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URBAN PLANNING | COMMUNITY DESIGN | LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | ENTITLEMENT

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EL PASO COUNTY

LETTER OF INTENT FOR: SADDLEHORN RANCH 824 ACRE CURTIS ROAD SUBDIVISION Preliminary Plan

Amended July 21, 2020

☐ **OWNER/APPLICANT, AND PLANNING CONSULTANT:**

Owner/Applicant:

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PROJECT LOCATION/DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY OF PROPERTY:

The Saddlehorn Ranch (aka *824 Acre Curtis Road Subdivision*) property for this Preliminary Plan application is located in El Paso County in Peyton, CO, approximately 12 miles east of downtown Colorado Springs, situated east of Curtis Road and the Town of Falcon, Colorado,

and south of Judge Orr Road. The site is bordered by Judge Orr Road on the north and Curtis Road on the west. It is approximately 2-1/2 miles east of CO Highway 24.

The Applicant proposes to develop the site as a planned community of new single-family detached manufactured residential dwelling units that recognizes and respects the character of the rural surrounding community. The total acreage of the proposed development is approximately 816 acres, of which approximately 608+/- acres will be developed with up to 218 single family residences on lots each not less than 2.5 acre size.

Approximately 134 acres (16.4%) of the 816 acre site is bisected in three distinct areas by jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands, which are identified on the Preliminary Plan as separate tracts. These areas will be preserved as open space with limited recreational use having a primary emphasis on walking and equestrian trails. None of the proposed 218 residential lots encroaches into any floodplain. All 134 acres of open space will remain as no-build tracts.

Public infrastructure to serve the new lots, including roads, drainage facilities, and utilities will all be constructed in compliance with applicable county standards, regulations and criteria in effect at the time of this application. In keeping with the rural character of the surrounding Peyton and Meadow Lake Estates communities, internal circulation will be comprised of paved Rural Local roads with roadside ditches.

A small windmill and water tank related to grazing activity exist on the property and will remain to help preserve and promote a rural identity for the proposed development. Two existing capped well heads also are located on the site. The windmill and water tank are both located on the Preliminary Plan and Final Plat.

Adjacent land to the east of the property is vacant. Land to the south and west of the property is zoned A-35. Single family residences exist to the west of the site, across from Curtis Road, and to the north of the site across from Judge Orr Road and are zoned RR-5.0, with RR-2.5 zone districts located about one mile south from the site on Curtis Road, PUD zoning within the adjacent Meadow Lake Airport, and RR-2.5 zoning approximately two miles west of the site on Judge Orr Road.

DEVELOPMENT REQUEST

The Owner and Applicant request approval of a Preliminary Plan for the development of 218 rural residential single family residential lots on approximately 816 acres (e.g. .267 DU/Acre density). Early grading operations are requested for Filing 1 and part of Filing 2. The Type C Application Form (1-2B) is submitted.

