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

Re: Site Development Plan Letter of Intent – ROCKY TOP RESOURCES, INC., 1755 E. Las Vegas Street . . . APN 64291-01-029, 030 and 031

LAND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS, INC. is representing Fred Martin of ROCKY TOP RESOURCES, INC. in this application for a Site Development Plan submittal in an I-3 Heavy Industrial zone for a planned use classification as a Recycling Facility. Use Variances were approved by the BOCC in the past to allow this operation within the existing RR-0.5 zone, are now expired and will no longer be granted. This request is being made to bring ROCKY TOP RESOURCES, INC. in compliance with its current uses on the property.

This site is located Southeast of the intersection of E. Las Vegas Street and the MLK Bypass. It consists of a series of "combined" platted tracts, with exceptions for CDOT, City and/or County rights-of-way. Fountain Creek runs along the Southwest of the site and Spring Creek runs along the East. A large number of mature trees exist along both these drainages and will serve as a good natural sight buffer. Surrounding zones are mainly County RR-0.5, M and I-3, and City M-1, M-2 and PF, with many of the properties being vacant.

The I-3 Heavy Industrial Zone category includes manufacturing, research facilities, warehousing, offices, mineral resources conversion operations, communications, and recycling operations. Within each County zone, principal permitted uses (uses allowed by right) and special or conditional uses (uses requiring approval) are noted. The I-3 zoning district is intended to accommodate manufacturing and industrial uses, which may include related outside storage of raw or finished materials, that are already on-site. This area is unlikely to develop as residential or agricultural due to it being located in a high industrial area and also is within a floodplain. The County has deemed this property and its planned uses appropriate for this zone, therefore, this request is consistent with the County Policy Plan, subject to an immediately-subsequent Site Development Plan formal submittal to follow approval of this zone change request.

Dimensional standards for this zone are as follows: Minimum Area – 40 acres; Minimum Setbacks – Front 30 feet, Rear 30 feet, Side 30 feet; Maximum Coverage – 25%; Maximum Structure Height Formula – a plane with a pitch of 2 feet horizontal to 1 foot vertical beginning 25 feet above all property lines using the mean property line elevations as the datum . . . these standards will be met for existing and proposed structures.

In regards to criteria for general conformance Section 5.3.5(B) approval, we offer the following: The value to the community at-large is that the industrial uses supply employment for area residents, allow a place to take their desired recycling efforts and generate revenue into the local economy. The landscape materials storage and recycling drop-off supplies jobs to local retail, truckers and operators. The wildlife habitats that are to remain undisturbed are utilized by El Paso County Parks via the granted Easement for the Fountain Creek Regional Trail. This area provides community recreation and nature/wildlife education. The I-3 zone will allow all existing and proposed structures and uses statutory provisions, therefore it will be compatible with the existing and permitted land uses.

The primary access point off of E. Las Vegas Street is an existing 30' Private Access Easement as an approved driveway entrance/exit located approximately in the middle of the property. The existing access off of E. Las Vegas Street has an existing gate approximately 300' from the Street's intersection. This will allow trucks and vehicles to more easily pull off Las Vegas Street without blocking traffic and creating an unsafe situation. Access and landscaping improvement installation will be planned in accordance with the future City of Colorado Springs E. Las Vegas Street, Spring Creek Drive Intersection Improvement Construction (unknown start date). This time delay will affect new entrance and employee parking improvement due to the raising of the existing grade per said City improvement. Until that time, temporary entrance landscaping will be provided and will be hand-watered, in conjunction with on-site continuous dust control during recycling activities. On-site landscaping around the proposed new building will also be maintained by hand watering.

A deviation from the standards of or in Section 2.3.7.E of the Engineering Criteria Manual (ECM) is requested. The design elements for a left turn lane into the site are the bay taper, lane length, storage length, which in combination makes up the left turn lane. There is an existing two-lane bridge (Spring Creek) located approximately 500 feet East of the site access. Accommodating the full auxiliary lane, taper and the required lane redirect taper (which would not be modified) would not be feasible given the distance between the access and the bridge. Further details and justification can be reviewed in the Deviation Request.

The number of employee vehicles on-site are an average of 15. On-site vehicles and equipment include: front end loaders (6) of various sizes; grinders (3); delivery trucks, semis with trailers (6); dump/roll-off trucks (6); trailers (2); water truck (1). Vehicular site use count is estimated at 300/day weekdays and 500-600/day on Saturdays in the summer time, and approximately one-third of that during the winter time. Internal access roads will consist of existing gravel, concrete pads and dirt surfaces in varying and changing routes based on material stockpile locations and quantities. No further asphalt or concrete paving is planned for on-site accessways, except in the vicinity of the proposed new building for parking stalls and garage aprons. A Traffic Memo is provided with this revised submittal.

About one-fourth of the site lies in the Fountain Creek Floodway. The Western portion of the adjacent property has been modified to reflect improvements that were made with the construction of the Bypass, taking some portions out of the designated floodway. The area remaining in the floodway may be fenced off and used for grazing. The areas not used are within both the 100-year and the 500-year floodplain. The rest of the site is outside of the 500 year floodplain which presents no restrictions to this type of use (see delineation on the revised Site Development Plan. No wetlands were found to be present on the site. The understory beneath the existing cottonwood trees consist of upland grasses dominated by non-native smooth brome grass and various upland herbaceous weedy species such as kochia, flixweed, and goosefoot and do not qualify as a wetland plant community. The noted waterways are jurisdictional and activities within the ordinary high water mark would be subject to regulation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. No activities are proposed within said ordinary high water mark at this time, nor any activity East of Spring Creek, and as such, a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is not required. A revised Drainage Report and Landscape Plan are provided with this Site Development Plan submittal.

The existing commercial well and septic system (portable restroom sanitary units) handle the needs of the work day hours business. At the present time, the portable restroom sanitary units are a temporary condition to be upgraded to an acceptable septic system at time of new structure construction, as located on the revised Site Development Plan. Soils Engineer evaluations for the OWTS is included with this revised submittal.

As mentioned with past Use Variance requests, this 44.8 +/- acre site has the potential to expand with much more room for safer operations. The initial intent is to provide a new office building with customer parking just West of the existing office modular. This will be an extended single-story shop/two-story office and mezzanine structure. This will house bathrooms, lockers and a lunchroom for the anticipated average of 15 employees. A future expansion of 40' to the proposed new building is anticipated.

The processing area, where most of the work will be done and which will produce the most noise, will be back behind the future shop building and at varying location across the site. On-site storage of collection dumpsters will be limited to an area along Spring Creek. This area is heavily treed so it will be well screened. Lumber piles, which are the most unattractive portion of the operation, will be screened with branch piles. The retail mulch and landscaping material area will also be up along Las Vegas Street to the East of the entrance. This is more accessible to retail customers and is the more attractive part of the business. It consists of organized piles of various types and color of mulch and landscaping materials. In the future, if the 100 year floodplain is filled with proper permitting and approval, these retail areas may move across the drive to the Northwestern portion of the site. This will make them more visible to the general public as they drive along the Bypass. Most retail piles are set on existing concrete pads to keep the underlying soil from mixing in with the finished products.

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Thank you for your consideration,
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