

**LORSON RANCH  
AT  
JIMMY CAMP**

**SKETCH PLAN NARRATIVE**

**INCLUDING:  
Impact Identification  
Social Impacts  
Jurisdictional Impacts  
&  
General Sketch Plan Narrative**

October 2003

This is not specific to this amendment. It refers to reports that were based upon the original plan and does not provide file nos

Provide an addendum with this plan addressing the changes referenced by cloud depicted on the skp plan to ensure minimal impacts



## **INTRODUCTION AND INTENT**

This Sketch Plan document contains plans, reports and policies designed to guide the future development of Lorson Ranch at Jimmy Camp, an approximately 1,361 acre, planned community. The plan is oriented primarily to a proposed single family detached community with a balanced mix of other housing densities, including areas of some attached dwelling units and supporting commercial, recreational and educational facilities that will make Lorson Ranch an important asset to the overall Fountain Valley Community. Besides assisting the developers of Lorson Ranch in the phased development of the property, the Sketch Plan will aid El Paso County officials and staff in determining future growth and development patterns including street connections, utility and drainage infrastructure.

This Sketch Plan represents the result of a comprehensive planning process involving analysis of market, environmental, utility and other development issues and trends affecting the site and this portion of the El Paso County area in general. Included within the Sketch Plan submittal documents are the anticipated methods of development implementation, conceptual plans for drainage, development phasing, transportation and land uses; and analysis of environmental elements.

## **LOCATION AND SIZE**

The Lorson Ranch Sketch Plan area contains approximately 1,361 acres of property and is currently located in the unincorporated area of El Paso County, in the southeast quadrant of the Colorado Springs metro area. More specifically, the site is located a little less than two miles east of the intersection of Powers Boulevard and Fontaine Boulevard. The property is located directly east of the intersection of Fontaine Boulevard and Marksheffel Road, it extends more than two miles to the east and a half mile to the north and south of the proposed alignment of Fontaine Boulevard. The area is currently contiguous with City of Fountain municipal boundaries (Appletree Addition) along the southwest portion of the property and is contiguous with the City of Colorado Springs along three quarters of its northern boundary (Banning-Lewis Ranch).

## **EXISTING LAND USE**

The majority of the property is presently unimproved and vacant (i.e., no structures per se, except for an abandoned farmhouse and related outbuildings). Present land uses on the site and uses in the recent past have been limited to livestock grazing, with areas of irrigated pasture land and hay meadows located along the western half of the property.

## **SURROUNDING LAND USE/ZONING**

Existing land uses to the west include the Cottonwood Grove and Cottonwood Meadows area, primarily a single family detached housing community located in the unincorporated area of El Paso County on either side of Fontaine Boulevard at it's intersection with Marksheffel. This developments are zoned Residential (R-4) and residential PUD. South and north of these two developments the land is vacant and used primarily for agricultural purposes; hay meadows and livestock grazing. The Singer property, master planned as Crescent Heights, is located west of the site, within the City of Fountain. Planned land uses along the Marksheffel Road frontage call for Office/ Business Park uses, it is zoned PUD. None of the Crescent Heights master plan area is presently platted or developed. There is a smaller piece of property, about 45 acres or so located just northeast of the intersection of Marksheffel and Fontaine Boulevard, this property is presently vacant and is Sketch Planned in the County for residential and commercial uses. This property is located between the Lorson Ranch property and Marksheffel Road, north of the proposed extension of Fontaine Boulevard. The Banning - Lewis Ranch master plan area, located within the City of Colorado Springs, is located along the majority of the northern boundaries of the property. This property is presently vacant and undeveloped with planned uses being shown as industrial on the Banning - Lewis Ranch master plan. It is zoned M2/cr in the City of Colorado Springs. Land east of the proposed Banning - Lewis Ranch is undeveloped, vacant and presently being used for livestock grazing purposes. Likewise, land east of the proposed Lorson Ranch development is undeveloped, vacant and used for livestock grazing purposes. Peaceful Valley Lake Estates is located South of the property from east to west, covering

about two thirds of the southern boundary of proposed Lorson Ranch. This development, located within the unincorporated area of El Paso County, includes single family residential homes, zoned RR-3, on five acre and above lots. Fountain's City Limits are located west of this development and uses include a smaller lot, single family residential PUD subdivision and the Appletree Golf Course. A single family residential subdivision, Peaceful Valley Country Club Estates, zoned RR-2, is situated directly West of the golf course, the western portion of this development backs onto Marksheffel Road. This development is located within the unincorporated area of the County. The Glen at Widefield, a primarily residential development of about 650 acres, is located southwest of the proposed Lorson Ranch development. The approved Sketch Plan for the Glen at Widefield, also located within the unincorporated area of the County, shows a future high school site located directly southwest of the Lorson Ranch property. Present land uses on the adjacent Glen at Widefield property in the vicinity of Lorson Ranch are limited to irrigated pasture land and hay meadows.

## **ACCESS & TRAFFIC**

Please refer to the more detailed traffic report, prepared by Drexel, Barrell & Co., submitted in conjunction with the Sketch Plan submittal.

## **IMPACT IDENTIFICATION**

### **Air Pollution**

Automobile and truck related emissions, including vehicle exhaust and suspended dust particles stirred up by traffic movement, account for about 50% of the total particulate pollution in the Pikes Peak Region. Within the project area, these sources will be the main contributor to any air pollution generated from the development. The land uses intended for the Sketch Plan area have no source land use that would be considered a major contributor to an air pollution problem. No industrial uses are planned for the site. Minor, secondary sources are fireplaces and lawn and garden gasoline powered products. Overlot grading and the resultant dust generation will be strictly

controlled in accordance with local fugitive dust regulations. The design of an efficient vehicular circulation system, paving of roads, construction control measures, and minimizing the amount of street sanding are all measures which are incorporated into the Sketch Plan design to keep this development's contribution to the air pollution at a minimum.

### **Water Pollution**

Any addition of water pollution from Lorson Ranch as a result of the development will be minimal. The primary discharge of pollutants into the regional water system will be limited to non-point source surface runoff which may contain sediments and limited inorganic and organic chemicals from streets, parking lots and lawns. The non-point sources of water pollution due to sediment runoff will normally be higher during initial grading and construction, but should be effectively controlled by adequate erosion control methods. The generation of any pollutants from this source will be temporary, and will be reduced considerably following the completion of all construction and revegetation. Wastewater from homes, commercial and school uses will be discharged into an overall collection system and be treated off site. With no industrial uses being planned for the property, no hazardous wastes will be discharged into the collection system. In general, the major storm water drainage system internal to the site will be designed as more natural systems that will help filter pollutants from water being discharged into the system. Detention basins and settling ponds should also aid in this process.

### **Noise Pollution**

The primary source of on-site noise pollution resulting from this project will be due to vehicular movement once construction is complete. Noise generated by larger trucks will be limited to areas of the site near Marksheffel Road. Increased setbacks, landscaping and buffering techniques along major roadways should help hold this nuisance to a minimum. At the present time, no flight operations associated with the Colorado Springs Municipal Airport or Peterson Air Force Base, nor noise from these operations, affect the Lorson Ranch property to any great degree. The airport master plan noise contour study has been revised to reflect the addition of an additional north-south

runway. The present 65 Ldn contour falls north of Fontaine Boulevard and west of Marksheffel, a little less than two miles northwest of the site. Using FAA recommended construction techniques, a 25Db reduction in interior noise for residential units will be obtained through insulation and soundproofing. While the developers of Lorson Ranch will grant avigation easements to Colorado Springs, no development restrictions are to be imposed.

### **Wildlife Habitats and Migration Routes**

The Highway 94 Planning Area study identified portions the Lorson Ranch Sketch Plan area, generally that area along the reaches of the Jimmy Camp Creek as having a potentially very high wildlife impact for eagles and blue heron. The far western portion of the site is also shown as a potentially high impact area for ducks and geese and the western two thirds of the property is shown as a potentially moderate wildlife impact for mule deer and scaled quail.

Other various wildlife of the plains area of El Paso County might be spotted on the site from time to time. The following discussion covers animals of the plains in general and is not meant to be site specific. Many different birds of prey can be seen over the plains. The roughlegged hawk is the most common winter resident, while the red-tailed hawk, Swainson's hawk, and ferruginous hawk are common throughout the summer. Other raptors, such as the prairie falcon, pigeon hawk, and marsh hawk are also present but less common. The most conspicuous birds on the prairie are the horned lark and meadow lark, and the magpie in creek bottoms. Various species of ducks and geese also visit the ponds and wetter areas of the site during different times of the year.

Other plains dwellers include an occasional pronghorn antelope, coyote, striped skunk, spotted skunk, thirteen-lined ground squirrel, white-tailed and black-tailed jack rabbits, eastern cottontail, plains pocket gopher, plains pocket mouse and western harvest mouse.

### **Floodplains/Surface Water**

The area within the boundary of the proposed Sketch Plan that has been identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as being a flood hazard area, is shown on the Sketch Plan and detailed in the drainage

report. Jimmy Camp Creek and the East Tributary of Jimmy Camp Creek run through the property from north to south. A small stock pond is located off the East Tributary, in the south central part of the site. The Fountain Mutual irrigation ditch snakes its way across the west central portion of the property, current plans call for the relocation of the ditch closer to the alignment of Jimmy Camp Creek. For more detailed information on floodplains and surface water please refer to the drainage report prepared by Drexel, Barrell & Co.

