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Colorado Springs City Councilman 1993-2001  
Colorado Springs City Planning Commissioner 1992-1993  
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URBAN PLANNING | COMMUNITY DESIGN | LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | ENTITLEMENT COORDINATION



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*American Planning Association (APA)*



## EL PASO COUNTY

### LETTER OF INTENT FOR: CANYON CREEK RANCH MS

TSN # 6214000112

EXISTING ZONE: RR-5

November 27, 2024

**OWNER/APPLICANT, AND PLANNING CONSULTANT:**

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### PROJECT LOCATION/DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY OF PROPERTY:

The *Canyon Creek Ranch* properties for this Minor Subdivision application are located in El Paso County in Black Forest, CO, approximately 17 miles northeast of downtown Colorado Springs, situated near Milam Road and Burgess Road. It is approximately two and a half miles northeast

of State Highway 21. Large Lot Single-Family detached residential dwelling units best recognize and respect the character of the surrounding Black Forest community within two miles of the site.

The site will be accessed from Creek View Road to the east, which bisects Lot 3 and Lot 2 of the adjacent Kettle Creek Subdivision. This access will become a private entry road within the subdivision.

The **2021 Your El Paso County Master Plan** identifies the Placetype of this development as “*Large Lot Residential*.” The primary land use in this Placetype is Single-Family Detached Residential. Agriculture, Commercial Retail/Commercial Services, and Parks and Open Space are allowed as support uses. Residential lot development, within the Large Lot Residential Placetype, allows for lots having a minimum area consisting of 2.5 acres and larger.

This Placetype is more connected and less remote than the *Rural* Placetype that comprises the larger eastern half of the county. The proposed plan proposes 3 single-family lots and two tracts for areas unable to be developed due to existing geographic conditions. A proposed private driveway from Creek View Lane cul-de-sac on the northeast of the site will provide access to the lots.

The site is approximately 24.654 acres and is covered in native vegetation, trees, bushes, and grasses. There is currently a single-family residence on the site.

***Core Principle 7: Maintain and expand the County’s recreation and tourism options.***  
***Goal 7.3 - Plan for and provide a variety of parks, trails, and open space within the region.***

***Large-Lot Residential Within the Large-Lot Residential Placetype, conservation design should be primarily utilized for preserving El Paso County’s rural character, defined by large swaths of open space with minimal development. Additionally, some Large-Lot Residential parts of the County include environmentally sensitive areas that need to be protected. Development should not be allowed within a certain distance of the critical natural assets to ensure they are not negatively impacted by future development. Protecting farmland and scenic views is also an important component of conservation design within Large-Lot Residential areas. The County should evaluate new developments on a case-by-case basis to determine their impact on these natural assets.***

In seeking approval of this plan, the zoning would remain unchanged from the current RR-5. In accordance with County standards, the minimum lot sizes proposed within the property will not be less than 5.0 acres for each lot. The residential density proposed in this plan is .12 dwelling units per acre.

Pursuant to this application, the applicant proposes to develop the site with three (3) single-family residential lots. Large Lot Single-Family detached residential dwelling units best recognize and respect the character of the surrounding Black Forest community within two miles of the site.

Infrastructure to serve the new lots, including driveways, drainage improvements, and utilities will all be constructed in compliance with applicable county standards, regulations, and criteria in effect at the time of this application. This is in keeping with the character of the surrounding Black Forest community.

The **2021 YOUR EL PASO MASTER PLAN** identifies the entire Canyon Creek Ranch property as being within the *Large-Lot Residential Priority Development Areas*. Interquest Parkway and Highway 21 are major roadways that connect the northeastern part of the County to Colorado Springs. Significant growth has been seen along the Interquest Parkway corridor between I-25 and Highway 21, serving the Black Forest community. The Master Plan suggests for an overall density of 2.5 acres to 5 acres per lot to be maintained within this area, consistent with the Large-Lot Residential Placetype, although there is denser development to the south and west.

Surrounding properties are rural, single-family homesites and farm homesteads. Land use within these properties has traditionally been rangeland, with some farming and forestry.

