

Purpose: The purposes of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Overlay District are to:

1. Encourage a mix of moderate and high-density development within walking distance of transit stations to increase transit ridership;
2. Create a pedestrian-friendly environment to encourage walking, bicycling and transit use;
3. Provide an alternative to traditional development by emphasizing mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development;
4. Create a neighborhood identity that promotes pedestrian activity, human interactions, safety and livability;
5. Encourage building reuse and infill to create higher densities;
6. Reduce auto dependency and roadway congestion by locating multiple destinations and trip purposes within walking distance of one another;
7. Provide a range of housing options for people of different income levels and at different stages of life.

Applicability: These standards apply to new applications for development and expansions/redevelopment of existing uses for all properties within or partially within a one-half (1/2) mile radius of RTD FasTracks stations located, as measured from a point roughly in the center of the platform.

RTD FasTracks Station half (1/2) mile in which these standards apply:

1. Arvada Goldstrike Station;
2. Clear Creek (Federal) Station;
3. Pecos Junction Station;
4. Original Thornton/88th Avenue Station Area;
5. Commerce City/72nd Station; and
6. The Westminster Station.

Relationship to underlying zoning district. The provisions of the Transit- Oriented Development (TOD) Overlay are in addition to the requirements of the underlying zoning district for a subject property and may supersede the zoning district requirements.

Relationship to other Zoning Overlays. The provisions of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Overlay are in addition to the requirements of other applicable zoning overlays.

Site Planning

Building Orientation. Primary commercial or residential building entrances shall face streets, connecting walkways, plazas, parks, station areas, or similar outdoors spaces, but not parking lots. Main entrances shall be provided with a direct pedestrian connection to the street without requiring pedestrians to walk through parking lots or cross driveways.

Sense of Place. Applicable to multifamily development, commercial, mixed-use, and industrial development. Enhanced landscaping and open space is required between public sidewalks and the front façade of the structure. A minimum of two (2) elements demonstrating a sense of place are required. A minimum of one (1) of the elements must be specific to the Station or that displays local art is required. The Community and Economic Development Department may accept any of the following examples for:

- Gateways to the site at pedestrian entrances that can be enhanced by special plantings or decorative fencing
- Accents, such as brick pavers or other material changes that can enhance the pedestrian experience
- Lighting effects, such as decorative fixtures, pole types, lamp color, and style
- Patios with seating
- Plazas with benches
- Promenades
- Terraces
- Water features
- Clock Towers
- Murals
- Pocket parks
- Local Artwork Displays

Additional elements that are not listed may be accepted and approved by the Director with written justification as part of the building permit application. An alternative location for the elements can be approved by the Director with written justification.

Signage. In addition to the requirements outlined below, all signage with the Transit Oriented Development (TODO) Overlay shall meet the minimum requirements outlined in Section 4-15 of the Adams County Development Standards and Regulations.

1. Signage should accent rather than detract from existing architectural character.
2. Sign materials should be compatible with those used for the building to which the sign relates.
3. Wall signs should not cover or mask important building details such as windows and doors.
4. No large signs shall be permitted within the TOD Overlay.

Streetscape and pedestrian connections.

Pedestrian amenities. Pedestrian amenities such as benches, public art, planters, trash receptacles, etc. are encouraged and shall be located along sidewalks, and in landscaped areas, open spaces and plazas.

Driveways. The creation of new sidewalk curb cuts shall be avoided whenever an alternative point of access is available or can be created. Where feasible, ingress and egress from parking shall be from side streets. The consolidation and sharing of driveways and curb cuts between adjacent properties and interior connections between parking lots and/or the use of shared parking facilities is strongly encouraged.

On-Street Parking. On-street parking shall be defined by landscape curb extensions or bulb-outs. Conventional or enhanced crosswalks shall be provided at all intersections.

Off-Street Parking. Off-street parking should be located behind, above, within, or below street-facing buildings to the maximum extent feasible. No parking will be allowed between the street and the front or side of a building.

Character and Image

Architectural Design.