DEVIATIONS AND WAIVERS

- 1.) Re. Cul-de-sac length: Deviation request from the standards of or in Section ECM Section 2.3.8 Roadway Terminations for cul-de-sac horizontal design of the Engineering Criteria Manual (ECM) is requested. ECM criteria for maximum cul-de-sac length of 1,600 feet for rural condition. The reason for the requested deviation for maximum cul-de-sac length is due to the phasing of the Saddlehorn development. In future filings of Saddlehorn Ranch, El Raiceno Trail and Carranza Trail will be completed and will eliminate the temporary cul-de-sacs with a loop. The loop is not being built in Filing 1 because it would require 6,361 feet of additional roadway without any platted lots and therefore isn't practical. Temporary cul-de-sacs have been added to the proposed end of the street to allow for fire access. There will be no lots served by these temporary cul-de-sacs.
- 2.) Re. Curtis Road: Deviation request from the standards of or in section ECM Section 2.2.4 Figure 2-4 Figure Rural Minor Arterial of the Engineering Criteria Manual (ECM) is requested. ECM criteria for a rural minor arterial cross sections requires a 12' travel lane and an 8' paved shoulder. The reason for the requested deviation for the cross section of a rural minor arterial cross section is that ROW would need to be obtained from property owners to have the full 8' paved shoulder on the west side of the road. While the minor arterial cross section could be built on the east side of the road, it is not the appropriate time to build out the full section until both sides of the road can be constructed. The proposed alternative is for the 8' paved shoulder to be reduced to a 2' paved shoulder, which is the maximum that may fit inside the existing western ROW.
- 3.) Re. Judge Orr Road: Deviation request from the standards of or in section ECM Section 2.2.4 Roadway Functional Classifications of the Engineering Criteria Manual (ECM) is requested. The 824 acre Curtis Road Development Traffic Impact Analysis Indicates Judge Orr Road is classified as a "4 Lane Minor Arterial" in the El Paso County 2040 Major Transportation Corridors Plan. The ECM currently has no standard cross section for a 4 lane minor arterial. It is assumed that a 4 lane minor arterial (rural) cross section would add a 12 ft. travel lane in each direction to the roadway. The reason for the requested deviation for the 4-lane minor arterial cross section is that additional ROW would need to be obtained in order to build the full street section. At this time, Saddlehorn Ranch is dedicating an additional 40' of ROW to facilitate this in the future; however, no additional ROW is being obtained on the north side of Judge Orr Road. The proposed alternative is to leave Judge Orr Road in its existing condition (12' paved travel lanes with 4' gravel shoulder), compared to the ECM standard for a 4-lane minor arterial.
- 4.) Re. Cul-de-sac length: Deviation request from the standards of or in Section ECM Section 2.3.8 Roadway Terminations for cul-de-sac horizontal design of the Engineering Criteria Manual (ECM) is requested. ECM criteria for maximum cul-de-sac length of 1,600 feet for rural condition. The reason for the requested deviation for maximum cul-de-sac length is due to planning for future development of the parcels to the east and south of

the Saddlehorn development. The land plan assumes that in the future, when the parcel to east and south are developed; Barrosito Trail will become an interconnected street to the south and La Noria Way will become an interconnected street to the east. Until the land develops to the east and south, Barrosito Trail functions as a dead end cul-de-sac with a length of 4,392 feet from its intersection with Del Cambre Trail to its terminus at the southern property line of Saddlehorn Ranch. Temporary cul-de-sacs have been added to the proposed end of Barrosito Trail and La Noria Way to allow for fire access and a public turnaround. There will be no lots served by these temporary cul-de-sacs. A considered alternative site plan would be to extend a roadway west at Copperas Court that intersects with Benito Wells Trail. The alternative roadway would be 1,211 feet in length, serve no lots, and require a box culvert crossing an existing drainageway. This alternative is not preferred for the reasons mentioned above. Other nearby municipalities allow for flexibility in cul-de-sac lengths in certain situations.

- 5.) Re. Centerline radius: Deviation request from the ECM criteria for minimum rural centerline radius. Applicant wishes to use the urban local centerline radius of 200 feet in four locations within the property as opposed to the rural local centerline radius of 300 feet. The applicant believes the reduced radius is appropriate for the roadway geometry at these four requested locations. In the four locations where the deviation is requested, the natural features of the site (floodplain constraints and nearby Curtis Road) lend themselves to the use of a “reduced radius” to create an efficient layout. Each area serves less than ten lots. Use of the required 300 foot centerline radius would create the need for excessively long flag lots or excessively large lots for the underlying RR-2.5 zoning. If the deviation is granted, the applicant would reduce the posted speed from 30 mph (rural local) to 25 mph (urban local). The daily traffic volume on these streets is minimal; each location only serves 10 or less nearby lots. This request is not based on financial consideration, but rather the lack of a “low volume reduction” in geometrical standards similar to ECM urban criteria. This deviation achieves a superior lot layout that improves the subdivision. The applicant believes excessively long flag lots are less desirable than the reduced centerline radius. Falcon Fire Protection District (Trent Harwig) had accepted the originally proposed knuckle layout (no longer proposed). The roadway may be signed to announce a speed limit of 25 mph, consistent with urban local speeds. Maintenance of the roadway will be unaffected by the reduced centerline radius. The use of the reduced roadway radius does not adversely affect aesthetic appearance as compared to the use of excessively long flag lots.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACRES IN THE PRELIMINARY PLAN AREA: 608.98 acres single family residential, 134.33 acres jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetland (floodplain/open space, no-build), 13.19 acres of detention and 59.98 acres roads/ROW for a total of 816.48 acres.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACRES WITHIN THIS APPLICATION: 816.00+/- acres

JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST

This request is consistent with the purposes of the EPCLDC including the **Falcon/ Peyton Small Area Master Plan**. The proposed Preliminary Plan is in conformance with subdivision design standards and establishes an adequate level of compatibility with surrounding areas of the site already constructed and other known surrounding areas currently proposed for development.

EXISTING AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Proposed improvements will include the construction of county-owned (e.g. public) and maintained asphalt roadways ('Rural Local' classification with roadside ditches). Drainage and storm water detention facilities will be constructed and maintained in conformance with County standards and specifications. Electric, natural gas, and telecommunication service points-of-connection will be extended from the roadways up to all new lots. Water will be provided via a central water system to be developed by the Owner/Applicant and will be operated and maintained by the Saddlehorn Ranch Metropolitan District (organization of a Metropolitan District will be completed at the time of Final Plat recording). Individual septic systems will be provided via an On Site Wastewater Treatment system (OSWT) prepared by the Owner in accordance with El Paso County Department of Health policy guidelines.

Improvements to Curtis Road and Judge Orr Road to be completed during the full build-out of Saddlehorn Ranch are as listed in the attached **"Table 10 – Roadway Improvements for Saddlehorn Ranch."** This data appears in the Traffic Improvement Study report that has been submitted with the Preliminary Plan application.

Grading and earthmoving activities will be limited to roadway, drainage and utility construction areas. Individual lot owners will assume responsibility for grading their respective lot; no 'overlot' grading is proposed to occur over most of the site.

The Colorado Geological Survey's review comment of the submitted geotechnical report (as posted on EDARP) indicates:

<<Provided Entech's recommendations are adhered to, and lot-specific investigations and analyses are conducted for use in design of individual foundations, floor systems, subsurface drainage, and pavements, CGS has no objection to approval of the 218-lot residential subdivision as proposed.>>

As such, prior to construction of proposed residences, lot-specific subsurface soil investigations will be performed to determine whether or not shallow groundwater, hydro-compacted soils, and/or potentially expansive soils are present on the lot, and to determine an appropriate foundation design, basement or crawl-space suitability, and/or lot-specific recommendations are necessary to mitigate these conditions. Language requiring lot-specific subsurface soil investigation will appear as a Note on the Preliminary Plan.

LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND COUNTY MASTER PLAN CONSISTENCY

ADHERENCE WITH THE EL PASO COUNTY POLICY PLAN

Goal 6.1 a *Encourage patterns of growth and development which complement the regions' unique natural environments and which reinforce community character.*

The El Paso County Policy Plan (the “Master Plan”) addresses issues directly related to the Preliminary Plan and development of the *Saddlehorn Ranch* development. The policies specifically related to the Preliminary Plan request include:

Policy 6.1.3 - *Encourage new development which is contiguous and compatible with previously developed areas in terms of factors such as density, land use and access.*

The Preliminary Plan proposed for 218 new single family rural residential lots is compatible with the existing adjacent rural residential lots in the Judge Orr Road and Curtis Road corridors. New lots will be similar in size to existing lots and roads serving the new lots will be compatible with the types of rural roadways in nearby adjacent neighborhoods.

Policy 6.1.6 - *Direct development toward areas where the necessary urban-level supporting facilities and services are available or will be developed concurrently.*

Saddlehorn Ranch is proposed as a development of single family rural residences within a non-urban density area of the Falcon/Peyton community. Utilities and road infrastructure needed to serve the new lots, such as new roads, drainage and detention facilities, erosion control, etc. will be constructed as part of this development.

