

## ROLLING HILLS RANCH NORTH FILING NO. 2 FINAL PLAT

### LETTER OF INTENT

SEPTEMBER 2024

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**PROPERTY OWNER:**

**MERIDIAN RANCH INVESTMENTS INC.**

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**TSN:** 4200000477

**ADDRESS:** MERIDIAN RANCH

**ACREAGE:** 88.17 AC

**CURRENT ZONING:** PUD

**CURRENT USE:** VACANT RESIDENTIAL LAND

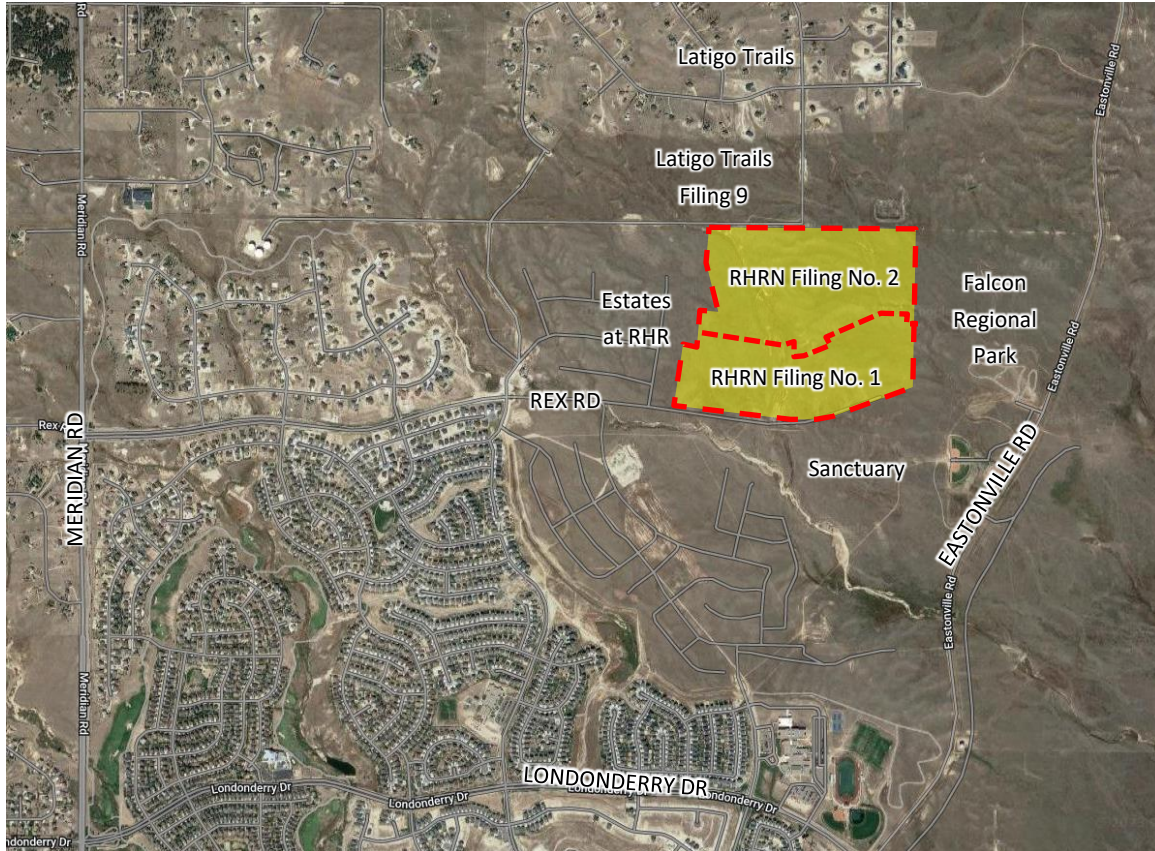
**FILE #:** SF-24-XXX

### REQUEST

GTL Inc. requests approval of a Final Plat for Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 at Meridian Ranch, consisting of 202 single-family dwelling lots, landscaping, open space, and trails on 88.17 acres.

### LOCATION

Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 at Meridian Ranch is located north of Rex Road and west of the Falcon Regional Park. The site comprises 88.17 acres and is zoned PUD. To the west is the Estates at Rolling Hills Ranch residential subdivision. To the south is Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 1, which includes similar lot sizes as proposed in Filing No. 2. To the south of Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 1 and Rex Road is the recently approved Sanctuary at Meridian Ranch PUD, with a density of 4.6 du/ac.



## PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

### Consistency with Approved Sketch Plan

An amendment to the Sketch Plan for Meridian Ranch was approved by the Board of County Commissioners on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The approved Sketch Plan includes a residential density cap of 5,000 lots. Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 is the last remaining residential subdivision within Meridian Ranch and will maximize the residential density within Meridian Ranch at 5,000 lots as approved by the Sketch Plan.

The Sketch Plan designates the area comprising the Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 at Meridian Ranch as MR-R4 (max. 4 du/ac). The Final Plat for Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 comprises 202 lots on 88.17 acres, which represents a gross density of 2.3 dwellings per acre, which is consistent with the maximum allowed density of 4 du/ac.

