

Gondola Transit Center Project Concept Review Application Project Narrative 12/22/23

1. Overview

Enclosed is the application for a Concept Review of the joint Steamboat Springs Redevelopment Authority (SSRA) and Steamboat Ski and Resort Corporation (SSRC) Gondola Transit Center (GTC) Project. The SSRA is the applicant for the GTC portion of the project, while SSRC is the applicant for the Meadows parking lot improvements and new gondola that will link the two project areas.

This application serves several purposes. The first is to familiarize City Staff with the details of the project and identify any questions or concerns about the project. The project team will work to address those issues ahead of the Development Plan submittal. The second is to verify what the entitlement process will look like moving forward and which submittals and approvals will be required. Last, the project team requests a general review for compliance with development standards and applicable other standards including engineering, utilities, fire safety, and others. Relevant City comments generated through this review process will also become part of the SSRA's approval of the project's schematic design (SD) plans.

Recognizing that this project will eventually require a Development Plan and Conditional Use approval, this narrative is coordinated to address Development Plan and Conditional Use requirements to demonstrate compliance with City development criteria and to highlight specific items where the project team requests feedback. Please see attached list of the project team's questions for DRT feedback.

The SSRA's lead consultant, Wenk Associates, has developed the landscape plans, and Landmark Consultants, Inc. (Landmark) provided civil engineering and surveying support. A traffic impact study has been prepared by Consor Engineers but is not part of the scope of the Conceptual Development Plan review. This report, along with other technical reports, will be submitted with the Development Plan.

In general, this narrative has been organized to coincide with CDC Section 709.C Criteria for Approval applicable to the Development Plan and Article 4 Development and Design Standards.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of this application.

2. Background

In August 2023, SSRA and SSRC entered into a public-private partnership to redevelop the GTC and Meadows parking lot. The two partners committed a total of \$50MM to the project, with SSRA committing \$20MM and SSRC committing \$30MM. Redeveloping the GTC has been a high priority for SSRA since its founding, and the partnership with SSRC opens the

possibility for completing a much larger project than would have been possible using SSRA funds alone.

The GTC project is split into two scopes, with the SSRA scope encompassing improvements to the GTC itself, from the Apres Ski Way Roundabout to the Ski Time Square Roundabout, including improvements to the Mount Werner Circle/ Mount Werner Road intersection should any be required. SSRC's scope includes improvements to the Meadows parking lot, construction of the new gondola, and streetscape and decorative elements and other amenities at the GTC that are over and above the level of finish outlined in SSRA's Steamboat Springs Streetscape Design Plan. This application is for the SSRA scope of the project.

As an SSRA project activity, the GTC project is designed and scoped to support the URA's core mission by enhancing and redeveloping the base area with the following goals in mind:

- Create a sense of place and an improved aesthetic character for residents and guests
- Enhance the aesthetic appearance of the Base Area to make it more appealing
- Improve pedestrian, bicycle, mass transit and auto accessibility and circulation
- Eliminate impediments to the redevelopment of key facilities within the Mountain Plan Area
- Upgrade and restore public infrastructure including transportation facilities, parking, sidewalks and streetscapes

In addition, through stakeholder engagement and other public outreach, the GTC project has adopted additional stakeholder-driven priorities, including improving pedestrian safety and walkability, building capacity for future growth and sustainable transportation, and reducing traffic congestion in the base area. As the project has progressed, other goals have surfaced as well, including ensuring that Steamboat Springs Transit's (SST) operations are prioritized and finding low/no carbon means to power project-related snowmelt.

Construction of the project is anticipated to require at least two construction seasons, beginning in 2025 at the earliest. To support this project schedule, the project team tentatively plans to submit all required applications for entitlements to the City later in 2024.

3. Affected Properties & Partners:

The following is a list of surrounding landowners that will be affected by the project. As discussed previously with Staff, for this review only signatures from primary affected landowners were obtained. Aspects of the project falling on secondary properties can be disregarded for the purposes of this Concept Review application.

