

STERLING RANCH PHASE 2 PRELIMINARY PLAN

LETTER OF INTENT

JULY, 2020

OWNER/APPLICANT:

SR Land
20 Boulder Crescent St. Suite 102
Colorado Springs, CO. 80903

OWNER

Challenger Communities LLC.
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Colorado Springs, CO. 80920

CONSULTANT:

N.E.S. Inc.
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Colorado Springs, CO. 80903

REQUEST

SR Land, LLC. requests approval of the following applications:

1. A Preliminary Plan for Sterling Ranch Phase 2; a 212-unit single-family development, 10 tracts for landscaping, drainage and utilities.
2. A request for Early Grading and Metro District Improvements for a portion of Phase 2 (Sterling Ranch Filing 3) upon staff approval of Preliminary Plan. (LDC Chapter 6.2.6 Pre-Development Site Grading)
3. Administrative Approval of Final Plats.

LOCATION

Sterling Ranch Phase 2 is located generally in the southwest portion of Sterling Ranch along Sterling Ranch Road and east of Marksheffel Road. Phase 2 consists of the properties located north and south of Sterling Ranch Road and west of Sand Creek.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan for 5,225 dwelling units on 1,444 acres was approved November 13, 2008. A rezone of 243.14 acres from RR-5 and I-3 to RS-5000 was approved March 24, 2015. A Preliminary Plan for Phase 1 on 182.26 acres of the RS-5000 zoned parcel was approved May 26, 2015. A Final Plat for Sterling Ranch Filing No. 1 for 134.38 acres was approved February 13, 2018.

Sterling Ranch Filing No. 2 on 49.64 acres plats the remaining area of the approved Phase 1 Preliminary Plan that lies south and west of Filing No. 1. This completes the connection of Sterling Ranch Phase 1 to Vollmer Road via Marksheffel Road and Sterling Ranch Road. This plat is currently under review.

This request is for Sterling Ranch Phase 2, which is the remaining part of the 243 acres zoned RS-5000, contains 212 single-family lots, ten tracts for landscaping, drainage, and utilities to be completed in multiple filings on 74.62 acres. The initial filing for Phase 2, Sterling Ranch Filing 3 (separate submittal to follow), is located east of School House Drive and south of Sterling Ranch Road and consists of 66 single-family lots and Tract H on approximately 19 acres. The remainder of the site will be future filings.

Schools: The Branding Iron Filing 2 Plat includes a site for an elementary school which is consistent with the Sketch Plan. Recent discussions with school district 20 indicate that they still have a need for the school site and that the 11.53 acres identified and the proposed location northwest of Sterling Ranch Road and Dines Boulevard is acceptable.

Trails and Open Space: The Preliminary Plan includes an interconnected system of trails and open space. Including Open Space along Sand Creek providing a regional trail connection. This system of trails and open space is intended to provide a comprehensive off-street pedestrian circulation system to supplement the standard sidewalks along streets. Trails and Open Space will be maintained by the Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District.

Traffic: A Traffic Impact Analysis was prepared by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. for the entirety of the Phase One Preliminary Plan (*Sterling Ranch Phase One, Traffic Impact Analysis, February 2015*). An updated Traffic Memo has been prepared in support of Filing No. 2, which incorporates subsequent analysis related to Sterling Ranch Filing No. 1, Homestead at Sterling Ranch, Branding Iron at Sterling Ranch Filings, and Sterling Ranch Phase 2.

Filing No. 2 includes the construction of Marksheffel Road between Vollmer Road and Sterling Ranch Road, and Sterling Ranch Road will be constructed from Marksheffel Road to Dines Boulevard, thereby connecting it to the southern point of Filing No. 1. Previous Deviations were approved for intersection spacing between Marksheffel and Sterling Ranch Boulevard, for the inclusion of meandering sidewalks, and for the cross-section of Sterling Ranch Road. Access to Phase 2 is provided by three access points off of Sterling Ranch Road.

Drainage: The drainage improvements associated with Phase 2 are consistent with the Master Development Drainage Plan and Preliminary Drainage Report for Sterling Ranch Phase One. The drainage improvements are designed to the most current El Paso County Engineering Criteria Manual,

the Sand Creek Drainage Basin Study, the City of Colorado Springs/El Paso County Drainage Criteria Manual, and the Urban Storm Drainage Criteria Manual.

Utilities: The property is located within the boundaries of Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 2. water, wastewater, storm water and park/recreational services will be provided by Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 1 pursuant to an intergovernmental agreement with Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 2.

Mountain View Electric Association, Inc. will supply electricity service and Colorado Springs Utilities will supply natural gas.

Roads: Road improvements for Sterling Ranch Road and Marksheffel Road are included in Sterling Ranch Filing 2. The Preliminary Plan interior roadways will be constructed as part of their respective filings.

Geologic Hazards: The site was found to be suitable for development. Some areas of the proposed subdivision have been found to be impacted by geologic conditions. These conditions impose some constraints on development, which can be mitigated by avoidance, regrading or through proper engineering design and construction methods. A map of the hazard areas and proposed mitigation measures can be found in the Geohazard Evaluation Report prepared by Entech Engineering Inc., dated June 25, 2020.

