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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

November 14, 2023

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

Subject: Jimmy Camp Creek Drainage Basin Study - Administrative Comments (MP-23-002)

Hello Ryan,

The Parks Planning Division of the Parks and Community Services Department has reviewed the Jimmy Camp Creek Drainage Basin Study and has the following administrative comments of behalf of El Paso County Parks. No El Paso County Park Advisory Board endorsement is required for these types of studies.

The Jimmy Camp Creek Drainage Basin commences in the north at its headwaters near Corral Bluffs and East Highway 24. Many tributaries feed Jimmy Camp Creek as it flows south toward its confluence with Fountain Creek in the City of Fountain. The creek and its tributaries flow primarily through open grasslands, dotted with numerous residential and industrial developments, but has been identified in the El Paso County Master Plan as an area of projected high development of a suburban residential nature.

The 2022 El Paso County Parks Master Plan shows four proposed regional trail connections and seven proposed bicycle routes located within the Jimmy Camp Creek Drainage Basin, including the following: Jimmy Camp Creek Primary Regional Trail, Highway 94 Primary Regional Trail, Crews Gulch Primary Regional Trail, South Powers Boulevard Primary Regional Trail. Of primary concern is the proposed Jimmy Camp Creek Primary Regional Trail, whose alignment runs north/south along the streambanks of southern Jimmy Camp Creek, before turning east and leaving the drainage basin. The proposed bicycle routes are located within the dedicated public rights-of-way and would be developed within their individual transportation corridor, so project impacts would be minimal.

A western branch of the Jimmy Camp Creek Trail continues alongside Jimmy Camp Creek east of the Colorado Springs Airport, following the creek north past East Highway 94 before terminating near the Corral Bluffs Open Space and Jimmy Camp Creek Park. This branch of the trail and the aforementioned park facilities are owned and managed by City of Colorado Springs Parks and Recreation Department. As such, staff recommends that the master plan be submitted to that agency for their review.

The 2022 El Paso County Parks Master Plan includes an update to the Candidate Open Space Areas, utilizing a weighted overlay of numerous natural and man-made attributes which contribute to strong candidate open space areas. A large percentage of the Jimmy Camp Creek Drainage Basin falls within the bounds of the updated Jimmy Camp and Fountain Creek Candidate Open Space Area, as well as the Corral Bluffs Candidate Open Space Area. Open space attribute values here include the Jimmy Camp Creek corridor, critical fish and bird habitat areas, surface water and wetland areas (jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional), floodplains, moderate wildlife impacts, and a variety of open high prairie grasslands. The Corral Bluffs section contains Corral Bluffs Open Space, an area of archaeological and paleontological significance, as well as stands of juniper and ponderosa pine, all located at the headwaters of the Corral and Strip Mine tributaries of Jimmy Camp Creek.

The Draft Basin Characteristics Report includes the following references to both County and City of Colorado Springs parks, trails, and open space opportunities located within the Jimmy Camp Creek Drainage Basin (please note minor edits in **bold**):

- *Additionally, the City of Colorado Springs is planning, as of the date of this report, on annexing and rezoning two properties in the Jimmy Camp Creek basin to parkland. The first property (Jimmy Camp Creek Annexation Filing No.1) consists of 410.3 acres located between the Blaney Rd S. and Meridian Rd. intersection and Jimmy Camp Creek in the upper watershed. The second property (Corral Bluffs Annexation Filing No. 1) consists of 920.4 acres located north of the Aztec Family Raceway in the northeast corner of the basin. These locations are shown as Open Space in the Future Land Use Map discussed below.*
- *There are several public parks and open spaces in the Jimmy Camp Creek Drainage Basin. In the El Paso County Master Park Plan (2013) there is a proposed 21-mile primary regional trail beginning at the confluence of Jimmy Camp Creek and Fountain Creek and continuing northeast, along Jimmy Camp Creek, until reaching the City of Colorado Springs. This trail connects the City of Fountain's Adams Open Space, proposed Corral Bluffs Open Space, and the City of Colorado Springs's proposed Jimmy Camp Creek Open Space.*
- *There are multiple proposed **[Candidate]** Open Spaces **[Areas]** that would be located fully or partially in the Jimmy Camp Creek Drainage Basin. Falcon Garrett Roads Open Space would occupy the broad northeast trending ridge that separates upper Jimmy Camp Creek from the East Fork Sand Creek in the northeast headwaters of the Drainage Basin. Corral Bluffs open space would be connected to the southeast of Falcon Garrett Road and would provide an opportunity for a regional trail alignment linking Fountain Creek with Colorado Spring's proposed Jimmy Camp Creek Park. The proposed Fountain and Jimmy Camp Creek Open Space would protect the floodplains of both creeks and the globally-vulnerable Arkansas darters that live in the spring-fed marshes adjacent to the main creek channels (EPC, 2013) **[2022]**.*

Staff appreciates the inclusion and recognition of the Jimmy Camp Creek Primary Regional Trail, the vast stretches of Candidate Open Space Areas, and the City's Corral Bluff Open Space and Jimmy Camp Creek Open Space. The proposed alternatives, which include stormwater detention, creekbank stabilization, and construction of natural stream channels, will only serve to protect the fragile Jimmy Camp Creek corridor, and therefore, allowing for more recreational opportunities in areas that would otherwise be subject to severe erosional and depositional events. Staff recommends that the applicant continue to recognize the creek channels and uplands as potential trail corridors, and further recommend that any future stream channel construction plans include locations for said trails corridors.

