

Legislation Text

File #: PB Reso 15-2016, Version: 1

Agenda Date: August 22, 2016

Subject: Resolution concerning a planned development overlay for property located at 2679 W. Main Street

Presented By: Andrea Mimnaugh, AICP, Planning Manager

APPLICATION SUMMARY:

Project Name:	Littleton Mixed Use
Application Type:	Planned Development Overlay
Location:	2679 West Main Street
Size of Tract:	31,255 sq.ft. (.73 acre)
Zoning:	B-2 (existing); B-2 with PDO Overlay (proposed)
Applicant:	Jon Benallo, 2679 Main Street Partners, L.L.C.
Owner:	2679 Main Street Partners, L.L.C.
Project Description:	Proposal for a 4-story, 41,102 square foot mixed-use building for retail, office and residential uses.
Staff	

Staff Recommendation: Denial

PROCESS:

 Planned Development Overlay (Approval by Planning Board)

> Site Development Plan (Administrative approval)

The Planning Board must base its decision on its compliance with the Planned Development Overlay (PDO) criteria, which includes compatibility with the Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines and the comprehensive plan.

If the proposed planned development overlay is approved by planning board for Littleton Mixed Use, the applicant's next step in the development review process would be to obtain administrative approval of a site development plan.

LOCATION:

The subject property is located on the north side of Main Street, between Curtice and Rapp Streets, as shown in the vicinity map in Figure 1.



Figure 1 Vicinity Map 2679 W. Main Street

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is the site of the former Valley Feed and Lawn store, located at 2679 Main Street. The property is within the Downtown Neighborhood Plan of the Comprehensive Plan and Subarea 5 of the Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines. The property is zoned Community Business District (B-2), which permits a variety of commercial uses and up to 50 percent residential use. The existing buildings would be demolished.

Please note, on June 14, 2016 city council approved a 90-day moratorium on new development applications for all properties within the B-2 Zone District. Based on the fact that Littleton Mixed Use development application was submitted prior to this moratorium being passed, the proposed project is able to continue within this timeframe and must adhere to the current B-2 zoning.



Figure 2 Street View of Subject Property Former Valley Feed Store

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant proposes a four-story, mixed-use building to include ground floor retail and office, second and third story offices uses, and fourth floor residential apartments.

The proposed building is placed at the property line at Main Street. The façade of the first two stories is brick with main entrance and storefront design at street level and historically proportioned windows at the second story; the third and fourth stories are stepped back from the façade. A cedar canopy is a prominent design element of the third story and a vertical feature, which houses the elevator shaft towards the front of the building, extends above the roofline.

A variety of building materials are proposed, including precast cement base at street level, brick at the first and second stories, decorative metal shingles at the third story and cement board siding at the residential fourth story. The height of the building is proposed at 53.5 feet with an elevator shaft near the front of the building at 54.5 feet and stairwell at the rear of the building reaching 61 feet.

Ingress and egress to the site is off of Main Street. Sixty-four onsite surface parking spaces are located on the west side of the building and tucked under the second story. Open space and landscaping is located primarily along the east, north and west perimeters of the site and internal to the parking lot.

A trip generation letter prepared by Aldridge Transportation Consultants estimates weekday vehicle trip generation for the proposed development to be 436. The letter also estimates AM and PM peak hours to generate 51 and 54 respectively. A copy of the trip generation letter is attached to this report.

Flexibility Allowed by a Planned Development Overlay:

Section 10-9-5 of the zoning code sets forth development standards that may be varied by a PDO. Table 1, below, compares zoning standards of the proposed PDO with the underlying B-2 zone district. The applicant is requesting variation from the unobstructed open space requirement, parking stall dimensional requirements and the number of

required parking spaces.