Floodplain: The eastern portion of this Preliminary Plan area, adjacent to Sand Creek, is mapped within Zone A of the FEMA Floodplain Map No. 08041C0533G, dated December 7, 2018. The remainder of the Preliminary Plan area is within Zone X, which is determined to be outside the 500-year floodplain. There are no lots shown within the floodplain.

Wetlands: The Sand Creek drainageway and jurisdictional wetlands were identified on the original 2008 Sketch Plan and preserved as a natural feature. The corridor is incorporated as part of the open space system and an extension of the Sand Creek Trail. This Phase of development will not impact the main Sand Creek Channel. The western tributary within the property will be lost. To mitigate the loss, the preferred method of mitigation is the watershed approach, as outlined in the Compensatory Mitigation Plan prepared by Bristlecone Ecology, dated June 2020. Which outlines the requirements for re-establishing the wetlands adjacent to the Sand Creek Channel.

Wildlife: Wildlife that has been viewed on the site and surrounding areas include prairie dogs, coyotes, pronghorn antelope, western meadowlarks, sparrow and several species of hawks including red tail. Prairie voles, mice and prairie dogs are the typical rodent population in the area. As development occurs within Sterling Ranch, care will be taken to minimize human and wildlife conflicts within reasonable limits.

Wildfire: The primary wildland fuel type is grassland with scattered trees. The Colorado State Forest Service has determined a low wildfire hazard potential and no specific fire mitigation plans or other actions are necessary.

Districts Serving the Property:

- Academy School District 20
- Mountain View Electric
- City of Colorado Springs Utilities – Gas
- Black Forest Fire Protection District
- Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District No. 2
- El Paso County Conservation District
- Pikes Peak Library District

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The relevant County Plans for Sterling Ranch are the County Policy Plan, the Falcon-Peyton Small Area Plan, and the Black Forest Preservation Plan. A detailed analysis of the relationship of the Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan and the goals and objectives of these plans was previously provided with the Sketch Plan, and Zoning submittals with findings of consistency having been made by the respective Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. These include the provision of adequate buffers and transitions from lower, rural density residential development, the provision of adequate urban services by Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District, an interconnected system of trails, open spaces and neighborhood parks, and the preservation of open space.

Sterling Ranch Phase 2 is consistent with the approved Sketch Plan and Zoning. As there have been no changes to the relevant County Plans since these approvals, the Preliminary Plan continues to be in compliance with the County Master Plan and the Black Forest Preservation Plan. The Phase 2 plan is consistent with the Water Master Plan and preserves the Sand Creek Greenway and has clustered development outside of the preservation area.

Black Forest Preservation Plan Goals & Policies

Goal 3.2 Give careful consideration to clustering alternatives in areas appropriate for subdivision as a means of preserving more open space, minimizing costs and environmental impacts and promoting aesthetic quality.

Goal 3.4 Utilize traditional (full) clustering alternatives to maximize useable and perceptual open space in higher density residential areas as designated in the Land use Scenario and Concept Plan if adequate guarantees for open space preservation can be provided.

The development is designed to have the lots internal to the property near Sterling Ranch Road and has preserved areas for future park and open space.

Water Master Plan

Goal 1.1 – Ensure an adequate water supply in terms of quantity, dependability and quality for existing and future development.

Goal 6.0 – Require adequate water availability for proposed development.

Policy 6.0.8 – Encourage development patterns and higher density, mixed use developments in appropriate locations that propose to incorporate meaningful water conservation measures.

Policy 6.0.11– Continue to limit urban level development to those areas served by centralized utilities.

Sterling Ranch Metro District and Meridian Service Metropolitan District, through intergovernmental agreements, have sufficient supply and infrastructure in the area to serve this development.

Preliminary Plan Review Criteria Chapter 7.2.1.D.2.e

1. The proposed subdivision is in general conformance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Master Plan;

Phase 2 lies within the Falcon-Peyton Small Area Plan identifying the area as proposed Urban Density Development and this is consistent. As stated previously, the Sketch Plan was thoroughly analyzed in its relationship to the County Plans and no changes have been made to these plans or the Phase 2 area.

2. The subdivision is consistent with the purposes of this Code;

The stated purpose of the Code is to preserve and improve the public health, safety and general welfare of the citizens and businesses of El Paso County. Land use compatibility with this purpose is determined through zoning. This subdivision is consistent with the RS-5000 zoning and the approved Sketch Plan.

3. The subdivision is in conformance with the subdivision design standards and any approved sketch plan;

The subdivision design standards are met and the subdivision is consistent with the approved Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan.

4. A sufficient water supply has been acquired in terms of quantity, quality, and dependability for the type of subdivision proposed, as determined in accordance with the standards set forth in the water supply standards [C.R.S. §30-28-133(6)(a)] and the requirements of Chapter 8 of this Code;

A sufficient water supply is available as demonstrated by the water supply commitment letter provided by Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District and the Water Resources Report provided by JDS Hydro.

