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## WINSOME: PRELIMINARY PLAN AMENDMENT

### LETTER OF INTENT

JUNE 2021

#### PROPERTY OWNER

Winsome LLC  
1864 Woodmoor Dr, Ste 100  
Monument, Colorado 80132

#### APPLICANT:

Winsome LLC  
1864 Woodmoor Dr, Ste 100  
Monument, Colorado 80132

#### CONSULTANT:

N.E.S. Inc.  
619 North Cascade Ave,  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

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#### REQUEST

RR-5

Winsome LLC requests approval of an amendment to the Winsome Preliminary Plan, approved July 9, 2019 by the El Paso County Board of County Commissioners. The amendment proposes the addition of (3) 5-acre lots in the northwest portion of the site in the R-5 zone. The (3) additional lots would be created by dividing (2) 10-acre lots into (4) 5-acre lots, and adding a 7.58-acre lot into the 87.668-acre Tract D open space. The Preliminary Plan Amendment also reflects minor site plan changes that have transpired through platting and construction documents for filings 1-2. Land use areas for the 768.028-acre property break down as follows:

- Residential Lots: 568.78 acres (146 lots)
- Commercial Lot: 7.21 acres
- Open Space: 145.2 acres
- Public ROW: 46.838 acres
- Total Acreage: 768.028

Please provide an explanation of these changes as well.

#### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The following reports are submitted in support of this Preliminary Plan and are referenced in this Letter of Intent:

- Soils, Geology and OWTS Report prepared by Entech Engineering, Inc.
- Natural Features and Wetlands Report prepared by Ecosystem Services, LLC (ECOS)
- Wildland Fire & Hazard Mitigation Plan prepared by Ecosystem Services, LLC (ECOS)
- Water Resources and Wastewater Report prepared by JDS Hydro Consulting, Inc.
- Preliminary Drainage Report prepared by The Vertex Companies, Inc.
- FEMA CLOMR Report prepared by The Vertex Companies, Inc.



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### Open Space and Trails

This amendment proposes the overall reduction of 6.23 acres of open space. With that reduction, 144.77-acres of the property, almost 19%, will remain as open space to preserve the natural resource of the West Kiowa Creek and its associated floodplain and wetlands and to preserve existing vegetation. This open space will also provide recreational opportunities for the residents of the proposed subdivision and surrounding neighborhoods. A network of looping trails is proposed through the open spaces, connecting with the internal rural local roads to provide multiple access points. The open space and trails will be owned and maintained by the proposed Metropolitan District (via easements where on residential lots). Discussions with Parks Department staff has indicated that there is no desire for a County regional trail on this property, as it is not identified in the Parks Master Plan.

### Drainage

The Preliminary Drainage Report prepared by Vertex analyses the existing drainage characteristics of the site and any required improvements. The proposed Winsome Subdivision is part of the West Kiowa Creek Drainage Basin with Kiowa Creek flowing from the southwest to the northeast across the property. Proposed drainage infrastructure includes road side ditches, culverts to convey stormwater under roads, swales, and six full spectrum detention ponds. All the detention ponds outfall the detained water into West Kiowa Creek at controlled rates. The proposed ponds are designed to reduce peak stormwater flow rates, down below historic rates before leaving the site. With the proposed drainage system, stormwater will be controlled and drainage will not have an impact on properties downstream from this development. The amended site plan shows additional stormwater ponds that were added with the filing 1 and 2 construction documents.

In the upper reaches of the property, individual lot owners will be responsible for maintaining proper stormwater drainage in and through their property. In lower reaches, public drainage easements are shown, which will be maintained by the Metropolitan District. Structures, fences, materials or landscaping that could impede the flow of runoff will not be permitted in the drainage easements.

