

LETTER OF INTENT

March 13, 2019

RE: MONUMENT ACADEMY – APPROVAL OF LOCATION APPLICATION

PARCEL NUMBERS: 6100000245

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Monument Academy, a Colorado Charter School authorized by the Lewis-Palmer School District No. 38, desires to construct a new middle/high school serving grades 6-12. The school intends to open in the fall of 2020 with approximately 600 students and anticipates growing its enrollment to 1,000 students at full build out. The school as proposed, would consist of approximately 55,000 SF built in phase one, and an additional 30,000 SF to be constructed in a future phase. The school will contain all customary program spaces such as academic spaces, athletic and gymnasium spaces, band, vocal music, art, drama and typical support spaces such as administrative and counseling spaces. While most of these functions will be constructed in the first phase, the second phase would likely expand the athletic and performance arts spaces including a multi-purpose performance venue.

In addition to the school functions, Monument Academy is currently negotiating with the YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region, the largest non-profit community support organization serving El Paso County, to occupy approximately 12,000 SF of phase one space that would be co-located with the school. The YMCA program would consist of athletic spaces such as a healthy living center, group exercise class space, personal training, and other similar functions. As with the school, the YMCA envisions constructing their program space in phases. Phase two could include an expanded healthy living center, additional group exercise spaces and potentially a competition aquatics venue. While negotiations with the YMCA have yet to be finalized, if all of these envisioned uses are eventually constructed, future phases would total approximately 40,000 SF of additional space.

Primary vehicular access to the school site from Walker Road will be provided via an 80 foot right-of-way public collector status roadway traversing the site from the north to south. The Walker Road / collector road intersection is proposed to be a roundabout configuration due to sight distance / safety considerations. A second vehicular access to the school site from Highway 83 will be provided via an 80 foot right-of-way public collector status roadway in an east/west configuration. The intersection at Highway 83 is proposed to be a right-in/right-out configuration. All interior roadways will be constructed by the applicant and will be designed and constructed to El Paso County specifications.

On-site traffic circulation and parking facilities are being proposed to support the proposed uses. Located north of the building and accessed from a north/south 80 foot right-of-way public collector roadway are approximately 266 student and faculty parking spaces. Located southeast of the building and accessed from an east/west 80 foot right-of-way public collector roadway are approximately 312 school visitor and faculty parking spaces. The southeast parking lot also facilitates substantial student pick up / drop off and vehicular stacking facilities. The proposed stacking distance is approximately 1300 lineal feet facilitating 66 vehicles. Located southwest of the building and accessed from a north/south 80 foot right-of-way public collector roadway are an additional 132 YMCA parking spaces. Proposed vehicular parking for the entire facility totals 710 spaces.

Additional site improvements also include regional athletic fields and connection to a regional pedestrian and equestrian trail system.

SITE INFORMATION

The Monument Academy is located within a portion of the NW ¼ of Section 15, T11S, R66W of the 6th PM. More specifically, the property is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Highway 83 and Walker Road. Vehicular access to the site is provided from the north by Walker Road and from the west by Highway 83.

The Monument Academy site totals approximately 64.10 acres and is currently zoned RR-5. The school facilities portion of the site, including building, parking, interior vehicular circulation and athletic fields, encompasses approximately 20.75 acres. The remaining 43.35 acres will facilitate additional dedication to adjoining right-of-ways (Hwy 83 and Walker Rd), interior public collector status roadways and 2 vacant undeveloped tracts currently zoned RR-5. The 2 vacant undeveloped tracts are expected to be the subject of future County land use applications unrelated to this specific Approval of Location Permit application.

DEVELOPMENT REQUEST

The applicant is requesting an APPROVAL OF LOCATION allowing the applicant to construct and operate a middle school and high school on the site as defined and described in the previous PROJECT DESCRIPTION.

JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST

The El Paso County Land Development Code's Section 5.3.3(G)(1) Approval of Location requires that the applicant "...ensure that the proposed site conforms to the adopted Master Plan as far as is feasible". The Monument Academy site is located within the Black Forest Preservation Plan (adopted Master Plan). Section 9 of the Black Forest Preservation Plan addresses Community Services and Public Facilities including schools.

9. Community Services and Public Facilities – 9.A goal: Provide adequate, efficient and economically feasible community services and public facilities to the planning area.

The Monument Academy's proposal to provide much needed middle school and high school facilities along with access to community recreational facilities is consistent with goal 9.A.

Policies – Schools – 9.4 Encourage cooperation between County, other governmental entities, the development community and area school districts to reserve adequate and appropriate school sites in a timely manner.

This site was originally owned by District 38. District 38 held the property for a number of years with the intent of developing a public high school on the site. Over the years, the District's infrastructure expansion plans changed and the District sold the site to the developers of the adjoining Walden community. In turn, the developers of the Walden community agreed to donate 20.75 acres to the Monument Academy for the construction of a middle and high school facility serving all of the north El Paso area community. This public / private partnership exemplifies the cooperation encouraged by Policy 9.4.

Policies – Schools – 9.5 Promote multiple utilization of school facilities for such uses as recreation, adult education, vocational training, senior citizens programs and community events.

As discussed in the previous PROJECT DESCRIPTION, the Monument Academy is negotiating with the YMCA, as a tenant within the Monument Academy facilities, to provide significant community recreational and educational programs. If successful in their joint negotiations, additional governmental entitlements will be required in order to implement the proposed land uses. In addition to the community facilities and programs offered by the YMCA, the Monument Academy site will be integrated into an existing County Parks regional trail system. This existing trail system provides non-motorized trail access to the adjoining Walden community as well as the entire northern El Paso County community (see El Paso County Parks Regional Trail Master Plan).

Proposed Actions – Schools 9.c Analyze proposed school sites to ensure that they are not located in flood plains or immediately adjacent to proposed major transportation corridors.

The Monument Academy site is not located within an established flood plain (see Plot Plan). While the actual school site is located nearby Highway 83, a major transportation corridor, it is buffered from the Highway by the 16.6 acre Tract B. Additionally and importantly, vehicular access to the school site is provided via an internal public collector status roadway rather than directly onto the Highway or from within the adjoining residential community.

Proposed Actions – Schools 9.d The interconnection of school sites with recreational areas and trail corridors should be encouraged.

The Monument Academy site is interconnected with an existing El Paso County Parks Regional Trail connecting adjoining communities and recreational facilities including the Black Forest Regional Park and the Fox Run Regional Park.

EXISTING AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Existing improvements within this parcel are related to past ranching activities including fences and erosion control facilities. Future improvements include middle and high school facilities (see previous PROJECT DESCRIPTION), collector status public roadways and dry underground utilities including telephone/communication, electric and natural gas.

Water service, including fire protection, will be provided by the Walden Corporation's central water system. Waste water collection and treatment will be provided by the Walden Corporation's central waste water collection and treatment system. Both the water and waste water systems are existing but will require substantial expansion in order to handle the school's water and waste water demands. Storm water runoff will be detained and managed within two proposed detention pond facilities (see Plot Plan).

The property is located within the service areas of Mountain View Electric Association, Blackhills Energy Corporation, Qwest Telephone and the Tri-lakes Monument Fire Protection District.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The applicant will be responsible for constructing all required public improvements at its sole expense. Installation of the required improvements will be guaranteed by a completion bond, letter of credit or joint certificate of deposit acceptable to the El Paso County Board of County Commissioners.

There are no slopes exceeding 30% within the proposed development areas or road ROW. A few areas of slopes exceeding 30% may exist within future open space and storm water facilities areas and are limited to existing pond embankments and drainage swale side slopes. No construction is proposed within these areas.

No waivers to the El Paso County Land Development Code or deviations to the El Paso County Engineering Criteria Manual are proposed within this application. The applicant has waived the statutory 30 day requirement for EPC to schedule the Planning Commission's approval.