5. A public sewage disposal system has been established and, if other methods of sewage disposal are proposed, the system complies with state and local laws and regulations, [C.R.S. §30-28-133(6)(b)] and the requirements of Chapter 8 of this Code;

Public sewage disposal is addressed in the Wastewater Treatment Report provided by JDS Hydro.

6. All areas of the proposed subdivision, which may involve soil or topographical conditions presenting hazards or requiring special precautions, have been identified and the proposed subdivision is compatible with such conditions. [C.R.S. §30-28-133(6)(c)];

Some areas of the proposed subdivision have been found to be impacted by geologic conditions. These conditions impose some constraints on development, which can be mitigated by avoidance, regrading or through proper engineering design and construction methods. These matters are addressed in the Geohazard Evaluation Report prepared by Entech Engineering Inc., dated June 25, 2020.

7. Adequate drainage improvements complying with State law [C.R.S. §30-28- 133(3)(c)(VIII)] and the requirements of this Code and the ECM are provided by the design;

These matters are addressed in the Preliminary Drainage Report prepared by JR Engineering

8. Legal and physical access is or will be provided to all parcels by public rights-of-way or recorded easement, acceptable to the County in compliance with this Code and the ECM;

All lots will be accessible by new public streets that comply with the LDC and ECM except where deviations are requested to the radius and the site distance of the knuckles. Street names have been approved by El Paso–Teller County 911 Authority.

9. The proposed subdivision has established an adequate level of compatibility by

1. incorporating natural physical features into the design and providing sufficient open spaces considering the type and intensity of the subdivision;

The Sand Creek drainageway and jurisdictional wetlands were identified on the original 2008 Sketch Plan and preserved as a natural feature. The corridor is incorporated as part of the open space system and an extension of the Sand Creek Trail east of this Phase 2 area. A 404 Permit was issued in 2016 authorizing work and channel improvements within the main stem of the Sand Creek and the development impact on the jurisdictional wetlands. Exposed bedrock was identified initially and is preserved within the Sand Creek Greenway.

2. incorporating site planning techniques to foster the implementation of the County's plans, and encourage a land use pattern to support a balanced transportation system, including auto, bike and pedestrian traffic, public or mass transit if appropriate, and the cost effective delivery of other services consistent with adopted plans, policies and regulations of the County;

Appropriate provisions are made in this regard in accordance with the Sketch Plan and surrounding area. Sidewalks are incorporated along the roadways for pedestrian connectivity. A County Regional Trail connection is provided along the east portion of the site along Sand Creek and provides pedestrian and bicycle connections to trails within Sterling Ranch and future trails to the south. A trail connection is shown along the north side of Sterling Ranch Road to connect the regional trail and the overall Sterling Ranch

development. Local streets are accessed from a network of arterial roads and provide access to the individual lots. Sterling Ranch Metro District provides cost effective delivery of water and wastewater services.

3. incorporating physical design features in the subdivision to provide a transition between the subdivision and adjacent land uses;

As necessary, appropriate landscaping setbacks and/or buffers are provided as required by the LDC. This plan incorporates a 50-foot Landscape Buffer and a 100-foot minimum building setback along the southern boundary as specified on the Sterling Ranch Sketch Plan.

4. incorporating identified environmentally sensitive areas, including but not limited to, wetlands and wildlife corridors, into the design; and

The Sand Creek drainageway and jurisdictional wetlands were identified on the original 2008 Sketch Plan and preserved as a natural feature. The corridor is incorporated as part of the open space system and an extension of the Sand Creek Trail. This Phase of development will not impact the main Sand Creek Channel. The western tributary within the property will be lost. To mitigate the loss, the preferred method of mitigation is the watershed approach, as outlined in the Compensatory Mitigation Plan prepared by Bristlecone Ecology, dated June 2020. Which outlines the requirements for re-establishing the wetlands adjacent to the Sand Creek Channel.

5. incorporating public facilities or infrastructure, or provisions therefore, reasonably related to the proposed subdivision so the proposed subdivision will not negatively impact the levels of service of County services and facilities;

The Traffic Impact Study prepared by LSC identifies the improvements for the surrounding roadways. The report demonstrates no negative impact to existing conditions in the area. The reports relating to water supply, wastewater treatment and drainage demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on existing service and facilities.

10. Necessary services, including police and protection, recreation, utilities, open space and transportation system, are or will be available to serve the proposed subdivision;

Water and sanitary sewer service is to be provided by Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District. Electric Service is provided by Mountain View Electric Association Inc. The site is entirely within Colorado Springs Utility territory for natural gas services. The required Will Serve letters are included with the submittal. Recreation opportunities are provided through trail connections and preserved open space along the Sand Creek Greenway.

11. The subdivision provides evidence to show that the proposed methods for fire protection comply with Chapter 6 of this Code; and

The site lies within the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District. A Fire Protection Report and Fire Commitment Letter is included with this submittal.

12. The proposed subdivision meets other applicable sections of Chapter 6 and 8 of this Code.

The proposed subdivision meets the applicable sections of these parts of the Code.