1. Horizontal Articulation: Buildings greater than two stories or taller than 30 feet shall be designed to have a clearly identifiable base, body and top with horizontal elements separating these components. The component described as the body shall constitute a minimum of 50% of the total building height. (See Figure 4-10-A)
2. Building Articulation: For buildings with a façade longer than 50 feet on any street edge, building articulation will be required at every 50 feet along the façade facing that street edge. Building articulation may be achieved through such things as window recesses, vertical and horizontal projections/banding, vertical and horizontal recesses, window composition/design, balconies and other architectural elements to be substantial in depth, in order to create shadow and architectural relief. Use of different colors does not provide building articulation.
3. Composition: Elements within each segment of a building facade, defined by a different roof height, are required to be symmetrical. A symmetrical condition is achieved when facade elements and openings are repeated in the same positions on either side of a central vertical line for that segment.
4. Entrances: To the maximum extent feasible, primary facades and entries shall face the adjacent street. Main entrances shall be provided with a direct pedestrian connection to the street without requiring pedestrians to walk through parking lots or cross driveways.
5. Scale: Facades shall incorporate a minimum of two (2) continuous details refined to the scale of 12 inches or less within the first 10 feet of the building wall, measured vertically at street level.
6. Expression: All masonry elements designed to appear as load-bearing shall be visually supported by other masonry elements directly below. On masonry building walls, expressed or implied structural piers shall be evident as vertical alignments on the facade.
7. Color: A maximum of two (2) primary colors for each building segment may be used with a maximum of two (2) secondary accent colors. If accent colors are to be used, they too must be described and used throughout the development and complement the primary colors.

Building Material.

1. General: A minimum of 50% of the building walls shall incorporate brick, cast stone, stone, formed concrete, glass in combination with metal or other high quality, long-lasting masonry or stone material over a minimum percentage of surface area (excluding windows, doors and curtain walls). The remainder of wall area may incorporate other materials.
2. Glare: Building materials shall not create excessive glare. If highly reflective building materials are proposed, such as aluminum, unpainted metal or reflective glass, the potential for glare from such materials will be evaluated to determine whether the glare would create a significant adverse impact on the adjacent property owners, neighborhood or community in terms of traffic safety, outdoor activities and enjoyment of views. If so, such materials shall not be permitted.

3. Transparency:

- a. Required Transparency: Facades shall incorporate transparent features (windows and doors) over a minimum percentage of the surface area of street fronting facades. Minimum percentages for ground level: 25% of surface area minimum; and upper levels of all uses: 15% surface area minimum. Transparency of the ground level shall be calculated within the first 15 feet of the building wall, measured vertically at street level. In cases where a building has more than two facades fronting a street or primary travel way, the transparency requirement shall only be required on one facade based on pedestrian traffic and vehicular visibility. All ground level windows shall provide direct views to the building's interior or to a lit display area extending a minimum of three (3) feet behind the window. Ground level windows shall extend above an eighteen (18) to twenty-four (24) inch base. Materials that restrict the ability of the public to view the inside of a structure from the outside are generally prohibited but may be allowed in limited locations in structures intended for financial or other uses with documentable safety concerns.
- b. Glass: Mirrored glass with a reflectivity or opacity of greater than sixty percent (60%) is prohibited. Windows located along a sidewalk and/or a street on the first floor of a building shall use transparent glass with a maximum visible light reflectance of approximately 0.15 to allow pedestrians to view activity within the building.
- c. Location and Details: Windows shall be individually defined with detail elements such as frames, sills, and lintels, and placed to visually establish and define the structure stories and establish human scale and proportion.

Use Modifications

Mixed-Use Development. Mixed use shall be allowed as a permitted use in all zone districts within the Transit Oriented Development Overlay (TODO), if (1) the parcel has a minimum of seventy-five (75) feet of lot width and (2) fronts along an arterial, collector or State Highway. Mixed Use in a zone district other than Mixed-Use (MU) must be approved through an Administrative Review Permit and must meet all other performance standards outlined in Section 4-10.

Large Scale Commercial Retail. Commercial Retail developments in excess of 20,000 square feet shall provide a minimum of 10% of the lot in public open space for the enjoyment of pedestrians, customers, and employees. To the maximum extent feasible, required Open Spaces shall be located along the pedestrian street.

Incentives. Incentives will be available within the TOD Overlay

Conditional Use Permit Required. To achieve compatibility with the vision outlined in the TOD and Rail Station Area Guidelines, the following uses require an approved Conditional Use Permit in all underlying zone districts in which it is a permitted use:

Dry Cleaners
Heavy Retail and Heavy Services
Heavy Industry
Moderate Manufacturing or Processing

Light Industry
Light Manufacturing or Processing
Outdoor Storage in excess of 25% of the building area
Commercial Parking Lot

Prohibited Uses. The following uses are prohibited in all zone districts in the Transit Oriented Development (TODO) boundaries:

Agricultural Businesses and Farm Operations
Agriculture Support Businesses and Services
Nurseries
Forestry and Siviculture
Airports, Landing Strips, and Heliports
New Mobile Home Parks
Jails and Prisons
Landscape Storage Yards
Sexually Oriented Businesses
Heavy Manufacturing or Processing uses