

## **COPPER CHASE AT STERLING RANCH FINAL PLAT**

### **LETTER OF INTENT**

**MAY 2023, REVISED SEPTEMBER 2023**

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#### **OWNER:**

SR LAND/MORLEY BENTLEY  
20 BOULDER CRESCENT ST. SUITE 102  
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO. 80903

#### **APPLICANT:**

CHALLENGER COMMUNITIES  
8605 EXPLORER DR. SUITE 250  
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO. 80920

#### **CONSULTANT:**

N.E.S. INC.  
ANDREA BARLOW  
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#### **SITE DETAILS:**

**TSN:** 5232410003  
**ADDRESS:** VOLLMER RD  
**ACREAGE:** 19.651 AC  
**CURRENT ZONING:** RS-5000  
**CURRENT USE:** VACANT

## REQUEST

N.E.S. Inc. on behalf of SR Land, LLC. requests approval of the Final Plat for 138 single family homes, 10 tracts and public rights of way on 19.651AC

## LOCATION

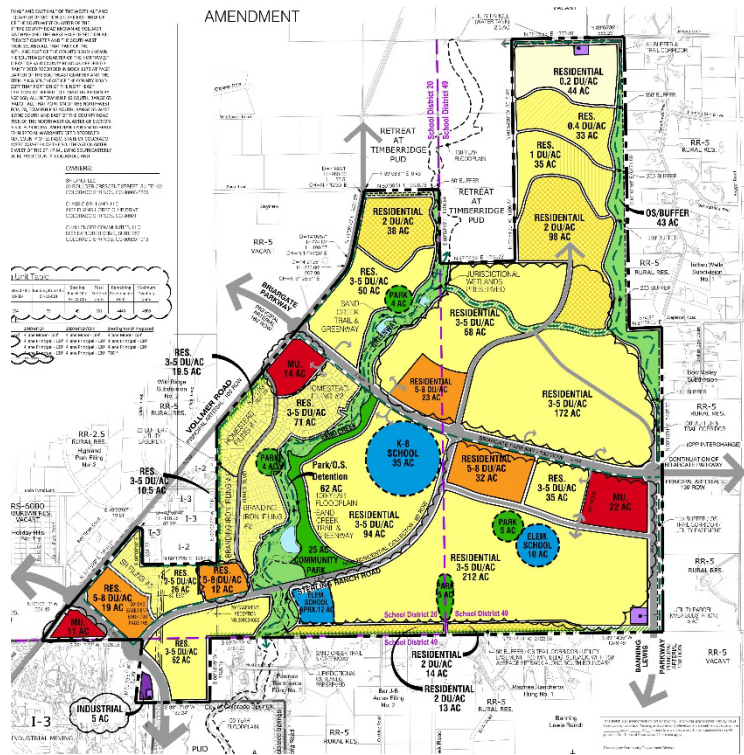
Copper Chase at Sterling Ranch is 19.6514 acres located east of the intersection of Marksheffel Road and Vollmer Road. The property is currently vacant, undeveloped land. The property is located southeast of the intersection of Vollmer Road and the proposed extension of Marksheffel Road.



## PROJECT CONTEXT

The Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan for 4,800 dwelling units on 1,444 acres was approved in December of 2022. Copper Chase is identified on the Sketch Plan with a density range of 5-8 du/acre. Vollmer Road is to the North. To the northeast is an area designated as 3-5 du/acre. To the southeast is residential 3-5 du/acre, and to the southwest is 11 acres designated for commercial.

The site is currently zoned RS-5000 and proposed to be rezoned as PUD (currently under review). The higher density residential at the corner of Vollmer and Marksheffel is appropriate for a location adjacent to an interchange of principal arterial streets and opposite future commercial. It will provide a transition from this intersection and commercial to the single-family within Sterling Ranch. The proposed density is consistent with the Amended Sketch Plan which was approved in 2022.



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposes 138 single family detached units on 19.65 acres, for a proposed gross density of 7 dwelling units per acre. The lots front and are entered from the three streets, Blue Feather Loop, Salt Fork Drive, and Lost Trail Drive. The project proposes a 5-foot side, a 20-foot front, and 15' rear setbacks are provided on all lots. The minimum lot area is 3,200 square feet.

