



# EL PASO COUNTY

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## DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

July 17, 2024

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

**Subject: Southern Colorado Rail Park Metropolitan District Nos. 1-3 Review (ID-24-004)**

Hello Kari,

The Park Planning Division of the Parks and Community Services Department has reviewed the Southern Colorado Rail Park Metropolitan District application and wishes to submit the following comments on behalf of El Paso County Parks.

This is a request by White Bear Ankele Tanaka & Waldron on behalf of Edw. C. Levy Company, for consideration of the Southern Colorado Rail Park Metropolitan District Nos. 1-3. These proposed districts will encompass the Southern Colorado Rail Park Project, which consists of approximately 140 acres of commercial use and 2,275 acres of heavy and light industrial uses. The site is located south of Charter Oak Ranch Road, west of Interstate Highway 25, and is bounded by the Fort Carson Army Base on its north, west, and east boundaries.

The 2022 El Paso County Parks Master Plan shows no impacts to proposed or existing parks, trails, or open space. Existing and proposed sections of the Fountain Creek Regional Trail lie to the east of the project area, east of Interstate 25, while Christian Open Space is located one mile northeast of the proposed industrial park. El Paso County's Clear Spring Ranch Open Space is located one mile to the east of the project, as are future proposed connections to the South Powers Boulevard Regional Trail.

These aforementioned recreational facilities will not be impacted directly by the project. However, it is noted that the submitted Sketch Plan shows a future extension of South Powers Boulevard / State Highway 21 to serve the east side of the industrial park. Clear Spring Ranch Open Space – owned by Colorado Springs Utilities and managed by El Paso County Parks – may be impacted by the proposed extension. El Paso County Parks has been heavily involved in the planning for the extension of Powers Boulevard and is aware of the possible impacts to Clear Spring Ranch Open Space and the Fountain Creek Regional Trail. This extension and its impacts to the mentioned park and trail facilities, however, have no bearing on the review of this metropolitan district application.

The applicant's Letter of Intent and proposed Service Plan make mention of future parks, trails, and open space, but Parks staff acknowledges that such recreational facilities will not be included in the project area beyond the designation of open space areas for floodplain and wetland habitat protection. Recreational facilities are not expected in an industrial area with expected heightened security and public safety concerns. The Southern Colorado Rail Park Metropolitan District Service Plan and Letter of Intent do include the following statements in regard to parks, trails, and open space:

- **Letter of Intent, Page 5, Compliance with EPC Parks Master Plan:** *Per the 2022 Parks Master Plan Update, the nearest existing and/or proposed regional trail to the Project is the Fountain Creek Regional Trail on the east side of I-25. The El Paso County Department of Parks and Community Services has stated that: "The El Paso County Parks*

*Master Plan does not show any facilities directly impacted by the [P]roject. Proposed and completed sections of the Fountain Creek Regional Trail lie to the east of the [P]roject area, east of Interstate 25. No regional park fees are recommended, as the County has elected to not require park fees for commercial subdivisions.”*

- **Service Plan, Page 9, Parks and Recreation:** *The Districts shall have the power and authority to plan, design, acquire, construct, install, relocate, redevelop, operate, and maintain park and recreation facilities and programs, including, but not limited to, parks, pedestrian ways, bike paths, bike storage facilities, signage, interpretive kiosks and facilities, open space, landscaping, cultural activities, community centers, recreational centers, water bodies, wildlife preservation and mitigation areas, riparian improvements, irrigation facilities, playgrounds, pocket parks, swimming pools, undergrounding utilities, and other active and passive recreational facilities, together with all necessary, incidental, and appurtenant facilities, land and easements, and all extensions of and improvements to said facilities. It is anticipated that the Districts will own and maintain park and recreation improvements not conveyed to the County, other appropriate jurisdiction, or other entity.*

*The Districts shall not have the authority to apply for or utilize any Conservation Trust (“Lottery”) funds without the express prior consent of the Board of County Commissioners. The Districts shall have the authority to apply for and receive any other grant funds, including, but not limited to, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) discretionary grants. Such approval, although required, is not considered to be a material modification which would require the need to revise this Service Plan.*

In conclusion and with the understanding that no recreational facilities will be provided within the bounds of the industrial park, EPC Parks and Community Services does not object to the formation of the Southern Colorado Rail Park Metropolitan District Nos. 1-3. These comments are being provided administratively and do not require endorsement by the Park Advisory Board.

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

Sincerely,



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