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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

February 15, 2023

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

**Subject: Sterling Ranch Metropolitan Districts No. 4 and 5 (ID-23-001)**

Hello Kari,

The Park Operations Division of the Community Services Department has reviewed the Sterling Ranch Metropolitan Districts No. 4 and 5 application, and has the following comments on behalf of El Paso County Parks:

This is a request by Spencer Fane, LLP., on behalf of Classic SRJ, LLC., for approval of the Sterling Ranch Metropolitan Districts No. 4 and 5. The combined districts include approximately 581 acres and are currently zoned RR-5. The site is located east of Vollmer Road and south of Arroyo Lane and includes the future eastern extensions of Briargate Parkway and Sterling Ranch Roads. The property is located immediately north of the City of Colorado Springs, north of Woodmen Road, and includes proposed areas of mixed-acreage urban residential land uses.

Previous reviews of sketch plans, preliminary plans, and PUD development plans for the overall Sterling Ranch development and individual filings highlighted impacts to El Paso County Parks master planned regional trails and on-road bicycle routes. The 2022 El Paso County Parks Master Plan shows the Sand Creek Primary Regional Trail effectively bisecting the Sterling Ranch development, running north-south along the western banks of Sand Creek. Numerous trail easements have already been dedicated for the Sand Creek Regional Trail, but are primarily outside of the current metropolitan district service area boundary.

Furthermore, the Woodmen Hills Secondary Regional Trail runs north-south along the northeastern boundary of the development, where it provides connections between the Sand Creek Regional Trail and locations to the southeast. Lastly, the Arroyo Lane Primary Regional Trail runs east-west along Arroyo Lane on the far northern boundary of the development, providing the connection between the two aforementioned regional trails. Trail easement dedications will be necessary along these trail corridors as the Sterling Ranch progresses through its development.

The Parks Master Plan also shows the proposed Vollmer Road Bicycle Route running north-south along Vollmer Road on the west side of the property, as well as the proposed Briargate Parkway Bicycle Route running east-west along the future Briargate Parkway extension, essentially bisecting the development. Dedicated public rights-of-way already exist or will be dedicated along these aforementioned bicycle routes, so no additional regional trail easement dedications were necessary or are anticipated during the development of Sterling Ranch.

EPC staff continues to be encouraged by the applicant's willingness to provide extensive recreational amenities for its residents and citizens of El Paso County through the development of an expansive and connected park, trail, and open space system. At this time, two park lands agreements have been executed for the purpose of waiving urban park fees in exchange for the construction of neighborhood urban park facilities in Homestead at Sterling Ranch Filing No. 2 and Branding Iron at Sterling Ranch Filing No. 2 – both located outside of the boundaries of the service areas of this current metropolitan application. A

forthcoming Urban Park Lands Agreement is anticipated for Homestead North at Sterling Ranch Filing No. 1 as well. Furthermore, a Regional Trail Agreement has been proposed by the applicant, and while this program is still in the development stages, an agreement is anticipated to take effect in 2023.

According to the service plan area map, as well as previously submitted sketch plan maps, numerous neighborhood pocket parks and a large community park, accessed by an interconnected network of trails and open space corridors, will provide modern recreational facilities for the residents and visitors of Sterling Ranch, particularly within the residential areas included in the metropolitan districts' service areas. The Sterling Ranch Metropolitan Districts No. 4 and 5 Service Plan includes the following statements:

- Page 1: Proposed Improvements to be Financed: Proposed completion of an estimated \$140,000,000 of on and off-site public improvements, including, but not limited to, roadway, water, sanitary sewer, drainage, **park and recreation**, and Sand Creek Channel improvements (including access roads and wetland mitigation)..
- Page 2: Proposed Ongoing Services: The Developer and the proposed Districts intend to work with existing overlapping service providers to obtain the necessary consents and/or approvals for the provision of necessary services to the Districts including, but not limited to, water, sewer, streets, stormwater and drainage, and **parks and recreation**.
- Page 2: Proposed Fees: The Districts anticipate imposing fees, including capital fees, facilities fees, drainage fees, and operations and maintenance fees, including an **open space maintenance fee** and street lighting fee.
- Page 9: **Parks and Recreation**: The Districts shall have the power and authority to finance, design, construct, acquire, install, maintain, and provide for public park and public recreation centers and other recreation facilities, services, or programs, including, but not limited to, grading, soil preparation, landscaping, sprinkler systems, fencing, pavilions, playgrounds, playing fields, open space, bike trails, pedestrian trails, pedestrian bridges, picnic areas, common area landscaping, streetscaping, storage buildings and facilities, weed control, paving, decorative paving, outdoor functional and decorative lighting, community events, and other services, programs, and facilities, with all necessary and incidental and appurtenant facilities, land and easements, together with all extensions and improvements thereto. To the extent necessary, the Districts shall dedicate any necessary improvements to one or more governmental entities that provide service ("Provider Jurisdiction") in accordance with the Provider Jurisdiction's rules and regulations. It is anticipated that the Districts will own, operate, and maintain the park and recreation improvements and facilities if not otherwise dedicated to another appropriate 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.

- A Service Area Map submitted with this metropolitan district application, as well as a previously submitted site/landscape plan (included with this review as an attachment), shows all park, trail, and open space tracts within the bounds of the Sterling Ranch, including those areas included in this application.



- The Estimated Infrastructure Capital Costs table, included as Exhibit C in this application, shows \$17,121,500 dedicated for the construction of parks, trails, and open space within each metropolitan district, including the 25+ acre community park.

In conclusion, Parks staff is encouraged by the applicant's continuing desire to plan and provide recreational opportunities for local residents and visitors of Sterling Ranch, including an internal parks, trail, and open space system that provides residents and visitors easily accessible and modern recreational amenities for citizens of all ages. The Sterling Ranch Metropolitan Districts will only serve to bolster these public recreational goals.

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,



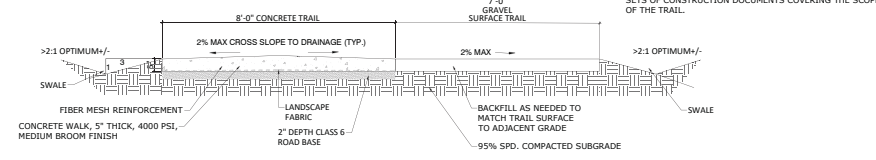
Ross A. Williams  
Park Planner  
Park Operations Division  
Community Services Department  
[rosswilliams@elpasoco.com](mailto:rosswilliams@elpasoco.com)