### **Geology and Soils**

Please refer to the soils and geology report, prepared by Kumar & Associates, submitted in conjunction with the Sketch Plan.

### **Vegetation and Wildfire**

The site is part of the vast grass prairie biome which occurs in eastern Colorado, eastern Wyoming, Kansas and Nebraska. The predominant indigenous vegetative cover on the property is native grasses.

In a study conducted in 2002, Savage and Savage, Inc. reported the following regarding the vegetation of the site: "The significant vegetation communities with the site can be broadly categorized as short grass prairie within the east half of the site, native xeric mixed grassland along Jimmy Camp Creek and the unnamed drainage, cattail marsh located adjacent to and within the unnamed drainage, wet meadow located adjacent to the unnamed drainage and agricultural fields within the west half of the property."

Portions of the western half of the property have been farmed in the past as irrigated hay meadows. Most of the non-irrigated areas of the property have long been over-grazed by domestic livestock and the vegetation is considered to be a disclimax. Continued over-grazing by livestock, coupled with the severe drought of the 1930's, resulted in change from mixed prairie to the true climax vegetation of the Colorado plains (typical of eastern and central Kansas) to the present mix of short and mid grass prairie. The short grass prairie is dominated by blue grama. Mid grasses include Sideoats grama, Galleta, Foxtail barley, Western wheatgrass, Bluebunch wheatgrass, Little bluestem, New Mexico feathergrass, needlegrass, and Needle and Thread.

The existing vegetative conditions, predominated by fairly low growing prairie grasses and forbes, is not susceptible to wildfire. The lack of any substantial number or groves of trees within the project area eliminates the potential for tree or crown fire. Additionally, the type of development that is proposed will eliminate any hazard of wildfire altogether.

### **Preexisting Waterforms, Watercourses or Bodies of Water**

Please refer to the drainage statement prepared by Drexel, Barrell & Co. for information on preexisting waterforms, watercourses or surface water.

### **Historical or Archaeological**

There are no known historical or archaeological sites on the Lorson Ranch property.

### **Natural or Scenic Sites**

No area of the site could be identified in the category of unique natural or scenic features.

### **Social Impacts**

No specific areas of the development have been planned for low-income housing, housing for the elderly or other specialized housing. Lorson Ranch developers plan to sell parcels to a variety of different homebuilders which would offer a wide range of housing units, from multi-family apartment units, townhomes, entry level and quality mid-range affordable single family homes to larger, semi-custom units.

## **JURISIDICTIONAL IMPACTS**

### **Police and Fire Protection**

El Paso County Sheriffs Department would provide police protection and fire protection would be the responsibility of Security Fire District, the development will have to be annexed to the Security Fire Protection District. The developers of Lorson Ranch want to promote cooperation between them and the County Sheriffs Department and Security Fire District to insure that



emergency response times keep pace with actual development, and that above average levels of service can be maintained.

### **Public Schools and Parks**

The proposed Lorson Ranch development is located within Widefield School District No. 3. In preliminary discussions with the District, they have indicated that three elementary schools and two junior high school sites would be needed in the Sketch Plan area. In the general vicinity of the subject property, two additional elementary schools and a proposed High School are planned. One elementary school would be located in the Crescent Heights development to the west and the other in the proposed Appletree project located south of the Lorson Ranch. A future high school site is shown on the Glen at Widefield Sketch Plan, located just to the southwest of the proposed Sketch Plan.

Any dedicated public park lands would be under the jurisdiction of El Paso County Parks Department, School District No. 3 or a metropolitan district, or a combination of all three. School District No. 3 has a park and recreation district that receives funds from the State's lottery program. The possibility exists that a park and recreational facilities program for the Sketch Plan area could be developed and maintained under a joint agreement between the School District No. 3 and El Paso County. The developer is anticipating forming a metropolitan district and is investigating what role a possible district would have regarding long term maintenance and ownership of park and open space lands.

### **Utility Services**

Water and Sanitary Sewer - Widefield Water and Sanitation District will provide water and wastewater disposal services to the site. For more detail regarding water resources and sanitary sewer services please refer to the Water Resources and Wasterwater Disposal Report.

Natural Gas - The proposed development lies within the service area of Aquila Natural Gas Company. Initial filings would be served from extensions from Fontaine Boulevard and from Marksheffel Road. All main extensions are made

by Aquila at the developers expense, subject to a seven year cost recovery program.

Electric - The proposed development is located within Mountain View Electric Association's service area, there appears to be no major problem with the phased expansion of their service facilities.

Telephone - Telephone service is provided by Qwest. For single-family residential subdivisions, service is extended by the developer under a cost recovery agreement with Qwest. For commercial telephone service, cable is extended by the company to a point on the site, usually the first structure built. From this point it is the responsibility of the builder or developer to extend service within the project.

All of the above entities appear to have the financial and physical capabilities to provide the proposed services on a phased improvements basis.

## **RELATIONSHIP OF SKETCH PLAN TO ADOPTED PLANS**

### **El Paso County Master Plan**

El Paso County's Master Plan provides a unified set of goals, policy guidelines, implementation programs to facilitate the review of new developments and to assist in the allocations of County resources. An orderly and controlled expansion of the County is encouraged in policies set forth in the Master Plan. The proposed development of Lorson Ranch will be consistent with the general intent of this policy. The 2003 Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the County Planning Commission as an element of the County Master Plan on July 15, 2003. Lacking an approved Sketch Plan for the property, that would much more specifically detail proposed land uses and densities, the Highway 94 Conceptual land use plan shows five acre parcels for the property.

### **Master Plan for the Extraction of Mineral Resources**

The "Master Plan for the Extraction of Mineral Resources" identifies two mineral resource areas on Lorson Ranch property. The larger of the two

resource areas, consisting of valley fill, is located on the western half of the property, mainly along and between Jimmy Camp Creek and the East Tributary of Jimmy Camp. The area consists of a flat, ancient stream bed area that consists of about 400-500 acres and is shaped somewhat like a large funnel. A small area along the northwest portion of the property is shown on the resource map as floodplain deposit. Valley fills are sand and gravels mixed with silt and clay deposits and floodplain deposit materials consist of older stream deposits containing sand, gravel, silt and clay preserved on benches or broad flat to sloping areas adjacent to streams. Because of the silt and clay mixture present in these materials, the demand for both these resources in western El Paso County is very low at best and from our initial on-site observations, the quality of these materials are marginal. Because of the possibility of a relatively high water table located along this area, the materials could not be economically mined.

#### **Regional Air Quality Maintenance Plan**

The proposed development does not appear to appreciably impact the Regional Air Quality Maintenance Plan. We've read the revised carbon monoxide maintenance plan for the Colorado Springs Attainment/Maintenance Area several times and one the thing is for certain, we're not really sure what it says or how new developments impact the air quality. The proposed Sketch Plan does not contain any point sources for air pollution, any pollutants or carbon monoxide generated would be limited to vehicles, gasoline powered lawn and garden tools and wood burning fireplaces. Following the overlot grading and construction of roads, structures, lawns, etc. the potential of air quality degradation due to dust particulates should be minimal.

#### **Regional Wastewater Plan**

The Sketch Plan area is proposed to be annexed to the boundaries of Widefield Water and Sanitation District. This District is an active member in the Lower Fountain Water Quality Management Association. This association is composed of general and special-purpose governments that have the ability to implement aspects of the Water Quality Management Plan. Some of the authorities given to the associations, according to the Clean Water Act, are to implement the point and nonpoint features of the water quality plan; design and

construct waste treatment works and related facilities in conformance with the plan and accept and utilize grants or other funds from other sources for waste treatment management processes.

### **Regional and County Transportation Plan**

With the exception of Marksheffel Road being proposed as something less than an expressway the proposed Lorson Ranch Sketch Plan is in conformance with the County Transportation Plan, we show Fontaine Boulevard as a future major or principal arterial and Meridian Road as a future expressway.

### **Regional Health Services Plan**

Not applicable.

## **DEVELOPMENT PHASING**

Project phasing, in a large, multi-use development such as Lorson Ranch, is a function of many complex and interrelated elements. The ever-changing and often volatile real estates market is the major factor influencing development phasing and actual construction. Market conditions can cause numerous revisions of not only the phasing program, but to the master development plan (Sketch Plan) itself. Other elements also affect the phasing plan to varying degrees. These include on and off-site infrastructure improvements such as street extensions, major drainage improvements and the phased extension of utility services such as water distribution, wastewater disposal, natural gas and electrical power. Project financing methods, including available financial resources and advancements in construction and engineering practices and techniques can also greatly affect project phasing decisions. The smooth coordination of development construction with the timely provision of essential infrastructure and municipal services are the major objectives of a development phasing program. The common goal of both the County and developers of Lorson Ranch is to insure that these elements can be delivered cost effectively and efficiently at each stage of development. Full build-out of Lorson Ranch is projected to occur over an approximate 25 year+ period of time. Development phasing will generally proceed from west to east in five, five-year phases. An average of 1,163 dwelling units and approximately 260 acres of land area are

projected within each five-year phase. The approximate population estimate at the end of the fifth phase would be in the neighborhood of 14, 500 people. The full development of commercial properties on the east side of the site will most likely take more than 25 years to complete. Please refer to the phasing map for locations of the six phases.