Table 1
B-2 Zone District Requirements and Proposed PDO Requirements

	Existing B-2 Zone Requirements	Proposed B-2 PDO Zone Requirements	Proposed PDO Site Plan
Primary Uses Allowed	Section 10-3-2, Uses Permitted B-2 Zone District	No change	Office, retail, and residential uses
Minimum Lot Area	None	None	31,225 sq.ft. (.73 acre)
Minimum Unobstructed Open Space	20 percent of overall site; 50 percent located adjacent to public street	12 percent of overall site; 50 percent of the 12 percent adjacent to public street	12 percent of overall site; 20 percent of the 12 percent adjacent to public street
Maximum Building Height	No maximum	No maximum	61 feet
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	2 : 1	2:1	1.3 : 1
Building Setbacks	None	None	None
Parking Requirements	Commercial per square feet: Retail: 1 space per 200 Office: 1 space per 300 <u>Residential</u> Multi-family: 1.5 per unit	retail and office spaces: Retail: 1 per 400 Office: 1 per 600 <u>Residential</u>	64 spaces
Parking Stall Dimensions	Regular space: 9x20 Compact space: 8x18	Regular space: 9x18 Compact space: 8x18	49 regular spaces 15 compact spaces
Parking Lot Landscaping	5 percent internal to parking lot	no change	6 percent internal to parking lot
Maximum Residential Use Area	Up to 50 percent residential uses	no change	24 percent residential uses
Building Stepped Height Allowance	Downtown Design Guidelines: stepped back after second story	elevator corridors •	 Stair and elevator corridors within 12 ft. of Main Street 25 percent balcony canopy encroachment into visible area
Design Guidelines	Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines	Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines	Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Planned Development Overlay Intent Statement

Section 10-9-5: Development Standards: To take advantage of the flexibility allowed by the PDO regulations, the proposed development must demonstrate special attention to creative, high quality design, and to producing a development that reinforces and complements citywide and neighborhood design goals and objectives. Plans that demonstrate such attention may qualify for certain variations from the underlying zone district requirements, detailed in this section, provided that such variations can be accomplished without impairing the intent of the land use code while providing a substantial benefit to the city of Littleton.

Analysis of Requested Variations

The applicant proposes variations to unobstructed open space and parking regulations for the B-2 zone district. The following includes a summary of the applicant's justification for the variation and the staff analysis. The applicant's full justification narrative is included in the letter of intent, attached to this report.

Reduction to the Unobstructed Open Space Requirement

Requirement: The B-2 zone district requires 20 percent unobstructed open space.

<u>Proposed Variation</u>: The PDO plan provides twelve percent of the site area as non-obstructed open space, a reduction from the twenty percent required in the B-2 district.

<u>Applicant's Justification</u>: The applicant's justification for this request is based on the rationale that the city's B-2 zone district is intended for a large commercial site. The applicant states that it is difficult to provide the required open space on a 31,225 square foot lot. Further, the project proposes a creative design with high quality material and finishes. <u>Staff Analysis</u>: The existing character of Main Street is defined largely by buildings that are built up to Main Street with no side setbacks and few properties include onsite open space. Provision of the full 20 percent unobstructed landscape requirement would interrupt the existing character of Main Street as expressed in the following two Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines (DDSG) objectives:

- 5.2.5.03: To maintain the continuity of building frontages along Main Street.
- 5.2.5.04: To generally maintain reinforce and extend the existing predominant spatial character of Main Street.

The provision of 12 percent unobstructed open space is primarily located along the east, north and west perimeters and internal to the parking lot. This seems appropriate in that it provides relief from an area otherwise dominated by hardscape.

Reduction to the Percentage of Unobstructed Open Space Required Along Public Right of Way

<u>Requirement</u>: The B-2 zone district requires that 50 percent of the unobstructed open space requirement be provided along public rights of way.

<u>Proposed variation</u>: The PDO plan provides 20 percent of the 12 percent proposed unobstructed open space along the Main Street frontage.

<u>Applicant's Justification</u>: The applicant's justification for the request is that it creates a conflict with a standard in the DDSGs that buildings be placed with a zero setback from the street in order to maintain the historic character and streetscape of the district:

• 5.2.5.s1: Along Main Street front setbacks shall not be allowed unless determined necessary to along with adjacent historic buildings.

