

# Project Description and Justification for Amended GPDP StoneCreek Real Estate Partners, LLC

Submitted: October 7, 2016; Revised: January 10, 2017, February 20, 2017, April 6, 2017

Southbridge Senior Living Planned Development  
1501 W. Mineral Avenue  
Littleton, Colorado  
StoneCreek Real Estate Partners, LLC

## I. Background

The applicant, StoneCreek Real Estate Partners, LLC (“StoneCreek”) seeks to modify an existing GPDP covering property located at 1501 West Mineral Avenue (“Site”). The current GPDP permits churches, church related activities, Christian pre-school, recreation, an indoor gym & soccer-type field (daylight hours), community meetings, administrative & professional offices, and other office park uses allowed under the B-1 & B-2 zoning districts. The proposed amendment seeks to add a limited number of uses consistent with an assisted living facility.

The proposed facility will be sited on approximately 4.29 acres of vacant land on the southern portion of the parcel generally located at 1501 West Mineral Avenue (“Site”). An existing two story office building will remain on the southern half of the parcel. The Site is presently zoned and will remain PD-C. It is bordered on the north by single family homes in the Southbridge neighborhood, on the east by Southbridge office buildings, on the South by the above referenced office building, and on the west by South Windermere Street.

## II. Project Overview

### Brief Summary

StoneCreek is applying to amend the uses under the existing GPDP to add a limited number of uses that are consistent with assisted living facilities. The applicant IS NOT SEEKING TO AMEND THE UNDERLYING ZONING. This use amendment will allow for the development of a Class-A, assisted living and memory care community for Littleton’s growing senior community. The project will consist of resident rooms, common areas, and amenities across approximately 75,000 square feet all under one roof. Typical common areas and amenities in StoneCreek communities include dining, activities, wellness and fitness, salon, housekeeping, maintenance, medication management, and gathering spaces. The amenities are intended primarily for resident use, and StoneCreek welcomes and promotes residents’ families and guests to enjoy the facilities with their loved ones.

The proposed addition is less intense than those uses currently allowed by right on the Site because it generates significantly less traffic and other impacts. Assisted living is a proven and desirable transitional use that is effective in bridging commercial and residential development. To further improve the transition from our single family neighbors to the north, StoneCreek held a neighborhood meeting to better understand our neighbors’ concerns. Following this meeting, we reoriented the buildings to locate the lower side of the building along the north edge of the Site and the taller portion of the building to the south. This reorientation will minimize visibility from the adjacent Southbridge neighborhood homes while maximizing overall visual appeal. Also, in response to neighbors’ concerns, StoneCreek will select building materials that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and will allow the StoneCreek community to seamlessly blend in with the area. Lastly, the applicant will minimize noise from emergency vehicles by instituting a silent call policy which will minimize the potential impacts of sirens from emergency vehicles.

### III. Criteria

The proposed amendment comports with the requirements of the PD-C district as set forth under the Littleton Municipal Code (“Code”) Sec. 10-2-23 as it is an allowable use that conforms with conditions and performance standards.

#### A. Consistent with the COMPLAN – Citywide Comprehensive Plan

The 2013 COMPLAN is comprised of 1) the Citywide Comprehensive Plan; 2) Neighborhood Plans that detail more specific goals and policies for Littleton’s identified neighborhoods; 3) Corridor Plans that outline goals and policies along major Littleton transportation corridors; and 4) Activity Area Plans yet to be created. The Site is further governed by the South Neighborhood Plan. The proposed development meets, exceeds, and exemplifies the goals and policies of the Citywide Plan as follows:

##### Goal #1: Foster a vibrant and evolving community

###### **Policy 1.1 – Encourage more opportunities for residents to live, shop, and play where they work and to work, shop and play where they live.**

Littleton, along with many other front-range suburbs in Denver, is home to a rapidly aging population that will require the construction of assisted living facilities in order to allow residents to age in place. There is no doubt that Littleton’s older adults would like to remain in Littleton and nearby the neighborhoods in which their children and grandchildren live. Furthermore, assisted living facilities located within Littleton allow the residents of the assisted living facility to continue to live nearby the places they shop and play. The proposed development is an excellent transitional use and makes it possible for Littleton’s inter-generational families to continue living, shopping, working and playing nearby each other.

