

Mr. Marts,

This email is in follow up to previous conversions expressing concerns about the process and the development of a nature center in Fox Run Park. While it may have been assumed that the concern was only among a handful of local citizens, the attached petition demanding the halting of the project until full county accountability can be achieved suggests otherwise. Within less than three weeks of its posting, the petition surpassed one thousand signatures from El Paso County citizens, demonstrating a significant level of disapproval with the current state of this project.

Concerns have been voiced in several settings by numerous citizens, but they continue to be largely discounted and inadequately addressed by County representatives. Disregarding these previously voiced concerns have raised questions about the integrity of the county process surrounding the planning and implementation of the nature center in northern El Paso County. This petition serves to encourage officials to respect the requests of local citizens for this project to be halted until full and proper investigation can be conducted.

A summary of concerns is as follows. Further detail of concerns is attached.

- **Notification and input** from the community most affected by this development has not been done in good faith. Notification of neighboring residents has never been done; local input has not been appropriately solicited, recorded or incorporated into the plans.
- **Impact on traffic, speeding, and local safety** in the residential area neighboring the park has not been appropriately studied and addressed in the plan.
- **Environmental impact** of placement of the Nature Center and 60 parking spots in a less developed part of the park has not been adequately studied, including plans to manage impact on wildlife, water, erosion, foot traffic, car traffic, noise and light pollution, and fire risk. Any studies previously done are outdated and do not reflect or address current population growth issues.
- **Current state of the trail system** in the park is in poor condition and there are no additional funds for trail repair and maintenance built into the project to reflect added park usage and traffic. County management recognizes a failure to maintain the current park but has not responded with a plan that addresses both current and future maintenance needs.
- There is a **lack of financial and administrative transparency** in the planning, funding, and administration of the Fox Run Nature Center. Conflicting data and responses suggest an unwillingness to properly divulge the process, plans, budget, and funding at a level that should be expected of county resources.

Concerned citizens have continued to request the County be held accountable to the following:

- Directly notify all residents surrounding the park and provide a means for direct input.
- Immediately include a committee of concerned citizens in nature center development planning and efforts.
- Properly study and address the concerns of the community surrounding the park, including traffic control, speeding, and safety.
- Budget and obtain adequate regular funding for trail repair, erosion control, waste management prior to expending resources on the building of new facilities.
- Explore relocation of the placement of the Nature Center elsewhere or to an already developed area of the park where parking is already available.
- Identify ways to control or re-route entrance to the park to avoid further danger and impact to the local neighborhoods.
- Conduct updated studies appropriate, accepted impact studies on the environment in and surrounding the park. (updated or current or )
- Exercise financial and administrative transparency to include private and government funding and annual budget of the nature center.

Please see the petition link below. I look forward to your follow up on this matter.

Sincerely,  
Concerned Citizens of El Paso County

Petition Link: <https://chng.it/Y5Jtf8c497>