### **DEVELOPMENT REQUEST**

The Owner and Applicant request plan approval for the development of three (3) rural residential single-family lots on 24.654 acres (e.g., .12 DU/Acre density).

### **JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST**

This request is consistent with the purposes of the **2021 Your El Paso Master Plan**. The plan is in conformance with subdivision design standards and establishes an adequate level of compatibility with surrounding areas of the site already constructed and other known surrounding areas currently proposed for development, particularly the existing Kettle Creek Subdivision flanking Creek View Road immediately to the east of our development and Timber Lakes to the north.

### **EXISTING AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

Electric and telecommunication service points-of-connection will be extended from the roadway to all new lots. Extension of natural gas service from a utilities provider is being sought from Colorado Springs Utilities. Water for each lot will be provided via wells. Individual septic systems will be provided per lot in accordance with El Paso County Department of Health policy guidelines.

***Incorporating Water-saving Actions in Land Use & Development Planning in El Paso County***  
*Discourage individual wells for new subdivisions with average lot sizes smaller than 2.5 acres when there is a reasonable opportunity to connect to an existing central system or construct a new central water supply system when the economies of scale to do so can be achieved, especially in the Laramie-Foxhills, Lower Arapahoe, Denver and Lower Dawson aquifers.*

Grading and earthmoving activities will be limited to internal residential streets, driveways, drainage, and utility construction areas. Individual lot owners will assume responsibility for grading their respective lot; no 'overlot' grading is proposed to occur over most of the site.

The subdivision will not interfere with the extraction of any known commercial mining deposit.

As such, prior to construction of proposed residences, lot-specific subsurface soil investigations will be performed to determine whether shallow groundwater, hydro-compacted soils, and/or potentially expansive soils are present on the lot, and to determine an appropriate foundation design, basement or crawl-space suitability, and/or lot-specific recommendations are necessary to mitigate these conditions. Language requiring lot-specific subsurface soil investigation will appear as a Note on the future Final Plat.

### **NO-BUILD / OPEN SPACE / RESIDENTIAL LOT OPEN SPACE EASEMENTS**

The Canyon Creek Ranch Sketch Plan proposes a combination of Public and Private Open Spaces. Public Open Space will include a Park site, Detention Pond parcels, and 8' trail easements located within certain Buffer Areas to provide connectivity to the Private Open Space easements and Public Open Space areas.

Public Park:	6.44 ac	(public open space)
Detention Ponds:	9.45 ac	(public open space)
Trail Easements:	2.69 ac	(public open space)
Floodplain Areas:	<u>31.88 ac</u>	(private open space)
Total Public OS:	18.58 ac	
Total Private OS:	<u>31.88 ac</u>	
Total:	50.46 ac	(public and private open space)

This section appears to be for a different project. I am not seeing a park site on this project, detention pond, etc. and the acreages don't add up.

### **12.7% Total Open Space provided.**

Public Open Space areas will be maintained by the Canyon Creek Ranch Metropolitan District or HOA. Private Open Space areas will be maintained by the owner on whose lot the Open Space easements may be located.

### **GEOLOGICAL CONDITIONS**

Please ensure this section of the letter is up to date with the current proposal

Geologic hazards found to be present at this site include faults, seismicity, and radon. Records show that dating back to 1900 Colorado Springs has not experienced an earthquake greater than 1.6 in magnitude. The nearest recorded earthquakes over 1.6 occurred in December of 1995 in Manitou Springs, which experienced magnitudes ranging between 2.8 and 3.5. Additional earthquakes over 1.6 occurred between 1926 and 2001 in Woodland Park, which experienced magnitudes ranging from 2.7 to 3.3. Both locations are near the Ute Pass Fault, which is more than 10 miles from our site. Potential earthquakes felt at this site will most likely result from minor shifting of the Pikes Peak Batholith, which includes pull from minor movements along faults found in the Denver basin. Authors of our Soils and Geology Report are of the opinion that ground motions resulting from minor earthquakes may affect structures (and the surrounding area) at this site if minor shifting were to occur. Based upon our geologists' experience with similar subsurface conditions, their recommendation is that the site be classified as Site Class B, with average shear wave velocities ranging from 2,500 to 5,000 feet per second for the materials in the upper 100 feet. This is accordance with the Pikes Peak Regional Building Code, 2017 Edition, which indicates maximum considered earthquake spectral response accelerations of 0.213g for a short period ( $S_s$ ) and 0.059g for a 1-second period ( $S_1$ ).