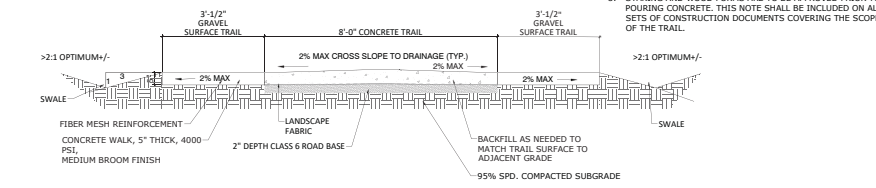


# 15' H20 LOADED REGIONAL TRAIL

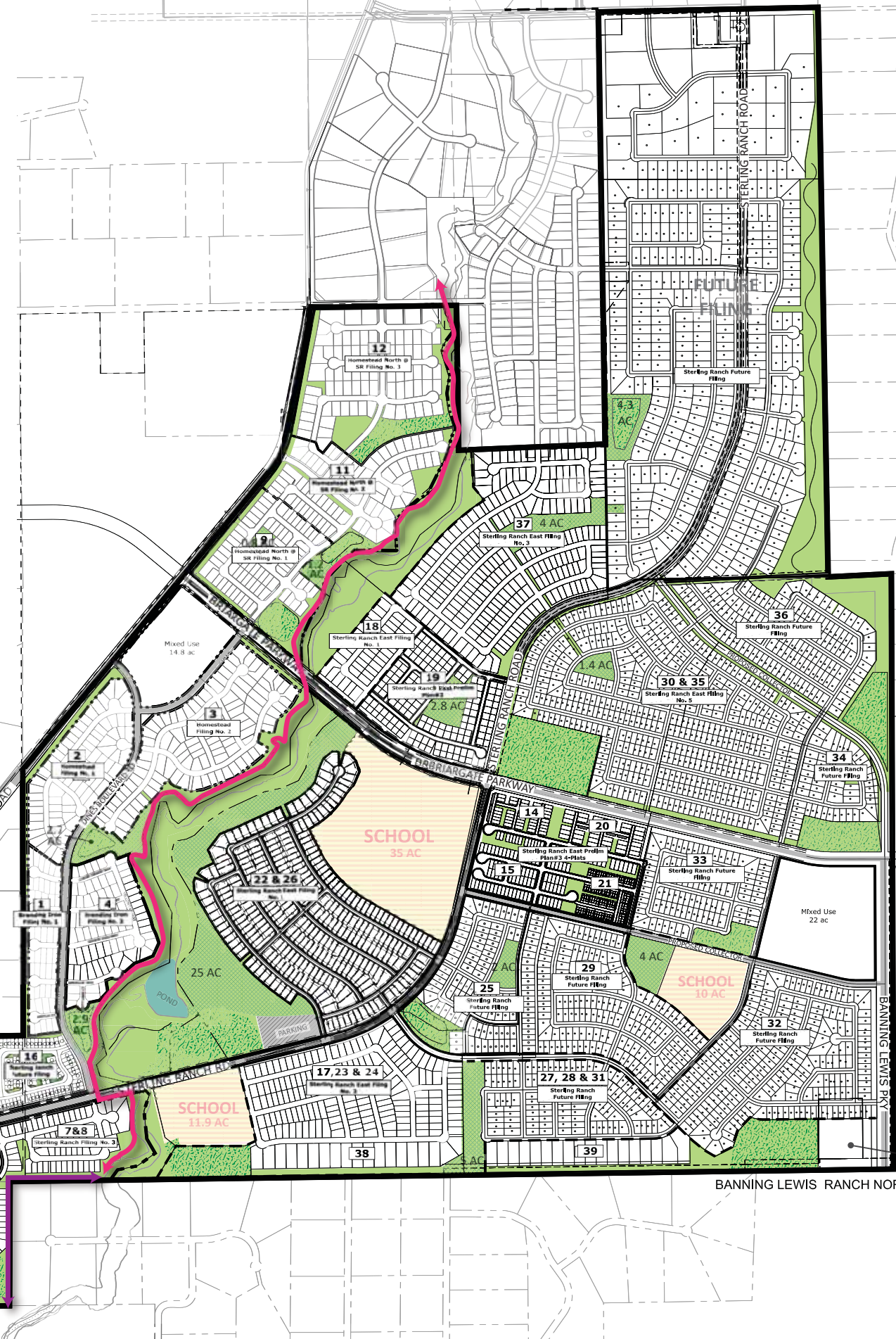
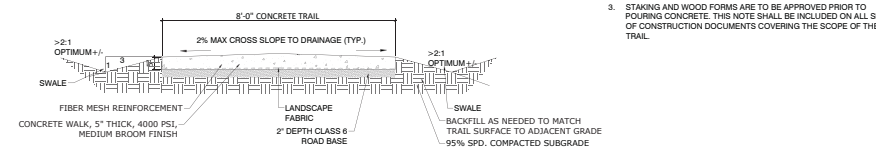
## OPTION 1



## OPTION 2



## 8' TRAIL



### LEGEND

- 15' MAINTENANCE ROAD INCORPORATING 8' H20 LOADED CONCRETE TRAIL WITH 7" GRAVEL SHOULDER
- 8' H20 CONCRETE REGIONAL TRAIL NO GRAVEL SHOULDER