### Utilities

Water: The Water Resources and Wastewater Report prepared by JDS Hydro indicates that water service will be provided by individual domestic wells on the residential lots and by a commercial well on the commercial lot. The wells will be drilled into the Dawson Aquifer. The proposed development as amended will generate an annual demand of approximately 92.60 acre-feet, for which there is sufficient capacity in the Dawson aquifer. Replacement water required to augment depletions from the Dawson aquifer will be available through return flows from the OWTS septic fields. McCune Ranch also has water rights in the Denver, Arapahoe and Laramie-Fox aquifers, but this development is not relying on this water as most of these rights have been sold to Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District for municipal water. Water quality testing of the Dawson Aquifer wells has been completed and is addressed in the Water Resources and Wastewater Report. ***The Applicant requests that the finding of sufficiency for water quantity, dependability and quality be approved with this Preliminary Plan Amendment.***

Wastewater: Wastewater service will be provided by onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS). Entech's OWTS Report concludes that the property is generally suitable for OWTS and that contamination of surface and subsurface water sources should not occur provided the systems are

Later in this letter you indicate that you wish to defer the water finding to final plat.

installed according to El Paso County and State guidelines. The Report identifies areas that are not suitable for OWTS. Some lots are impacted but still have sufficient space for OWTS due to the size of the lot. The report recommends individual soils investigations for septic systems prior to construction and that location of OWTS must ensure that well sites are a minimum of 100 feet from the OWTS absorption fields. Further detailed analysis of OWTS locations will be undertaken with the Final Plat.

Gas: Gas Service will be provided by Black Hills Energy and a Will Serve letter is provided.

Electric: Electric Service will be provided by Mountain View Electric Association and a Will Serve letter is provided.

### **Natural Features**

The topography of the property is characterized by rolling hills and valleys with deep ravines drainage to the creek. The West Kiowa Creek, its associated floodplain and wetlands and ravines, is the principal natural feature on the property. In some instances, the wetlands and tails of the ravines are within lots and in these situations the areas are to be protected by “no build” easements. The general extent of these are identified on the Preliminary Plan but detailed evaluation and plotting will take place with the Final Plats.

### **Vegetation**

The majority of the site is vegetated by short grass prairie, with wetlands alongside the creek and Ponderosa Pine in the northwest corner and along the southern property line. The area southeast of the creek has been heavily grazed, which has degraded the vegetation and allowed the establishment of invasive weeds. The eastern part of the site has been plowed in the past. The ECOS Natural Features and Wetlands Report notes that there will be little impact on vegetation due to the large lot format of the development and the extensive area protected as open space. There is the potential to improve the vegetation with the proposed noxious weed management plan and native plant restoration outlined in the ECOS Natural Features Report.

### **Noxious Weeds**

The noxious weeds on the site are mainly contained with the proposed open space areas. ECOS have provided a noxious weed management plan within the Natural Features Report, which recommends weed control prior to and during construction to eliminate existing weeds and to prevent introducing new weeds. Following construction, the Metropolitan District will be responsible for weed control in the open space. With the individual lots, weed control will be the responsibility of the individual home owner and will be enforced through covenants.

### **Floodplain**

Portions of the site adjacent to the West Kiowa Creek are mapped within Zone A of the FEMA Floodplain Map No. 08041CO350G, dated December 7, 2018. Zone A indicates that Base Flood Elevations have not been determined. A floodplain boundary has been assessed by Vertex as described in the FEMA CLOMR Report and is depicted on the Preliminary Plan. The proposed floodplain is subject to verification by FEMA through the CLOMR/LOMR process. The proposed floodplain is contained within the open space areas.

### **Wildlife**

The ECOS report indicates that the site currently provides good habitat for a variety of wildlife. Birds are the most common wildlife, with mammals in the treed areas and reptiles and amphibians in and around the creek. The extensive area of open space proposed on the Preliminary Plan will provide a wide upland buffer for wildlife along the creek and the large lot configuration will minimize impact on wildlife. There will be low to no impact on protected species. The noxious weed management plan and recommended native plant revegetation will improve the wildlife habitat. Post and rail fencing is proposed on the perimeter of the subdivision and similar fencing will be the standard for the individual lots, which will be enforced by the Metro District.

