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COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PARK OPERATIONS ~ JUSTICE SERVICES
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ~ VETERANS SERVICES ~ RECREATION/CULTURAL SERVICES

December 1, 2021

Kylie Bagley
Project Manager
El Paso County Development Services Department
2880 International Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Subject: **Kane Ranch Property Disconnection (DANX-21-003)**

Hello Kylie,

The Park Operations Division of the Community Services Department has reviewed the Kane Ranch Property Disconnection application and has the following comments on behalf of El Paso County Parks.

The Kane Ranch property is located in south central El Paso County within the City of Fountain, immediately adjacent and west of northwesternmost section of Kane Ranch Open Space and south of Squirrel Creek Road, extending 4 miles westward Link Road. The Tee Cross Property is located immediately north of Squirrel Creek Road but is located in unincorporated El Paso County.

The 2013 El Paso County Parks Master Plan shows both the Kane Ranch and Tee Cross properties impacting existing open space, as well as proposed trail and bicycle route corridors. As noted above, Kane Ranch Open Space is located immediately adjacent of the Kane Ranch Property's easternmost property line, which could impact the quality of the open space. Buffering residential development adjacent to the open space should be considered. This may also influence future road and trail planning efforts within the Kane Ranch Property and the Kane Ranch Open Space. Consideration should also be given to establishing an interconnected open space and trail network to provide outdoor recreation and multi-modal transportation opportunities to the future residents within Kane Ranch.

The proposed Squirrel Creek Primary Regional Trail is located along the northern edge of the proposed Kane Ranch Property or the southern edge of the Tee Cross Property, while the Tee Cross Property also intersects the proposed Jimmy Camp Creek Primary Regional Trail along its western boundary. Lastly, the Kane Ranch Primary Regional Trail is located east and south of both properties, which should influence planning and implementation of future public trail corridors.

The Kane Ranch and Tee Cross Properties both intersect the South Powers Boulevard and Squirrel Creek Road Bicycle Routes. Dedicated public rights-of-way already exist along these bicycle routes, so no trail easement requests are necessary in those locations; however, the applicant is advised that multi-model transportation options may be developed within the rights-of-way in the future. Furthermore, the applicant should consider public trail corridors that connect to these primary roadways.



The Open Space Master Plan of the 2013 El Paso County Parks Master Plan shows the westernmost portion of the Tee Cross Property impacting a stretch of the Fountain and Jimmy Camp Creek Candidate Open Space area. Natural resource values here include critical wildlife habitat, including for the Arkansas Darter (a State Species of Concern), wetlands and riparian vegetation. Water quality protection is a concern in this area that drains to Fountain Creek and where the Widefield aquifer is close to the surface. Staff recommends wide ranging open spaces along the Jimmy Camp Creek corridor that provide for habitat and natural resource protection, as well as passive recreational facilities, such as trails.

Staff recommends that the applicant(s) establish a working relationship with El Paso County Parks in order to plan and implement future parks, trails, and open spaces during the early assistance stages. Due to the expansive acreage of each property, regional trail connections and public recreational amenities are critical, especially in a section of El Paso County where such services are limited. Due to the fact that this application only concerns the disconnection of the Kane Ranch Property and in conjunction with the adjacent Tee Cross Properties, no trail and parkland dedications or park fees are necessary at this time, although the applicant should expect such recommendations and requirements with future preliminary plans and final plats. Park Land Agreements and regional park land dedications should be considered as acceptable alternatives to regional and urban park fees.

These comments are being provided administratively, and this application does not require Park Advisory Board consideration.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Ross A. Williams
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Park Operations Division
Community Services Department
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