



Sterling Design Associates, llc

CIVIL ENGINEERS - LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

May 16, 2017

El Paso County  
Planning and Community Development Department  
2880 International Circle, Suite 110  
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

RE: Visual Impact Analysis for Proposed Starbucks, Lot 2 Academy Gateway Subdivision

Dear Ms. Parsons,

The site is located on the west side of Struthers Rd just north of the intersection with North Gate Blvd within the Academy Gateway Subdivision. The site lies within the Tri-Lakes area and I-25 Corridor. Of particular emphasis in the I-25 corridor is the preservation of the natural character of the corridor. The I-25 visual overlay further emphasizes efforts to cluster development in order to preserve open space and viewsheds to the Front Range and eastern plains, provide screening for parking, minimizing large parking fields visible from I-25, reducing adverse impacts from signage, and promotes the use of low level lighting, and the native landscaping.

The proposed development lies on the east most edge of the subdivision along Struthers Rd. and will have limited visibility if any from I-25. The 2,200 SF building is limited in height to 22'-6" with raised parapets to screen rooftop equipment. The elevation of the site and low building maintain views to the Front Range from the Ridge Pointe Apartments. The location does not allow for views to the eastern plains because of the existing topography and apartments directly to the east of the site so that will not be applicable for this property.

The parking lot consists of spaces for 23 cars and a drive through lane for roughly 12 cars. Parking lot islands are provided above and beyond the El Paso County Land Development Code standards of 1 island / 15 spaces to soften the parking lot, provide shade, and reduce glare and heat gain. A 25' wide landscape buffer with evergreen trees is provide along the east side facing Struthers Rd and the multi-family residential across Struthers which provides year round screening of the building, parking, and drive through lane.

Landscape species proposed in the landscape plans were selected from the Academy Gateway Design Guidelines and consists of a mix of native and naturalized plantings appropriate for area and in harmony with the I-25 Corridor visual overlay goals.

Proposed signage for the site is limited to one low monument sign and building mounted signage. The monument sign is proposed to be located along Struthers Rd. at either the intersection of Glen Eagle Gate View or at the access drive just south. The final location is yet to be finalized. The sign will be constructed according to the Academy Gateway Design Guidelines and El Paso County Code.

Jay M. Newell, PE  
Wayne T. Sterling, RLA, LEED AP

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No up-lighting is proposed and all parking lot lights and building mounted lighting will be low level, full cutoff fixtures per the Academy Gateway Design Guidelines.

In conclusion, the proposed Starbucks design meets the goals set forth in the I-25 Corridor visual overlay plan in that it maintains the natural character of the corridor, provides for native and naturalized landscaping, provides screening of the parking lot and building, provides low impact signage, and provides for low level lighting while maintaining the views to the Front Range.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Spencer', followed by a long horizontal line.

Jonathan Spencer, PLA  
On behalf of Sterling Design Associates, LLC

Jay M. Newell, PE  
Wayne T. Sterling, RLA, LEED AP

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