### **Wetlands**

The delineation of the wetlands on the site was undertaken by ECOS. The wetlands around the West Kiowa Creek, its tributaries and ravines, are jurisdictional and are mapped on the Preliminary Plan. There are also some isolated wetlands and upland swales that are determined to be non-jurisdictional. The jurisdictional wetlands are almost wholly within the open space area. Where the wetlands impact proposed lots, these areas are protected as no build easements. The only construction impact on the wetlands is the proposed street crossings and associated culverts. If wetland disturbance is cumulatively less than 0.5 acres, it will be covered by the Nationwide Permit #29 for residential development. If the impact is greater than 0.5 acres then a specific 404 Permit will be required from the US Army Corps of Engineers.

### **Soils and Geology**

The Soils and Geology Report prepared by Entech identifies the geologic conditions that occur intermittently on the property, including artificial fill, loose or collapsible soils, expansive soils, slope stability, downslope creep, floodplain and potential high ground water. Many of these constraints are within the open space area and the floodplain is wholly within the open space. The report indicates that these conditions can be mitigated through proper engineering design and construction techniques, including special foundation design and subsurface drains. Lot 55 is impacted by an area of unstable slope and a "no build" easement 30-feet around the unstable slope is recommended and is shown on the Preliminary Plan. This lot has adequate buildable area outside the "no build" zone.

### **Wildfire Hazard Mitigation**

The treed areas on the property lie within an area mapped as High Hazard for wildfire. The previous owners of the property undertook fire mitigation in 2013 and 2015, which included thinning trees, removing ladder fuels and modifying stand structure. The covenants for the subdivision set out standards for fire mitigation to ensure that this is a Firewise community and meets the County Development Standards for Fire Protection. Additional fire mitigation may be required on the individual lots to bring them into compliance with these standards. The location and type of new landscaping on individual lots will also be controlled to minimize wildfire risks. The Wildland Fire & Hazard Mitigation Plan prepared by ECOS provides more detail on the potential wildfire fuels on the property and suggested mitigation measures. This is a draft report and more detailed analysis of mitigation will be necessary as home locations are defined.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

**Preliminary Plan**

Rezoning has already been approved. Please revise to reflect past approvals. This letter should specifically indicate and provide justification for how the current proposal meets the criteria. This section should include a discussion of specific goals and policies.

The Preliminary Plan is consistent with the approval criteria in Section 7.2.1.D.2.e of the LDC as follows:

**1. The proposed subdivision is in general conformance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Master Plan;**

Water Master Plan has not been addressed

The Master Plan comprises the County Policy Plan and Black Forest Preservation Plan. The same policies that support the proposed rezoning to RR-2.5 and CC, also support the Preliminary Plan. The proposed rural residential development is in a location contiguous to existing rural residential subdivisions where large lot residential development is encouraged by the Master Plan. The Master Plan also encourages clustering concepts to conserve open space and natural features. The lots proposed on the Preliminary Plan range from 2.5 to 10 acres, with a total of 146 lots, which is less than a 5-acre lot density for the site. Including smaller 2.5-acre lots within the development provides the ability to cluster the lots and protect the principal natural feature on the site, the West Kiowa Creek and its associated wetlands.

The proposed CC zoning will accommodate commercial uses that support the surrounding residential areas in a convenient location at the intersection of two proposed minor arterial roads. This is consistent with the goals and policies of the Master Plan.

**2. The subdivision is consistent with the purposes of this Code;**

This is not relevant to the current proposal.

The stated purpose of the Code is to preserve and improve the public health, safety and general welfare of the citizens and businesses of El Paso County. The proposed subdivision of rural residential lots and a neighborhood commercial center is consistent with the County Master Plan and is compatible with the surrounding 5-acres single family lots and rural character of the area.

**3. The subdivision is in conformance with the subdivision design standards and any approved sketch plan;**

There is no approved Sketch Plan for this property. The proposed subdivision is in conformance with the subdivision design standards other than the two requested waivers, which are discussed in more detail below. The subdivision design standards set out in Chapter 8 of the Land Development Code are met, including but not limited to:

- adequate provision for traffic, drainage, open space, recreation and parks;
- provision of properly designed roads to provide for safe and convenient vehicular circulation and identification of required road improvements;
- adequate provision for water, sewer and other utilities;
- Ensuring that structures will harmonize with the physical characteristics of the site;
- Ensuring that land is divided into lots that are of adequate size and configuration for the purpose for which they are intended to be used; and
- Protecting the natural resources, considering the natural vegetation.

