

Letter of Intent

County Staff encourages adding statements regarding compliance with County Policy Plan and Small Area Plan. Cite specific goals and explain how proposed development satisfies each goal.

Black Forest Meadows LLC; Black Forest Meadows and Black Forest Meadows is a 20-acre property in northern El Paso County, is home to some of the largest lawns, natural grassy meadows, rolling hills and awesome views. Guests and visitors find themselves in awe of being surrounded by nature as if they were in the Colorado Mountains with grassy meadows and the unparalleled beauty of the Black Forest yet, only 15 minutes from all of the amenities of the Front Range with fine dining and lodging in Colorado Springs, Monument and Palmer Lake.

When the original land owners bought this property in 1987 it was virgin land with the exception of some minor logging the 1800's and the Corp of Engineers dam which was built to the south of this property. The property owners cared for this property and have treated it as a gift from nature as we also feel the same gratitude and respect for the land and our neighbors.

Black Forest Meadows would provide the ideal setting for a true Colorado wedding and special event experience, being situated close to the Front Range and its amenities, hidden enough for privacy and separated far enough to not disturb adjacent land and home owners. Black Forest Meadows is focusing on small groups of guests and events so that guests enjoy the experience, unhurried and relaxed. Guest would enjoy a hands on Alpaca experience walking and feeding them and could have photos taken with them. The sand badminton/volleyball court and horse shoe pit would provide guests enjoyment as would a variety of lawn games.

As a way to give back to the community, we plan to host several free of charge educational tours and non-profit fund raising events.

Access to Black Forest Meadows utilizes an existing entrance from Goshawk Road E. An additional emergency access is available on the west at the intersection of Goshawk Road W and Hodgen Road. It is anticipated the overall annual average daily trip and from the property to be less than 12, as shown in the Trip Generation & Driveway Permit Technical Memo / Traffic Memo page 3. There are 39 parking stalls onsite, including 4 ADA parking stalls. As outlined in the Traffic Memo on page 3, there are 10 parking spaces allocated for vendors (including a shuttle bus) out of the total 39 parking spaces; leaving 29 parking spaces for wedding party and guests. The Bride and Groom would be responsible for procuring and providing shuttle service for guests who exceed the allotted parking spaces available on site.

The following El Paso County criteria seems to be met for not requiring a TIS as found in ECM Appendix B (B.1.2.D): Vehicular traffic 1) Daily trip generation is less than 100 (consistent with CDOT criteria for no study) 2) No additional intersections with State Highway – none proposed 3) Increase in trips does not increase by more than 100 daily trips – less than 100 trips total 4) No change in traffic type – proposed residential use 5) Acceptable LOS on adjacent roadways is maintained – proposed traffic increase vs. existing trips on Hodgen Road is negligible 6) No accident or safety problems on adjacent roadway in immediate vicinity – none documented 7) No change in land use with access to Hodgen Road – none proposed Pedestrian/Bicycle traffic No existing or new pedestrian/bicycle facilities or traffic is required

along Hodgen Road. Please reference Trip Generation & Driveway Permit Technical Memo / Traffic Memo page 1, paragraph 2 and Site Trip Generation Estimate on page 3.

The main location of the operation is located at 17104 Goshawk Road E, Colorado Springs, CO 80908. Existing building located one quarter mile from Goshawk Road E will be the site of the events secluded unobtrusively in the center treed portions of the property, as referenced on the site plan map. Hours of operation for event day will be 9:00 am to 10:00 pm while observing county noise ordinance and curfews. Dust will be minimal as the main existing driveway is graveled with class 6, road base. Black Forest Meadows is anticipating using a water tanker truck with sprayers for use on the driveway if dust control is needed. Black Forest Meadows is located in the Falcon fire protection district with the nearest station 10 miles from the building headquarters. Entrances and driveways are wide enough for fire engines, emergency responders and police. Multiple open areas are available for a medical helicopter.

Structural facilities to be used for guest activities will include a 25' X 30' Pavilion (to be built upon approval of variance of use), an existing 48' x 46' pole barn (with dressing room and restrooms upon approval of variance of use) and a rustic 36' x 36' Alpaca barn (for photographs only). The existing private residence on site will remain private and not utilized by guests. Upon approval of request of variance use existing bathrooms and septic system will be upgraded and permitted for use. Potable drinking water would come from the existing domestic water that the Black Forest Meadows owners utilize with adjudicated water rights. Group size would not exceed 75 guests per event with no guests staying overnight on the property. Event times would be limited to 8 hours, from either 9am – 5pm or 2pm – 10pm adhering to noise ordinances. A licensed Wedding Coordinator/Planner will be required and copies of all contracts will be kept in Black Forest Meadows files for review and compliance.

Land disturbance will be less than one acre and shall not negatively affect adjacent and downstream drainage.

Last year, 2020 and this year, 2021 have proven to be hardship years for the owners of Black Forest Meadows. Being able to work from home on the property reduces the hardship of a commute due to a serious medical issue requiring a lengthy hospital stay and disability in 2019, early retirement in 2020 and supplemental oxygen use for property owner, Edward Ritchey. Ed and Deborah Ritchey are able to maintain the property as Ed is a retired Mechanical Systems Engineer for Lockheed Martin and grew up on a Dairy Farm. For the past 25 years, Deborah Ritchey has aspired to owning and operating a small wedding venue as she had been the owner and operator of her own wedding planning business and Sales Manager for The Shriner's Hospital for Children Event Center.

It is our wish to give back to the community and share the beauty of Colorado while preserving and maintaining this peaceful and beautiful land with little or no impact to our surrounding neighbors.