###### **Policy 1.2 – Create the circumstances that will encourage dynamic, innovative employers to locate within the city.**

The proposed development, in addition to providing much needed services for older adults, will also provide new jobs for approximately 40 full time employees.

###### **Policy 1.6 – Encourage housing that responds to changing market demands in the local housing market, allows every generation and income group to call Littleton home, and is otherwise consistent with this plan.**

The proposed uses are NOT residential under the Littleton Code. However, because ongoing care and treatment must occur in the facility, the nature of a care facility plays a critical role in the life of Littleton’s seniors. As the Baby Boomers begin to age, Littleton must respond to the changing market demands of older adults and provide the types of services that allow the Boomers to age in place. Without adequate assisted living facilities, Littleton’s older adults will be forced to leave the city. In addition, the families of Littleton’s Baby Boomers want to live close to the patriarchs of their families, and Littleton should strive to be city where inter-generational families can live in close proximity.

###### **Policy 1.8 – Require that new commercial development be appropriately buffered from adjacent uses.**

The proposed uses will provide at least a 50 foot buffer from its residential neighbors. Additionally, in response to the requests of neighbors, it has oriented the single story building to abut the neighborhood and steps-up the height of the building as it moves away from its adjacent uses.

**Goal #3: Enhance local, regional, and global linkages – physical, social, technological**

**Policy 3.2, 3.4 – Increase the walkability of neighborhoods and develop an inviting citywide pedestrian network.**

The project will install and improve sidewalks along its perimeter which will add to the pedestrian connectivity in the area and improve circulation from the residential neighborhoods to nearby parks and the Highline Canal.

**Goal #4: Maintain and expand upon the characteristics that make Littleton an authentic and distinctive community**

**Policy 4.1 - Build upon the assets that are unique to Littleton, such as the Platte River and its adjoining natural areas and Littleton's history, schools, neighborhoods, cultural facilities, and public image.**

Littleton values its history, and so too should it honor and protect the needs of those members of the community who have contributed to that history. Littleton's seniors are precisely the kind of important community asset that should be protected. The proposed project will help keep Littleton's seniors in Littleton rather than moving away to other communities that can accommodate their needs.

**Policy 4.3 – Encourage high quality design, architecture, landscape architecture, and public art throughout Littleton.**

The applicant worked closely with the community in the design and massing of the proposed project. Following the requests of neighbors during a public meeting, it has relocated the smaller, single story building to abut the neighborhood and moved the taller end of the building to be located farthest away from our residential neighbors. It provides at least a 50 foot buffer from its residential neighbors.

Additionally, the design of the project was developed with thoughtful consideration of surrounding architecture and materials indicative of the area, reflecting the character of the adjacent neighborhood through the use of contextually relevant and quality materials. It will apply the adopted design standards and guidelines to complement the surrounding architecture and ensure the project's contextual relevance.

The proposed development will be designed in compliance with current building codes and standards, including the International Energy Conservation Code. Mechanical and electrical systems will be evaluated and designed to achieve the maximum feasible efficiency that meets the facility's functional requirements. Landscaping will be designed to maximize efficiency of water usage. Sustainable design is a critical component to the proposed development and every effort will be made to exceed the minimum requirements to ensure

that the City of Littleton is gaining housing that emulates their vision for future conservation.

## **B. Consistent with the South Neighborhood Small Area Plan**

### **NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS**

**Goal 1: To develop a regional employment center in the South Neighborhood while assuring adequate buffering of adjacent residential and recreational uses from adverse effects of commercial and industrial uses.**

The proposed development will employ approximately 40 full time employees. Because this is StoneCreek's first facility in the area, all positions will be new jobs to the area.

StoneCreek has taken great care to buffer the proposed development. The development includes open space, a fifty foot buffer along the northern property line in accordance with 10-2-23(D)2(a). StoneCreek will utilize foundation plantings and property line shrub plantings to buffer the proposed building. Further, in order to mitigate any potential issues with on-site lighting, StoneCreek will submit a Photometric Plan that will be designed in accordance with the national dark skies principals and all lighting will be downcast with the lenses fully screened from adjacent properties.

