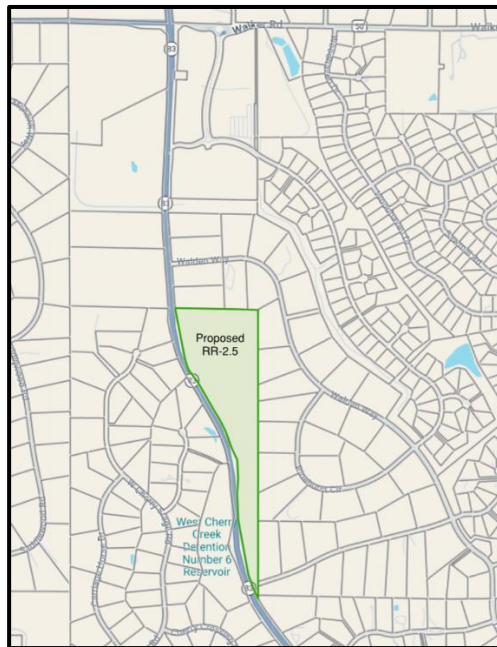


The North Ranch
Map Amendment (Rezoning)
Letter of Intent
May 14, 2026



Please
add:
P268

PCD File No. P26XX ←

The North Ranch LLC
944 Cheyenne Blvd
Colorado Springs, CO 80905

OWNER: The North Ranch LLC
944 Cheyenne Blvd
Colorado Springs, CO 80905

REPRESENTATIVE: Vertex Consulting Services, LLC
5825 Delmonico Dr., Suite 320
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

PROPERTY LOCATION: East of Highway 83 and North of Needles Drive

TAX SCHEDULE NO: 6100000369

ACREAGE: 47.55 acres

CURRENT ZONING: RR-5

PROPOSED ZONING: RR-2.5

Please briefly discuss the existing structures/land uses. Will they be affected by the rezone? If so, discuss.

UTILITY SERVICE:

Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA) provides electric service and Black Hills Energy provides natural gas service to the area. Each new dwelling unit will be served by individual onsite well and septic systems.

REQUEST:

This is a request for approval of a map amendment (rezone) of 47.55 acres to the RR-2.5 (Residential Rural) zoning district.

Analysis and Justification:

The following is an analysis of the Map Amendment (Rezoning) criteria included within Section 5.3.5 of the El Paso County Land Development Code and justification for approval:

REZONING CRITERIA #1: *“The application is in general conformance with the El Paso County Master Plan including applicable Small Area Plans or there has been a substantial change in the character of the neighborhood since the land was last zoned.”*

Your El Paso County Master Plan

Chapter 1 of Your El Paso Master Plan (2021) states that the Plan is “general in nature-it cannot tackle every issue in sufficient detail to determine every type of necessary action.” In addition, Chapter 1 goes on to state that the Plan “is intended to provide clearer and more coordinated policy, resulting in a document that effectively communicates County goals and identifies specific actions to achieve both County-wide and local area objectives.” When taken together, these two statements suggest to the reader that the Plan may only address certain issues at a cursory level

and that specific steps or actions for addressing such issues may not be offered within the Plan. However, that is not the case with this map amendment (rezoning) request, as identified below.

Chapter 3 Land Use

Key Area Analysis: “Tri-Lakes Key Area”

“Tri-Lakes” Key Area

The property is located within the Tri-Lakes Key Area. The Plan describes the key area as follows:

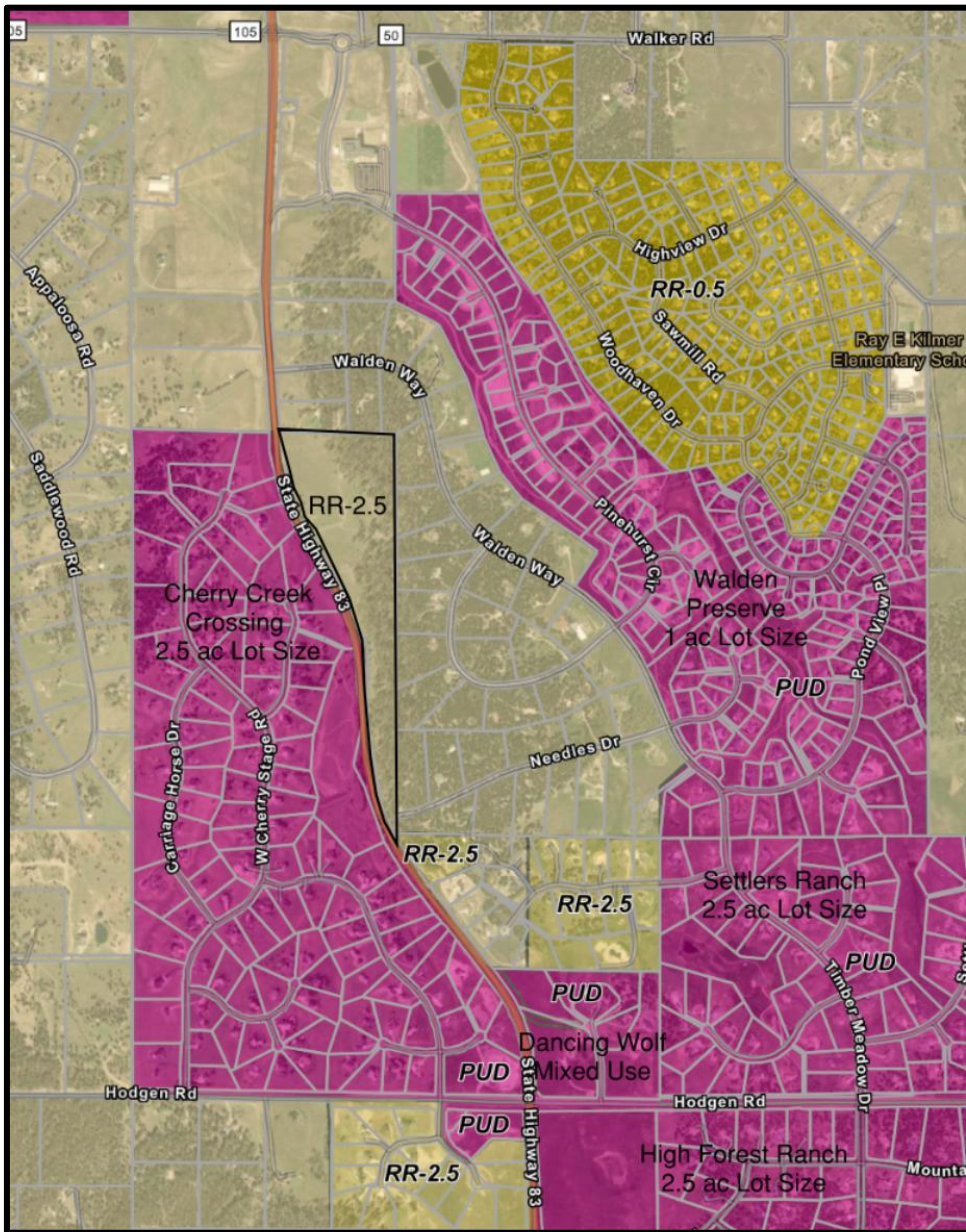
“Tri-Lakes is the northern gateway into the County along Interstate 25 and Highway 83. It is situated between Pike National Forest, the United States Air Force Academy, and Black Forest. With significant suburban development and some mixed-use development, this Key Area supports the commercial needs of many of the residents in northern El Paso County. ***Tri-Lakes also serves as a place of residence for many who commute to work in the Denver Metropolitan Area.*** It is also an activity and entertainment center with the three lakes (Monument Lake, Woodmoor Lake, and Palmer Lake) that comprise its namesake and direct access to the national forest. Tri-Lakes is the most well-established community in the northern part of the County with ***a mixture of housing options***, easy access to necessary commercial goods and services, and a variety of entertainment opportunities. ***Future development in this area should align with the existing character and strengthen the residential, commercial, employment, and entertainment opportunities in the adjacent communities of Monument, Palmer Lake, and Woodmoor.*** (emphasis added)

The proposed Map Amendment (Rezoning) is in general conformance with the El Paso County Master Plan, specifically the goals and policies applicable to the Tri-Lakes Key Area. The Master Plan identifies Tri-Lakes as a well-established residential community that accommodates a significant population of residents who commute to employment centers in the Denver Metropolitan Area. The proposed rezoning supports this role by providing additional residential opportunities that expand housing availability and reinforce the area’s function as a commuter-oriented community. The property’s proximity to Highway 83 further supports its suitability, offering convenient regional access and strengthening the connection between housing supply and employment centers to the north and south.