## **LAND USE PLAN**

The major purpose of this planning effort is to formulate a general land use plan for the subject property that can be used by El Paso County as a means of evaluating the relationship between land uses of certain types and densities, physical land capabilities, and the adequacy of support facilities and services to meet the needs of anticipated development.

The Sketch Plan is intended to provide the general land use designations and standards that County staff, the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners will use as a guide for future development decisions such as rezonings, preliminary plans and final plats. The Plan delineates major land use activities as can best be determined at this time, including major transportation linkages, approximate densities and location of residential uses, the location and approximate amount of commercial uses, schools and open space/drainage/easement areas.

The land uses and densities illustrated on the Lorson Ranch Sketch Plan are representative of general development patterns which can be considered appropriate for the site. The following information summarizes the various land use classifications depicted on the Sketch Plan.

## **PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACE, DRAINAGE CHANNELS AND EASEMENTS**

This land use classification includes areas of the Sketch Plan that are basically open or not developed for specific uses such as residential or commercial uses. These areas, as identified on the Sketch Plan, include approximately 171.9 acres or 12.6% of the total land area. The major elements of this land use classification, the Jimmy Camp Creek channel, the east tributary of Jimmy Camp Creek and the power line easement not only provide important open space breaks within the site but also lend themselves for active and passive

park features such as playfields, trails, picnic areas, tot lots and wildlife and nature study areas. These uses will compliment the more active recreation and playground areas normally developed in conjunction with the development and building of school sites by Widefield School District No. 3. In past developments located within the boundaries of School District No. 3, the District has allocated a certain portion of their school sites for playgrounds, playfields and active recreation areas. This practice is expected to continue in the Lorson Ranch area and should produce between 30-35 acres of active recreation areas in conjunction with school facilities on the five proposed school sites.

Although specific linkages and locations are not show on the Sketch Plan per se, more than adequate access to park and open space areas will be provided from within neighborhood areas and from public rights-of-way where possible. Many neighborhoods will be linked with park/open space areas and school sites by an overall trail system that will utilize trail, utility and drainage easements. It is the developers intent that this overall system would eventually become part of the park and open space system of El Paso County Parks Department or the park and recreation division of Widefield School District No. 3 or under the auspices of a metropolitan district, or possibly as a combination of two or three of the jurisdictions.

A portion of this land use classification also includes land for drainage facilities. The developer is exploring ways to integrate drainage improvements into the park and open space areas as amenities rather than the eyesores that many drainage facilities sometime become. Every attempt will be made to utilize, where possible, a "softer, more environmentally sensitive" approach to drainage improvements. Another possibility for potential sites for active recreation areas will be the utilization of drainage detention basins that will be located and identified in more detail when the next level of drainage studies (master development drainage plan) are accomplished.

## **RESIDENTIAL**

The residential program has been organized to provide development flexibility and a compatible mix of a variety of housing types and densities.

Approximately 937 acres or 68.9% of the total 1,361.4 acres is programmed for residential uses.

### **Low Density Residential - RL (3-4 units per acre)**

This residential land use classification accounts for 90.6 acres, or 10% of the total residential category. This residential classification includes single-family detached homes on lots ranging in size from 6,000 to over 10,000 square feet. Total dwelling units at full build-out would range from approximately 272 to 362 units.

### **Medium-Low Density Residential - RLM (4-6 units per acre)**

This land use classification consists of single family detached homes on lots ranging in size from approximately 5,000 to 7,000 square feet in size. Approximately 600.1 acres or 44.1% of the total property has been allocated for this use. Total units would range between 2,400 to 3,601 units.

### **Medium Density Residential - RM (7-10 units per acre)**

This classification commonly includes smaller, detached single family units such as patio homes, pinwheel cluster homes, courtyard homes, and duplexes. This land use accounts for 182.1 acres or 19.4 % of the total residential category. Total units are projected to range from 1,275 to 1,821 units. With products of this nature it is best to design individual subdivisions expressly for the unit type.

### **Medium/High Density Residential - RMH (10-13 units per acre)**

This classification includes attached townhome type units. This residential use accounts for 35.5 acres or 4% of the total residential category. Two townhome sites are located on the Sketch Plan, the total number of units range from 355 to 462 units. Most generally, development in this density range will feature common amenity packages such as common driveways and access/ parking courts and common open space/activity areas.

### **High Density Residential - RH (17-20 units per acre)**

This multi-family land use classification includes 29.1 acres or 3.0% of the residential category. Total units at full build-out would range from 495 to 582 units. Structures are typically garden level type apartment/condominium buildings, two to three and one-half stories in height. Parking for the units can be open, covered, or a combination of both. Common open space for both passive and active recreation is usually provided. Other amenities can include a clubhouse with meeting and game rooms, a swimming pool/hot tub, tennis courts, tot lot, and a fitness facility. Direct access is usually provided to a collector or arterial street.

### **COMMERCIAL USES**

This land use category includes those commercial (non-residential) uses including office/business park, community commercial and neighborhood commercial classifications. These land use designations consist of 89.5 total acres or 6.6% of the total site area. 29.7 acres of commercial use is centered around the intersection of Fontaine Boulevard and Marksheffel Road and the remainder of the commercial uses are located at the far east boundaries of the site, at the future intersection of Fontaine and Meridian Road.

### **NON-COMMERCIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL USES**

Approximately 334.5 acres or 24.5% of the total development area would be allocated to non-residential and non-commercial uses. These uses include park/open space uses, drainage facilities, utility sites, schools, miscellaneous rights-of-way and easements, and principal arterial and collector streets.

### **Major Drainage Channels**

Jimmy Camp Creek and the East Tributary of Jimmy Camp run in a basic north/south direction through the western and central portions of the property and contain approximately 115.7 acres or 8.5% of the total site. The channels are projected to vary in width from approximately 120 feet to over 650 feet and would handle both on-site and off-site (to the north) storm water runoff and



incidental flows. Please refer to the included drainage report prepared by Drexel Barrell & Co. for more detail regarding the drainage ways.

### **Schools**

Five school sites, totaling 70 acres or 5.1% of the total site, are projected for the proposed development. The school sites include three elementary schools and two junior highs. The actual configuration and general location of the school sites could change somewhat from that shown on the Sketch Plan once the surrounding residential areas are final designed. The acreages for the sites would basically remain the same.

### **Arterials and Collectors**

Within the Sketch Plan area, approximately 92.6 acres or 6.8% of the total site area, has been allocated for principal arterials and collector streets. This figure also includes additional right-of-way that would be reserved for the future expansion of Marksheffel Road and Meridian Road. The interior collector street system was designed to provide a hierarchy of access streets that would efficiently collect traffic from residential streets and individual neighborhoods and link them to the principal arterial and major collector for efficient dispersal.

### **Power Line Easement**

This land use classification includes 52.1 acres or 3.8% of the total site area for the major electric transmission line easement. The easement is 325 feet wide and diagonals across the eastern half of the property.

### **Irrigation Ditch**

The Fountain Mutual Irrigation Company has an irrigation ditch (60' ROW) that snakes its way generally north and south across the western half of the property. Plans call for the ditch to be relocated along the east side of the projected alignment of Jimmy Camp Creek.

**El Paso County Planning Department  
Master Plan Consistency Review  
March 24, 2004**

**File #** SKP-03-002

**Applicants:** Fountain Valley School (owner) and the Landhuis Company (applicant)

**Parcel ID #** 55000-00-216, 061, 012, 010, & 049

**Project Name:** Lorson Ranch at Jimmy Camp Sketch Plan

**Project Description:** A request for approval of the Lorson Ranch at Jimmy Camp Sketch Plan, consisting of 1,361 acres, proposed for 964 acres of single-family residential, 29 acres of multi-family, 5 school sites, 116 acres of floodplain, 52 acres of high power line easements, 39 acres of open space, and 29 acres of commercial. The property is generally east of the intersection of Fontaine Boulevard and Marksheffel Road, north of and adjacent to Peaceful Valley Estates.

## **Land Development Code**

It is the policy of the County to: ...

7. Preserve the integrity of existing and natural drainage patterns in order that the aggregate of future public and private development activities will not cause storm drainage and floodwater patterns to exceed the capacity of natural or constructed drainageways or to subject other areas to increased potential for damage due to flooding, erosion, or sedimentation or to result in pollution to streams, rivers, and other natural bodies of water. (Chapter II, pp. II-1 – II-2)

## **Master Plan Elements**

### **El Paso County Wildlife Habitat Maps (1996)**

“It is intended that the use of this topical Master Plan element will be as a generalized planning and screening tool subject to technical input and review provided by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and potentially by other wildlife professionals.” (Resolution No. MP-96-002)

### **El Paso County Policy Plan (1998)**

**Goal 6.1A** – Encourage patterns of growth and development which complement the region’s unique natural environments and which reinforce community character.

**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.

**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.

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

**Policy 6.3.2** – Rely on the Small Area Planning process to define the sub-area specific boundaries for urban density development.