**4. A sufficient water supply has been acquired in terms of quantity, quality, and dependability for the type of subdivision proposed, as determined in accordance with the standards set forth in the water supply standards [C.R.S. §30-28-133(6)(a)] and the requirements of Chapter 8 of this Code;**

Water service will be provided by individual domestic wells on the residential lots and by a commercial well on the commercial lot. The wells will be drilled into the Dawson Aquifer. Water rights in the Dawson Aquifer of 232.50 acre-feet annually will be transferred to the McCune Ranch for the proposed development, which will generate an annual demand of approximately 92.60 acre-feet. Water quality testing of the Dawson Aquifer wells has been completed and is of sufficient quality to serve the proposed residential development. *The Applicant requests that the finding of sufficiency for water quantity, dependability and quality be deferred to the Final Plat.*

Earlier in this letter it is stated that a finding is being sought with prelim.

**5. 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;**

Wastewater service will be provided by onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS). Entech's OWTS Report concludes that the property is generally suitable for OWTS and that contamination of surface and subsurface water sources should not occur provided the systems are installed according to El Paso County and State guidelines. The Report identifies areas that are not suitable for OWTS. Some lots are impacted but still have sufficient space for OWTS due to the size of the lot.

**6. All areas of the proposed subdivision, which may involve soil or topographical conditions presenting hazards or requiring special precautions, have been identified and the proposed subdivision is compatible with such conditions. [C.R.S. §30-28-133(6)(c)];**

The Soils and Geology Report prepared by Entech identifies the geologic conditions that occur intermittently on the property, including artificial fill, loose or collapsible soils, expansive soils, slope stability, downslope creep, floodplain and potential high ground water. Many of these constraints are within the open space area and the floodplain is wholly within the open space. The report indicates that these conditions can be mitigated through proper engineering design and construction techniques, including special foundation design and subsurface drains. In Filing 3, Lot 32 is impacted by an area of unstable slope and a "no build" easement 30-feet around the unstable slope is recommended and is shown on the Preliminary Plan. This lot has adequate buildable area outside the "no build" zone.

**7. Adequate drainage improvements complying with State law [C.R.S. §30-28-133(3)(c)(VIII)] and the requirements of this Code and the ECM are provided by the design;**

These matters are addressed in the Preliminary Drainage Report prepared by Vertex Engineering. Proposed drainage infrastructure includes road side ditches, culverts to convey stormwater under roads, swales, and six full spectrum detention ponds. All the detention ponds outfall the detained water into West Kiowa Creek at controlled rates. The proposed ponds are designed to reduce peak stormwater flow rates, down below historic rates before leaving the site. These measures comply with the requirements of the LDC and ECM.

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

The majority of lots will be accessible by new public streets that will comply with the LDC and ECM. The lots that do not have direct access to a public street will be accessed by a shared/common access easement, in order to preserve topography and natural features. A waiver of 8.4.3(C)(2)(e) of the LDC is requested to address this condition. Street names have been approved by El Paso–Teller County 911 Authority.

**9. The proposed subdivision has established an adequate level of compatibility by**

**1) incorporating natural physical features into the design and providing sufficient open spaces considering the type and intensity of the subdivision;**

A 145-acre area of open space, almost 19% of the property, is proposed to preserve the natural resource of the West Kiowa Creek and its associated floodplain and wetlands. This open space will also provide recreational opportunities for the residents of the proposed subdivision and surrounding neighborhoods. The open space will be owned and maintained by the proposed Metropolitan District.

**2) incorporating site planning techniques to foster the implementation of the County's plans, and encourage a land use pattern to support a balanced transportation system, including auto, bike and pedestrian traffic, public or mass transit if appropriate, and the cost-effective delivery of other services consistent with adopted plans, policies and regulations of the County;**

A network of looping 5' breeze trails is proposed through the open spaces, connecting with the internal rural local roads to provide multiple access points. An interim trail is also proposed on part of the preserved right-of-way along Hodgen Road, until it is needed for road widening. The trails will be owned and maintained by the proposed Metropolitan District (via easements where on residential lots).