Administrative approval of the final plat, as a finding of water sufficiency is requested with the PUD/Preliminary Plan which is currently under review.

**COMPATIBILITY/TRANSITIONS:** The site is surrounded by residential development, or vacant land zoned for residential. To the southwest, across Marksheffel Road, is vacant land zoned RR-5 and designated as 11AC mixed use commercial on the Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan. West of the site, across Vollmer Road is RM-30. Northwest of the site is RR-2.5. This area has been developed as single family residential and is part of the Highland Park Filing No. 2 subdivision.

Northeast and east of the site is Sterling Ranch Filing 2, which is zoned RS-5000. Sterling Ranch Filing 4, RS-5000 is southeast of the development.

Directly south of Copper Chase and the 11AC mixed use parcel, lies industrial uses, zoned I-3. The southeasternmost corner of Copper Chase, across Marksheffel Road, is adjacent to this use.

**ACCESS AND CIRCULATION:** A full-movement access is provided at the intersection of Alzada Drive and Outcrop Drive. A ¾ movement access is provided at the intersection of Bynum Drive and Salt Fork Drive. Alzada Drive and Bynum Drive are both planned to be constructed as Urban Local streets as part of Sterling Ranch Filing No. 2.

**TRAFFIC:** A Traffic Impact Analysis was prepared by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. for the entirety of Sterling Ranch Development (*MTIS dated March 17, 2023*). An updated Traffic Memo has been prepared in support of Copper Chase at Sterling Ranch, which incorporates subsequent analysis related to traffic estimates generated by buildout of Sterling Ranch Phase I and Phase II, and The Retreat at Timber Ridge. A List of other traffic studies within Sterling Ranch and in the vicinity of the area of study completed within the past five years (that LSC is aware of) is shown in Appendix Table 1 of the TIS. The land use and access currently proposed are consistent with what was assumed in the Master TIS and The Sterling Ranch East Rezoning and Preliminary Plan TIS. Appendix Table 2 of the TIS report includes a list of improvements needed either prior to or with Copper Chase at Sterling Ranch. The following auxiliary lanes shown will be required with Copper Chase at Sterling Ranch development if not completed with Sterling Ranch Filing No. 2:

- Marksheffel/Vollmer
  - 155-foot northbound right-turn deceleration lane on Vollmer approaching Marksheffel, plus a 160-foot taper
  - 310-foot southbound left-turn lane on Vollmer approaching Marksheffel, plus a 160-foot taper.
  - 425-foot westbound left-turn lane on Marksheffel approaching Vollmer, plus a 200-foot taper
  - 235-foot westbound right-turn deceleration lane on Marksheffel approaching Vollmer, plus a 200-foot taper
- Sterling Ranch/Marksheffel
  - 470-foot eastbound left-turn lane on Marksheffel approaching Sterling Ranch, plus a 200-foot taper
  - A 285-foot southbound left-turn lane on Sterling Ranch approaching Marksheffel, plus a 90-foot reverse-curve taper
  - A 155-foot southbound right-turn lane on Sterling Ranch approaching Marksheffel, plus a 160-foot taper

#### Sterling Ranch/Bynum

- A 155-foot northbound left-turn lane on Sterling Ranch Road approaching Bynum, plus a 90-foot reverse-curve taper

**NOISE:** The Land Development Code requires the impacts of noise pollution to residents be mitigated. A noise study conducted by LSC in December of 2021 is included with this submittal. The Noise Study found that with a minimum 6-foot-high noise barrier all noise levels in the development will be below 67 decibels. The noise barrier referenced by the study determined to be a rigid material, with a density of at least four pounds per square foot. It identifies a 6-foot sound wall adjacent to Marksheffel Road and

Vollmer Rd to address this recommendation. The 6-foot sound wall will be installed and maintained by the Sterling Ranch Metro District.

**FLOODPLAIN:** This site is not within a designated F.E.M.A. Floodplain as determined by the flood insurance rate map, community panel number 08041C0533G, effective 12.07.2018.