**Goal 6.5** – Encourage the preservation of agricultural uses as an important contributor to the economy and land use character of the County.

**Goal 11.3** – Promote the planning and design of drainage facilities which maximize on-site amenities while minimizing detrimental downstream erosion.

**Policy 11.3.1** – Where feasible, support the use of natural or naturalistic drainage approaches rather than hard line solutions.

**Goal 11.4** – Promote public safety and reduce loss of private property.

**Policy 11.4.1** – Strongly discourage development in designated floodplains.

**Policy 11.4.8** – Encourage “prudent line” approaches which adequately set structures back from flood-plain boundaries, especially in areas which may be prone to bank erosion.

## **2003 Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan**

### **Sub-Area 4 – Colorado Centre**

An overriding concern in the Sub-Area is compatibility with City industrial and residential areas ... Within unincorporated areas in the southern portion of the Sub-Area, 5-acre densities are recommended. Thirty-five-acre densities are recommended east of Jimmy Camp Creek. Once City properties are developed, 5-acre densities should be accommodated east of Jimmy Camp Creek ... Trail corridors should be constructed to link Corral Bluffs and Jimmy Camp Creek.

**Objective 2.1.** Develop with due recognition of the unique site characteristics of each sub-area

**Policy 2.1.1.** Consider physical site characteristics for all development proposals, with particular attention to mineral deposits, moderate and steep slopes, mining subsidence, debris fans, drainage ways, floodplains, and soils

**Policy 2.1.2.** Assess soils based on permeability, erodability, flooding frequency, and high water tables

**Objective 2.2.** Ensure that the nature and intensity of proposed developments are consistent with the Land Use Map and Sub-Area scenarios

**Policy 2.2.1.** New developments should demonstrate compatibility with surrounding land uses in terms of general use, connectivity, building heights, scale, overall densities, dust, and noise and feature gradual transitions in densities and/or appropriate buffers

**Policy 2.2.2.** Accommodate a compatible mix of industrial, office, commercial, residential, open space, and recreational land uses

**Policy 2.2.6.** Allow increases in lot densities provided that overall lot densities meet recommended densities on the Concept Map. Only 50% of steep slopes, floodplains,

subsidence areas, strip-mined areas, and other unbuildable areas should be counted in density calculations

**Objective 2.3.** Ensure that zonings and Sketch Plans are compatible with the Land Use Map.

**Policy 2.3.2.** Encourage lands surrounding sketch plan projects or municipal areas to remain in 35-acre zoning until substantial build out of those sketch plans or municipal areas

**Policy 2.3.3.** Encourage revised sketch plans, which are consistent with the vision of the Highway 94 Update

**Policy 2.3.4.** Evaluate existing sketch plans for their compatibility with the Highway 94 Update

**Objective 3.2.** Create gradual transitions between rural and urban uses through means such as varying densities and lot sizes, buffering, and reduced building scales

**Goal 14.** Provide or facilitate a well-connected system of parks, trails, and open spaces

**Objective 14.1.** Consider strategies to incorporate open space resources into development

**Objective 14.2.** Coordinate efforts to conserve open space with efforts to preserve cultural landscapes, historic sites, and agricultural uses

**Policy 14.1.1.** Plan open space and recreational areas in conjunction with school sites, when appropriate

**Policy 14.1.3.** Identify trails early in the development process

**Policy 14.1.4.** Identify key drainages in the Planning Area suitable for open space and trails

**Policy 14.1.5.** Select trail corridors to connect and highlight community assets, both cultural and natural

**Policy 14.1.8.** Consider trail corridors along Jimmy Camp Creek and Corral Bluffs

**Goal 19.** Effectively manage waterways

**Objective 19.1.** Effectively manage flood events

**Policy 19.1.1.** Preclude damage to life and property by strict adherence to El Paso County floodplain regulations

**Policy 19.1.2.** Ensure that structures or property are not inappropriately sited in floodplains to preclude damage to downstream properties and downstream drainage structures

**Policy 19.1.3.** Preserve floodway functions through the retention of natural floodway features

**Policy 19.1.4.** Respect the potential for catastrophic floods in or near floodplains and meander belts through the use of prudent line setbacks, streamside overlays, and comprehensive drainage basin planning approaches

**Objective 19.2.** Maintain healthy waterways

**Policy 19.2.1.** Protect the integrity of existing waterways and minimize their disruption

**Policy 19.2.2.** Keep off-site drainage to historic flows

**Policy 19.2.3.** Ensure drainage is addressed for all changes in land use in accordance with existing County regulations and adopted Drainage Basin Plans

**Policy 19.2.4.** Ensure that the Army Corps of Engineers is advised of all modifications to Area wetlands and that modifications to identified wetlands use the Section 404 permitting process of the Clean Water Act as a means to control erosion and sedimentation

**Policy 19.2.5.** Coordinate County prudent line setbacks with the Streamside Overlay for the City of Colorado Springs

**Policy 19.2.6.** Ensure developments within the unincorporated portions of El Paso County complement and respect the Streamside Overlay for the City of Colorado Springs

**Policy 19.2.7.** Encourage developments to utilize adjacent streams as amenities, preserve streamside character, and help advance greater stream area functionality

**Implementation Strategy 19.2a.** Use National Wetlands Inventory Maps to produce a County wetlands map

**Goal 22.** Promote a healthy diversity of flora and fauna in the Planning Area

**Policy 22.1.1.** Promote the preservation of significant wildlife species and habitat areas as identified by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the County Natural Heritage Inventory

**Policy 22.1.1.** Encourage the preservation of water bodies and food chains critical to species preservation

## **Background Information**

The Sketch Plan covers 1,361 acres and includes the following:

- 4,841 to 6,985 dwelling units
- 12,635 to 18,230 residents (using 2.61 persons average County household size per the 2000 Census)
- Using a proposed buildout of 30 years, the Sketch Plan phasing plan would equate to the construction of approximately 200 dwelling units per year. For the year 2004, all of El Paso County, both incorporated and unincorporated, is forecast to have 4,200 single-family permits. 200 represents approximately 5 percent of the annual total.
- Unbuildable areas include 52 acres of a transmission line easement and 116 acres of channelized floodplain.

A large collection of State Lands lies to the east of the proposed sketch plan, 5-acre rural residential lots lie to the south, generally larger urban residential lots lie to the west, and vacant lands zoned for industrial uses within the City of Colorado Springs lie to the north.

One of the documents pertinent to the Sketch Plan proposal is the Land Development Code (Chapter V, Section 47). In addition to other guidance, the Land Development Code requires that the applicant address the following:

- The relationship of the sketch plan to the County Master Plan
- Compatibility of the proposed land uses within and adjacent to the plan
- Availability of community facilities, to include parks and open space
- Impacts upon or of the 100-year floodplain of any water course

Master Plan elements include:

- Wildlife Habitat Maps (1996)
- Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan (1997)
- Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan (2003)

The Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan depicts a limited urban area west of the Jimmy Camp Creek floodplain adjacent to Marksheffel Road. It recommends 35-acre lot sizes to the east of Jimmy Camp Creek. Once City properties are developed, the Plan recommends 5-acre densities east of Jimmy Camp Creek. The 5-acre lots are intended as a transition to the State Lands and other ranchlands. Trail corridors are also envisioned along Jimmy Camp Creek. It is assumed that areas west of the Jimmy Camp Creek and the Eastern Tributary will eventually develop at urban densities although the Plan used only a 20-year planning horizon through 2023. The Phasing Plan for the Lorson Sketch Plan generally follows the Plan scenario.

Plans for the City of Colorado Springs also designate the Jimmy Camp Creek floodway as a Candidate Open Space. Already, open space and trails are integrated into the Banning-Lewis Ranch development. The County Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan continues these links. The trail is expected to not only connect to Fountain Creek Regional Park, but ultimately to Pueblo as part of the Front Range Trail.

Wildlife Habitat Maps, adopted as an element of the County Master Plan in 1996 as delineated by the Colorado Division of Wildlife, depict the area as having roughly the following potential impacts to wildlife habitat:

- 10 percent - Very High Impact
- 10 percent - High Impact
- 70 percent - Moderate Impact
- 10 percent - Low Impact

The highest impacts are on the west side of the development. Wildlife concerns include wildlife corridor preservation, adequate corridor buffers, fishery impacts, preservation of creek bottoms, the associated tree preservation, and erosion.

Jimmy Camp Creek represents one of only a few wooded creek bottoms east of IH 25. The Creek is also described under the Survey of Critical Biological Resources for El Paso County. The Survey emphasizes the consequences of development in the watershed on channel stability and habitat. The following can lead to watershed degradation:

- An increase in impervious surfaces, such as roads, rooftops, and parking lots
- Floodplain encroachment
- Increased urban irrigation
- Creek restraints
- Increased wastewater treatment plant discharges

Floodplain issues are particularly important as the history of El Paso County is replete with instances of significant regional flooding, many of which occurred within the Fountain Creek watershed and Jimmy Camp Creek. Floods of note occurred in 1864, 1878, 1885, 1894, 1921, 1922, 1932, 1935, 1965, 1977, 1989, 1990, 1993, 1995, 1998, and 1999. Predictably, the County

Soil Survey lists the flooding frequency of the Jimmy Camp Creek floodway as “frequent.” The Prudent Line Setback approach espoused by El Paso County and the Streamside Overlay adopted by Colorado Springs to the north represent an attempt to protect the functionality of waterways and protect residents from loss of life and property.