Steep slopes and floodplain are also considered geologic hazards.

Northern El Paso County and the 80133 zip code in which the site is located, has an EPA assigned Radon Zone of 1. A radon zone of 1 predicts an average indoor radon screening level greater than 0.4 pCi/L (picocuries per liter), which is above the recommended levels assigned by the EPA. *The EPA recommends corrective measures to reduce exposure to radon gas.*

In terms of mitigation, Geologic conditions found to be present at this site include potentially expansive and compressible soils, ponding water, shallow groundwater, and flood prone areas. The geologic hazards do not prohibit the subdivision or can be mitigated. The subdivision is appropriate, and the design is based on mitigating the constraints of topography, soil types, geologic hazards, aggregate resources, environmental resources, floodplain, airplane flight overlays, or other constraints.

In conclusion, the geologist's evaluation determined that the proposed development is feasible. The geologic conditions identified are considered typical for the Front Range region of Colorado. Mitigation of geologic conditions is most effectively accomplished by avoidance. However, when avoidance is not a practical or acceptable alternative, geologic conditions should be mitigated by implementing appropriate planning, engineering, and suitable construction practices. The specific methodologies are found in the Soil and Geology report provided as part of this submittal.

## **ADHERENCE WITH THE 2021 YOUR EL PASO MASTER PLAN, AND WATER MASTER PLAN**

***Land Use & Development, Core Principle: Manage growth to ensure a variety of compatible land uses that preserve all character areas of the County.***

The 2021 Your El Paso Master Plan (the “Master Plan”) addresses issues directly related to the Canyon Creek Ranch **Sketch Plan and development**. Policies specifically related to this **Sketch Plan** request include:

Update

**Goal 1.1 - Ensure compatibility with established character and infrastructure capacity**

The Sketch Plan proposed for the new single-family rural residential lots is compatible with the existing adjacent rural residential lots in the Judge Orr Road corridor. New lots will be similar in character to existing lots and roads serving the new lots will be compatible with the types of rural roadways in nearby adjacent neighborhoods.

**Goal 1.4 – Continue to encourage policies that ensure “development pays for itself”.**

Canyon Creek Ranch is proposed as a development of single-family rural residences within a non-urban density area (**Rural Placetype**) of the **Falcon/Peyton community**. Utilities and **road infrastructure needed to serve the new lots, such as new roads, drainage and detention facilities, erosion control, etc. will be constructed as part of this development.**

**Housing & Communities, Core Principle:** *Preserve and develop neighborhoods with a mix of housing types.*

Update

**Goal 2.2 – Preserve the character of rural and environmentally sensitive areas.**

The subdivision design with RR-2.5 and RR-5 zoning for the site is harmonious and compatible with the rural character of adjacent and nearby neighborhoods that are also zoned RR-2.5, RR-5.0 and A-35, as well as A-5. The Applicant proposes to avoid overlot grading across the 397.32-acre site, and instead will limit grading to driveways and drainage infrastructure in keeping with the established land use character of surrounding sub-areas of the county. Low density will help to sustain the appearance and unique environmental conditions of adjacent properties.

**Transportation & Mobility, Core Principle:** *Connect all areas of the County with a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system.*

**Goal 4.1-Establish a transportation network that connects all areas to one another, emphasizing east-west routes, reducing traffic congestion, promoting safe and efficient travel.**

The design of the Canyon Creek Ranch subdivision will locate new home driveways with direct access onto proposed internal Rural Local streets. Up to 94 proposed residences will have driveways off these internal Rural Local streets. Additionally, there will be Rural Minor Collector and Rural Major Collector classifications within the subdivision. Canyon Creek Ranch plans no direct driveway access for any new lot to any proposed Major Collector, Stapleton Road, Judge

Update this paragraph - appears to reference different project issues

Orr Road, or Elbert Road minimizing any traffic impact from new lots onto these existing arterials.