<u>Staff analysis</u>: As stated previously, the existing character of Main Street is defined by buildings that are built up to Main Street. In order to preserve the historic character of the streetscape as well as to continue to maintain the street edge, the

proposed 20 percent of the 12 percent proposed unobstructed open space along Main Street appears appropriate.

Parking Reduction

<u>Requirement</u>: Parking requirements for retail and office uses are as follows:

- Retail: 1 space per 200 square feet of building area
- Office: 1 space per 300 square feet of building area

PDO Development Standards state that any proposed reduction in parking requirements requires documentation and justification showing that the adjacent streets or alleys shall not bear an unreasonable impact from the reduction in parking requirements.

<u>Proposed variation</u>: The applicant proposes a 50 percent reduction for retail and office uses.

<u>Applicant's justification</u>: The applicant's justification is that the downtown area is a transit oriented development destination with access to rail and bus transit opportunities making it advantageous for commuters to use alternative transportation to get to work. Further, the property is eligible for inclusion into the Main Street Historic District which provides a 50 percent reduction for all properties.

<u>Staff Analysis</u>: The proposed reduction in parking does not provide adequate support for the claim that commuters will use alternative transportation to get to work. An underparked development will increase the amount of parking within downtown as drivers search for an on-street parking space or a commercial parking lot. Further, the parking reduction afforded within the Main Street Historic District is provided as an incentive to join the district, which has community-wide benefits in that any new construction or redevelopment must meet additional criteria for compatibility with the historic district. It does not appear the proposed reduction in parking for the commercial uses in Littleton Mixed Use provide substantial benefit to the city of Littleton.

Parking Stall Dimensions

<u>Requirement:</u> Standard parking stall dimensions are 9' x 20' per section 10-4-9(6) of the zoning code with a 23-foot drive aisle.

<u>Proposed variation</u>: The applicant proposes a dimension of 9' x 18' with a 24-foot drive aisle.

<u>Applicant's justification</u>: The proposed wider drive aisle will improve vehicular and emergency access on the site. The 9' x 18' parking stall dimension is a common dimension for Denver metro-area downtowns and leads to less on-site paved area. The applicant's full justification is included as an attachment to this report in the "Applicant's Development Overview."

<u>Staff Analysis</u>: Based on staff research on parking space dimensions, a 9' x 18' parking stall provides sufficient length and width for most vehicles. It appears appropriate to allow two feet less in length for parking stalls in order to accommodate wider drive aisles throughout the parking area.

Compatibility with the Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines

Section 10-9-5 (H) of the zoning ordinance requires that a project be compatible with any design guidelines adopted by planning board. The proposed project must be compatible with the Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines, Subarea 5. The proposed development appears to be consistent with the following DDSGs:

5.2.1.s1: The ground floors of building frontages shall be primarily occupied by pedestrian active uses.

5.3.1.s1: Buildings shall be designed to provide human scale, interest and variety while maintaining an overall sense of relationship with adjoining or nearby buildings.

The building frontage on Main Street includes the main entrance and three storefront bays at street level. The design incorporates both historic and contemporary architectural elements to create continuity of design along Main Street while also providing variety and interest: building materials

include pre-cast concrete and brick at the street level as the historic design elements, and aluminum sun louvers, metal shingles and contemporary signage as the contemporary elements. The proposed retail and office uses at the street level will provide opportunities to enhance pedestrian activity at the west end of Main Street.

5.2.1.06: To insure that the facades which face the public realm (such as streets and parks) receive the building's highest level of design and the building's best quality materials.

5.3.2.06: To use lasting materials that weather well and gracefully age.

The building includes primarily brick, metal shingles, aluminum windows and metal trim on all four facades. The base of the building includes durable pre-cast concrete panels which provides a natural and elegant look. The materials are considered high quality that should last and weather well.

5.3.1.05: To emphasize the entry or entries to a building

5.2.2.s6: Recessed entries shall be allowed if they are relatively shallow in depth, but shall not be allowed of deep enough to form an arcade or large entry vestibule.

Signage at the entrance to the building is appropriately scaled to the size of the building and helps to emphasize the entrance. The entrance design includes a recessed area that provides a protected area to view the building directory sign without creating an overly large vestibule.