Although the basic acreage of the Eastern Tributary of Jimmy Camp Creek has been maintained, the western Jimmy Camp Creek floodway has been channelized to approximately one-third of its original size. Commercial uses are planned, with the highest levels of impervious cover, adjacent to the channelized area. The County Soil Survey identifies the areas that are most susceptible to flooding.

Urban uses are planned on the eastern border of the Sketch Plan adjacent to State Lands. These State Lands are leased for grazing to provide revenue for the State school system. The State has consolidated thousands of acres in the area. Urban uses can have significant detrimental effects on ranching operations including loose dogs that harass cattle, blowing trash, trespass problems, and property damage. The Highway 94 Plan ultimately envisions 5-acre tracts in the area.

## **Consistency Discussion**

The initial Lorson Sketch Plan submittal featured urban uses with few compatibility measures. To rectify these deficiencies, the Planning and Engineering staffs worked with the applicant, which resulted in various buffering measures.

The applicant went before the Planning Commission with several Master Plan consistency concerns. The Planning Commission unanimously denied the Sketch Plan based largely on the concerns of the adjoining and impacted property owners. What follows is a list of the previous Master Plan Consistency comments and the applicant’s March 16, 2004 response.

- Incorporate compatibility measures for the northern portions of the Sketch Plan adjacent to the incorporated areas of Colorado Springs zoned as industrial.
  - Applicant Response – Banning-Lewis will likely develop from north to south. Capital Pacific Holdings is generally in agreement with the uses proposed on its southern border.
- Given that much of the area is classified as having very high, high, or moderate wildlife impacts according to the Colorado Division of Wildlife, develop a wildlife management plan. A management plan would help address habitat and corridor preservation.
  - Applicant Response – The applicant agreed to add a note stating that a wildlife habitat management plan will be prepared in cooperation with CDOW during the initial platting stages.
- Given that the Sketch Plan basically entails the creation of a small city with associated impacts to the drainage basin, complete a drainage basin planning study. The applicant should avoid the placement of commercial areas adjacent to the channelized Jimmy Camp Creek floodway unless measures are incorporated to protect the floodway corridor from erosion, non-point source pollution, and increased storm volumes and velocities.

Commercial uses placed near the floodway would also be likely to diminish the habitat values of the remaining stream corridor. The following drainage concerns should be incorporated into the Sketch Plan and the drainage plan:

- Because of the potential to be breached or overflowed in periodic storms, levees should not be allowed as part of any drainage plan. Detention should be planned off-channel to minimize degradation of the Jimmy Camp Creek stream channels.
- In terms of functionality and sustained integrity, no altered floodplain slope should be greater than 4:1, otherwise soil bioengineering is more likely to fail.
- The area also has high potential for sedimentation, which would require cleaning after storm events. An operational manual should be developed as part of the Sketch Plan Amendment to account for the eventuality of sedimentation problems along with the responsible agency and funding guarantees.
- Limit the channelization of Jimmy Camp Creek. Use soil areas of “frequent flooding” to help determine the extent of channelization. Demonstrate how the Sketch Plan riparian areas compare with the adjacent Streamside Overlay for the City of Colorado Springs.
- Applicant Responses:
  - No levees are planned.
  - No slopes will be greater than 4:1.
  - (Sedimentation) The applicant will follow County drainage regulations.
  - (Channelization) The applicant believes the proposed treatment of the floodway is better than full channelization.
  - (Colorado Springs Streamside Overlay) The applicant states that he is not required by County regulations to match their treatment of Jimmy Camp Creek with that of the City. Again, the applicant will take actions as required by County regulations.
- Plan the eastern trail connection adjacent to the transmission easement rather than in the easement for a more viable recreation venue.
  - Applicant Response – The proposed eastern trail will be in the transmission tower easement, although the applicant will attempt to limit its placement beneath the power lines.
- Similarly, place trails out of engineered floodways and in adjacent buffers. Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be used in buffer zones. BMPs would help protect constructed trail facilities from flood damage and would address other values, such as buffering, filtering, habitat, creek meanders, corridor preservation, and creek bottom preservation.
  - Applicant Response – The applicant will attempt to keep the trail out of engineered floodways, with the exception of trail crossings.
- Develop separate estimates for floodplain, transmission tower easements, open space, trail, school, and park acreages. Otherwise, it is difficult to determine the acreage for each of these uses.
  - Applicant Response – Acreages are already shown on the Sketch Plan and defined in the narrative to the extent possible.



- Incorporate compatibility measures for the eastern areas adjacent to State Lands and private ranchlands, such as open space tracts.
  - Applicant Response – Because this area is in the final phase to be developed after 2029, buffering decisions should be made coincident with the platting process.

## Summary

In general, the Lorson Sketch Plan contravenes the recently adopted Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan. Although the Highway 94 Plan recognizes that urban uses could some day develop to the north of the proposed sketch plan in the City of Colorado Springs, those uses do not yet exist. Additionally, compatibility concerns currently exist for the adjacent uses to the west, east, and south. These concerns were a concern at the recent Planning Commission Meeting, in which the Sketch Plan was unanimously denied. Buffering was not assumed to be able to adequately ensure compatibility.

Given the unfinished nature of the staff and applicant work to date, it would be premature to approve the Sketch Plan at this point. Fundamental changes in densities are prudent.

Reviewed by Joseph C. Gorney, AICP, Planner II  
Comprehensive Planning Section

**El Paso County Planning Department  
Master Plan Consistency Review  
February 6, 2004**

**File #** SKP-03-002

**Applicants:** Fountain Valley School (owner) and the Landhuis Company (applicant)

**Parcel ID #** 55000-00-216, 061, 012, 010, & 049

**Project Name:** Lorson Ranch at Jimmy Camp Sketch Plan

**Project Description:** A request for approval of the Lorson Ranch at Jimmy Camp Sketch Plan, consisting of 1,361 acres, proposed for 964 acres of single-family residential, 29 acres of multi-family, 5 school sites, 116 acres of floodplain, 52 acres of high power line easements, 39 acres of open space, and 29 acres of commercial. The property is generally east of the intersection of Fontaine Boulevard and Marksheffel Road, north of and adjacent to Peaceful Valley Estates.

## **Land Development Code**

It is the policy of the County to: ...

7. Preserve the integrity of existing and natural drainage patterns in order that the aggregate of future public and private development activities will not cause storm drainage and floodwater patterns to exceed the capacity of natural or constructed drainageways or to subject other areas to increased potential for damage due to flooding, erosion, or sedimentation or to result in pollution to streams, rivers, and other natural bodies of water. (Chapter II, pp. II-1 – II-2)

## **Master Plan Elements**

### **El Paso County Wildlife Habitat Maps (1996)**

“It is intended that the use of this topical Master Plan element will be as a generalized planning and screening tool subject to technical input and review provided by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and potentially by other wildlife professionals.” (Resolution No. MP-96-002)

### **El Paso County Policy Plan (1998)**

**Goal 6.1A** – Encourage patterns of growth and development which complement the region’s unique natural environments and which reinforce community character.

**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.

**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.

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

**Policy 6.3.2** – Rely on the Small Area Planning process to define the sub-area specific boundaries for urban density development.

**Goal 6.5** – Encourage the preservation of agricultural uses as an important contributor to the economy and land use character of the County.

**Goal 11.3** – Promote the planning and design of drainage facilities which maximize on-site amenities while minimizing detrimental downstream erosion.

**Policy 11.3.1** – Where feasible, support the use of natural or naturalistic drainage approaches rather than hard line solutions.

**Goal 11.4** – Promote public safety and reduce loss of private property.

**Policy 11.4.1** – Strongly discourage development in designated floodplains.

**Policy 11.4.8** – Encourage “prudent line” approaches which adequately set structures back from flood-plain boundaries, especially in areas which may be prone to bank erosion.

## **2003 Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan**

### **Sub-Area 4 – Colorado Centre**

An overriding concern in the Sub-Area is compatibility with City industrial and residential areas ... Within unincorporated areas in the southern portion of the Sub-Area, 5-acre densities are recommended. Thirty-five-acre densities are recommended east of Jimmy Camp Creek. Once City properties are developed, 5-acre densities should be accommodated east of Jimmy Camp Creek ... Trail corridors should be constructed to link Corral Bluffs and Jimmy Camp Creek.

