

**WEEKLY INFORMATION PACKET
MEMORANDUM**

To: Mayor McGrath and City Council

From: Tracy Winfree, Director of Public Works for Transportation
John Pollak, Co-Director Housing & Human Services
Mike Sweeney, Transportation Operations and Planning Coordinator
Micki Kaplan, Senior Transportation Planner
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Date: April 17, 2008

Subject: Information on Boulder Transit Village: Concept & Site Planning Project

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This memo provides information on a new phase of work beginning at the Boulder Transit Village, which includes development of a concept plan for the 11-acre city Housing Division- and RTD-owned properties located at the northeast corner of 30th and Pearl streets, a site plan and the subsequent construction of a new RTD bus/bus rapid transit (BRT) facility on the RTD owned portion of the property.

The Boulder Transit Village (BTV) is a high priority city and RTD project spanning multiple years, several city councils and several RTD boards of directors. Since 2001, the BTV has been envisioned to be an integrated, mixed-use, transit-oriented development (TOD) that combines RTD bus/BRT service with housing (including a substantial amount of affordable housing) and supportive commercial uses. The development addresses all of City Council's community sustainability goals.

This project is located within the area of the 160-acre Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP). TVAP outlined the vision, goals, future land uses and transportation connections for the area. Although related, The BTV: Concept and Site Planning project is a separate joint initiative between the city and RTD. This effort will inform the investment of RTD's \$7.8 million federal grant that RTD received to plan for phased and integrated development of a transit facility and housing on the 11-acre site and to design and build the RTD bus facility. RTD's federal grant will not fund detailed site planning or housing on the site.

The city's Housing Division currently owns approximately eight acres of the 11 acre site, of which 5.5 acres are leased to Pollard Motors until 2016. RTD owns the remaining three acres. While RTD has the legal authority to develop its property and transit facilities without following the city's standard review process, the BTV Intergovernmental Agreement commits the city and RTD to an integrated development.

This year, RTD partnered with city staff to begin the concept and site planning phase of work for this project, which includes the following components:

- Hiring a consultant team to assist in developing a Concept Plan for the entire site for review by the city Planning Board and RTD;
- Developing a site plan, including design and site review by Planning Board for only the RTD bus/BRT facility portion of the site; and
- Construction of the regional RTD bus/BRT facility and park-n-ride by RTD.

The primary objective of the BTV: Concept & Site Planning Project is to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to development of the property over time. This will ensure that the RTD bus facility is integrated in “form and function” with future housing and commercial development. This work effort required an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with RTD that City Council and RTD approved in September, 2007 in order to establish an agreement of roles and responsibilities between the city and RTD and in order to use RTD’s federal grant funds for the project.

Following a competitive request for proposals (RFP) process, EDAW, a planning, design and place making firm in Denver, was hired as the prime consultant for the project. Pivot, an Oregon architecture firm with specialties in affordable housing and transit facility design, is part of EDAW’s team as the lead architect for development of the transit station design. Concept planning is expected to be completed in late 2008 and will include:

1. Development of a concept plan for the 11-acre BTV site assuming a high quality transit facility that functions first for transit, but with the goal of working well for future TOD (housing and commercial);
2. Development of conceptual level plans, which include identifying the amount of buildable land available for the TOD (residential and commercial, including potential for creation of a mid-box component);
3. Creation of a phasing plan for development;
4. Establishment of a road network and bicycle and pedestrian connections. Identify a road, multimodal connections network for the Boulder Transit Village to/from the transit facility, including interior circulation of the transit facility;
5. Determination of parking needs;
6. Identifying the location, general size and program for a neighborhood pocket park;
7. Exploration of options for enhancing the interface and connections between Goose Creek and the site, which may include the widening and de-channeling of the Goose Creek corridor;
8. Identifying all water, wastewater and storm water improvements;
9. Integrating the historic Jaycees/Union Pacific Depot building into the concept plans; (The Housing Division will lead a concurrent effort to identify a general program for the historic depot building); and

Site planning, design and construction of the first phase RTD bus facility and associated infrastructure is expected to be completed in 2009 and will include;

1. Six bus bays complete with passenger amenities;
2. A park-n-Ride facility that will assess feasibility of structure vs. surface parking;
3. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation within the site and connection to the future commuter rail;

4. Site amenities such as lighting, street furniture, landscaping and signage;
5. Enclosed maintenance storage area (small size for station area cleaning) and utilities;
6. Signalized street intersection on Pearl Street for access to the new north-south multi-modal road;
7. Exploration of potential for non-residential shared use of the park and ride and transit facility such as parking and/or commercial uses.

The BTV: Concept & Site Planning Project will be consistent with the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan, the Transportation Master Plan and the Transit Village Area Plan.

Once the concept plan is substantially completed, the city's Housing Division will work with Enterprise Community Partners, a national non-profit that helps build affordable housing by providing financing expertise to community and housing developers, to translate the concept plan design into a development program that reflects city goals for affordability as well as realistic expectations for development costs and operating budgets. Based on the results of the concept plan feasibility analysis and development program, the Housing Division may proceed with a RFP process for development of a first phase of housing.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No additional city funds are required. City staff time, comprised of staff from the Housing, Transportation, Long Range Planning divisions and the Economic Redevelopment Director, has been allocated and will be used for local "in kind" match to support RTD's federal \$7.8 million grant. The city Housing Division funds used to purchase the property at 30th and Pearl streets in 2004 will also be used for "local" match.

