

To: Holly Williams, El Paso County Commissioner, District 1
Carrie Geitner, District 2
Stan VanderWerf, District 3
Longino Gonzales, Jr., District 4
Cami Bremer, District 5
Ryan Houser, El Paso County Dept. of Planning and Community Development

From: Bill Heeter, President of Cathedral Pines Metro District Board
Kevin Ehlers, President of Cathedral Pines Homeowners' Association

Date: November 10, 2021

Re: Flying Horse North Development

As President of the Cathedral Pines Metro District Board and President of the Cathedral Pines Homeowners' Association, we are writing on behalf of our residents to express our concerns over the proposed development of Flying Horse North (FHN) that deviates from El Paso County's Master Plan. We believe the possibility exists that Black Forest and more specifically, the community of Cathedral Pines, could be negatively impacted by the adjacent development of Flying Horse North if lot densities are increased. The degree of that impact depends greatly upon whether the plans for the undeveloped parts of Flying Horse North are consistent or deviate with the directives of the Master Plan.

Cathedral Pines is a 171-property upscale community located just south of Flying Horse North with a number of homes directly adjacent to Flying Horse North. Our development is heavily forested with mature Ponderosa Pines, four ponds within our community, a walking trail around the perimeter of Cathedral Pines that is shared with the County. The area is gifted with an abundance of wildlife and many of us have chosen to live in Cathedral Pines because of the natural beauty and density of the forested surroundings. We are concerned that possible changes to the El Paso County Master Plan for the area could be detrimental to the aesthetics, environment, and wildlife in the area. We believe the Master Plan should be used as it was meant to be, as a guide in decision-making, and not cast aside in favor of greater density and a change in the development strategy of Flying Horse North.

Cathedral Pines and Flying Horse North are both identified as Large-Lot Residential areas in the Master Plan. The Plan then proceeds to describe Large-Lot Residential/Conservation design (or clustered development), and later says such areas should "provide for a similar level of development density as existing large-lot areas [2.5-5 acres] while maximizing the preservation of contiguous areas of open space and the protection of environmental features".

In addition, the Master Plan specifically states "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 placetype in this area in a development pattern that matches the existing character of the developed Black Forest community** (emphasis added). Both Cathedral Pines and Flying Horse North are also identified in the plan as "Forested" along with the adjacent Black Forest community. Again, as stated in the Master Plan, "The seamless connection between the natural environment and small scale, low intensity development is critical to their identity."

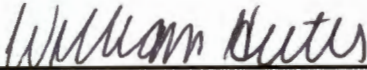
The existing golf course in Flying Horse North (part in the Forested area) and the two open space parks shown on the preliminary plan, while technically qualify as open space, provide no protection of the forested area. As cited in the Master Plan there is a need to " balance development with environmental stewardship and protect valued areas and habitats." Larger lot sizes and incorporating buffers where appropriate would accomplish the need to preserve this unique localized characteristic versus allowing much greater density of housing through smaller lot sizes and greater residential development. The identification of Flying Horse North as "Potential for Annexation and Annexation Areas of Interest" are contradictory to these objectives.

Our concerns as the community adjacent and potentially connected to FHN via a possible Milam Road extension (making it a thoroughfare into FHN) include increased automobile traffic on roads not equipped to handle it; added sound and light pollution; increased use of our community trails requiring more maintenance and upkeep (an expense our community incurs); the incompatibility with nearby lower-cost and denser development; a lack of protection for the forested area and wildlife; possible water supply implications; and the lowering of our property values. The infringement on the quietude and nature-filled views of Cathedral Pines along with the inconsistency with the adjoining neighborhood would greatly and likely negatively influence the decision to purchase in our community. In addition, any decision to make Milam Road a southern entry point into Flying Horse North would also require the elimination of the heavily forested area at the center of our community and negatively affect all of our residents.

As representatives of Cathedral Pines and with our respective Boards' endorsements, we urge the commissioners to consider the possible negative implications of changing the development of Flying Horse North to allow greater density and access through Cathedral Pines, and to remain true to the original objectives of the El Paso County Master Plan.

Below our signatures is a photograph of Cathedral Pines and our area to give you a visual sense of our community, and we invite you to personally visit Cathedral Pines and meet our residents. We are most concerned about this issue and are closely monitoring its developments.

Many thanks for your consideration.



William Heeter, President, Cathedral Pines Metro District Board



Kevin Ehlers, President, Cathedral Pines Homeowners' Association