**Objective 2.1.** Develop with due recognition of the unique site characteristics of each sub-area

**Policy 2.1.1.** Consider physical site characteristics for all development proposals, with particular attention to mineral deposits, moderate and steep slopes, mining subsidence, debris fans, drainage ways, floodplains, and soils

**Policy 2.1.2.** Assess soils based on permeability, erodability, flooding frequency, and high water tables

**Objective 2.2.** Ensure that the nature and intensity of proposed developments are consistent with the Land Use Map and Sub-Area scenarios

**Policy 2.2.1.** New developments should demonstrate compatibility with surrounding land uses in terms of general use, connectivity, building heights, scale, overall densities, dust, and noise and feature gradual transitions in densities and/or appropriate buffers

**Policy 2.2.2.** Accommodate a compatible mix of industrial, office, commercial, residential, open space, and recreational land uses

**Policy 2.2.6.** Allow increases in lot densities provided that overall lot densities meet recommended densities on the Concept Map. Only 50% of steep slopes, floodplains,

subsidence areas, strip-mined areas, and other unbuildable areas should be counted in density calculations

**Objective 2.3.** Ensure that zonings and Sketch Plans are compatible with the Land Use Map.

**Policy 2.3.2.** Encourage lands surrounding sketch plan projects or municipal areas to remain in 35-acre zoning until substantial build out of those sketch plans or municipal areas

**Policy 2.3.3.** Encourage revised sketch plans, which are consistent with the vision of the Highway 94 Update

**Policy 2.3.4.** Evaluate existing sketch plans for their compatibility with the Highway 94 Update

**Objective 3.2.** Create gradual transitions between rural and urban uses through means such as varying densities and lot sizes, buffering, and reduced building scales

**Goal 14.** Provide or facilitate a well-connected system of parks, trails, and open spaces

**Objective 14.1.** Consider strategies to incorporate open space resources into development

**Objective 14.2.** Coordinate efforts to conserve open space with efforts to preserve cultural landscapes, historic sites, and agricultural uses

**Policy 14.1.1.** Plan open space and recreational areas in conjunction with school sites, when appropriate

**Policy 14.1.3.** Identify trails early in the development process

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**Policy 19.2.5.** Coordinate County prudent line setbacks with the Streamside Overlay for the City of Colorado Springs

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**Policy 19.2.7.** Encourage developments to utilize adjacent streams as amenities, preserve streamside character, and help advance greater stream area functionality

**Implementation Strategy 19.2a.** Use National Wetlands Inventory Maps to produce a County wetlands map

**Goal 22.** Promote a healthy diversity of flora and fauna in the Planning Area

**Policy 22.1.1.** Promote the preservation of significant wildlife species and habitat areas as identified by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the County Natural Heritage Inventory

**Policy 22.1.1.** Encourage the preservation of water bodies and food chains critical to species preservation

## **Comprehensive Planning Comments**

The Sketch Plan covers 1,361 acres and includes the following:

- 4,841 to 6,985 dwelling units
- 12,635 to 18,230 residents (using 2.61 persons average County household size per the 2000 Census)
- Using a proposed buildout of 30 years, the Sketch Plan phasing plan would equate to the construction of approximately 200 dwelling units per year. For the year 2004, all of El Paso County, both incorporated and unincorporated, is forecast to have 4,200 single-family permits. 200 represents approximately 5 percent of the annual total.
- Unbuildable areas include 52 acres of a transmission line easement and 116 acres of channelized floodplain.

A large collection of State Lands lies to the east of the proposed sketch plan, 5-acre rural residential lots lie to the south, urban residential lots lie to the west, and vacant lands zoned for industrial uses within the City of Colorado Springs lie to the north.

One of the documents pertinent to the Sketch Plan proposal is the Land Development Code (Chapter V, Section 47). In addition to other guidance, the Land Development Code requires that the applicant address the following:

- The relationship of the sketch plan to the County Master Plan
- Compatibility of the proposed land uses within and adjacent to the plan
- Availability of community facilities, to include parks and open space
- Impacts upon or of the 100-year floodplain of any water course

Master Plan elements include:

- Wildlife Habitat Maps (1996)
- Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan (1997)
- Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan (2003)

The Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan depicts a limited urban area west of the Jimmy Camp Creek floodplain adjacent to Marksheffel Road. It recommends 35-acre lot sizes to the east of Jimmy Camp Creek. Once City properties are developed, the Plan recommends 5-acre densities east of Jimmy Camp Creek. The 5-acre lots are intended as a transition to the State Lands and other ranchlands. Trail corridors are also envisioned along Jimmy Camp Creek. It is assumed that areas west of the Jimmy Camp Creek and the Eastern Tributary will eventually develop at urban densities although the Plan used only a 20-year planning horizon through 2023. The Phasing Plan for the Lorson Sketch Plan generally follows the Plan scenario.

The applicant initially proposed commercial uses along the eastern border of the property and higher density residential uses along the southern border. Given the uncertainty associated with a 30-year buildout and the likely traffic impacts to Meridian Road from commercial uses, the applicant deleted the commercial uses. Lots sizes have also been enlarged, to some degree, along the southern boundary to one-acre and one-half-acre in an attempt to make the Sketch Plan more compatible with the adjacent 5-acre lots.

Industrial uses are planned adjacent to the northwest and north central portions of the Sketch Plan in the City of Colorado Springs as part of the Banning-Lewis Ranch development. Although the current Colorado Springs zoning could change and substantial buildout is not expected for decades, that area represents an appropriate area for the concentration of urban uses within the Sketch Plan. Compatibility measures should be incorporated into the Lorson Sketch Plan, however, for areas closest to the planned industrial areas. If the Colorado Springs zoning were to change to residential uses, then the compatibility measures might not be necessary. Plans for the City of Colorado Springs also designate the Jimmy Camp Creek floodway as a Candidate Open Space. Already, open space and trails are integrated into the Banning-Lewis Ranch development. The Lorson Sketch Plan should continue the Jimmy Camp Creek Trail and Open Space network and provide a link to southern portions of the regional trail, as identified in the County Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan. The trail is expected to not only connect to Fountain Creek Regional Park, but ultimately to Pueblo as part of the Front Range Trail.

Wildlife Habitat Maps, adopted as an element of the County Master Plan in 1996 as delineated by the Colorado Division of Wildlife, depict the area as having roughly the following potential impacts to wildlife habitat:

- 10 percent - Very High Impact
- 10 percent – High Impact
- 70 percent – Moderate Impact
- 10 percent – Low Impact

The highest impacts are on the west side of the development. Wildlife concerns include wildlife corridor preservation, adequate corridor buffers, fishery impacts, preservation of creek bottoms, the associated tree preservation, and erosion.

Jimmy Camp Creek represents one of only a few wooded creek bottoms east of IH 25. The Creek is also described under the Survey of Critical Biological Resources for El Paso County. The Survey emphasizes the consequences of development in the watershed on channel stability and habitat. The following can lead to watershed degradation:

- An increase in impervious surfaces, such as roads, rooftops, and parking lots
- Floodplain encroachment
- Increased urban irrigation
- Creek restraints
- Increased wastewater treatment plant discharges

Floodplain issues are particularly important as the history of El Paso County is replete with instances of significant regional flooding, many of which occurred within the Fountain Creek watershed and Jimmy Camp Creek. Floods of note occurred in 1864, 1878, 1885, 1894, 1921, 1922, 1932, 1935, 1965, 1977, 1989, 1990, 1993, 1995, 1998, and 1999. Predictably, the County Soil Survey lists the flooding frequency of the Jimmy Camp Creek floodway as "frequent." The Prudent Line Setback approach espoused by El Paso County and the Streamside Overlay adopted by Colorado Springs to the north represent an attempt to protect the functionality of waterways and protect residents from loss of life and property.

The Fountain Creek Watershed Plan, developed by the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, also speaks to these waterway issues. The Watershed Plan discusses ongoing channel erosion, the resultant increased sediment loading, and downstream damage. The cost of downstream damage is generally borne by federal agencies, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, municipalities, counties, and private landowners.

Although the basic acreage of the Eastern Tributary of Jimmy Camp Creek has been maintained, the western Jimmy Camp Creek floodway has been channelized to approximately one-third of its original size. Commercial uses are planned, with the highest levels of impervious cover, adjacent to the channelized area. Although some reduction of the floodways can be expected, the applicant should minimize the channelization and stabilize the natural waterways to minimize erosion and sedimentation problems for downstream uses. The County Soil Survey identifies the areas that are most susceptible to flooding. These soils represent a reasonable line for a channelized floodway. The downstream golf course might not be able to withstand the increased storm volumes or velocities from the proposed channelization. Without adequate filtration and distance to waterways, non-point source pollution emanating from commercial parking lots could also degrade water quality. Overall, any channel relocation needs to be thoroughly scrutinized to protect the health, safety, and welfare of any future residents, both within the development and downstream, protect habitat values, and preserve the floodway function.

Because of the potential to be breached or overflowed in periodic storms, levees should not be allowed as part of any drainage plan. Detention should be planned off-channel to minimize degradation of the Jimmy Camp Creek stream channels. In terms of functionality and sustained integrity, no altered floodplain slope should be greater than 4:1, otherwise soil bioengineering will likely fail.

The area also has high potential for sedimentation, which would require cleaning after storm events. An operational manual should be developed as part of the Sketch Plan Amendment to account for the eventuality of sedimentation problems along with the responsible agency and funding guarantees.

Additionally, for floodway management, roads should be built outside of existing designated floodplains, whenever possible. Even with a relocated floodplain, roadways represent 100 percent impervious cover. Locating roadways away from waterways allows filtering for non-point source pollution, a deceleration of storm flows, and water infiltration into the soil. The applicant should plan for vegetated swales, bioretention areas, filter strips, and riparian buffers for all areas adjacent to floodways. In no case should the proposed development result in increased storm volumes or velocities for downstream or adjacent property owners above historic rates.