Based on its community outreach, StoneCreek has also completely reoriented the proposed buildings in order to preserve its neighbors' west and southwest views. StoneCreek will orient the buildings so that the single story portion of the building is located along the north portion of the Site and the two-story buildings will be located along the southern portion, adjacent to commercial uses.

**Goal 2: To prevent degradation of the water quality of McLellan Reservoir, the Highline Canal or any surface or subsurface water body within the South Neighborhood.**

The applicant will comply with all drainage and water quality requirements in its design and construction procedures in order to meet this goal.

**Goal 3: To provide adequate vehicular access to and from industrial areas in the neighborhood without introducing commercial or industrial traffic onto residential streets.**

The proposed use is one of the lowest traffic generators of any commercial uses, and will generate significantly less traffic than the uses currently permitted. StoneCreek has agreed to submit a traffic study as part of the entitlement process. Importantly, the expected traffic generated from the development will not occur during peak rush hour times of the day. The anticipated traffic would consist of approximately 15 employees (at any one time) accessing the development at off-peak times and family visitation predominately on the weekends. All other traffic, such as deliveries, trash pickup, food service, and mail, will occur on weekdays, but only during standard business hours and at times that are respectful of its neighbors. Delivery traffic will be limited to a rear entrance on the other side of the project from our residential neighbors.

StoneCreek also understands that there may be concerns with emergency vehicle sirens associated with the proposed development. In StoneCreek's experience, there are typically only one or two emergency vehicle trips per week and it is StoneCreek's common practice to pre-arrange with emergency service providers to turn off their sirens before they enter the neighborhood.

**Goal 4: To protect residential and recreational areas from negative visual and audible intrusions of commercial and industrial development.**

StoneCreek, as described in Goals 1 and 3 above, has taken extra precaution to carefully develop this site in order to eliminate the potential visual and audible concerns of its neighbors. The proposed use is one of the lowest traffic generators of any commercial uses, and will generate significantly less traffic than the uses currently permitted. Deliveries, trash pickup, food service, and mail, will be limited to business hours at the rear of the building opposite our residential neighbors.

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**Goal 6: To provide and maintain infrastructure and facilities including: schools; parks and open space; streets; and water, sewer and drainage systems required to support development.**

In addition to StoneCreek preserving a generous portion of the site as open space and attractively landscaping the Site, the proposed development will not house Littleton residents with school aged children. Therefore, the proposed development will not have an impact on Littleton schools. StoneCreek will also provide for and maintain any other infrastructure needed to develop the assisted living facility.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD POLICIES**

### **Transportation**

**Policy 1: That commercial and industrial traffic be discouraged from using "local" residential streets through design and regulatory controls.**

Primary access to the proposed development shall be provided by an entrance on South Windermere Street, which is a collector and not a local residential street meeting the intent of this policy. Any additional access points will be determined at the time of SDP or plat.

## Land Use

**Policy 1: That residential areas be protected from commercial and industrial development by utilizing a combination of setback “buffers,” screening, and other measures to reduce the visual and audible impacts created by the development.**

StoneCreek is sensitive to its neighbor’s concerns regarding setbacks, buffers and screening to reduce the potential visual and audible impacts of the proposed development. As discussed more thoroughly above, the building will be centrally located on the parcel and is oriented toward the South Windermere Street frontage. A generous portion of the site will be preserved as open space and attractively landscaped to enhance the aesthetic aspect of the development. The site will also utilize a covered porte-cochere building entrance as well as convenient visitor and emergency service drive lanes. Parking areas are proportionately located on three sides of the facility to provide for adequate spaces for employees and visitors.

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**Policy 6: That general development plans for each development area be submitted for approval prior to detailed planning which shall include sufficient data to determine the adequacy of city service systems, the impact and treatment of traffic with respect to adjacent neighborhoods, and the impact of residential development on schools.**

The GDPD Amendment review process has submitted all required general development plans for the proposed development for local services. StoneCreek has submitted, and staff has evaluated a traffic study as part of the GDPD Amendment review process to determine the impacts on traffic. Because the proposed development will only provide services for adults 55+, the proposed development is not anticipated to have any impact the local schools.

## Parks, Open Space, & Public Services

**Policy 1: That adequate land be made available by the appropriate private or public body for schools, fire protection, and public recreation.**

A generous portion of the site will be preserved as open space and attractively landscaped to enhance the aesthetic aspect of the proposed development.