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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

March 6, 2024

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2880 International Circle
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Subject: Eastonville Road, Londonderry Drive to Rex Road Construction Document Review – (CDR-23-021)

Hello Kari,

The Park Planning Division of the Parks and Community Services Department has reviewed the Eastonville Road Construction Document Review and has the following comments and recommendations on behalf of El Paso County Parks. Eastonville Road is located in north-central El Paso County, commencing at the Town of Falcon in the south and proceeding northward to its terminus at Evans Road. A paved urban collector within the Town of Falcon, Eastonville Road becomes a gravel rural road as it travels northward, providing access to such neighborhood communities as Woodmen Hills, Meridian Ranch, Latigo Trails, and the proposed Waterbury and Grandview Reserve. This particular project, however, focuses on two segments immediately adjacent to Falcon High School and Falcon Regional Park.

The 2022 El Paso County Parks Master Plan shows the project impacting a proposed primary regional trail connection, as well as being located immediately east of Falcon Regional Park. The proposed Eastonville Primary Regional Trail is located along the western boundary of the park, located along both sides of Eastonville Road to accommodate trail users from the existing Meridian Ranch development located on the northwestern side of the road, as well as proposed residential and commercial developments along the southeastern side of Eastonville Road, including the aforementioned Grandview Reserve and Waterbury communities.

Beginning in April 2021, El Paso County Parks began consulting with El Paso County Public Works, as well as Grandview Reserve engineering contractor, HR Green to better understand the future alignments of the Eastonville Regional Trail. The expansion of the Eastonville Road right-of-way would also impact Falcon Regional Park, particularly in the form of stormwater runoff facilities. Initial discussions were focused on the stormwater facilities, and EPC Parks was not agreeable with placing detention facilities within Falcon Regional Park. A compromise was reached when EPC Parks accepted plans for stormwater quality facilities, in the form of longitudinally-positioned rain gardens, to be constructed adjacent Eastonville Road and Falcon Regional Park. These plans, however, were abandoned in favor of stormwater quality and detention facilities to be constructed in Grandview Reserve. EPC Parks provided the following comments on May 4, 2022:

- *El Paso County (EPC) Parks agrees to the stormwater drainage plan showing the entire stormwater detention facility located within the Grandview Reserve property on the eastern side of Eastonville Road, with the loss of two residential lots.*
- *EPC Parks also agrees to the construction of the drainage swale on the western side of Eastonville Road from the parking lot southward to detain overland flow coming west to east, and the drainage swale may empty into the existing natural drainage and wetlands area.*

- *EPC Parks further agrees to allow the current Falcon Regional Park parking lot rain garden to drain into the aforementioned swale, as the existing outlet culvert under Eastonville Road will no longer be used due to design constraints.*
- *EPC Parks requests that the drainage swale be lined with natural grass vegetation and asks that occasional rip rap “dams” be installed along its entire length to slow stormwater flows and prevent erosion of the channel.*
- *EPC Parks also requests that at the location where the swales drain into the natural drainage and wetland, that the swales be designed in such a manner as to slow flows to a minimum to prevent excessive sediment deposition and damage to the wetland areas (rip rap lined, widen the swale, etc.).*
- *EPC Parks requests that the drainage swale be constructed in its final state rather than temporarily when early grading begins on Grandview Reserve and Eastonville Road. An unlined, rough-graded temporary swale would lead to unnecessary erosion along the channel and could lead to irreversible damage to the park, the natural drainage, and its wetlands. The drainage swale must be constructed in full and revegetated, with erosion control blankets along its length to allow for proper revegetation in what has proven to be difficult soil for revegetation efforts. (Could a water truck being used during the construction of Eastonville Road lightly spray water on the revegetated channel during construction to promote growth?)*
- *Lastly, EPC Parks requests the final drainage plans well in advance of construction to allow for final review and the development of a temporary construction access license that allows for the construction of the drainage swale on EPC property outside of the Eastonville Road ROW.*

After stormwater facilities were planned, planning efforts focused on the Eastonville Road civil drawings, to include the paving of the road with asphalt, curb, gutter, roundabouts, striping, and pedestrian crossings. Much discussion centered around the inclusion of a concrete sidewalk adjacent Falcon Regional Park along the western side of Eastonville Road. EPC Parks provided the following comments on October 18, 2022:

- *The planned road is sort of jammed up against the western ROW boundary, leaving a bulk of the additional 20’ ROW available on the east side. The roadway needs to be shifted into the eastern ROW to allow for the construction of a sidewalk along the western side of the road, between the road and the drainage ditch. The Grandview Reserve folks kept their sidewalk/trail a distance from the road, so a slight shift in the roadway will not impede their planned sidewalk system. The western sidewalk should extend from Falcon High School property to the Falcon Regional Park Dog Park (see note below) with occasional tie-ins to the Eastonville Regional Trail.*
- *The roundabout at the creek crossing must be pushed to the east as much as possible to avoid impacts to the drainage and wetland area. This is one of the few wetlands in the area and the only one within Falcon Regional Park. It does contain some wildlife in the form of toads and birds. The graded slope on the west side of the roundabout should be replaced with a redi-rock wall, with handrails if necessary.*
- *Where our proposed western sidewalk gets close to the existing Eastonville Regional Trail, a connection should be made to allow users to access the park without creating social trails.*
- *Where the plan passes close to the main parking lot at Falcon Regional Park, the trail alignment on the plan is not correct. It turns to the northwest at this location, away from the dirt access road, which must remain in place with a turnoff from Eastonville Road. A culvert will be necessary for the drainage ditch crossing. I will send a second email showing the Falcon Regional Park Phase II as-builts, as well as a page from the master plan that shows the complete park build out. The Eastonville Regional Trail does differ from what is shown in the master plan, but is shown fairly accurately on the plans.*



