In-depth parking analysis
 - Review change in utilization over time
 - Monitor PnR over several days to determine any abnormal or inappropriate usage
 - Survey license plates at peak utilization to determine user origins
2. Development feasibility analysis
 - Review existing zoning and potential for future zoning changes
 - Complete basic architectural concept drawings showing possible/likely massings
 - Create pro formas based on likely unit count/square footage against construction and financing assumptions to determine development feasibility and residual land value



3. Internal Outreach

- Review potential for closure or parking reduction with the following groups:
 1. Service Planning
 2. Capital Programs
 3. Legal
 4. Finance
 5. Special project teams, as needed (e.g., Facilities and Fleet Project)

4. Jurisdiction Outreach

- Review potential PnR closure or reduction
- Review zoning consistency with local plans
- Discuss any unique challenges on the site

If a development is financially feasible, and both RTD staff and jurisdiction staff are amenable, TOD staff will prepare to pursue a Request for Proposals/Qualifications once approved by the GM/CEO.

VI. Appendices

Appendix A. RTD TOD DESIGN STANDARDS

[Adapted from RTD Transit Oriented Development Design Criteria, published 2012]

The purpose of the RTD TOD Design Standards is to guide development at and around RTD transit stations in order to encourage a livable and transit-supportive final design. The standards cover TOD components such as building orientation, mix of uses, density, pedestrian friendliness, connectivity, access, parking, and public spaces.

RTD will work with the local jurisdiction on any conflicts between RTD criteria and local jurisdiction planning and zoning. The intent of the RTD criteria is to specifically focus on urban design and development pertaining to the success of TOD at the station and within the station area. The standards should serve as a complement to the jurisdiction's station area planning, zoning, and rules and regulations.

Key Terms

Activated Edge: The first floor of a building structure that is activated by its land use, its proximity to a street or transit plaza, architectural materials and fenestration.

Mixed Income Housing: The development of housing options that increase residential opportunities for multiple income levels in a given area.

Mixed-Use Development: Development projects that integrate multiple land uses into a single structure. Typical land uses found within a mixed-use development include: residential / commercial and office / commercial buildings. The mixing of multiple land use types in one development allows for the activation of urban areas, increases housing options for diverse income levels, reduces auto-dependence and creates activity at the street level.

Multi-modal Transportation: A transportation system that offers users diverse transport options that are effectively integrated, in order to provide a high degree of accessibility for cars, pedestrians, bikes and mass-transit.

Public Realm: The portion of the built environment that is accessible to the public. The public realm typically includes:

- The street including sidewalks and on-street parking.
- Open space including plazas, parks and squares.
- Transit facilities, including bike paths, transit hubs and pedestrian ways.

Streetscape: The built elements of a street, including building fronts, street furniture, sidewalks, signs, landscaping, lighting and motor vehicle parking. Together these elements help to define the character of a street.

Walkability: The development of a built environment that encourages people to live, work and recreate within a pedestrian scaled context. The creation of pedestrian scaled street grids, investment in attractive streetscape elements and a mix of land uses help to facilitate a walkable urban environment.



Design Principle 1: Organize & Orient the TOD Site Based on the Transit Station

Intent

Good TOD celebrates the station and leverages transit access for increased development and ridership. How development integrates a transit station into it can be an indicator of success for creating a successful TOD. The public realm, streets, sidewalks, plazas and open space may organize the immediate station area in a way to identify the station as a defined center, establish a network to connect all modes of transportation to the station that is intuitive and enjoyable, and allows the building forms to respond and reflect the hierarchy of the site.

Standards

- The station must have an 'address'; it shall front onto an active public realm, either a street or active plaza space.
- Integrate the station with the surrounding development by providing continuous multimodal access and pedestrian-scaled sequence of spaces.
- In places where there are buildings adjoining the station plaza, buildings shall front onto the plaza by providing entrances, translucent windows and sitting areas serving the space outside the building.
- Building placement and building massing shall allow direct pedestrian movement between transit, mixed land uses and surrounding areas. Stations shall not front onto the backside of a block or building.
- Lighting at building entrances facing the station plaza shall be designed to match the luminance levels of the plaza.