**GEOLOGIC HAZARDS:** The site was found to be suitable for development. Some areas of the proposed subdivision have been found to be impacted by geologic conditions. These conditions impose some constraints on development, which can be mitigated by avoidance, regrading or through proper engineering design and construction methods. No basements or slab on grade are allowed in this development; at this location a foundation depth of 30 inches is recommended. Subsurface perimeter drains may be necessary to prevent the intrusion of water into areas below grade. These will be provided and maintained by the Sterling Ranch Metro District. Swales should be created to intercept surface runoff and carry it safely around and away from structures. Specific foundation recommendations should be made after grading is completed. A map of the hazard areas and proposed mitigation measures can be found in the Soils, Geology, and Geologic Hazard Study prepared by Entech Engineering Inc included in this submittal.

**SCHOOLS:** The approved Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan identifies an 11.8AC site and one 38AC site as land dedications for D20. The 11.8AC site is located east of Sand Creek and shown as a future elementary school site. The 38AC site is shown as a future K-8 school site and is located in the southwest corner of Briargate Parkway and Sterling Ranch Road. Both school sites are shown on the recently approved Sterling Ranch East Phase 1 Preliminary Plan Filings 1-4.

**TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE:** The Sterling Ranch master planned community includes an interconnected system of trails, open spaces and neighborhood parks to allow for a recreation-oriented community. Parks throughout the Sterling Ranch development have been located so that residents have a ten-minute walk or less to these facilities.

The Copper Chase PUD is comprised of 19.651 AC. County Code requires 10% of the development area to be open space (1.97 AC), and 25% of the required open space to be connected and useable .49 AC. Copper Chase includes 3.47 AC of open space in 10 tracts, which equates to 17.6% of the 19.65 AC site. Tract H is a centralized park with provides 1.27 AC of contiguous usable open space, which equates to 64% of the required open space, and more than two and one-half times the required contiguous open space.

Land Use	Required	Provided
Overall PUD Area	NA	19.651 Ac
Total Open Space Area	1.97 Ac (10%)	3.47 Ac (17.6%)
Active/Contiguous Open Space Area	0.49 Ac (25% of 10%)	1.27 Ac (64% of 10%)

The Copper Chase development provides internal sidewalks and trails running through the development that connect to the internal park and to external sidewalks/trails along Vollmer Road, Marksheffel Road

and Sterling Ranch Road. These sidewalks/trails in turn provide pedestrian connectivity throughout the Sterling Ranch Community, with links to the Sand Creek Regional Trail and neighborhood parks on the west side of Sand Creek and the future Community Park on the east side of Sand Creek

**DRAINAGE:** The drainage improvements associated with the Copper Chase at Sterling Ranch are consistent with the Master Development Drainage Plan and Final Drainage Report for Sterling Ranch. The drainage improvements are designed to the most current El Paso County Engineering Criteria Manual, the Sand Creek Drainage Basin Study, the City of Colorado Springs/El Paso County Drainage Criteria Manual, and the Urban Storm Drainage Criteria Manual. A final drainage report has been included with the final plat submittal.

**UTILITIES:** The property is located within the boundaries of FAWWA for Water and wastewater. Storm water and park/recreational services will be provided by Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 1 pursuant to an intergovernmental agreement with Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 2.

Mountain View Electric Association, Inc. will supply electricity service and Colorado Springs Utilities will supply natural gas. The utility commitment letters are submitted with this application.

**DISTRICTS/ENTITIES SERVING THE PROPERTY:**

The following districts will serve the property:

- Academy School District 20
- Mountain View Electric Association
- City of Colorado Springs Utilities Department – Gas
- Sterling Ranch Metro District
- Black Forest Fire Protection District
- FAWWA – Water and Waste Water