Because of the magnitude of the Lorson Sketch Plan and the previously mentioned concerns, a drainage basin master plan is warranted.

Urban uses are planned on the eastern border of the Sketch Plan adjacent to State Lands. These State Lands are leased for grazing to provide revenue for the State school system. The State has consolidated thousands of acres in the area. Urban uses can have significant detrimental effects on ranching operations including loose dogs that harass cattle, blowing trash, trespass problems, and property damage. The applicant should buffer ranchlands from urban uses, perhaps with open space tracts or 5-acre lots, as envisioned in the Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan.

The Sketch Plan entails the construction of housing for 12,635 to 18,230 residents and would generate thousands of new vehicle trips in the area. Because of the substantial traffic impacts, the developer should participate in a fair and equitable manner for road construction of Fontaine Boulevard, Marksheffel Road, and Meridian Road.

## **Summary**

Some urban residential uses already exist to the west of the proposed development. Vacant areas within Colorado Springs exist to the north and are zoned industrial. State Lands and other ranching areas lie to the east, while 5-acre rural residential lots lie to the south.

The most significant Master Plan issues are compatibility with the existing uses, floodplain relocation, habitat impacts, and adherence to the Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan.

While the Lorson Sketch Plan has some elements sympathetic to the County Master Plan, other elements are not. To correct these deficiencies and make the Sketch Plan more consistent with the County Master Plan, the following changes are recommended:

- Incorporate compatibility measures for the northern portions of the Sketch Plan adjacent to the incorporated areas of Colorado Springs zoned as industrial.



- Given that much of the area is classified as having very high, high, or moderate wildlife impacts according to the Colorado Division of Wildlife, develop a wildlife management plan. A management plan would help address habitat and corridor preservation.
- Given that the Sketch Plan basically entails the creation of a small city with associated impacts to the drainage basin, complete a drainage basin planning study. The applicant should avoid the placement of commercial areas adjacent to the channelized Jimmy Camp Creek floodway unless measures are incorporated to protect the floodway corridor from erosion, non-point source pollution, and increased storm volumes and velocities. Commercial uses placed near the floodway would also be likely to diminish the habitat values of the remaining stream corridor. The following drainage concerns should be incorporated into the Sketch Plan and the drainage plan:
  - Because of the potential to be breached or overflowed in periodic storms, levees should not be allowed as part of any drainage plan. Detention should be planned off-channel to minimize degradation of the Jimmy Camp Creek stream channels.
  - In terms of functionality and sustained integrity, no altered floodplain slope should be greater than 4:1, otherwise soil bioengineering is more likely to fail.
  - The area also has high potential for sedimentation, which would require cleaning after storm events. An operational manual should be developed as part of the Sketch Plan Amendment to account for the eventuality of sedimentation problems along with the responsible agency and funding guarantees.
  - Limit the channelization of Jimmy Camp Creek. Use soil areas of “frequent flooding” to help determine the extent of channelization. Demonstrate how the Sketch Plan riparian areas compare with the adjacent Streamside Overlay for the City of Colorado Springs.
- Plan the eastern trail connection adjacent to the transmission easement rather than in the easement for a more viable recreation venue.
- Similarly, place trails out of engineered floodways and in adjacent buffers. Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be used in buffer zones. BMPs would help protect constructed trail facilities from flood damage and would address other values, such as buffering, filtering, habitat, creek meanders, corridor preservation, and creek bottom preservation.
- Develop separate estimates for floodplain, transmission tower easements, open space, trail, school, and park acreages. Otherwise, it is difficult to determine the acreage for each of these uses.
- Incorporate compatibility measures for the eastern areas adjacent to State Lands and private ranchlands, such as open space tracts.

If these conditions are adequately addressed by the applicant, the Plan would be consistent with the Master Plan. If approved, the Sketch Plan, as a conceptual document, should have an automatic expiration provision of 5 years.

Reviewed by Joseph C. Gorney, AICP, Planner II  
Comprehensive Planning Section

**El Paso County Planning Department  
Master Plan Consistency Review  
December 4, 2003**

**File #** SKP-03-002

**Applicants:** Fountain Valley School (owner) and the Landhuis Company (applicant)

**Parcel ID #** 55000-00-216, 061, 012, 010, & 049

**Project Name:** Lorson Ranch at Jimmy Camp Sketch Plan

**Project Description:** A request for approval of the Lorson Ranch at Jimmy Camp Sketch Plan, consisting of 1,361 acres, proposed for 908 acres of single-family residential, 29 acres of multi-family, 5 school sites, 116 acres of floodplain, 52 acres of high power line easements, and 90 acres of commercial. The property is generally east of the intersection of Fontaine Boulevard and Marksheffel Road, north of and adjacent to Peaceful Valley Estates.

## **Master Plan Elements**

### **El Paso County Policy Plan (1998)**

**Goal 6.1A** – Encourage patterns of growth and development which complement the region's unique natural environments and which reinforce community character.

**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.

**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.

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

**Policy 6.3.2** – Rely on the Small Area Planning process to define the sub-area specific boundaries for urban density development.

**Goal 6.5** – Encourage the preservation of agricultural uses as an important contributor to the economy and land use character of the County.

**Goal 11.3** – Promote the planning and design of drainage facilities which maximize on-site amenities while minimizing detrimental downstream erosion.

**Policy 11.3.1** – Where feasible, support the use of natural or naturalistic drainage approaches rather than hard line solutions.

**Goal 11.4** – Promote public safety and reduce loss of private property.

**Policy 11.4.1** – Strongly discourage development in designated floodplains.

**Policy 11.4.8** – Encourage “prudent line” approaches which adequately set structures back from flood-plain boundaries, especially in areas which may be prone to bank erosion.

## **2003 Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan**

### **Sub-Area 4 – Colorado Centre**

An overriding concern in the Sub-Area is compatibility with City industrial and residential areas ... Within unincorporated areas in the southern portion of the Sub-Area, 5-acre densities are recommended. Thirty-five-acre densities are recommended east of Jimmy Camp Creek. Once City properties are developed, 5-acre densities should be accommodated east of Jimmy Camp Creek ... Trail corridors should be constructed to link Corral Bluffs and Jimmy Camp Creek.

**Objective 2.1.** Develop with due recognition of the unique site characteristics of each sub-area

**Policy 2.1.1.** Consider physical site characteristics for all development proposals, with particular attention to mineral deposits, moderate and steep slopes, mining subsidence, debris fans, drainage ways, floodplains, and soils

**Policy 2.1.2.** Assess soils based on permeability, erodability, flooding frequency, and high water tables

**Objective 2.2.** Ensure that the nature and intensity of proposed developments are consistent with the Land Use Map and Sub-Area scenarios

**Policy 2.2.1.** New developments should demonstrate compatibility with surrounding land uses in terms of general use, connectivity, building heights, scale, overall densities, dust, and noise and feature gradual transitions in densities and/or appropriate buffers

**Policy 2.2.2.** Accommodate a compatible mix of industrial, office, commercial, residential, open space, and recreational land uses

**Policy 2.2.6.** Allow increases in lot densities provided that overall lot densities meet recommended densities on the Concept Map. Only 50% of steep slopes, floodplains, subsidence areas, strip-mined areas, and other unbuildable areas should be counted in density calculations

**Objective 2.3.** Ensure that zonings and Sketch Plans are compatible with the Land Use Map.

**Policy 2.3.2.** Encourage lands surrounding sketch plan projects or municipal areas to remain in 35-acre zoning until substantial build out of those sketch plans or municipal areas

**Policy 2.3.3.** Encourage revised sketch plans, which are consistent with the vision of the Highway 94 Update

**Policy 2.3.4.** Evaluate existing sketch plans for their compatibility with the Highway 94 Update

**Objective 3.2.** Create gradual transitions between rural and urban uses through means such as varying densities and lot sizes, buffering, and reduced building scales

**Goal 14.** Provide or facilitate a well-connected system of parks, trails, and open spaces

**Objective 14.1.** Consider strategies to incorporate open space resources into development

**Objective 14.2.** Coordinate efforts to conserve open space with efforts to preserve cultural landscapes, historic sites, and agricultural uses

**Policy 14.1.1.** Plan open space and recreational areas in conjunction with school sites, when appropriate

**Policy 14.1.3.** Identify trails early in the development process

**Policy 14.1.4.** Identify key drainages in the Planning Area suitable for open space and trails

**Policy 14.1.5.** Select trail corridors to connect and highlight community assets, both cultural and natural

**Policy 14.1.8.** Consider trail corridors along Jimmy Camp Creek and Corral Bluffs

**Goal 19.** Effectively manage waterways

**Objective 19.1.** Effectively manage flood events

**Policy 19.1.1.** Preclude damage to life and property by strict adherence to El Paso County floodplain regulations

**Policy 19.1.2.** Ensure that structures or property are not inappropriately sited in floodplains to preclude damage to downstream properties and downstream drainage structures

**Policy 19.1.3.** Preserve floodway functions through the retention of natural floodway features

**Policy 19.1.4.** Respect the potential for catastrophic floods in or near floodplains and meander belts through the use of prudent line setbacks, streamside overlays, and comprehensive drainage basin planning approaches