### Consistency with Approved PUD/Preliminary Plan

The site comprises 88.17 acres of the approximately 149 acre Rolling Hills Ranch North PUD/Preliminary Plan for Rolling Hills Ranch North Filings 1 & 2 (PUDSP 23-005). The Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 Final Plat is wholly consistent with the Rolling Hills Ranch North Filings 1 & 2 PUD/Preliminary Plan,

which was approved by the Board of County Commissioners on May 9, 2024. The PUD/Preliminary Plan approval included PUD modifications/ deviations from ECM Section 2.5.2.(C)(4) relating to mid-block crossings to be spaced no greater than 600 feet apart and ECM 2.3.2 relating to intersection spacing for an urban local street.

### County Master Plan Compliance

#### ***Your El Paso County Master Plan***

Meridian Ranch is primarily identified as a Suburban Residential placetype on the County Master Plan adopted in May 2021, which assumes a primary land use of single-family detached residential with lot sizes smaller than 2.5 acres per lot, up to 5 units per acre. However, the area covered by the proposed Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 is identified as Large-Lot Residential placetype, which assumes a primary land use of single-family detached residential, typically 2.5-acre lots or larger. Previous Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 1 had the same primary land use. These parcels have been identified for 1-acre lot development since the 2011 approval of the Meridian Ranch Sketch Plan, and the Rolling Hills Ranch North area was amended to 4 du/ac density in 2021. Identifying these areas as Large-Lot Residential placetype does not reflect the approved Sketch Plan, which takes precedent over the more recently approved County Master Plan.

The proposed density and lot size of Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 is more consistent with Suburban Residential Placetype, which is the designation of the remainder of Meridian Ranch. The primary land use in the Suburban Residential placetype is detached single-family land uses with lots sizes smaller than 2.5 acres per lot, up to 5 units per acre. Supporting land uses include Single-family Attached, Multifamily Residential, Parks/Open Space, Commercial Retail, Commercial Service, and Institution. Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 proposes single-family detached residential development at a density of 3.9 du/ac, with supportive open space and trails, which is consistent with the placetype land use objectives.

Characteristics of the Suburban Placetype include connectivity to trails, hiking paths, and bike lanes to provide access to parks, open space, other neighborhoods, jobs, and services. Neighborhood scale parks and open space should be distributed throughout the residential development to support community gathering and recreation. Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 is an integral part of Meridian Ranch and is a continuation of a long-term development with a distinct vision. The Meridian Ranch community centers on a recreational lifestyle by providing opportunities such as a golf course, recreation centers, parks and open space, and trails for residents to enjoy. Overall, Meridian Ranch common landscape elements such as fencing, street tree plantings, landscaping, and signage will establish a unique sense of place for this development. The recreation centers and neighborhood parks are in areas of higher density to provide accessible focal elements for the neighborhoods.

In the Areas of Change chapter of the County Master Plan, Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 is identified as a "Minimal Change: Developed." The plan notes that these areas have undergone development and have an established character. Developed areas of minimal change are largely built out but may include isolated pockets of vacant or underutilized land. These key sites are likely to see

more intense infill development with a mix of uses and scale of redevelopment that will significantly impact the character of an area. Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 is one of two remaining unplatted residential development parcels within Meridian Ranch (the other being Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 1). The development of the parcel in a manner consistent with the Sketch Plan and the established character of Meridian Ranch is anticipated by this Area of Change designation.

Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 aligns with Core Principle 2, Housing & Communities, which seeks to “preserve and develop neighborhoods with a mix of housing types” as well as Goal 2.3 to “locate attainable housing that provides convenient access to goods, services, and employment”. The development provides lots ranging in size from 6,000 sf to 16,000 sf, which adds to the overall variety of housing options and price points available Meridian Ranch.

Core Principle 1, Land Use and Development, which seeks to “manage growth to ensure a variety of compatible land uses that preserve all character areas of the county.” Goal 1.1 seeks to “ensure compatibility with established character and infrastructure capacity.” The proposed range of lot sizes and the preservation of drainage areas as open space ensures consistency with these goals by a development that is compatible with adjacent subdivisions within Meridian Ranch.

Objective TM1-4, Transportation and Mobility, encourage sidewalks and other multimodal facilities in all new development. The Final Plat includes tracts for open space and trails to provide recreation opportunities and connection to adjacent neighborhoods. It is part of the larger Meridian Ranch community which promotes extensive interconnected opens spaces and parks throughout the development.