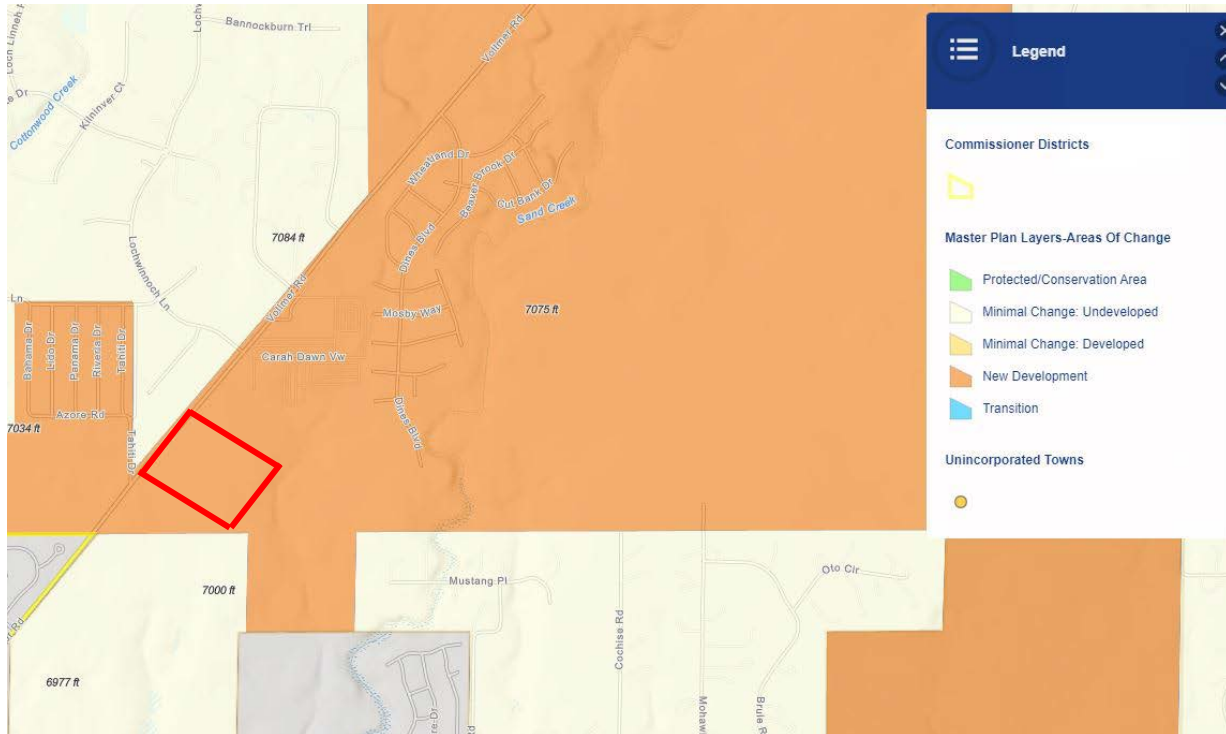
**RELATIONSHIP TO THE ADOPTED COUNTY MASTER PLANS**

The relevant County Plans for Sterling Ranch are the Your El Paso Master Plan, the Water Master Plan, the 2040 Major Transportation Corridor Plan, and the Parks Master Plan. A detailed analysis of the relationship of the Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan and the goals and objectives of these plans was previously provided with the Sketch Plan. These include the provision of adequate buffers and transitions from lower, rural density residential development, the provision of adequate urban services by Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District, an interconnected system of trails, open spaces and neighborhood parks, and the preservation of open space.

**YOUR EL PASO MASTER PLAN**

The new County Master Plan denotes the site as a suburban residential placetype, which consists of predominantly single-family homes while supporting multi-family, neighborhood commercial, and parks. The Copper Chase at Sterling Ranch Final Plat proposes 138 single family detached residential units, which aligns with this placetype. This plan also aligns with the curvilinear pattern of streets that characterizes the suburban residential placetype.

This area is located within a priority development area and is denoted as a “new development area” on the Areas of Change map. New development areas take place on land largely undeveloped, adjacent to built out areas. These areas are to be designed to integrate with and compliment adjacent development. Copper Chase is presently an undeveloped portion of the County that is adjacent to a built-out area and will be developed to match the character of that adjacent development.



The Final Plat & Preliminary Plan (currently under review) is also consistent with Core Principle 1, Land Use and Development, which seeks to “manage growth to ensure a variety of compatible land uses that preserve all character areas of the county,” in addition to goal 1.1, “ensure compatibility with established character and infrastructure capacity” and goal 1.3, “encourage a range of development types to support a variety of land uses.” Copper Chase supports a variety of single-family housing choices in the localized area while preserving single family characteristics of the nearby developments such as Single Ranch Filing No. 2 and Sterling Ranch Filing No. 4. The proposed layout provides over 19% open space, connection to Sterling Ranch Trails and Open Spaces and detached single family housing.