Furthermore, the Master Plan emphasizes that future development within the Tri-Lakes Key Area should “align with the existing character” while strengthening residential, commercial, and community opportunities in Monument, Palmer Lake, and Woodmoor. The proposed RR-2.5 zoning is consistent with this directive and reflects the established pattern of mixed residential densities in the surrounding area. Adjacent properties to the north and west are zoned RR-5, while properties immediately to the south are zoned RR-2.5, creating a compatible and gradual transition in lot sizes. The nearby Cherry Creek Crossing PUD (approximately 2.5-acre lots) and the Walden Preserve PUD

(approximately one-acre lots located roughly 800 feet to the east) further demonstrate the existing mixture of residential densities that characterize the area (see map below).

By reinforcing the existing development pattern, supporting commuter housing demand, and maintaining compatibility with surrounding zoning and land uses, the proposed Map Amendment aligns with and advances the intent of the Master Plan. As such, the application meets the review criterion that it is in general conformance with the El Paso County Master Plan.



Area of Change Analysis: “Minimal Change: Developed”

The subject property is identified in the Areas of Change map within the Plan as being within the “Minimal Change: Developed” area of change.

“Minimal Change: Developed” Area of Change

Page 21 of the Plan characterizes areas of “Minimal Change: Developed” by stating:

“These areas have undergone development and have an established character. Developed areas of minimal change are largely built out ***but may include isolated pockets of vacant or underutilized land. These key sites are likely to see more intense infill development with a mix of uses and scale of redevelopment that will significantly impact the character of an area.*** For example, a large amount of vacant land in a suburban division adjacent to a more urban neighborhood may be developed and change to match the urban character and intensity so as to accommodate a greater population. The inverse is also possible where an undeveloped portion of a denser neighborhood could redevelop to a less intense suburban scale. ***Regardless of the development that may occur, if these areas evolve to a new development pattern of differing intensity, their overall character can be maintained.***”
(Emphasis added)

This parcel is an underutilized vacant property in an enclave of developed property on all sides. To the north and east is the Walden subdivision, to the west and south the Cherry Creek Crossing subdivision. As discussed above, the proposed RR-2.5 zoning is consistent with the established pattern of mixed residential densities in the surrounding area. The proposed rezone is consistent with the surrounding established development character.

Placetype Analysis: “Large-Lot Residential”

The subject property is shown on the Placetypes map of Your El Paso Master Plan as being within the Large-Lot Residential Placetype.

Page 26 of the Plan identifies the following land uses as being Primary Land Uses within the Large-Lot Residential Placetype:

- Single-Family Detached Residential (typically 2.5 acre lots or larger)

In addition, the Placetype includes the following Supporting Land Uses:

- Parks/Open Space
- Commercial Retail
- Commercial Service
- Agriculture

The Large-Lot Residential Placetype is described further on page 26 as follows:

“The Large-Lot Residential placetype consists almost entirely of residential development and acts as the transition between placetypes. ***Development in this placetype typically***

consists of single-family homes occupying lots of 2.5 acres or more, and are generally large and dispersed throughout the area so as to preserve a rural aesthetic. The Large-Lot Residential placetype generally supports accessory dwelling units as well. Even with the physical separation of homes, this placetype still fosters a sense of community and is more connected and less remote than Rural areas. Large-Lot Residential neighborhoods typically rely on well and septic, but some developments may be served by central water and wastewater utilities. If central water and wastewater can be provided, then lots sized less than 2.5 acres could be allowed if; 1.) the overall density is at least 2.5 acres/lot, 2.) the design for development incorporates conservation of open space, and 3.) it is compatible with the character of existing developed areas.