**Community Facilities & Infrastructure, Core Principle:** Continue to coordinate with local and regional agencies to provide well-managed, high-quality community facilities and services.

**Goal 5.3 – Ensure adequate provision of utilities to manage growth and development.**

There shouldn't be any future plat / SDP submittals

Concerning utilities, at **future Development Plan/Final Plat submittals**, Canyon Creek Ranch will seek commitment letters for delivery of electrical service and natural gas from established utility providers in the vicinity. On-site wells will provide water to each new lot and wastewater will be accommodated by individual on-site wastewater treatment systems. Based upon evaluation by Canyon Creek Ranch environmental and geotechnical engineers, it has been determined that the site is suitable for individual on-site wastewater treatment systems without contamination of surface and subsurface water systems.

**Goal 5.4-Use best management practices to protect water quality, conserve water, minimize impacts of flooding, and beautify El Paso County.**

The submitted drainage report specifically details a four step process to minimize adverse impacts of development. The process includes reducing runoff volume, stabilizing drainageways, treating the water quality capture volume (WQCV), and consider the need for Industrial Commercial best management practices (BMPs).

**Environment & Natural Resources, Core Principle:** Prioritize and protect the County's natural environment.

**Goal 9.2- Promote sustainable best practices with regard to development and infrastructure.**

The area surrounding the property has sufficient carrying capacity to support the new development regarding roadway capacity, water supply, septic suitability, educational facilities, and organized structural fire protection. Commitment Letters from entities that would supply this development with essential services will be sought and provided at future levels of Development Planning/Final Platting.

The **Sketch Plan** design, which includes 94 homes on 2.5 and 5.0 acre lots, ensures that development of this site will remain compatible and contiguous with existing low-density rural residential areas. With a density of .23 DU/AC, Davis Ranch is compatible with numerous other subdivisions adjacent to and within a 2-mile radius of the property.

**GAS SERVICE**

This appears to be from a different project

The applicant will seek natural gas service by utility service providers already established in the vicinity at future levels of Development Plan/Final Platting.

**FIRE PROTECTION**

Fire protection shall be provided by the Peyton Fire Protection District.

Update this paragraph

**ELECTRICAL SERVICE**

Black Forest Fire

The electric service provider for the area is Mountain View Electric Association, Inc.

**POLICE PROTECTION**

Police protection will be provided by the El Paso County Sheriff's Office.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Update - Academy SD 20

Update or delete

The property lies within the Peyton School District (23).

**RECREATION FACILITIES**

Canyon Creek Ranch will provide a combination of public and private open spaces including a park site, detention pond parcels, and 8' trail easements located within certain buffer areas to provide connectivity to the Private Open Space easements and Public Open Space areas. The 50.46 acres of public and private open space amounts to 12.7% of the site dedicated to recreational opportunities.

**WATER SERVICE**

The following information is provided at the request of El Paso County per the El Paso County Water Master Plan, Chapter 7, Implementation:

**Water Quality, Quantity and Dependability:**

A water resources report and water supply information summary have been provided to the County with this Sketch Plan application.

The water resource report provides data for the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) which confirms the proposed water supply for all of Canyon Creek Ranch is sufficient in terms of quality, quantity, and dependability for the proposed subdivision. The report includes documentation that the proposed water supply is sufficient in terms of quantity, dependability, and quality for the proposed subdivision.



Canyon Creek Ranch is a proposed single-family residential and commercial development located east of Peyton, CO. The proposed development is comprised of seven different existing parcels which are currently owned by the Davis Family. The total acreage encompassed by these six parcels is 397.32 acres. The subdivision is proposed to be subdivided into ninety-four (94) residential lots and two (2) commercial lots. All 94 residential lots and 2 commercial lots are to be served by on-site residential and commercial wells drilled into the not-nontributary Denver aquifer below the Canyon Creek Ranch property. The proposed subdivision lies within the Upper Black Squirrel Creek Designated Groundwater Basin and is managed by the Upper Black Squirrel Creek Groundwater Management District.