**Objective 19.2.** Maintain healthy waterways

**Policy 19.2.1.** Protect the integrity of existing waterways and minimize their disruption

**Policy 19.2.2.** Keep off-site drainage to historic flows

**Policy 19.2.3.** Ensure drainage is addressed for all changes in land use in accordance with existing County regulations and adopted Drainage Basin Plans

**Policy 19.2.4.** Ensure that the Army Corps of Engineers is advised of all modifications to Area wetlands and that modifications to identified wetlands use the Section 404 permitting process of the Clean Water Act as a means to control erosion and sedimentation

**Policy 19.2.5.** Coordinate County prudent line setbacks with the Streamside Overlay for the City of Colorado Springs

**Policy 19.2.6.** Ensure developments within the unincorporated portions of El Paso County complement and respect the Streamside Overlay for the City of Colorado Springs

**Policy 19.2.7.** Encourage developments to utilize adjacent streams as amenities, preserve streamside character, and help advance greater stream area functionality

**Implementation Strategy 19.2a.** Use National Wetlands Inventory Maps to produce a County wetlands map

**Goal 22.** Promote a healthy diversity of flora and fauna in the Planning Area

**Policy 22.1.1.** Promote the preservation of significant wildlife species and habitat areas as identified by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the County Natural Heritage Inventory

**Policy 22.1.1.** Encourage the preservation of water bodies and food chains critical to species preservation

## **Comprehensive Planning Comments**

As proposed, the Sketch Plan Amendment is inconsistent with the County Master Plan. It should not be approved until the applicant redesigns the Sketch Plan and addresses Master Plan consistency concerns.

Among other items, the Land Development Code (Chapter V, Section 47) requires that the applicant address the following:

- The relationship of the sketch plan to the County Master Plan
- Compatibility of the proposed land uses within and adjacent to the plan
- Availability of community facilities, to include parks and open space
- Impacts upon or of the 100-year floodplain of any water course

More specifically, the Sketch Plan in its current form does not adequately address consistency with the 2003 Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan, consistency with the 1997 Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan, floodway functions, identified sensitive wildlife habitat, and compatibility with the adjacent uses, including Stewardship Trust Lands to the east and large lot rural-residential lots to the south.

The Highway 94 Plan contains extensive language regarding the preservation of floodway functions. Development of large parcels represents an ideal opportunity to tailor a development proposal to fit the landscape functions, protect future residents and tenants, preclude environmental degradation, and create a viable part of the community fabric. Channelizing the extensive floodplain of Jimmy Camp Creek and its eastern tributary degrades its functionality and capacity with questionable effect upon future residents, both within and downstream of the development. The history of El Paso County is replete with instances of significant regional flooding, many of which occurred within the Fountain Creek watershed. Floods of note occurred in 1864, 1878, 1885, 1894, 1921, 1922, 1932, 1935, 1965, 1977, 1989, 1990, 1993, 1995, 1998, and 1999. The County Soil Survey lists the flooding frequency of the area as "frequent." The Prudent Line Setback approach espoused by El Paso County and the Streamside Overlay adopted by Colorado Springs to the north represent an attempt to protect the functionality of waterways and protect inhabitants from loss of life and property.

Commercial uses are planned, with the highest levels of impervious cover, along with one of the elementary schools, within the existing floodplain. Even with channelization and armoring, such a sketch plan design will likely maximize any floodway effects on downstream uses. It's questionable whether the downstream golf course will be able to withstand the increased storm volumes or velocities. Non-point source pollution emanating from parking lots will have far less opportunity for filtration with an associated degradation of water quality.

In general, the likely effects of the current sketch plan design include sedimentation, scouring, and increased maintenance costs with the potential to exacerbate drainage problems for downstream properties, including the City of Fountain. Alterations to the extensive Jimmy Camp Creek floodplain would likely require extensive detention, retention, and erosion control measures. In terms of functionality and sustained integrity, no floodplain slope should be greater than 3:1. The area also has high potential for sedimentation, which would require cleaning after storm events. An operation manual should be developed as part of the Sketch Plan Amendment to account for the eventuality of sedimentation problems along with the responsible agency and funding guarantees. Overall, channel relocation appears questionable with serious ramifications for the health, safety, and welfare of any future residents.

The Fountain Creek Watershed Plan, developed by the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, speaks to these issues. Issues discussed within the Plan include ongoing channel erosion, the resultant increased sediment loading, and downstream damage. The cost of downstream damage is generally borne by federal agencies, such as the Federal Emergency Management Association, municipalities, counties, and private landowners.

Several documents also speak to the sensitive nature of the wildlife habitat in the area. These include the 1997 Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan, the 2001 Survey of Critical Biological Resources for El Paso County, and the 2001 Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas for El Paso and Pueblo Counties. The floodplains and their environs are generally areas of high wildlife impact. The Survey of Wetlands also discusses the issue of flooding.

Compatibility with the rural residential areas to the south and the agricultural lands to the east has not been incorporated into the Sketch Plan. Overall, the Sketch Plan represents an abrupt transition in densities from some of the surrounding uses. Lot densities should be reduced and buffers integrated into the Sketch Plan to ensure compatibility with the rural residential uses to the south. Lot sizes should be increased to 35 acres adjacent to the State Stewardship Trust Lands on the east side of the development. Currently, the Sketch Plan features 60 acres of commercial uses in that area along with approximately 7,000 square foot residential lots. 60 acres equates roughly to the area used by three WalMarts or three large grocery stores. Such urban uses can have significant detrimental effects on ranching operations including loose dogs that harass cattle, blowing trash, trespass problems, and property damage. The 60 acres of commercial uses near Marksheffel should be eliminated. Overall, the Sketch Plan would marginalize these ranching operations and the nearby rural residential uses.

Another sketch plan worth noting for the sake of comparison is the proposed Santa Fe Springs Sketch Plan and Planned Unit Development near Falcon. The Santa Fe Springs applicant is currently revising the antiquated Santa Fe Springs Sketch Plan. Revisions are intended to make the Sketch Plan more compatible with County Master Plans, adjacent uses, and the extensive floodway functions of the site. Forthcoming revisions will include buffers between the planned urban lots and the existing rural residential lots, buffers around all floodplains, minimal hard lining of drainage ways, integration of trails into the development, and a transition in densities on the east side of the property to 35 acre lots adjacent to agricultural properties. Planned commercial uses are buffered from the adjacent uses. These measures are intended to not only

ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses and to protect environmental functions, but to create a marketable and viable real estate product.

Given its substantial acreage and the attendant design flexibility, the Lorson Sketch Plan could be modified and made more consistent with the County Master Plan by the use of such design elements.

It should be noted that some urban uses already exist on the west side of Marksheffel Road in the vicinity of Fontaine Boulevard. Some limited commercial uses outside of the floodplain could be platted near Marksheffel in that area.

Urban industrial, commercial, and residential uses are also planned adjacent to the northwest and north central portions of the Sketch Plan in the City of Colorado Springs as part of the Banning-Lewis Ranch development. Although currently identified uses could change and substantial buildout is not expected for decades, that area represents an appropriate area for the concentration of urban uses within the Sketch Plan. Plans for the City of Colorado Springs also designate the Jimmy Camp Creek floodway as a Candidate Open Space. Already, open space and trails are integrated into the Banning-Lewis Ranch development. The Lorson Ranch Sketch Plan should continue the Jimmy Camp Creek Trail and Open Space network and provide a link to southern portions of the regional trail, as identified in the County Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan. The trail is expected to not only connect to Fountain Creek Regional Park, but to ultimately connect to Pueblo as part of the Front Range Trail. The channelization espoused by the current Lorson Sketch Plan forfeits the opportunity for the creation of a lasting community amenity and its integration into the County Master Plan.

Currently, the Lorson Sketch Plan includes 52 acres of a transmission line easement and 116 acres of channelized floodplain. Other than these unbuildable areas, the Sketch Plan has no identified open space. Overall, the intent of County Master Plan elements is to encourage applicants to maintain the functionality and the integrity of these areas, protect the future residents and owners from potential hazards, and create lasting community assets. The Sketch Plan should be changed to address these elements, as required in the Land Development Code.

## **Summary**

The sketch plan stage is the most appropriate time to address Master Plan consistency by the applicant's use of both map and text elements. The Land Development Code lists the criteria most salient to a sketch plan submittal. At the present time, the submitted sketch plan does not adequately address those criteria.

More specifically, the Sketch Plan in its current form does not adequately address consistency with the 2003 Highway 94 Comprehensive Plan, consistency with the 1997 Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan, floodway functions, identified sensitive wildlife habitat, and compatibility with the adjacent uses, including Stewardship Trust Lands to the east and large lot rural-residential lots to the south.

If the Sketch Plan is ultimately modified to address Master Plan consistency concerns, resubmitted, and approved, it should contain an expiration provision of 5 years.

In its current form, however, denial is recommended.

*Reviewed by Joseph C. Gorney, AICP, Planner II  
Comprehensive Planning Section*



# Markup Summary

dsdparsons (3)

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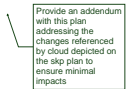


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This is not specific to this amendment. It refers to reports that were based upon the original plan and does not provide file nos



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Provide an addendum with this plan addressing the changes referenced by cloud depicted on the skp plan to ensure minimal impacts