Primary: Mount Werner Circle Right of Way
Owner: City of Steamboat Springs

Gondola Square Condo's Common Area (PIN: 211077001)
Owner: Gondola Square Condos
Zoning: G-2

One Steamboat Place Condominium at Apres Ski Way Common Area
(PIN: 288677001)

Owner: SV Timbers Steamboat, LLC.
Zoning: G-2

Steamboat Grand Resort Hotel Common Area
Owner: Steamboat Grand Resort Hotel
Zoning: RR-1

Lot 2, The Knoll Subdivision
Owner: Alterra Mountain Co Real Estate Development
Zoning: RR-1

Lot G Ski Hill Subdivision
Owner: Alterra Mountain Co Real Estate Development
Zoning: G-2

Sheraton Steamboat
Owner: Steamboat Resort Village, LLC
Zoning: G-2

Secondary: Snowflower Common Area
Owner: Snowflower at Steamboat Condos
Zoning: G-2

Easements: Multiple Easements will need to be vacated, modified or reviewed for conflict

4. Development Plan Criteria for Approval:

A. 709.C.1: *The Development Plan is consistent with the character of the immediate vicinity or enhances or complements the mixture of uses, structures, and activities present in the immediate vicinity.*

As outlined in the SSRA's founding goals listed above, enhancing the character and aesthetic quality of the base area is of central importance to this project. The GTC's proposed design will prioritize transit functionality while improving the pedestrian experience, reducing vehicular congestion and upgrading the aesthetic quality of the neighborhood. The project's character will be consistent with other SSRA infrastructure projects, using the Steamboat Springs Streetscape Design plan as a guide. If architectural elements are included in future design phases, their design will be in character with the contemporary aesthetics of the base area. Where applicable, material choices and other design details will be coordinated to match or compliment adjacent and surrounding improvements.

B. 709.C.2: *The Development Plan will minimize any adverse impacts on the natural environment, including water quality, air quality, wildlife habitat, vegetation, wetlands, and natural landforms.*

The GTC site is already intensely developed. Most of the site is paved hardscape with minimal natural landscape, vegetation, or wildlife habitat. Where possible, existing trees and other vegetation will be protected and saved. The project will include all necessary water quality features. Existing materials are expected to be salvaged to the extent practicable and reused where possible. Pollution from vehicles, including oil and grease spills and noise, in the immediate area will be reduced as a result of less vehicular traffic passing through the GTC area.

The project is anticipated to include snow-melted roads, plazas and sidewalks. A feasibility study is currently underway to explore strategies for powering a ground source heat geothermal system for the project's snowmelt. In parallel, the project team is facilitating negotiations with YVEA and a second feasibility study for a deep, electricity and heat generating advanced geothermal project. Depending on the outcome of these studies, the project will either employ a geothermal system or the team will continue exploring other alternatives. Every last option for environmentally friendly snowmelt will be exhausted before considering a project redesign or other options.

C. 709.C.3: *The Development Plan provides adequate vehicular access, considering grade, width, and capacity of adjacent streets and intersections; parking: loading, unloading, refuse management, and other service areas; pedestrian facilities; and public or private transportation facilities.*

The GTC project proposes a broad reconfiguration of traffic flows in the base area. Most notably, the project would close Mount Werner Circle at the GTC to all through traffic, with the exception of SST buses and emergency vehicles. The Meadows parking lot is being redesigned in turn to accommodate redirected private skier drop-off traffic, and the project also seeks to reduce resort shuttle congestion by creating a new consolidated shuttle service and only allowing participating shuttles to drop passengers at the GTC. The new high-speed gondola will add another dimension to base area access and pedestrian flows, shuttling employees, community members and ski area guests from the GTC to the Meadows parking lot during a wide range of operating hours and dates, according to community demand.

A draft Traffic Impact Study (TIS) is under review and will recommend appropriate mitigation measures at impacted intersections. The TIS will be shared with Public Works for review when available. It is anticipated that mitigation measures will be required at a number of off-site intersections, including but not limited to, Mt. Werner Road / Pine Grove Road, Mt. Werner Road / Mt. Werner Circle, and the intersections adjacent to the Meadows parking lot.

Care has been taken to accommodate existing access to adjacent properties, where those properties' access comes from within the project boundaries. The Sheraton, SSRC and the Gondola Square Condominiums share a driveway that connects to the east side of Mount Werner Circle between One Steamboat Place and Gondola Square Condominiums. The access is preserved in the proposed plans, and the design of the proposed roundabout where it will originate has been sized and configured to allow for large delivery vehicles to turn around and back into the driveway in the same manner that they do currently.