**3) incorporating physical design features in the subdivision to provide a transition between the subdivision and adjacent land uses;**

The proposed mix of 2.5 acre to 10-acre residential lots is compatible with the existing large lot character of residential development in the area. There are several 2.5-acre lot subdivisions in this part of the County adjacent to 5-acre lot subdivisions. While some of the lots will be smaller than the adjacent 5-acre lots, the proposed clustering of development allows for the preservation of open space and the protection of natural features. The project retains 5-acre lots adjacent to all boundaries, except Hodgen Road, which provides an appropriate transition. Hodgen Road itself, and the preserved 50-foot right-of way to expand the road to a 4-lane arterial road, provides a transition to the south.

With regard to the adjacent A-35 zoning along the eastern side of the property, the proposed rezoning at 5-acre lot density and inclusion of 5-acre lots along the boundary is a comparable to the transition between the A-35 zoning and existing 5-acre lots surrounding it, so no additional design features are considered necessary.

The proposed commercial lot will provide the opportunity for a neighborhood serving commercial center to offer convenient services and facilities that are not currently available in the area. The developer will ensure that commercial uses are compatible with the rural location in terms of the type of uses, the scale of buildings and the architectural and lighting on the site, which will be controlled by the Metro District or Home Owners' Association. It is intended to retain the character of this lot by

preserving existing trees as part of the future commercial development to provide a buffer and enhance the visual character of the site.

**4) incorporating identified environmentally sensitive areas, including but not limited to, wetlands and wildlife corridors, into the design; and**

The preserved open space adjacent to the West Kiowa Creek will protect the existing wetlands and will conserve wildlife habitat. The control of noxious weeds through the development of the site and management of the open space will improve wildlife habitat.

**5) incorporating public facilities or infrastructure, or provisions therefore, reasonably related to the proposed subdivision so the proposed subdivision will not negatively impact the levels of service of County services and facilities;**

The Traffic Impact Study demonstrates that the development will not materially impact existing levels of service on surrounding roads and proposed access improvements on Hodgen Road will accommodate the site development traffic. The development will be served by well and septic systems and will have no negative impact on existing County services and facilities.

**10. Necessary services, including police and protection, recreation, utilities, open space and transportation system, are or will be available to serve the proposed subdivision;**

The site will be served by well and septic as described above. Mountain View Electric and Black Hills Energy will provide electric and natural gas services as stated in the Will Serve letters included in this submittal. Adequate open space and streets are provided to serve the future residents of the subdivision.

**11. The subdivision provides evidence to show that the proposed methods for fire protection comply with Chapter 6 of this Code; and**

The Falcon Fire Protection District has adequate capacity to provide fire protection to the proposed subdivision. A Fire Protection Report and a Will Serve letter from the Fire Chief is included with this submittal.

**12. The proposed subdivision meets other applicable sections of Chapter 6 and 8 of this Code.**

The proposed subdivision meets the applicable sections of the Code, subject to the requested waivers, which are justified in the context of preserving the existing topography and natural features on the site.

**Waivers**

1. Waiver of Chapter 8.4.3(C)(2)(e) of the LDC:

Chapter 8.4.3(C)(2)(e) of the LDC states requires lots to have access from a public road. The following lots do not have direct access from a public road and will be accessed via a shared access easement over the adjacent lot.: Filing 1 Lot 29, Filing 3 Lots 8 and 11. The requested waiver will help to protect existing topography and natural features by avoiding unnecessary extension of public roads. Section 7.3.3 of the LDC states that a waiver from standards shall be approved only upon the finding, based upon the evidence presented in each specific case, that:

- **The waiver does not have the effect of nullifying the intent and purpose of this Code;**

The most relevant purpose of the code in this regard is to “establish reasonable standards of design and procedures for subdivision”. The requirement for lot access to a public road is a reasonable standard but, in this case, access is to be established by a specific easement that provides shared access and maintenance responsibilities over an adjacent lot. This is a common solution where topography and natural features limit the ability to extend public roads due to right-of-way width and grade requirements.