5.2.2.s3: Sidewalks shall be uninterrupted by curb cuts and driveways as much as possible in order to improve and support Main Street as a walkable street.

In absence of an alley or side street to provide access to the property, the site includes a single curb cut off of Main Street. The access is wide enough to accommodate vehicular ingress and egress while not exceeding what is necessary so as to preserve the pedestrian experience on Main Street.

5.2.3.s.3 Parking lots serving Main Street buildings shall be located at the rear of buildings. side parking lots shall be avoided along Main Street in order to maintain the continuity of the building frontages along the street.

The proposed site layout does not meet this standard in that there is a vehicular access from Main Street and an onsite parking lot located at the side and rear of the property. However, section 8.15 of the DDSGs allows for deviations from design standards when unique site factors exist and when an alternative can achieve the stated intent. The site is unique in that it has no opportunity to take access from side streets, forcing parking lot access to be directly from Main Street. In response to the limitations of the site, the applicant has provided a site wall that screens the parking from Main Street using material from the building creating continuity desired in the standard.

5.2.3.02 Where visible from the street or public open space, to minimize the visibility of vehicles within parking lots or garages.

In addition to the screening provided along Main Street, as addressed under 5.2.3.s3, above, the applicant is providing a black metal screen along the west elevation to reduce visibility of vehicles parked under the rear of the building.

5.2.5.s1 Along Main Street front setbacks shall not be allowed unless determined necessary to align with adjacent historic buildings.

The adjacent building to the east of the proposed new building is setback from Main Street. However, it

is not recognized as having historic significance in the Littleton Historic Buildings Survey of 1997 due to significant alterations over the years.

The proposed building is placed at Main Street and meets this criterion because there is no setback.

Related information on setbacks in B-2 zone

The B-2 zone district has no required building setback. However, the zoning code requires that 50 percent of the overall required unobstructed open space requirement be located adjacent to public right of way. Although B-2 has no required building setback, the placement of unobstructed open space results in a building setback for new development within the B-2 zone.

The unobstructed open space requirement applies to the proposed development. However, the applicant has requested as part of the PDO application to vary this requirement, providing compatibility with the existing development pattern on Main Street and the DDSGs.

5.3.1.s2 Proposed buildings adjoining Main Street that are higher than two stories shall step back their upper story of stories so that only 25 percent or less of the upper floors is visible to pedestrian view from the center of the sidewalk directly across the street from the project. This setback may be waived for special corner forms, architectural emphasis at street intersection, or improvement in material qualities.

The proposed building includes a third story canopy along the front façade and a vertical element (elevator shaft) that exceed the maximum allowance of 25 percent visibility from the sidewalk directly across Main Street.

Both elements are integrated into the architectural design of the overall building. The use of cedar for the canopy and metal wall shingles for the vertical element, as shown in the plan set, provides high-end finishes and constitutes an improvement in material quality for the overall building. Therefore, a waiver from the intent of the upper-floor setback may be justified.

- 5.3.1.s3 New buildings and additions shall possess an architectural character that respects the traditional design principles of historic buildings along Main Street . . . The building façade should generally have three vertical divisions: 'bases,' 'middles' and 'tops.'
- 5.3.1.g12 Distinctive corner, entry treatments and other architectural features designed to interact with contextual features may be designed differently than the 'base,' 'middle' and 'top.' This difference would allow the addition of vertical emphasis at significant architectural points along the building façade.

The architectural design of the building adheres to principles of historic buildings at the first and second story with its use of brick, its storefront design at street level, and vertical windows at the second story. At the upper stories, a prominent vertical design element that houses the elevator shaft and the third story canopy are integrated into the design of the overall building and serves as a significant architectural feature at the front of the building.