The Sheraton/SSRC/Gondola Square Condominiums driveway is also the proposed location for ADA shuttle drop-off. The grade of the regular consolidated shuttle berths is too steep for wheelchair lifts to function properly, so the project team is studying the possibility of adding a single ADA shuttle berth adjacent to this driveway, on the One Steamboat Place plaza area.

Lot G, Ski Hill Subdivision, (the Gondola Square Parking Garage) takes access from the east side of Mount Werner Circle on the north side of the project. The project proposes moving Lot G's access north from its current location. The relocated access would improve the pedestrian plaza at the southwest corner of Lot G by allowing a flattening of grades and a widening of the sidewalk connecting to the northern consolidated shuttle drop-off and the removal of a crosswalk between that drop-off and the rest of the gondola plaza. This proposed access seems to function adequately, with circulation and visibility-related drawbacks that would be mostly mitigated with the installation of a new median on that section of Mount Werner Circle. Lot G is slated for redevelopment in the near future, and any proposed project would need to address any issues with the relocated access.

The Steamboat Grand business owners along Mount Werner Circle are accustomed to receiving deliveries directly in front of their businesses. The team is studying possible strategies for allowing those deliveries to continue and what the impacts would be. 12-15 public parking spaces are also proposed in front of the Grand. There is concern that those spaces will be used for private skier drop-off and will create congestion with drivers circling to look for parking opportunities. SSRC has communicated an openness to managing those spaces through the day and potentially opening and closing them at certain hours to mitigate this concern.

D. 709.C.4: The Development Plan complies with all applicable requirements of this CDC.

Below is a summary of our analysis of the development standards described in CDC Article 4:

401: Waterbody Setbacks: There are no named creeks or rivers on the property and the draining tributary area is less than 20-acres, per the Watercourse definition in the CDC.

402: Landscaping: The existing site landscaping is mostly contained within planters, medians, curb islands and roundabout center islands; except for the grouping of deciduous trees, shrubs, evergreen trees, and turfgrass to the West of what is currently the Gondola Square Parking Garage (See Existing Conditions). Existing landscaping will be preserved as practicable.

New landscaping will be in character with the landscaping completed with other SSRA project activities.

403: Buffering, Screening, and Fencing: No dumpsters, private parking areas or other nuisance elements are proposed.

404: Revegetation: The standards described in CDC Section 404.C are addressed as follows:

404.C.1: Vegetation and Site Grading: The site will be disturbed and regraded almost entirely and the proposed grades are within the requirements described in the geotechnical recommendations.

The project team is confirming whether any existing trees within the disturbance zone are large enough to fall within the Tree Preservation criteria per Table 404-1.

404.C.2: Revegetation plans are required for this project: All areas disturbed are to be revegetated and monitored and maintained until ground cover meets or exceeds the City and State's requirements. Detailed plans, along with the Stormwater Management Plan, will be generated for the construction permit as required. The site disturbance is large enough to be subject to the State's Stormwater Discharge Permit System as administered by the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment.

404.E: The anticipated land disturbance is expected to be less than 4.2-acres and therefore Revegetation Collateral for Large Lot Land Disturbance is not expected to be applicable. This calculated acreage includes the property (4.0-acres) and the perimeter disturbances related to utilities and sidewalks.

405: Exterior Lighting: New URA street lighting, plaza and landscaping lighting will be studied via photometric analysis and proposed for inclusion in the project.

406: Off-Street Parking: No off-street parking is proposed with the project.

407: Off-Street Loading: Deliveries to the Sheraton and Gondola Square Condos occurs via their shared driveway that was discussed above. There is an existing condition where some of those delivery drivers back out into the right-of-way that can hopefully be improved with better accommodation for trucks to turn around and back in instead.

408: Refuse Management: There will be refuse containers, including for recycling, located at strategic locations for easy access by all users. SSRC will empty and maintain these containers and will use their existing dumpsters to empty them into.

409: Snow Storage: The project's required snow storage will be finalized according to the outcome of the geothermal feasibility study currently in progress and the resulting extent of project snowmelt. Minimal snow storage has been provided in the Conceptual Development Plan drawings because it is assumed most paved areas will be snow melted.

410: Performance and Operation: The project's reduction of private vehicular and shuttle traffic should reduce offensive noise, smoke, vibrations, dust, odors, etc. in the vicinity of the project. The project team is studying the proposed gondola to understand possible noise or other impacts.