Policy 6.1.11 - *Plan and implement land development so that it will be functionally and aesthetically integrated within the context of adjoining properties and uses.*

The Preliminary Plan with RR-2.5 zoning for the site is harmonious and compatible with the rural character of adjacent and nearby neighborhoods that are also zoned RR-2.5, RR-5, and PUD.

Policy 6.1.14 - *Support development which complements the unique environmental conditions and established land use character of each sub-area of the County.*

The Applicant proposes to avoid overlot grading across the 816 acre site, and instead will limit grading to roadways and drainage infrastructure in keeping with the established land use

character of surrounding sub-areas of the county. Lower density will help to sustain the appearance and unique environmental conditions of adjacent properties.

Goal 6.2

Protect and Enhance Existing and Developing Neighborhoods

Policy 6.2.1 - *Fully consider the potential impact of proposed zone changes and development on the integrity of existing neighborhoods.*

Policy 6.2.2

Promote the unique identity of neighborhoods through the use of focal points, parks, trails and open spaces, preservation of significant natural features, compatible location and design of mixed uses, and promotion of pedestrian and other non-motorized means of travel.

The Applicant proposes to incorporate hiking and equestrian trails in the floodplains and in various part of the proposed development to promote non-motorized multi-modal transportation linkages within the development. Ideally, residents might travel by horseback from their home to their neighbor's home.

The Preliminary Plan for lower density development that is compatible with the character and use of the non-urban density communities of Falcon/Peyton. Jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands within the floodplain areas of the site will be preserved as open space no-build areas, which will also lend themselves well toward sustaining the rural nature and character and maintaining the integrity of the surrounding community.

The Owner/Applicant furthermore propose to introduce a new public trail system within Saddlehorn Ranch to include equestrian use to further promote a rural character that is compatible with existing adjacent neighborhoods.

The Applicant proposes that varying housing types will be developed within the project, including the introduction of manufactured housing products to promote attainability by a wider segment of new home buyers.

Goal 6.4 *Develop and maintain rural residential areas in a manner which protects their integrity, addresses the carrying capacity of the natural environment and provides for an adequate level of non-urban facilities and services.*

Policy 6.4.3 - *Allow rural residential development in those areas with sufficient "carrying capacity" including roadway capacity, water supply, septic suitability, educational facilities and organized structural fire protection.*

The surrounding area of the Preliminary Plan has sufficient carrying capacity to support the new development with regard to roadway capacity, water supply, septic suitability, educational

facilities, and organized structural fire protection. Commitment Letters from entities that would supply this development with essential services have been submitted with this Preliminary Plan application.

Policy 6.4.4 - *Encourage new rural residential subdivisions to be located within or contiguous with existing rural residential areas or to be incorporated as a buffer between higher density and undevelopable areas.*

The Preliminary Plan design, which includes 2.5 acre home sites and larger expanses of open space (16.4% within the floodplains), ensures that development of this site will remain compatible and contiguous with existing rural residential areas. At .267 DU/Ac, Saddlehorn Ranch is compatible with numerous other subdivisions adjacent to and within a 2 mile radius of the property.

Policy 6.4.6 - *Allow for the accommodation of necessary supporting commercial uses within or in proximity to rural residential areas in a manner that preserves the rural character of these areas.*

Policy 6.4.11 - *Support planning and regulatory approaches which limit the adverse impacts of grazing on lots of 5 acres and less.*

Livestock and grazing will be permitted on lots of 5 acres and less but will be limited to recreational animals (horses) and small livestock including chickens or goats. Covenants for Saddlehorn Ranch have been drafted and include the following language:

"No animals, birds, livestock, reptiles or insects of any kind may be raised, bred, kept or boarded in or on a Lot, except for bona fide household pets as permitted by applicable local laws or ordinances and in compliance with any Rules and Regulations not in conflict with such laws or ordinances. Additionally, owners may keep a reasonable number of horses, goats, chickens and other animals as may be permitted by the Rules and Regulations or allowed by the Board of Directors on a Lot, and may, with the prior written approval of the ARC, construct such barns, corrals, and/or fenced areas as necessary to contain the same. Each animal must be controlled by its owner and is not allowed off the owner's Lot except when properly controlled and accompanied by its owner or his or representative, who is responsible for collecting and properly disposing of any animal waste. An Owner's and/or Occupant's right to keep animals is coupled with the responsibility to pay for any damage caused by such animal, as well as any costs incurred as a result of such animals. "

ADHERENCE TO THE FALCON / PEYTON SMALL AREA PLAN

The property is within the boundaries of the Falcon Peyton Small Area Plan (2008) [Section 4.4.7 Stapleton-Curtis Corridor]

With specific regard to the Stapleton-Curtis Road Corridor, Saddlehorn Ranch adheres to the following criteria of the Plan:

3 Goals and Principles

3.1 Land Use

*3.1.1 Provide a **balance of land uses** that respects existing and historical patterns while providing opportunities for future residents and businesses.*

*3.1.3 Preserve the **core rural character** of the area.*

*3.1.4 Provide a **variety of different densities** of development options.*

The Preliminary Plan will provide for single-family detached homes on 2.5 acre lots, which is compatible with the RR-2.5 and RR-5 zone districts and current uses within the adjacent areas of the Plan. This lower density of the development, combined with nearly 134 acres of non-jurisdictional and jurisdictional wetlands and floodplain area that are to be preserved in perpetuity as no-build open space parcels also help to preserve the core rural character of the area. A system of equestrian trails proposed throughout the open space parcels also will help to maintain the rural character of the Plan area.

3.3 Residential Areas and Densities

*3.3.1 Encourage **diversity and variety in housing** types, sizes, locations, and prices to meet the needs of existing and new residents.*

*3.3.2 Promote **predictable growth** in the housing market that is consistent with the Small Area Master Plan.*

*3.3.4 Meet the **housing needs** of as many existing and new residents of differing ages, incomes, and desired living accommodations.*

The Preliminary Plan encourages diverse housing types and prices to meet the needs of existing and new residents. The applicant envisions manufactured housing products as an alternate to stick-built tract housing, which will facilitate the development of new homes on 2.5 acre lots that are attainably priced (in comparison to tract subdivisions within the Plan area). This will help to meet the needs of existing and new residents of differing ages and incomes by providing an alternative housing product to that offered elsewhere within the Plan area.

The Preliminary Plan anticipates a finite quantity of 218 homes that can be built on 2.5 acre lots within the 816 acre development, which promotes predictable growth that is consistent with the Plan.

3.4 Facilities and Services (Fire Protection, School Districts, Wastewater Facilities, etc.)

*3.4.1 Encourage development in urban areas where **adequate public facilities** or services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.*

*3.4.2 Provide for the efficient provision of **public safety** in the area.*

*3.4.3 Encourage the **availability** of facilities and services within the planning area, close to the residents.*

Letters of Commitment to Serve all the area within the Preliminary Plan have been provided with this submittal for public safety, gas, and electric. No new facilities for fire protection or schools are proposed or required for this application.

The Applicant is in the process of establishing a Metropolitan District for the creation of a water district that will develop two existing wells (located in the southeast vicinity of the 816 acre site) to facilitate the construction of a central water supply and serve all new homes within the Preliminary Plan area. **and "824" MD?**

3.5 Transportation

El Paso County Road Impact Fee Program

This project will be subject to participation in the El Paso County Road Impact Fee Program.

This project will request annexation into the 10 mil PID. The up-front fees will be per the current 2019 fee schedule for Single Family Detached housing.

Upfront Road Impact fees are due at plat recordation.