Guidelines

- The land uses adjacent to the station should provide an optimal mix and make the best use of the transit resource.
- All blocks should be active on all four sides. Block sizes should be walkable, with block faces not exceeding 400 feet on block face.
- Provide landscape-enhanced view corridors into the station from appropriate approaches.
- Buildings should be well-lit and oriented to streets, open spaces and the station to provide needed surveillance. The provision of a secure and pleasant pedestrian environment encourages walking.



Design Principle 2: Design for Compact and Mixed-Use Development

Intent

Successful TOD is characterized by transit-supporting densities in the immediate station area, which are typically greater densities than the surrounding area. Higher densities create active street environments through ground floor retail, increased ridership, and help to activate public spaces. Ideally, land uses are integrated vertically to maximize the density and create a more dynamic public realm – residents, visitors and/ or transit users coexist and use the same streets and buildings. This begins to create an 18-hour place, rather than a 9-5 workplace, or night and weekend residential neighborhood.

Standards

- The immediate uses around a station in the immediate station area shall be of the highest densities of the station area, or shall be able to demonstrate intensification of density over time.
- TODs located at high activity nodes such as main streets, town centers, and educational and medical facilities shall be designed to provide convenient on-site transit facilities, including plaza or other signature civic space, shelters, benches and bike racks. All applicable RTD Transit Access Guidelines and Bus and Rail Design Criteria shall be adhered to.
- Ground floors that front public space and roadway shall focus activated edges at corners and high pedestrian traffic areas.

Guidelines

- Activate public spaces by providing defensible spaces along the street edge and plaza space by providing outdoor sitting areas, appropriate landscape and urban furniture. Small scale projects can also capitalize on transit availability. Transit stops can be combined with shops and services like daycare, convenience stores, or restaurants to create community activity nodes.
- Combine transit stop with activated, mixed uses where possible.

Design Principle 3: Create a High Quality Pedestrian-Oriented Environment

Intent

The pedestrian environment should be engaging and feel safe and comfortable. This increases walkability to and from the station, and signals that pedestrians are a priority in the immediate and secondary station areas. A variety of streetscape elements, building massing and character can aid in achieving quality pedestrian environment. A quality pedestrian environment can activate ground floor use activity as well.

Standards

- Furnish the station, station plaza and approaches to the station with appropriate streetscape components such as benches, paving materials, lighting, signs and utilities to provide an adequate pedestrian scale, safety and aesthetics.
- The pedestrian system shall provide for a continuous high quality, barrier free walking surface and be directly linked to transit stations.
- Provide for increased surveillance and security of the pedestrian environment through active building edges and building orientation toward the street. Sidewalks on streets can enhance the personal safety of pedestrians by including them - not isolating them from street activities.
- Provide visual connection from the station to the larger context of the station area through the street grid network by avoiding blank walls and encouraging building access and windows at the street level.
- Buffer pedestrian routes from fast moving vehicles and large surface parking lots with pedestrian amenity zones and on-street parking.
- Provide bicycle access and parking appropriately for both transit and development within the immediate station area.
- Structured parking on the ground floor shall be wrapped with activated uses or screened in a way that engages the public realm.
- The pedestrian realm shall be designed to respond to the ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

Transit Facility Standards

- Transit plazas must be continuous with the pedestrian realm, and shall have direct access from at least two sides in the urban fabric.
- Provide outdoor sitting areas, appropriate landscape and urban furniture to create a greater sense of personal security for those walking or waiting for transit service or otherwise using the space.
- All applicable RTD Transit Access Guidelines and Bus and Rail Design Criteria shall be adhered to.
- Provide ample facilities for bicycles to safely access the station area. Preferred facilities are bicycle lanes separated from vehicular lanes, although sharrows are allowable in areas with limited right-of-way. Bicycle facilities shall meet AASHTO standards and local jurisdiction standards; should there be a conflict, ASSHTO standards will prevail. Signage should be installed to indicate bicycle routes and movements.



- Provide areas for bicycle parking and storage at the station.