Copper Chase is also consistent with Core Principle 2, Housing & Communities, which seeks to “preserve and develop neighborhoods with a mix of housing types”, as well as Goal 2.1 to “Promote development of a mix of housing types in identified areas.” Copper Chase proposes a smaller detached single family residential product type that is complimentary to the proposed single family residential uses within Sterling Ranch. This development proposes detached single-family housing that is similar to the immediately adjacent developments of Sterling Ranch Filing No. 2 and Sterling Ranch Fil. No. 4.

Transportation & Mobility core principals and goal 4.2, “Promote walkability and bikability where multimodal transportation systems are feasible” and Community Facilities & Infrastructure and goal 5.1, “Coordinate with agencies to provide high-quality community facilities, services and infrastructure to

enhance quality of life,” are supported by Copper Chase. This development is connected to the Sterling Ranch Phase I Preliminary Plan which includes a comprehensive off-street pedestrian circulation system to supplement the standard sidewalks along streets and a system of open spaces, trails and parks. A proposed community trail runs along Marksheffel Road on the south side of the development connecting to the Sterling Ranch open space/trail network and 4.8 AC park in the northwest corner of Sterling Ranch Filing No. 4. Parks throughout the Sterling Ranch development have been located so that residents have a ten-minute walk or less to these facilities. This is reflected by Copper Chase’s adjacency to a 4.8 AC park within Sterling Ranch.

#### **WATER MASTER PLAN**

*Goal 1.1 – Ensure an adequate water supply in terms of quantity, dependability and quality for existing and future development.*

*Goal 6.0 – Require adequate water availability for proposed development.*

*Policy 6.0.8 – Encourage development patterns and higher density, mixed use developments in appropriate locations that propose to incorporate meaningful water conservation measures.*

*Policy 6.0.11 – Continue to limit urban level development to those areas served by centralized utilities.*

This development will be served by FAWWA, which is the overall service entity for Sterling Ranch and other adjacent properties. Copper Chase at Sterling Ranch includes 138 lots which fall into high-density development ratios for small lots, and roughly 1.368 acres of irrigated landscaping. The resulting water demand is 52.13 acres feet.

FAWWA-owned and currently available on-site non-tributary (NT) and adjudicated not non-tributary (NNT) water totals are 1901.83 AF for 300 YRs which would be adequate supply to meet the needs of 5,387 SFE. This leaves a net excess of currently available water of 1037 AF for 300 YR and therefore there is more than sufficient water supply to meet the needs of Sterling Ranch Phase One (which includes Copper Chase) on the 300-year basis.

The FAWWA water system has only been in operation for three years, so little-to-no usable historic information would be reliable for unique, long-term planning. However, substantial nearby data from the Falcon area is available for use. As of the end of 2021, the system had approximately only 300 active users. Therefore, initial projections have been based on area-wide water user characteristics and a linear buildout rate. This rate is considered to be an average annual rate that might be reasonably maintainable over a 10-year period. The average growth rate is projected as 180 units added per year.

- **2040 Scenario:** Based on the above factors, the FAWWA system might conservatively anticipate serving 3,710 SFEs in the year 2040. This number is a service area projection and includes the Retreat and The Ranch, as well as the main Sterling Ranch residents. This would require no additional water.
- **2060 Scenario:** Based on the same factors, the Sterling system might be expected to serve 7,310 SFEs within its expanded service area, which includes the Retreat and The Ranch. This would be substantially greater than the actual Sterling Ranch. The annual acre-foot requirement might be



679 annual AF, but supply would include water from The Ranch which has not yet been added to inventory. In addition to adding off-site sources, potential, additional supplies include renewable resources and/or regional projects bringing new water to the area

Municipal water demand for Sterling Ranch would be met using primarily Arapahoe and Laramie-Fox Hills formation wells in the SRMD area. The first well site will be drilled with an Arapahoe Well (A-1) and Laramie-Fox Hills Well (LFH-1); well site #1 includes both an Arapahoe and a Laramie-Fox Hills well. Additional permits will be obtained as needed to ultimately continue to add to the system as needed. Existing well permits are included in the Water Resources Report completed by JDS Hydro in October, 2022.