*3.5.1 Recommend land use patterns that make **efficient use** of existing transportation infrastructure and limit the cost of future extensions and upgrades.*

*3.5.2 **Mitigate congestion** by providing flexibility for areas of higher population densities while protecting lower density areas from the negative effects of traffic.*

*3.5.5 Enhance the future role of **Meadow Lake Airport** through the recommendation of compatible land uses.*

*3.5.6 **Balance** long term transportation infrastructure needs with current requirements.*

A Traffic Impact Study [TIS] has been prepared and provided with the Preliminary Plan application. The TIS addresses the use of the two major transportation corridors (e.g. Curtis

Road and Judge Orr Road) that provide primary access/egress to and from the Preliminary Plan area. No “negative effects” of traffic would be triggered as a result of the need to construct additional major arterial infrastructure; all new roads within the Preliminary Plan area would be a local residential category.

With regard to Meadow Lake Airport, as originally indicated on Page 2 of this LOI the Preliminary Plan area had once before been approved by the county as a PUD development with up to 5,370 urban-density dwelling units on 6,300 acres. This Preliminary Plan application proposes significantly fewer units (e.g. 218) on 2.5 acre lots within the 816 acre site, and would be very compatible with the character and type of residential development that has been allowed to occur immediately adjacent to the Airport.

3.6 Water Supply

*3.6.1 Plan for **water resources** in a thoughtful way that recognizes the non-renewable nature of water resources in the area, accommodates existing and historical uses, and allows for sustainable, planned growth.*

The Applicant is in the process of establishing a Metropolitan District for the creation of a water district that will develop two existing wells (located in the southeast vicinity of the 816 acre site) to facilitate the construction of a central water supply that will service all new homes within the Preliminary Plan area. This will allow for sustainable, planned growth as the Preliminary Plan area does not rely on development of numerous new wells as a primary source of water for new residences.

3.7 Parks, Trails, and Open Space

*3.7.1 Provide **recreational amenities** for area residents.*

The Preliminary Plan indicates 134 acres of jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands and floodplains that will remain as no-build open space area. The Owner/Applicant proposes that equestrian trails will be developed for area residents within some of these open spaces.

All parks, trails, and open space tracts will be maintained by the *Saddlehorn Ranch Metropolitan District*, which will be formed and organized prior to the approval of the Final Plat.

and 824 Metro District? 

3.8 Natural Systems

*3.8.1 Preserve **important natural features** that are critical to the function of natural systems such as watersheds and wildlife corridors.*

The Preliminary Plan indicates there are 134 acres of jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands and floodplains that will remain as no-build open space area. These areas will remain as no-build preservation tracts to protect natural watersheds and wildlife corridors.

WATER DEPENDABILITY

The following information was provided by request of El Paso County:

Water Sufficiency:

- A Technical, Managerial, and Financial Capacity assessment is currently being drafted for this project. **It will be submitted to CDPHE in August 2020.**
- The Basis of Design Report (BDR) for the system will be submitted to CDPHE in August 2020.
- Per the Water Resources and Wastewater Report submitted in 2019, Saddlehorn Ranch has the following Supply and Demands:

Water Supply and Demand Summary

LOTS	Total Supply (AF/Year)	Total Demand (AF/Year)
224	198.16	150.08

Water Quality

- Two wells, an Arapahoe and a Laramie-Fox Hills, have been drilled, screened, cased, and tested for this subdivision. Both well completion reports were done in 2008.
- Saddlehorn Ranch Metropolitan District (SRMD) has sampled both wells for three quarters in 2019.
- None of the primary constituents that were tested were above their respective Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL). Only Total Dissolved Solids, a secondary standard, was above its MCL.
- Chlorination and filtration to remove Iron and Manganese are planned for this system. This will likely be accomplished via a pressure-sand filtration. Although filtration is not mandatory, it will be done for water taste and aesthetics.

System Certification

- Upon completion of construction of the water system, the design engineer will certify that it has been built in general conformance with the appropriate plans specifications (CDPHE, AWWA, IBC, etc.)
- Prior to completion of the system, and during the BDR phase, a designated Operator in Responsible Charge (ORC) will be selected and identified.

END