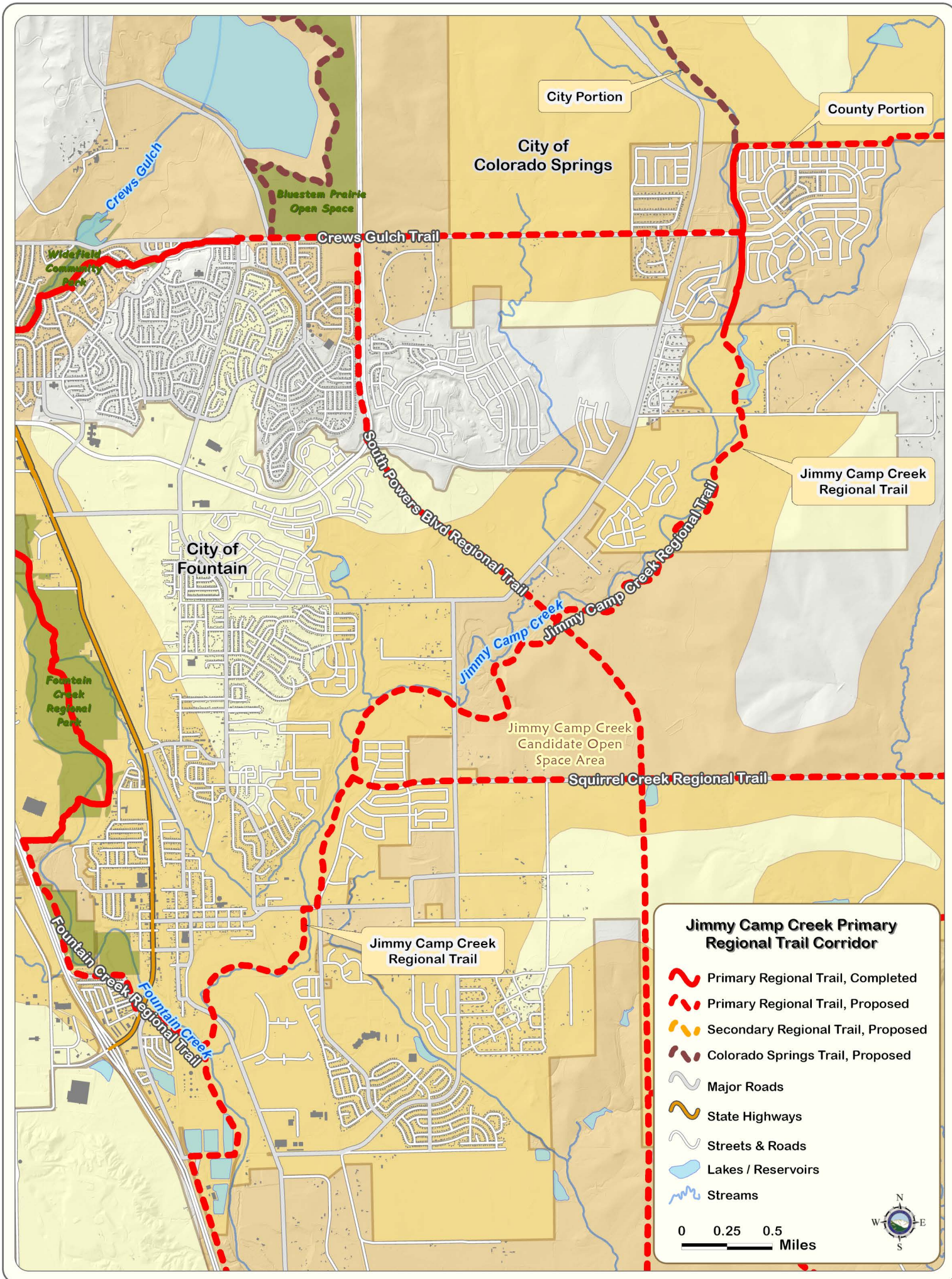
Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,












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Jimmy Camp Creek Primary Regional Trail Corridor

-  Primary Regional Trail, Completed
-  Primary Regional Trail, Proposed
-  Secondary Regional Trail, Proposed
-  Colorado Springs Trail, Proposed
-  Major Roads
-  State Highways
-  Streets & Roads
-  Lakes / Reservoirs
-  Streams

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