The not-nontributary Denver Aquifer, which will serve as the water source for the Canyon Creek Ranch Subdivision, is estimated to provide a 300-year supply of 45.19 AF/year of water. Each residential lot is assumed to require 0.443 AF/year/lot of water, totaling 40.756 AF/year of residential demand at full build-out. The two commercial properties are estimated to demand 4.40 AF/year of water at full-build. Therefore, total demand at full build-out is estimated to total 45.185 AF/year, which is less than the 300-year supply out of the Denver Aquifer to the Canyon Creek Ranch Subdivision.

Maximum depletions to the alluvium from pumping out of the Denver aquifer in this area amount to 4% of pumping from the aquifer. Using the demands listed above, maximum depletions at full build-out are estimated to be 1.8074 AF/year by the year 300 of pumping. Replacement flows back to the alluvium will be returned at 90% of indoor and domestic uses from the residential and commercial properties. Total indoor usage from the residential and commercial properties are estimated to be 28.15 AF/year at full buildout. The corresponding return flows back to the alluvium via non-evaporative septic systems is assumed to result in an annual volume of 25.335 AF/year, which exceeds the estimated depletions to the alluvium, which is calculated above.

The water quality in the Denver aquifer formation in this area has typically been suitable for residential potable use. Water samples were obtained from the existing well (well permit #163012-F) constructed via an exterior hose bib existing on the side of the house located at 9350 Elbert Road. Water samples were obtained from this tap on 04/04/2023, with water quality testing performed Colorado Analytical Laboratories and Hazen Research, Inc., per the El Paso County Land Development Code section 8.4.7(B). All results were found to be below primary and secondary Maximum Contaminant Limits (MCLs).

The Langlier Index value was recorded at -1.83 which indicates the possibility of corrosive water. It is recommended that any homes or additions built in this subdivision use non-copper piping for water distribution from well to home and within the home.

Because of the absence of all evidence of fecal contamination in the form of E. Coli or Total Coliform, or that all sampled and analyzed constituents were below all primary and secondary

*standards the proposed water source emanating from the Denver Aquifer is deemed safe for public consumption.*

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The Canyon Creek Ranch Sketch Plan provides for three separate point-of-access from Stapleton Road, Judge Orr Road, and Elbert Road into the community.

***Subdivision Access** Local access is key to connecting residents to the region and residents have identified subdivision access as a primary concern. Input received as part of Your El Paso County outreach process cited a need for subdivision communities to have two points of access, or two ways in and out. Generally, single access subdivisions create points of high traffic and congestion where they join the primary street network and are disconnected from other neighborhoods by roads that dead end at cul-des-sac. Having two points of access allows for a more contiguous street network and would remove these barriers.*

Walking trails indicated within the Sketch Plan (8' wide trail easements are proposed) help to provide connectivity throughout Canyon Creek Ranch, and to encourage walking and bicycling in the community while effectively reducing vehicular travel – especially to Park and Open Space and the Commercial Retail/Commercial Service areas.

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### **TRANSPORTATION IMPACT STUDY GUIDELINES**

***Providing multiple points of access to a subdivision** also improves efficiency in emergency response times and allows for better pedestrian and bicycle access across neighborhoods. Better access can be the difference between a resident or visitor choosing to walk over drive to their destination. Increased access, especially with multimodal options for walking and biking has the opportunity to reduce vehicular travel and ultimately congestion and stress on roadway infrastructure.*

#### **B.1.1. Types of Study**

A.

***Master TIS.** Where large, complex projects (big box retail or residential developments over 100 acres) are planned or a project is phased over a multi-year build-out, it may be appropriate to prepare a Master TIS for the initial action followed by periodic updates for specific phases. The Master TIS must include overall phasing of improvements to coincide with project phasing.*

The transportation engineering consultant for Canyon Creek Ranch prepared a Master TIS as part of this Sketch Plan submittal. The trip generation of the project is relatively low, but the site encompasses a relatively large area with proposed roadway connections to three adjacent arterial roadways. The site is also relatively close to the US Highway 24 & Stapleton intersection.

