



November 19, 2020

Heather Lamboy  
City of Aurora  
15151 E Alameda Parkway, Suite 5200  
Aurora, CO 80012

Re: **Metro Center #1449821 Letter of Compliance**

Dear Heather,

When meeting with the City to discuss the first review comments for Metro Center on October 23, 2020, the City requested a letter of compliance. This letter serves to demonstrate how the Metro Center Master Plan and Design Guidelines comply with the City's currently adopted plans, specifically the City's Comprehensive Plan – Aurora Places (2018), City Center Station Area Plan (2015), and Unified Development Ordinance (2019), and meets the City's goal to create an active and well-designed destination within Aurora.

**Comprehensive Plan – Aurora Places (2018)**

Metro Center (as well as the Town Center at Aurora, Aurora City Plan, and the Aurora Municipal Complex) is located in the Comprehensive Plan – Aurora Places' Urban District Placetype. The Comprehensive Plan describe Urban Districts as *"a mix of residential and commercial uses focused around great public spaces where people can live, work and come together"* and creating *"outdoor spaces that are appropriately sized and surrounded by active uses to create around-the-clock places"*. The Urban District Placetype calls for a mix of uses in an urban fabric which has a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environment. Primary land uses include multi-family residential development, restaurants, commercial retail, commercial service, office, and entertainment and arts districts. Urban Districts are critical to the economic and fiscal health of the city because it is a center of employment, culture, and activity. Through the City's Aurora Places adoption, it was clearly determined by the community that the Metro Center site should serve as the key location within Aurora's Downtown with Transit Oriented Development (TOD). The Comprehensive plan calls for TODs to *"Ensure an appropriate mix of housing, employment, entertainment and services focused around gathering places, such as a central plaza or main street"* and are described as a *"key entry point to the city with quality urban design, public art, and innovative businesses"*. The Metro Center Master Plan is a mixed-use, urban, walkable TOD community that will be a hub for entertainment, retail, multi-family housing, hospitality, and commercial uses. The Metro Center Master Plan is consistent with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan.

**City Center Station Area Plan (2015)**

Metro Center is designed with interconnected, energetic public realms, with coordinated street furnishings, streetscape and memorable public art. Starting with the "heartbeat"- Metro Center plaza is located immediately adjacent to the RTD station, reinforcing the vision within the Station Area Plan of this site being a TOD. The City Center Station Area Plan describes the importance of public spaces in TOD's as *"parks, plazas and main streets that are beautiful and useful can become important identifying elements"*. Locating the Metro Center plaza immediately adjacent to the station provides easy pedestrian access to the rest of the development, including connections to Dawson Street, the regional trail and to E. Centerpointe Drive (main street). E. Centerpointe Drive has a wide public amenity zone/public realm that include enhanced paving, an elevated two-way bicycle lane, ample sidewalks,



coordinated planters, benches, trash receptacles and street trees. The network of public realms at Metro Center stitch together urban parks and plazas with distinguished streetscapes and memorable public art.

Metro Center is located within the City Center of the Station Area Plan. Within the City Center area, the Metro Center property falls into two zone districts: the Core Zone and the Fringe Zone. The Core Zone district is defined as “...the central area of City Center where the greatest intensity of development shall occur. Major centers of employment and public facilities shall be functionally integrated with high density and commercial areas” and generally includes Metro Center Master Plan’s PA-A1, PA-2 and PA-B1-B4. All Planning Areas are envisioned to contain one or more of the following uses: commercial mixed-use, high density residential mixed-use, multi-family, and parks. These uses serve as the highest density of the master plan and offer employment and residential opportunities. The master plan’s residential components that exist within the Core Zone have minimum densities of 60 du/ac within planning area A and a mixture of 40 du/ac and 30 du/ac within planning area C. These are high densities and provide the Core Zone with its intended intensity. The Fringe Zone district is defined as “...containing uses in different proportions, and at a lesser density. Higher density residential uses are intended to comprise a greater proportion of the total development in the fringe than in the core, with lower densities in the fringe” and generally includes PA-B and associated PA-B parks. The minimum residential density within the Master Plan’s Fringe Zone is 20 du/ac and supports the fringe’s function as providing greater proportion of total development than the Core Zone (PA-A and PA-C). The Metro Center Master Plan supports the vision of the City Center Station Area Plan through its land use planning and public space design and layout.

### **Unified Development Ordinance Mixed-Use – Transit-Oriented Development District (2019)**

The City of Aurora’s Unified Development Ordinance’s (UDO) Mixed-Use – Transit-Oriented Development (MU-TOD) District intends to “...foster special, sustainable and urban places near transit stations that include places to live, work, shop, and recreate to...encourage the use of public transit, encourage job creation and economic growth through proximity to transit...provide citizens with new housing and lifestyle choices with a high level of amenities and social interaction”. The Metro Center Master Plan provides an urban environment where residents can live, work, shop, and recreate through its mixture of uses, recreational features and design, and location. A key component of the Metro Center Master plan is its connectivity to an existing light rail station. The developments’ relationship to the light rail defines the proposed land use locations and pedestrian/bicycle network that ties the uses together. Planning Areas B1, B2, B3, and B4 are envisioned to develop with offices, specifically Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF) buildings that support the tech industry within Aurora, with supportive unique and local retail and business. Smaller block sizes and strategically placed parks, open space, and activity nodes facilitate pedestrian friendly social interactions and recreation. A variety of housing is proposed for throughout the master plan to activate the property at all time of day and week. Ultimately, these features and project location will create an active community that will appeal to and sustain businesses and jobs. The Metro Center Master Plan embodies the vision of the UDO’s MU-TOD District through its focus on transit, physical and experiential connectivity, and place activation.

### **Summary**

The Metro Center Master Plan and Design Guidelines provide a cohesive, connected and coordinated system of streets, trails, sidewalks, open spaces and infrastructure that are integrated into the surrounding area and does not create significant adverse impacts on the surrounding areas. The Metro Center Master Plan provides enhanced connectivity for both vehicles and pedestrians. The master plan improves and expands multimodal transportation throughout the site. Bikeways and enhanced pedestrian areas are proposed, including a vibrant public realm that includes art, and a series of urban parks and plazas. Metro Center will be an urban, walkable community that brings urban energy to the suburbs. In total, the Metro Center Master Plan complies with and reinforces the City of Aurora’s Comprehensive Plan – Aurora Places, City Center Station Area Plan, and Unified Development Ordinance.