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPACTS:

- **Economic:** It is anticipated that the improvements resulting from the project will increase economic opportunities in the transit village area. A new transit station, housing and supportive neighborhood commercial uses will be constructed in phases. Early city investment in infrastructure and development of the RTD bus/BRT facility as well as a possible first phase of housing is expected to be a catalyst for other improvements in the area.
- **Environmental:** Increased transit ridership, expanded multimodal connections, increased alternative mode share, and additional workforce housing support the Boulder Comprehensive Plan and TMP goals of reducing incommuting, dependency on single-occupant automobile use, congestion and emissions.
- **Social:** Planning 200 – 300 new homes with up to 50 percent permanently affordable units addresses key city goals. The site also will also provide a permanent home for the historic Jaycees/Union Pacific Depot building and a new neighborhood pocket park. A new transit station and associated connections will create new access options for the public.

BACKGROUND:

The Boulder Transit Village began when the city and RTD identified the need for a new bus transit station and park-n-Ride in the Boulder Valley Regional Center (BVRC) area, long before RTD's FasTracks Program was conceptualized. In 2001, City Council and RTD approved the selection of the 11-acre site at 30th and Pearl streets. City Council and RTD completed the first of two IGA's to purchase the property together in 2004. In October 2004, the city's Housing

Division, in partnership with the Transportation Division and RTD, purchased the site through a negotiated agreement with Pollard LLC. The agreement was consistent with council's direction to design and construct a transit oriented development (TOD) located near high-frequency transit bus service that would provide a mix of housing types with a unique opportunity to provide a "significant level" of affordable housing. The city's Housing Division currently owns approximately eight acres of the BTV area, of which 5.5 acres are leased to Pollard Motors until 2016. RTD owns the remaining three acres of the site. (See Attachment A: Map of Boulder Transit Village 11 acre site.)

RTD Federal Grant

In 2004, RTD, in partnership with the city, was successful in obtaining a \$7.8 million federal grant to complete concept level planning at the property and to design and construct the first phase of the RTD bus/BRT transit facility. Originally scheduled to begin in 2006, the work effort was postponed, per request by the city to RTD, until a Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP) was created. The TVAP established a vision and framework for the site and surrounding area (160 acres total).

The RTD grant is a fixed amount of funding that can only be used for the RTD bus/BRT facility concept level planning for the 11-acre site and for some infrastructure to support the transit facility. Due to the delay, the purchasing power of the grant has been reduced with the recent increases in construction material prices. The grant also requires that the funds be primarily obligated in 2008 and expended in 2009. Further delay will prevent the city and RTD from maximizing this valuable federal resource.

Intergovernmental Agreement with RTD

In 2007, in anticipation of beginning this next phase of work, the city and RTD developed a second Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that clarified roles and responsibilities for the RTD federal grant for the planning and construction process. (The first IGA, approved in 2004, was for partnering on the land purchase.) This second IGA documents city and RTD roles and responsibilities at different stages in the project, how the two agencies will work together during the BTV: Concept & Site Planning Project effort and how the grant funds will be expended. The IGA includes several key items worth noting, including:

- 1) The city will take the lead on developing the concept plan for the entire 11-acre site and will work in partnership with RTD;
- 2) Upon completion of concept level planning for the entire site, RTD will take the lead on design and construction of its bus based transit facility and will work in partnership with the city;
- 3) After concept planning is completed, property boundaries between RTD and the city will be reconciled and subdivision of the property will be modified if necessary;
- 4) The BTV: Concept & Site Planning Project will include a public process component (such as public open houses and updates to council, boards and commissions);
- 5) The RTD bus facility design will go through city planning processes of concept and site review; and

- 6) RTD will fund a share of the infrastructure costs (per standard city requirements of a property owner seeking to develop their property).

Project Timeline

Status of the project and estimated timeline follows. (For detailed information, see Attachment B: Project Tasks and Timeline.)

- 2001: Site selection, and “fitness tests,” of the site are completed.
- Fall, 2004: First IGA with RTD and land acquisition of 11 acre site is completed.
- 2004: \$7.8 million federal grant awarded to RTD (in partnership with the city) to plan and build first phase (RTD transit facility and supportive infrastructure) of the TOD.
- July 10, 2007: Second IGA documents city and RTD roles and responsibilities during the concept and site planning processes (approved by City Council).
- Fall 2007: Developed and issued an RFP to hire a design team for concept planning and design of transit facility.
- March 2008: Hired EDAW, a Denver-based design consultant.
- Summer/fall 2008: Develop concept plan for Planning Board review.
- Fall 2008 - spring 2009: Design RTD Regional Bus/BRT station and conduct site review.
- Summer 2009: Begin first phase transit facility construction.
- 2009 - 2010: Possible Phase I development of the Housing Division’s site (2.5 acres), depending on the outcome of concept planning analysis.
- 2014 - 2016: Future phases - commuter rail station facilities and new transit service.
- 2014 – 2016: Phase II development of the Housing Division’s site (5.5 acres).

NEXT STEPS:

During the next quarter (April – June 2008), an interdepartmental staff team will work jointly with RTD and the consultant team to develop several concept plans for the site. An open house will be scheduled in late May or early June to obtain public feedback on the various concepts, and information will be provided to city council, city boards and commissions during important phases of the project, including the future open houses. The concept plan process is anticipated to take approximately six months to complete. Site planning, design of the transit station and site review is anticipated to be completed in approximately one year.

For more information on this subject, please contact Senior Transportation Planner Micki Kaplan at 303-441-4162 or kaplanm@bouldercolorado.gov, or Housing Planner Michelle Allen at 303-441-4076.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A) Site Map
- B) Project Tasks and Timeline