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September 5, 2018

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

Subject: Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan Amendment (SKP-18-003)

Hello Kari,

The Planning Division of the Community Services Department has reviewed the Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan Amendment, and has the following comments of behalf of El Paso County Parks. This application will be presented to the Park Advisory Board September 12, 2018.

Request by N.E.S., Inc on behalf of Morley-Bentley Investments and SR Land, LLC, for approval of the Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan Amendment. The property is currently zoned CS, RR-5, and RS-5000 and is located along Vollmer Road, north of Woodmen Road and west of Meridian Road. The original Sketch Plan was approved in May 2009, and this amendment addresses a density modification of two residential areas. These modifications are consistent with the Sterling Ranch Preliminary Plan, Falcon/Peyton Small Area Plan, and the Black Forest Preservation Plan.

The 2013 El Paso County Parks Master Plan shows three proposed regional trail connections and one proposed bicycle route impacted by the project. The proposed Sand Creek Regional Trail alignment bisects the western portion of the property, running north/south along Sand Creek, while a western branch of the Sand Creek Trail, located along a proposed extension of Marksheffel Boulevard, will connect the primary alignment of the Sand Creek Trail to City of Colorado Springs trails located to the west of the project site. The proposed Arroyo Lane Primary Regional Trail traverses east/west along the northern property boundary and will provide connectivity to Meridian Ranch to the east. Furthermore, the proposed Vollmer Road Bicycle Route runs north/south adjacent to the western property boundary. A dedicated public right-of-way already exists along the aforementioned bicycle route, so no easement requests are necessary at that location; however, the applicant is advised that multi-model transportation options will be developed within the rights-of-way in the future.

The Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan Amendment shows 148 acres of open space, dedicated to neighborhood or community parks, greenways, drainages, landscaping buffers, and trails. This constitutes approximately 10.2% of the total project area of 1,444 acres. In addition to the 57-acre open

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space along the Sand Creek corridor, numerous 4- and 5-acre neighborhood parks are shown in the Sketch Plan, as well as a 30-acre community park located alongside Sand Creek.

The El Paso County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioner summaries for the approval of the Sterling Ranch Preliminary Plan, endorsed by the Park Advisory Board in April 2015, added requirements for the dedication to El Paso County of a 25-foot wide regional trail corridor along Sand Creek for the construction, maintenance, and public access of the Sand Creek Primary Regional Trail. This trail easement, Instrument #218054786, was dedicated to El Paso County in May 2018. This dedication, however, does not extend beyond the Preliminary Plan boundaries, so additional trail easement dedications will be required with forthcoming final plats.

Staff recommends that the developers designate and provide to El Paso County 25-foot trail easements along the remaining sections of Sand Creek, as well as along the southern side of Arroyo Lane for the purpose of construction and maintenance of the Sand Creek Regional Trail and the Arroyo Lane Regional Trail, respectively. Staff also encourages the developers to construct the aforementioned proposed neighborhood and community parks, so as to provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of Sterling Ranch. Furthermore, staff encourages the developers to construct internal trail systems that link residents not only to the proposed neighborhood and community parks, but also to the County's regional trail system.

Recommended Motion (Sketch Plan Amendment):

Recommend to the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners that the approval of Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan Amendment includes the following conditions: (1) designate and provide to El Paso County a 25-foot trail easement along the Sand Creek corridor, that allows for public access, as well as construction and maintenance by El Paso County of the Sand Creek Regional Trail, (2) designate and provide to El Paso County a 25-foot trail easement along south side of Arroyo Lane, that allows for public access, as well as construction and maintenance by El Paso County of the Arroyo Lane Regional Trail, (3) the easements shall be shown on all forthcoming preliminary plans and final plats, and the aforementioned easements shall be dedicated to El Paso County on the forthcoming final plat(s), (4) fees in lieu of land dedication for regional and urban park purposes will be calculated upon review of forthcoming preliminary plans and final plats, and will be required at time of the recording of the forthcoming final plats.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Ross A. Williams
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Sterling Ranch