- **The waiver will not result in the need for additional subsequent waivers;**  
This request is limited to two conditions within the proposed subdivision, which will not be repeated elsewhere in the subdivision.
- **The granting of the waiver will not be detrimental to the public safety, health, or welfare or injurious to other property;**  
The shared access scenario is a common arrangement between two privately owned properties and is controlled through an easement that will run with property. There will be no harm to the public or other property.
- **The conditions upon which the request for a waiver is based are unique to the property for which the waiver is sought and are not applicable to other property;**  
The requested waiver will help to protect existing topography, natural features and vegetation by avoiding unnecessary extension of public roads. While this is not necessarily unique to this property, it is a primary objective of the Black Forest Preservation Plan and can be achieved by this waiver without harm to the public or other property.
- **A particular non-economical hardship to the owner would result from a strict application of this Code;**  
The owner has sought to create a subdivision that protects the existing topography, natural features and vegetation by clustering development and limiting grading by reducing the extent of the roadways. The shared driveways will provide lot access without needing the right-of-way or grade standards of a public street.
- **The waiver will not in any manner vary the zoning provisions of this Code;**  
The density proposed by this subdivision is consistent with the current RR-5 zoning. The requested waiver does not allow the developer any greater density than could be achieved without it.
- **The proposed waiver is not contrary to any provision of the Master Plan.**  
The proposed waiver is consistent with the goal of the Black Forest Preservation Plan to encourage rural residential development that preserves existing topography, natural features and vegetation by clustering development.

2. Waiver of Chapter 6.3.3(c)(j) of the LDC — **Correct section citation is 6.3.3(C)(3)(j)**

Chapter 6.3.3(c)(j) of the LDC requires turnouts or turnarounds where driveways exceed 300 feet. The driveways that serve Filing 2 lots 29 and 30, Filing 2 lot 19, Filing 3 lots 1, 7 and 8 exceed 300 feet. The requested waiver will help to protect existing topography and natural features by not expanding the driveway area more than necessary to provide adequate access. Section 7.3.3 of the LDC states that a waiver from standards shall be approved only upon the finding, based upon the evidence presented in each specific case, that:

- **The waiver does not have the effect of nullifying the intent and purpose of this Code;**  
The most relevant purpose of the code in this regard is to “establish reasonable standards of design and procedures for subdivision”. The requirement for turnouts or turnarounds where driveways exceeds 300 feet is a reasonable standard but, in this case, the Falcon Fire Chief has approved the proposed plans on the basis that residential driveways will provide adequate turnaround and the proposed driveway width and surface material meets Fire Code standards.
- **The waiver will not result in the need for additional subsequent waivers;**  
This request is limited to five conditions within the proposed subdivision, which will not be repeated elsewhere in the subdivision.
- **The granting of the waiver will not be detrimental to the public safety, health, or welfare or injurious to other property;**  
The proposed driveways have been reviewed and approved by the Falcon Fire Chief to ensure safe access to these lots. There will be no harm to the public or other property.
- **The conditions upon which the request for a waiver is based are unique to the property for which the waiver is sought and are not applicable to other property;**  
The requested waiver will help to protect existing topography, natural features and vegetation by avoiding unnecessary extension of public roads where a driveway will suffice. While this is not necessarily unique to this property, it is a primary objective of the Black Forest Preservation Plan and can be achieved by this waiver without harm to the public or other property.
- **A particular non-economical hardship to the owner would result from a strict application of this Code;**  
The owner has sought to create a subdivision that protects the existing topography, natural features and vegetation by clustering development and limiting grading by reducing the extent of the roadways. The extended driveways will provide lot access without needing the right-of-way or grade standards of a public street.
- **The waiver will not in any manner vary the zoning provisions of this Code;**  
The density proposed by this subdivision is consistent with the current RR-5 zoning. The requested waiver does not allow the developer any greater density than could be achieved without it.
- **The proposed waiver is not contrary to any provision of the Master Plan.**  
The proposed waiver is consistent with the goal of the Black Forest Preservation Plan to encourage rural residential development that preserves existing topography, natural features and vegetation by clustering development.