Conservation design (or clustered development) should routinely be considered for new development within the Large-Lot Residential placetype to provide for a similar level of development density as existing large-lot areas while maximizing the preservation of contiguous areas of open space and the protection of environmental features. While the Large-Lot Residential placetype is defined by a clear set of characteristics, the different large-lot areas that exist throughout the County can exhibit their own unique characters based on geography and landscape.” (emphasis added)

The proposed rezone allows for lot sizes of 2.5 acres or greater. The concurrently submitted subdivision also depicts a total of 15 lots, resulting in an average of 3.17 acres per lot.

Chapter 4 Housing & Communities

In addition to supporting and being in compliance with the applicable Areas of Change, Key Area, and Placetype designations and policies in Chapter 3 of the Master Plan, the proposed rezoning is also in total alignment with the Residential Priority Development Area designation found in Chapter 4 of the Plan.

The subject property is located within a Priority Development Area, specifically the Black Forest/North Central Area. Priority Development areas were specifically identified in an effort to guide growth towards certain areas of the County first, before developing others.

The Plan states “El Paso County is expecting significant growth over the next 20 years. While large expanses of undeveloped land exist throughout the County, particularly in the Rural Placetype, development should be prioritized elsewhere to efficiently utilize and extend existing infrastructure, conserve water resources, and strengthen established neighborhoods. This framework identifies specific locations throughout the County that should be prioritized first for new residential development to help accommodate growth.”

The Black Forest/North Central Area is described further on page 57 as follows:

Black Forest is a community with one of the strongest and most well-established

characters in El Paso County. This area is built around protecting the forest and preserving its rural quality. Due to this natural amenity, many new residents seek to live in this area when moving to the County.

- ***Careful planning is required to promote health of natural areas, especially the forest, while accommodating new development for future residents.***
- The County should ***maintain existing and expand the Large-Lot Residential place type*** in this area in a development pattern that matches the existing character of the developed Black Forest community.
- Commercial nodes should be considered where appropriately served by the transportation network in the northern area to provide commercial goods and services within closer proximity to the population in this area. This would reduce unnecessary travel to other parts of the County and establish key commercial areas within the communities that need them.

The proposed zoning aligns with the Master Plan recommendations, including prioritizing development in this area of the County while maintaining and expand the Large Lot Residential Placetype. Additionally, the property owners have already completed a tree survey which resulted in the removal of beetle-infested trees. The property owners have also drafted a detailed forestry management and wildfire mitigation plan and begun the necessary mitigation to ensure not only the health of the forest but also the safety of those in the area.

El Paso County Water Master Plan

The subject property is located within Planning Region 2 of the Water Master Plan, pursuant to Figure 3-1 on page 25, which includes Walden Water and Sanitation District along with several other central water providers. Table 5-3 of the Plan identifies that Region 2 has a current demand of 7,532 acre-feet per year and a current supply of 13,607 acre-feet per year, which results in current excess water supplies in the amount of 6,075 acre-feet per year. Tables 5-4 and 5-5 project Region 2 as continuing to have excess water supplies at year 2040 and at full buildout (2060) in the amount of 1,894 acre-feet and 353 acre-feet, respectively. A Water Resources Report is not required with a rezone application and, therefore, has not been provided. A finding of water sufficiency will be required at the subdivision stage of development.

El Paso County Parks Master Plan

The El Paso County Parks Master Plan (2022) does not depict any planned open space on, or adjacent to the subject property. The Plan depict a planned bicycle route along Highway 83 and Walker Road. Land dedication, or fees in lieu of land dedication are not required at the rezoning stage of development, but will be required at the final plat stage of development.

2024 Major Transportation Corridors Plan (MTCP)

The 2045 Roadway Plan (Classification and Lanes) exhibit of the 2024 El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan (MTCP) identifies Highway 83 to the west of the project as a “Principal Arterial”. A traffic impact study was prepared by SM Rocha and has been submitted in support of the requested rezone application. **please include the proposed surface type for the new road to be built with the subdivision. Please comment on the condition of the existing roadway and if the condition is suitable for the new development.**

Other Topical Elements

The proposed rezone is in compliance with the other topical elements of the County Master Plan, including the Master Plan for Mineral Extraction, and the El Paso County Wildlife Habitat Maps and Descriptors.