Consistency with the Citywide Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Neighborhood Plan

Section 10-9-5 of the zoning ordinance requires that a planned development overlay be consistent with the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan. The applicant's narrative is attached to this report in the letter of intent. The following goals and policies of the Citywide Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Neighborhood Plan appear to be applicable to this application:

CITYWIDE MASTER PLAN

The vision for the future of Littleton is that Littleton will:

Respect and build upon its history

The architecture of the proposed building incorporates key elements of commercial buildings in Downtown Littleton, including strong vertical elements, horizontal division of the lower floors with a traditional rhythm, placement and proportions of the windows, and use of traditionally dimensioned brick along the front façade and wrapped on the sides.

Value livability, diversity, and progress

The proposed mixed-use project will provide high quality office space and residences, adding to the ability to work, live, and play in the neighborhood.

• Raise the bar to increase the quality of community and economic development

By providing high quality commercial and residential space, and paying attention to architectural details, the proposed development will help raise the bar for the quality of the community. A reduction in parking for the commercial uses in the building, however, may not meet this vision for downtown.

Goal 1: A DYNAMIC LITTLETON: Foster a vibrant and evolving community

1.1 Generate more opportunities for residents to live, shop, and play where they work and to work, shop, and play where they live.

By providing office and residential space, the proposed development expands the opportunity for residents to live, shop, and play where they work and to work, shop, and play where they live.

1.6 Encourage housing that responds to changing 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 development will provide new multifamily dwelling units within the Downtown Neighborhood where there is current demand for new housing.

1.9 Strengthen downtown by:

b. increasing housing diversity and densities to help enliven the streets and support the stores and restaurants.

Adding additional housing units will increase the density downtown and will result in more people on the sidewalks and in the retail and restaurant establishments.

c. encouraging a diversity of businesses that serve a larger market and provide support services for the needs of downtown residents and employees.

The addition of both ground floor and upper level office space will provide opportunities for attracting a diversity of businesses.

Goal 4: A DISTINCTIVE LITTLETON: Maintain and expand upon the characteristics that make Littleton an authentic and distinctive community.

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.

By aspiring for compatibility with the neighboring historic buildings, the proposed project aims to continue the character of the historic district.

- **4.2 Encourage preservation of historic structures, districts, and places that are significant to Littleton history.** The proposed mixed-use project will increase the number of residents and employees Downtown add to the economic and cultural vitality of the District, helping assure its preservation.
- **4.3 Encourage high quality design, architecture, landscape architecture, and public art throughout Littleton.** The proposed project is generally consistent with the design guidelines of the DDSG.

PART II: TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION 2: Focus on Activity Areas and Corridors

23 Attract desired development and encourage redevelopment in designated activity areas and corridors This site is generally considered appropriate for development because it is located along Main Street in the city's downtown core.

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Downtown Planning Principles

• SMALL TOWN CHARACTER - Downtown will retain its small town character, as defined by its pedestrian scale, absence of tall buildings, intact neighborhoods, historic structures, diverse land uses, and enjoyable pedestrian environment.

With the building step-backs above the second floor and the design and detailing of the first two floors, the proposed building will have a pedestrian scale.

The overall height of the structure will be visible to both drivers and pedestrians on Main Street, with the majority of the third and fourth stories being set back, the impact of the height is mitigated. The architecture of the proposed building incorporates key elements of commercial buildings in Downtown Littleton - the strong vertical elements, the horizontal division of the lower floors with a traditional rhythm, the placement and proportions of the windows, and the use of traditionally dimensioned brick.

The proposed project will help maintain the diversity of land uses Downtown by providing mixed use within one building.

• QUALITY DESIGN - All new development, architecture, and urban design will consist of enduring materials and a design that fits with downtown and that is timeless, appropriately scaled, and reflects of downtown's character and livability.

The proposed development does include enduring materials, a design that generally fits with downtown and that is timeless, and is appropriately scaled.

GOAL

Downtown will continue to have a mixture of land uses that promote:

- a vibrant Main Street District
- the desirability of downtown as a place to live
- a diversity of residents
- a healthy and stable business environment

The mix of residential and office uses in the proposed development will help downtown meet this goal.

to the west.

POLICIES

LU-2 The land uses in the Main Street District should be predominantly commercial and residential. LU-2b. Along Main Street, encourage retail and restaurant uses on the ground floor and offices and residences above.

The proposed development includes office and retail on the ground floor.