#### **B.2.3. Study Area**

*The limits of the transportation network to be studied shall be based on the size and extent of the proposed development, the existing and future land uses, and traffic conditions on and near the site.*

*The limits of the study area shall be agreed to by the ECM Administrator before preparing the TIS. The Master TIS shall generally establish the study area for all subsequent Individual TISs.*

The Canyon Creek Ranch study area includes the proposed access points, adjacent arterial roadways and existing county road intersections. The study area also includes the US Highway 24 intersections with Judge Orr Road, Stapleton Road, and Elbert Road. Judge Orr Road/US Highway 24 and Stapleton/US Highway 24 have been included, as CDOT has commented on most other development projects in the area and have required these intersections to be included in TIS reports. CDOT is requiring escrow contributions from all area development projects toward a future traffic signal at Stapleton/US Highway 24.

A.

#### **Study Area Basis for Master TIS.**

- All adjacent and internal collector and arterial roadways;
- Offsite collector and arterial links within the study area that are impacted by 10 percent or more by the project;
- Continuity and adequacy of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to the nearest attraction (existing or planned);
- Access to the most direct public transportation services facility or public transportation services route where public transportation services are available; or
- Any pedestrian routes within 2 miles of a school.

The TIS report includes adjacent arterial roadways and internal collector roadways. Some Internal Rural Local roadways are also shown to clarify overall circulation. Offsite Collector and arterial links impacted by 10 percent or more have been included. Bicycle, pedestrian, and multi-modal transportation have been addressed in the report.

#### **B.2.4. Evaluation Elements**

A.

**Evaluation Elements for a Master TIS.** *The purpose of the Master TIS is to provide a general sense of the overall impacts to the transportation system and to identify the larger scale improvement needs necessitated by the proposed zoning (i.e., widening of arterials, connecting key gaps in the roadway system, etc.). For example, for a large development plan with a multi-phase build-out, the Master TIS would not only address the overall project, but also identify key measurable criteria that would trigger the construction of some incremental portion of the overall infrastructure improvement plan. Typically, with each phase of the project a new individual site TIS specific to that phase would be prepared. This new study would verify the accuracy of the original traffic projections, both on site and background, and check the criteria identified for infrastructure improvements and other pertinent information.*

*The key elements of the project impact assessment for a Master TIS shall include the following minimum evaluations:*

- *Conformity with the adopted MTCP and ECM;*
- *Peak hour link volume and LOS;*
- *Appropriateness of access locations;*
- *Multi-modal and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) opportunities;*
- *Pedestrian/bicycle requirements and improvements;*
- *Safety and accident analysis. Other items requested by the ECM Administrator in the Scoping Meeting; and*
- *Neighborhood and public input issues.*

*In cases where a developer seeks vesting with a Site Specific Development Plan, the Master TIS is required to present all the detailed information required in an Individual Site Transportation Impact Study.*

The TIS includes information and references to the adopted MTCP and ECM. The study includes peak-hour volumes and levels of service analysis. The report specifically comments on access locations, includes recommendations, and calls out locations where deviations may be required for intersection spacing. The study addresses TDM and non-motorized transportation elements. From a safety standpoint, the report calls out preliminary auxiliary turn-lane needs, identifies that intersection/access sight-distance criteria will need to be met, and identifies that participation in a future traffic signal at US Highway 24/Stapleton will be a requirement at the appropriate stage of development. The report identifies a potential future roundabout at the intersection of Stapleton/Judge Orr. The report also calls out potential deviations that may be required.

### **CDOT Access Permitting**

The report calls out that a CDOT Access Permit(s) will be required but clarifies that this is the Sketch Plan stage. CDOT will comment on the TIS, but submittal of an application for CDOT Access Permit would be premature at the Sketch Plan stage of the process.

**END.**

