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Holly Williams
El Paso County Commissioner -- District 2
200 South Cascade Avenue, Suite 100
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

RE: OPPOSITION TO HEAVY INDUSTRIAL ZONING CHANGE

Dear Ms. Williams,

I reside in your district and am adamantly opposed to the zoning change of the property at the corner of Falcon Highway and Curtis Road to HEAVY INDUSTRIAL (I-3). This zoning is not compatible with the existing properties in the surrounding area. I am also a user of the Meadow Lake Airport.

Why I am opposed:

I-3 zoning allows for heavy industrial uses (such as a Concrete Batch Plant, Waste Transfer Station, Hazardous Material Facilities, Private Prisons, Rendering Plants, Petroleum Refining, Slaughterhouses, Smelters, etc) that are not compatible with the residential properties that completely surround the proposed site. There are over 700 residential homesites within a mile and a half of the property, in all directions. There is also new KOA campground approximately a mile to the North. Even residents who are not in direct visual contact with property will be affected. The impact of the "direct view" of the industrial site is important, but more important is the potential dust, noxious odors, harmful chemicals, dangerous materials, etc that will be carried by the winds into the surrounding neighborhoods. I-3 activities have a much higher impact on the surrounding area, and affect a much larger area than other uses such as commercial or residential.

How is this happening?

The El Paso County Master Plan mis-characterizes the Meadow Lake Airport as an "Employment Center" which incorrectly infers that the airport is a commercial / industrial area, and therefore it would be appropriate to re-zone the property adjacent to the airport as I-3 (Heavy Industrial).

This is a sneaky way to perform "Spot Zoning" of I-3 into an area of residential properties. I feel the applicant is being disingenuous, using proximity to the Meadow Lake Airport as justification for allowing I-3 zoning. The reality is that the subject property is surrounded by residential neighborhoods in all directions.

More about the Meadow Lake Airport:

There are more airplanes based at Meadow Lake Airport than at any other Private Airport in the United States. Meadow Lake is home to more than 400 airplanes. This does not mean that Meadow Lake is anything like commercial airports such as Colorado Springs Municipal Airport or Centennial Airport in Denver. When you enter the Meadow Lake Airport there is a Residential Area (approximately 69 lots) on the left and Airplane Storage hangars on the right. There are a few small businesses on the airport, primarily to support flying and airplanes. These include a flight school, avionics shop, and aircraft maintenance shops. This airport has a more residential feel. It is surrounded by the commercial development that is present at many airports.

The primary purpose of the airport is to facilitate take offs and landings for small aircraft, and for storage of aircraft when they are not being used. Typical use of the airport is airplanes stored quietly inside buildings or tied down on the ramp most of the time. Activity occurs when the airplane is pulled out of the hangar and taxied to the runway, where it usually departs the area.

The Meadow Lake Airport is definitely not an "Employment Center" as defined by the El Paso County Planning Department.

Water Issues:

Many Industrial and Heavy Industrial uses are large consumers of water. The documents associated with this re-zone application state that "a finding of water sufficiency is not required with a map amendment (rezone)." It also states that the El Paso County Zone 3 water demand by 2060 will be 8,307 AFY (Acre Feet per Year) with a projected supply of 8,284 AFY. That means a 23 AFY deficit by the year 2060. Water use is a major concern!

Map of the Area:



The proposed Heavy Industrial zoning is not compatible with the surrounding residential properties. There are over 700 residential properties within a mile and a half and many more that could be affected by hazardous materials, trash, dust, and noxious fumes, especially with the winds that are common in this area.

I ask that you reject this and any future application to introduce Industrial Zoning in this area.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Stephen W. Rothert