REZONING CRITERIA #2: *The rezoning is in compliance with all applicable statutory provisions, including but not limited to C.R.S. § 30-28-111 § 30-28-113, and § 30-28-116.*

County staff has not identified any issues regarding the proposed rezoning’s compliance with all applicable statutory provisions. Pursuant to state statute and El Paso County’s notification procedures, the County will cause the public hearing notice to be published in the newspaper ensuring all statutory requirements have been satisfied.

REZONING CRITERIA #3: *The proposed land use or zone district is compatible with the existing and permitted land uses and zone districts in all directions.*

The property owner is requesting to rezone the property from the RR-5 zoning district to the RR-2.5 zoning district. The parcels located immediately adjacent to the south are zoned RR-2.5. The property is also surrounded by the RR-5 and PUD (2.5 acre) zoning districts (refer to zoning map above). The RR-2.5 zone is compatible with the RR-5 zone.

Section 3.2 of the Code provides the purpose statements for all conventional zoning districts within unincorporated El Paso County.

The purpose of the RR-2.5 (Residential Rural) zoning district:

“The RR-2.5 zoning district is a 2.5 acre district intended to accommodate low-density, rural, single family residential development.”

The purpose of the RR-5 (Residential Rural) zoning district:

“The RR-5 zoning district is a 5 acre district intended to accommodate low density, rural, single-family residential development.”

The primary difference in the intent of the above zoning districts is the dimensional standards, more specifically the minimum lot size requirement. Both districts purpose statement includes “to accommodate low density, rural, single-family residential development.” Both districts allow for single-family and rural land uses. The purpose statements of the zoning districts are compatible with one another.

The Land Development Code definition of “Compatibility” clearly points out that two items do not need to be identical in order to be considered compatible; “The characteristics of different uses, activities or designs which allow them to be located near or adjacent to each other in harmony. Some elements affecting compatibility include height, scale, mass and bulk of structures. Other important characteristics that affect compatibility are landscaping, lighting, noise, odor and architecture. Compatibility does not mean “the same as.” Rather, compatibility refers to the sensitivity of the proposed use, activity or design in maintaining the character of existing development within the vicinity.”

Using the Code definition, compatibility can be accomplished if:

1. Located adjacent to one another in harmony (coexist without negative impacts).

The existing condition is harmonious. The fact that the surrounding zoning districts are already varied with A-5, RR-5, RR-2.5, RR-0.5, and PUD adjacent to one another is evidence enough that these zoning districts can, and do, abut one another harmoniously.

The RR-2.5 zoning district permitted uses is essentially a paired down, or less intense, list of those land uses allowed in the RR-5 zoning district. There are no permitted uses in the RR-2.5 zone that are not permitted in the immediately adjacent zoning. The zone districts can remain adjacent in harmony.

2. Compatible height

The adjacent zoning districts all allow for a maximum height of 30 feet.

3. Compatible scale, massing, and bulk

The RR-5 and adjacent PUD zoning district have a maximum coverage of 25% whereas the RR-2.5 does not include a maximum coverage. However, the drainage report submitted with the concurrently reviewed subdivision application includes a maximum lot coverage of 10%, which is lesser than that required by the PUD or RR-5 zoning districts. Anticipated structures in all zone districts include single-family detached dwellings, garages, and barns.

The scale, massing, and bulk standards within the surrounding zone districts are compatible, and identical.

4. Compatible landscaping, light, noise, odor, and architecture

All zone district have the same landscaping, lighting, noise, and architectural standards.

5. Maintain the character of existing development in the vicinity

As discussed above, the proposed RR-2.5 zoning is consistent with the established pattern of mixed residential densities in the surrounding area.

REZONING CRITERIA #4: *The site is suitable for the intended use, including the ability to meet the standards as described in Chapter 5 of the Land Development Code, for the intended zone district.*

Table 5-4 of the Land Development Code identifies the density and dimensional standards of the RR-2.5 zoning district:

- Minimum lot size: 2.5 acres
- Front Setback: 25 feet
- Side Setback: 15 feet
- Rear Setback: 25 feet
- Maximum Height: 30 feet

The concurrently reviewed subdivision depicts lot sizes meeting the 2.5 acres size limitation. Each dwelling unit will be required to submit for approval of a residential site plan demonstrating compliance with the dimensional standards included in Chapter 5.

PCD has not reviewed a subdivision application for this property. Please revise to add insight into future development / submittals.