The project is located within Region 3, Falcon Area, containing 4 growth areas projected to be completed by 2040, three areas to be completed by 2060, and two other growth areas located on the north and south sides of Falcon Highway directly east of Falcon. Specifically, the Water Master Plan states:

“Region 3 contains four growth areas west of Falcon projected to be completed by 2040. Other areas of 2040 growth are projected for the north-central part of the region west of Highway 24 extending from Falcon to 4-Way Ranch. North of Falcon along Highway 24, growth is projected by 2060 on both sides of the highway. Just west of Falcon, another small development is projected by 2060 on the north and south sides of Woodmen Road. On the east side of Highway 24, three separate areas of growth are projected for development by 2060, with the largest of the three spanning from south of Judge Orr Road to east of Peyton Highway into Region 4c. This development will likely consist of 35-acre lots that will require individual wells to use Denver Basin groundwater. The other two growth areas will be located on the north and south sides of Falcon Highway directly east of Falcon.”

Copper Chase will be centrally serviced by FAWWA which will become the overall service entity, for not only the Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District, but the Retreat and the future ranch as well. It is expected that an urban residential home in Sterling Ranch will require an average of 0.353 annual acre-feet. This is consistent with the historic needs of nearby developments.

Water rights adjudications have been decreed by the State of Colorado, Water Division 2 District Court, Water Division 1 District Court, and the Colorado Groundwater Commission. The comprehensive rights for the FAWWA service include both decrees and determinations. The most recent water rights added to the Sterling Ranch Inventory are three acquisitions: McCune Ranch 391.33 AC for 300 YRs, Bar-X Ranch 592.78 AF for 300 YRs, and Shamrock West 220.10 AF for 300 YRs. FAWWA currently has a total supply of 1901.83 acre-feet. This leaves a net excess of currently available water of 1037.64AF over 300years; thereby creating a more than sufficient water supply to meet the needs of Sterling Ranch East Phase one on the 300-year basis.

FAWWA’s main supply source is centralized at a point that both Cherokee Metropolitan District and Woodmen Hills Metropolitan District have adjacent major storage and delivery facilities. There are currently no arrangements in place to make connections, but in the future, SRMD may seek to have interconnections and possibly share supply. Other actions include conducting cooperative actions with CSU and SRMD to potentially share centralized facilities.

Municipal water demand for Sterling Ranch would be met using primarily Arapahoe and Laramie-Fox Hills formation wells in the SRMD area. The first well site will be drilled with an Arapahoe Well (A-1) and Laramie-Fox Hills Well (LFH-1); well site #1 includes both an Arapahoe and a Laramie-Fox Hills well. Additional permits will be obtained as needed to ultimately continue to add to the system as needed. Existing well permits are included in the Water Resources Report completed by JDS Hydro in October, 2022.

#### **2040 MAJOR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR PLAN**

The 2040 Improvements map identified the most proximate roadway improvement to the site is the county road capacity improvements to Vollmer Rd between Marksheffel Rd and Briargate Pkwy/Stapleton Dr, which will upgrade that section of Vollmer Road to a minor arterial. There will be rural county road upgrades to Vollmer Rd north of Briargate Pkwy/Stapleton Dr. The extension of Briargate Parkway/Stapleton Dr as a 4-lane principal arterial from Vollmer Road to Meridian Road will add a new east-west roadway connection through Sterling Ranch just north of the site.

#### **EL PASO COUNTY PARKS MASTER PLAN**

The Parks Master Plan does not identify any proposed parks or candidate open space on this site or in the vicinity. The Sterling Ranch master planned community includes an interconnected system of trails, open spaces and neighborhood parks to allow for a recreation-oriented community. Parks throughout the Sterling Ranch development have been located so that residents have a ten-minute walk or less to these facilities. The Sand Creek Regional Trail on the west side of Sand Creek is the major north-south trail connection through the development, which provides connectivity throughout the community and to a series of parks planned alongside it. The Copper Chase development will be connected to the regional trail and adjacent parks by the trail connection that will be provided along the north side of Marksheffel Road and Sterling Ranch Road, adjacent to the Copper Chase development. Copper Chase Final Plat includes internal pedestrian connections to provide access through the development and to the external trails and amenities within Sterling Ranch. All pedestrian connections are in substantial compliance with the PUD Preliminary Plan which is currently under review.