411: Technical Specifications: The proposed improvements shall conform with the City's Engineering and Building Department Standards to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

411.C.1: Drainage: A drainage study will be provided as required by the Development Plan. The proposed drainage system will be designed according to the City of Steamboat Springs Engineering requirements.

411.C.2: Streets and Circulation: Mt. Werner Circle is currently classified as a Collector street which serves to connect local streets and allow traffic to pass through. With the implementation of the GTC improvements, and closure of a section of Mt. Werner Circle to through traffic, this section of Mt. Werner Circle may need to be reclassified as a specialty street.

411.C.3: Fire Prevention: The project team will coordinate with the Fire Department to determine whether any additional hydrants or other systems will be required with this project beyond the typical spacing.

412: Critical improvements: Please see attached list of questions.

413: Phasing: Construction phasing will be required for this project, with construction expected to take at least two years. At this time, all improvements are anticipated to come online at the same time, however the project team is considering what would be required for interim operations if one part of the project or another were to be delayed.

414: Multi-Mode Facilities/Complete Streets: The proposed improvements specifically address the multiple user requirements within the project limits.

415: Clear Vision Setbacks: There are two driveways entering Mount Werner Circle within the project limits and both are being studied for visibility and sight distance.

416: Outdoor Storage: There is no outdoor storage proposed with this application.

417: Internal Sidewalks: Much of the project is dedicated to pedestrian connections.

418: Retaining Walls: It is very likely that the proposed retaining wall along the Sheraton access road will require a variance for being over-height with no terracing. All other walls in the project are expected to be under 6 ft. tall.

419: Flood Damage Prevention: There are no areas within or immediately adjacent to the property designated as Special Flood Hazard Areas per FEMA

FIRM Number 08107C0879D dated February 4, 2005. The project has been designed in accordance with the City's Engineering Standards.

420: Accessory Building and Structures: Please see attached questions.

421: Open Space: Please see attached questions.

422: Large Format Retail Development: Not applicable to this Development Plan application.

423: TND Frontage Type Standards: Not applicable to this Development Plan application.

424: TND Building Type Standards: Not applicable to this Development Plan application.

425: TND Hillside Strategies: Not applicable to this Development Plan application.

426: Access: The project is accessible by public streets via Mt. Werner Circle, Apres Ski Way, and Ski Time Square Drive.

427: Postal Facilities: To be addressed during future design phases.

436: Duplex Design Standards: Not applicable to this Development Plan application.

437: Multiple-Family Residential Building Design Standards: Not applicable to this Development Plan application.

438: Commercial and Mixed-Use Building Design Standards: Please see attached questions.

440: Base Area Design Standards: Please see attached questions.

E. 709.C.5: *The Development Plan is in substantial conformance with an approved Conceptual Development Plan, if applicable.* There is not an approved or proposed Conceptual Development Plan – Not Applicable.

F. Conditional Use Criteria for Approval:

707.C.1: *The proposed use is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other adopted plans.* The proposed project closely follows the preferred approach to redeveloping the GTC outlined in the Mountain Area Master Plan.

707.C.2: *The proposed use is consistent with the purpose of the zone district.* The proposed project would support the dense, resort-focused zone districts surrounding it, including G-2, G-1 and RR-1. The project will provide critical accommodation for transit

users and guests accessing the base area and dense development on adjacent properties.

707.C.3: The proposed use will mitigate any negative impacts to surrounding properties and the community, considering factors such as hours of operation and the potential for off-site impacts such as odors, noise, smoke, dust, glare, vibrations, shadows, and visual impacts. The proposed transit center will continue to operate much as it does today, with several important changes. Traffic in the area will be greatly reduced by the elimination of private skier drop-off and private shuttle traffic. Those reductions will be partially offset by the new gondola, which is anticipated to run during extended hours to accommodate the needs of employees arriving at work early in the morning and guests and employees leaving restaurants and bars late at night. The drive motor for the gondola is currently anticipated to be at the bottom terminal, which would reduce any noise impacts around the top terminal at the GTC.

707.C.4: The proposed use complies with all other applicable requirements of this CDC.

The project team is open to discussing concerns and collaborating with Staff as appropriate, should any additional requirements be identified.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have during your review. Thank you in advance for your time and careful considerations.