- *Where the Eastonville Regional Trail crosses Rex Road, it must be tied into the planned roundabout pedestrian crossing. Signage at this roundabout should indicate the trail crossing Rex Road so drivers are aware of the pedestrian crossing.*
- *As noted on the plan, we understand that Rex Road is not included in this plan, however, it (and its sidewalks) should be constructed to the point of the new Falcon Dog Park entrance. This will prevent access to the dog park being disrupted only during the construction of the new entrance, rather than a second time during the construction of Rex Road. The sidewalk on the south side of Rex should have a crosswalk to the northside at the dog park entrance.*

At this point and from the perspective of El Paso County Parks, the Eastonville Road expansion project seemed to go on hiatus. In February 2023, the Eastonville Road Construction Document Review (CDR) was submitted through eDarp and EPC Parks staff began reviewing the final plans for the first two segments of Eastonville Road, adjacent Falcon High School and Falcon Regional Park. Staff quickly noted the lack of a sidewalk on the western side of Eastonville Road, as well as impacts to the Eastonville Regional Trail and the wetlands area located in the southern section of the park. Parks staff initiated a meeting with EPC Public Works and HR Green to discuss these issues.

A virtual meeting was held on Thursday, February 29, 2024, in which EPC Parks, Public Works, and HR Green discussed the submitted EPC Parks comments from October 2022. EPC Parks outlined the importance of this pedestrian corridor as Falcon Park is master planned to include six baseball fields, three soccer fields, playgrounds, dog park, and picnic pavilions. The park will be the largest park in the Falcon area and will be a large draw to surrounding residents. The El Paso County Parks Master plan considered this future growth when identifying the trail/sidewalk along both sides of Eastonville. After much discussion regarding the difficulties of including a sidewalk on the western side, or “Park Side,” of Eastonville Road, a series of compromises was reached:

- Through the Grandview Reserve Phase I development application process and through their much-appreciated coordination with El Paso County Parks, the applicant has proposed constructing the Eastonville Regional Trail on the east side of Eastonville Road within the bounds of their property as a combined hybrid concrete and crusher fine surfaced trail, with equal 5-foot sections running parallel to each other.

Both the El Paso County Parks Master Plan and a typical section for a roadway of this classification call for detached sidewalks on both sides of the road. However, due to the challenges this site presents, there is no concrete sidewalk on the western side of Eastonville Road. In order to provide a commensurate level of pedestrian access, , El Paso County Parks recommends the construction of the Eastonville Regional Trail as a combined hybrid 10-foot-wide concrete trail and 3-foot-wide crusher fine surfaced trail on the east side of Eastonville Road outside of the Eastonville Road right-of-way. The western portion of the Eastonville Regional Trail within Falcon Regional Park will remain an 8-foot-wide crusher fine surfaced internal park trail that will not function as a sidewalk for Eastonville Road.

- Steps must be taken to reduce impacts on the wetlands area located adjacent the Dawlish Drive roundabout. The Falcon Park Master Plan identified this wetland area as having high conservation values, and it was set aside from park development. Current plans show the roundabout encroaching on the wetlands area and drainage channel (Sheets R2 & R3). EPC Parks staff acknowledges that the Eastonville Road expansion project will provide improved drainage for this channel under Eastonville Road but asks that impacts be as minimal as possible.
- The Construction Documents must show the sidewalk/trail connection between the Dawlish Drive roundabout and the western portion of the Eastonville Regional Trail within Falcon Regional Park. Currently, the plans show the roundabout grading impacting and partially covering the regional trail (Sheets R2 & R3). The plans should show any necessary rerouting of the trail, plus the connector from the roundabout’s western sidewalk. The sidewalk connection should comply with ADA Accessibility standards.



- The vehicle access road, shown on Sheet PP2, is used by El Paso County, High Plains Little League, Meridian Service Metro District, MVEA, and others to access utility infrastructure. This access must be preserved, and the final reroute and construction must be included in this project. This access may connect to either the existing paved or gravel overflow Falcon parking areas in Falcon Regional Park, and unauthorized vehicular access be controlled by utilizing bollards, cables, and locks. Staff acknowledges that the road shown on the plan is very generalized and may not represent the final design.
- As depicted on Sheet R5, where the western portion of the Eastonville Regional Trail approaches the Rex Road roundabout, the connecting sidewalk/trail needs to have the same smooth s-curve approach on the south side as is designed for the north side.

El Paso County Parks greatly appreciates the level of collaboration offered between El Paso County Public Works, Grandview Reserve, and HR Green. These past discussions and compromises will only serve to strengthen pedestrian transportation options along Eastonville Road and the adjoining communities. If needed, EPC Parks staff looks forward to continuing discussions regarding final details to the Construction Documents and is readily available to meet either virtually or on site if and when necessary.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



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