Guidelines

- Design a way-finding system that facilitates the approach to train platforms and serves as an orientation guide for the station area.
- Where appropriate, focal points at the station, or at key nodes within the station area, should be used to guide transit users to the station. Examples of focal points may include public art, special streetscape treatments such as lighting, banners and pedestrian amenities.
- Building amenities such as storefront windows, awnings, architectural features, lighting, seating, and landscaping should be provided to create a comfortable pedestrian environment along and between buildings.

On Street Parking Guidelines

- Based on its proximity to transit, parking for development should be less than surrounding, traditional development.
- Parking and parking access should not face onto the plaza or platform space.
- On street parking should be allowed where feasible. On-street parking in the station area needs to be managed in coordination with the jurisdiction to limit daytime usage in order to discourage transit riders from parking all day.



Design Principle 4: Utilize the Street Grid to Connect and Provide Access

Intent

Streets provide access for multiple modes and allow for direct connections between the station and surrounding uses in the immediate and secondary station areas. An interconnected pattern, ideally a grid, provides the most efficient and direct form of access and helps shape the built form. The pattern best serves TOD if the blocks are at a pedestrian scale, meaning their lengths and widths respond to the pedestrian experience at the street level. As part of the street pattern, a hierarchy identifies streets that better serve different mixes of land use and modes.

Standards

- The street pattern should be based on a grid/interconnected system that simplifies access for all modes.

Guidelines

- All applicable Transit Access Guidelines shall be adhered to.
- All blocks should be active on all four sides. Block sizes should be walkable, with perimeters not exceeding 400 feet on block face.
- Demonstrate connectivity to the larger station area for pedestrians, buses, vehicles and bicycles.
- Pedestrian access should be incorporated into the street grid. In some cases mid-block pedestrian ways should be incorporated to facilitate pedestrian circulation.



Appendix B. PARKING GUIDING PRINCIPLES (2016)

1. RTD will continue to operate its parking management program under the current enabling legislation (CRS 32-9) and evaluate potential improvements to the program, including changes to parking fees, on a regular basis.
2. RTD will evaluate all decisions on parking based on the impacts to ridership and the financial, operational, and capital benefits to RTD.
3. RTD will evaluate third-party parking operation and management agreements considering the following factors:
 - a. Consistency with RTD parking management practices, including retaining control over RTD assets
 - b. Opportunities to leverage third-party resources
 - c. Input from local governments prior to finalizing agreements
 - d. Other relevant factors
4. RTD will evaluate new or additional parking in the context of comprehensive, multimodal plan for station accessibility considering the following factors:
 - a. Cost effectiveness of each mode
 - b. Ease of access based on connectivity and convenience of each mode
 - c. Infrastructure and maintenance costs of each mode
 - d. Local jurisdiction land-use plans and community vision for the area
 - e. Changes in commuter preference related to new shared mobility options
 - f. Customer safety
 - g. Feasibility of shared parking arrangements
 - h. Other relevant factors.
5. RTD will evaluate parking replacement of station area property for joint development or other purposes considering the following factors:
 - a. Current parking-facility utilization
 - b. Opportunities to increase station area density based on local land use plans
 - c. Distance from mixed-use, transit oriented urban centers
 - d. Connectivity to other modes of access
 - e. Potential for increased transit ridership
 - f. Obligations on or limits to the quantity of parking due to legal restrictions or federal funding requirements
 - g. Other relevant factors.

Appendix C. OTHER RESOURCES

The RTD Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Group relies on its website to define its role in promoting transit-oriented communities and to publish resources for development partners. Refer to <https://www.rtd-denver.com/about-rtd/transit-oriented-development> to review the following resources listed below.

1. **Unsolicited Proposal Procedure for Joint Development** – The eight-step process, requirements, and timeline for evaluating developers’ interests in redeveloping agency property, including links to submission forms and evaluation guidelines.
2. **TOD Status Report** – Annual report summarizing station-area development since 2015, particularly value created from multifamily apartment, office, and retail growth.
3. **TOD Illustrated** – Every TOD in the District, shown rail line by rail line, station by station, with images. (A GIS version of this same data, sans images, is also available.)