#### **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

The Final Plat meets the Final Plat review criteria in Chapter 7.2.1.D.3.f of the Land Development Code as follows:

- 1. The subdivision is in conformance with the goals, objectives and policies of the Master plan;**  
The Final Plat is in substantial conformance with the Preliminary Plan. Both plans conform to the goals, objectives and policies of Your El Paso County Master Plan. Please see above justification.
  
- 2. The subdivision is in substantial conformance with the approved preliminary plan;**  
The Final Plat is in substantial conformance with the Preliminary Plan which is currently under review.

**3. The subdivision is consistent with the subdivision design standards and regulations and meets all planning, engineering, and surveying requirements of the County for maps, data, surveys, analysis, studies, reports, plans, designs, documents, and other supporting materials;**

Deviations for maximum mid-block ped ramp spacing, number of ped ramps at a “T” intersection, minimum centerline radius and intersection spacing standards, mid-block ramps on the local roadway “T” intersections, minimum space between Broken Back Curves were included with the PUD/Preliminary Plan currently under review. The Final Plat is in substantial conformance with the PUD/Preliminary Plan.

**4. A public sewage disposal system has been established and, if other methods of sewage disposal are proposed, the system complies with State and local laws and regulations [C.R.S. 30-28-133(6)(b)] and the requirements of Chapter 8 of this Code;**

Sewage disposal will be provided by FAWWA. System adequacy and compliance is demonstrated in the Waste Water Disposal Report prepared by JDS Hydro and submitted with the Preliminary Plan. A water and waste water commitment letter has been included with this Final Plat submittal.

**5. All areas of the proposed subdivision which may involve soil or topographic conditions presenting hazards or requiring special precautions have been identified and that the proposed subdivision is compatible with such conditions;**

A geologic hazard report was prepared by Entech Engineering, Inc and submitted with the Preliminary Plan & Final Plat. Geologic hazards identified onsite include, potential shallow ground water, artificial fill, shallow bedrock, potential expansive soil and hydrocompaction. Mitigation for areas impacted by geologic hazards have been identified in the PUD Preliminary Development Plan. Entech concludes in their report that development of the site can be achieved with mitigation through proper design and construction or through avoidance. Investigation of each lot is recommended prior to construction.

**6. Adequate drainage improvements are proposed that comply with State Statute [C.R.S. 30-28-133(3)(c)(VIII)] and the requirements of this Code and the ECM;**

Compliance with drainage requirements are demonstrated in the submitted Final Drainage Report prepared by M & S civil April of 2023.

**7. Legal and physical access is provided to all parcels by public rights-of-way or recorded easement, acceptable to the County in compliance with this code;**

All lots are accessed by public roads. Deviations for maximum mid-block ped ramp spacing, minimum centerline radius and intersection spacing standards, mid-block ramps on local “T” intersections and minimum spacing between Broken Back curves have been included with the Preliminary Plan.

**8. Necessary services, including police and fire protection, recreation, utilities, and transportation systems, are or will be made available to serve the proposed subdivision;**

Commitment letters from the Black forest fire protection, MVEA, and CSU have been included with this submittal.

**9. The Final Plans provide evidence to show that the proposed methods for fire protection comply with Chapter 6 of this code;**

Copper Chase will be served by the Black Forest Fire district. A commitment letter and fire protection report has been included with this submittal. Hydrants will be provided and maintained by the Sterling Ranch Metro District.

**10. Off-site impacts were evaluated and related off-site improvements are roughly proportional and will mitigate the impacts of the subdivision in accordance with applicable requirements of Chapter 8;**

Necessary off-site improvements have been evaluated through the various reports submitted with the Final Plat, as well as the Preliminary Plan (currently under review), and will mitigate the impacts of the subdivision in accordance with the applicable requirements of Chapter 8 of the Land Development Code.

**11. Adequate public facilities or infrastructure, or cash-in-lieu, for impacts reasonably related to the proposed subdivision have been constructed or are financially guaranteed through the SIA so the impact of the subdivision will be adequately mitigated;**

An SIA is included with the Final Plat submittal. All improvements included with SIA are shown in Exhibit A.

**12. The subdivision meets other applicable section of Chapter 6 & 8;**

The subdivision complies with all applicable sections of the LDC.

**13. The extraction of any known commercial mining deposit shall not be impeded by this subdivision;**

There are no known commercial mining operations or deposition on this site.