- LU-9 The height of future buildings in downtown should respect its historic scale and character.
- LU-9a. Retain the current maximum height restrictions in downtown's underlying zone districts. When the underlying zone district does not have a maximum height or when the development review process permits the consideration of additional height, employ the following criteria:
 - The desired character of the district in which the proposed structure is located.
 - Acknowledgement that the Columbine Mill and Courthouse will be the dominant structures downtown.
 - Compatibility with pedestrian scale of Main Street. Generally, maximum height should increase with additional distance from Main Street.
 - Preservation of the view of mountains as seen from Main Street east of Curtice Street.

With the step back above the second floor, at four-stories, the proposed development generally meets this policy. At 60', the proposed building will be shorter than both the Mill and the Courthouse.

LU-10 Development adjacent to the identified iconic structures should respect and not detract from their prominence. (See the Framework for the location of Iconic Structures). With a relatively simple design and use of materials on the first two floors, the proposed building generally respects and does not detract from the prominence of the Carnegie Library building, which is two buildings

LU-10a. Require that the height, scale, building placement, and other design elements of new construction, expansion, or other property changes respect and do not overwhelm iconic structures. Employ techniques such as building setbacks and step-backs for upper stories, and further detail that direction in the Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines.

The design and use of materials on the first two floors, the proposed building does not appear to overwhelm the iconic Carnegie Library building, which is two buildings to the west.

CN-5 While not allowing parking to diminish its overall design quality, downtown should have parking for residents, employees, shoppers, and visitors.

The parking provided by the proposed development for its commercial and office uses is half of what is required of a new building. It does not appear the proposal meets the intent of this policy.

- 4. Provides an equitable regulatory and/or financing structure, which could include:
- ii. An incentive program, such as reductions for historic designation, transit-related advantages, or fees-in-lieu of required on-site parking.

The city has an incentive program for historic designation, but the applicant has chosen to not join the historic district and does not qualify for the parking reduction incentive. The parking reduction allowed within the Main Street Historic District is provided as an incentive to join the district, which has community-wide benefits in that any new construction or redevelopment must meet additional criteria for compatibility with the historic district.

GOAL

Downtown's authentic, historic, small-town character will be protected.

POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

HP-2 New construction, redevelopment, and rehabilitation of historic structures should complement downtown's historic character.

HP-2a. Apply the adopted design standards and guidelines to all new construction, redevelopment, and rehabilitation of historic structures.

The design and materials of the proposed development are consistent with the adopted design standards and complement downtown's historic character.

Generally, it appears the proposed project addresses most of the above goals and policies from the Citywide Plan and the Downtown Neighborhood Plan yet some do not appear to be addressed.

NEIGHBORHOOD OUTREACH:

The applicant reached out to adjacent property owners to provide information on the proposed project.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff finds that the proposed mixed-use development at 2679 West Main Street does not meet the criteria for a reduction in parking per the planned development overlay.

An underparked development will increase the amount of parking within downtown as drivers search for an onstreet parking space or a commercial parking lot. Further, the parking reduction afforded within the Main Street Historic District is provided as an incentive to join the district, which has community-wide benefits in that any new construction or redevelopment must meet additional criteria for compatibility with the historic district. It does not appear the proposed reduction in parking for the commercial uses in Littleton Mixed Use provide substantial benefit to the city of Littleton.

In order to receive a recommendation of approval, a proposed development must meet all applicable criteria for a planned development overlay. Staff does not recommend approval of the proposed mixed-use development because Littleton Mixed Use has not provided adequate justification for a parking reduction per section 10-9-5 (E) of the zoning code.

PROPOSED MOTION:

Staff has prepared two motions and resolutions for Planning Board's consideration:

Motion to Deny

I move to approve Planning Board Resolution No. 15(a)-2016, which DENIES the planned development overlay application for the proposed mixed-use development located at 2679 West Main Street.

Motion to Approve

I move to approve Planning Board Resolution No. 15(b)-2016, which APPROVES the planned development overlay application for the proposed mixed-use development located at 2679 West Main Street.