### ***El Paso County Water Master Plan***

The project is located within Region 3, Falcon Area, containing 4 growth areas projected to be completed by 2040, three areas to be completed by 2060, and two other growth areas located on the north and south sides of Falcon Highway directly east of Falcon. Specifically, the Water Master Plan states:

“Region 3 contains four growth areas west of Falcon projected to be completed by 2040. Other areas of 2040 growth are projected for the north-central part of the region west of Highway 24 extending from Falcon to 4-Way Ranch. North of Falcon along Highway 24, growth is projected by 2060 on both sides of the highway. Just west of Falcon, another small development is projected by 2060 on the north and south sides of Woodmen Road. On the east side of Highway 24, three separate areas of growth are projected for development by 2060, with the largest of the three spanning from south of Judge Orr Road to east of Peyton Highway into Region 4c. This development will likely consist of 35-acre lots that will require individual wells to use Denver Basin groundwater. The other two growth areas will be located on the north and south sides of Falcon Highway directly east of Falcon. See Figure 5.5 for Region 3 growth map projections.”

Region 3 has a current water supply of 7,164-acre feet per year and a current demand of 4,494-acre feet per year. The 2040 water supply is projected to be 7,921-acre feet per year and the project demand is

6,403-acre feet. The proposed subdivision lies within the Meridian Service Metropolitan District (MSMD) service area. The Water Resources Report indicates that MSMD has sufficient supply to meet the expected need at full build out by 2040 and 2060. A finding of adequate supply of water in terms of quantity, quality, and dependability to meet El Paso County's the 300-year requirement was issued with the approved PUD/Preliminary Plan for Rolling Hills North Filing Nos. 1 and 2.

MSMD currently incorporates a 15% reserve into their future planning. Based on the needs, current supply, and reserve, the District has sufficient water to meet the needs expected now and into the future with no shortages anticipated. The District's current use is based on an average of 20% renewable water sources and has a state approved replacement plan with Cherokee Metro Water District as partners that will be a renewable water source in the near future.

The MSMD service area is in the Upper Black Squirrel Creek Groundwater Management District and the water bearing formations in descending stratigraphic order are the Dawson, Denver, Arapahoe, and Laramie Fox Hills. These four aquifers are collectively known as the Denver Basin aquifers and are found approximately at depths of 500, 1,400, 1,900, and 2,500 feet below the ground surface. MSMD currently services over 15,500 in equivalent population in several filings within Meridian Ranch, Falcon High School and portions of Latigo Trails as an out of district user. The water system that serves Meridian Ranch is classified as a "public water system" and meets all the applicable requirements of the CDPHE.

The water system uses groundwater as its primary source of supply. Filtration and disinfection facilities have been constructed at a central location to ensure good water quality. Elevation differences that exist throughout the property require that the distribution system is divided into two pressure zones to ensure that the water is delivered at no less than 40 psi during peak hour flow and at no more than 120 psi during periods of low use. Storage facilities and distribution piping are provided to ensure that the residual pressure requirements are achieved both during peak hour demands and during maximum day demands with a superimposed fire flow of 1500 gpm for the residential areas and up to 3500 gpm for commercial areas.

The proposed residential subdivision satisfies the following policies of the County Water Master Plan:

*Policy 5.2.4 – Encourage the locating of new development where it can take advantage of existing or proposed water supply projects that would allow shared infrastructure costs.*

The proposed subdivision is located within MSMD and a commitment letter noting the District's ability to serve the proposed development in an efficient manner with the current infrastructure has been provided.

*Policy 5.5.1 – Discourage individual wells for new subdivisions with 2.5 acre or smaller average lot sizes, especially in the near-surface aquifers, when there is a reasonable opportunity to connect to an existing central system, alternatively, or construct a new central water supply system when the economies of scale to do so can be achieved.*

The proposed development is located within the MSMD service area and is proposed to connect to the existing central water and wastewater. A service commitment letter is provided for the proposed development.

*Policy 6.0.1 – Continue to require documentation of the adequacy or sufficiency of water, as appropriate, for proposed development.*

A finding of adequate supply of water in terms of quantity, quality, and dependability to meet El Paso County's the 300-year requirement was issued with the approved PUD/Preliminary Plan.

#### ***El Paso County Parks Master Plan (Updated 2022)***

Falcon Regional Park is identified as a new regional park in the Master Plan. This park was dedicated to the County by the owners and developers of Meridian Ranch. All regional park fees are offset by the dedication of this land to the County per the overall Parks Land Agreement for Meridian Ranch.

The Arroya Lane Regional Trail is identified as a 5.38 mile proposed primary regional trail that is 29% complete. Part of that trail runs through the northern section of Meridian Ranch. The western portion has either been constructed or platted with previous subdivisions. The remaining trail section is within Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 and will complete the regional trail through Meridian Ranch to provide a continuous connection to the adjacent Falcon Regional Park.

#### ***El Paso County Major Transportation Corridor Plan (MTCP)***

Rex Road to the south of the proposed Rolling Hills Ranch North subdivision, and Eastonville Road to the east boundary of Meridian Ranch, are identified as minor arterials on the 2040 Functional classification map of the MTCP. The construction of Rex Road as an Urban 2-Lane Minor Arterial from the Rolling Ranch Drive to Shelter Creek Drive was included as part of the Sanctuary at Meridian Ranch approved PUD/Preliminary Plan and Final Plat. As agreed with the El Paso County Engineer, the approved design is for a half-section of the Urban Minor Arterial street-section, as the projected long-term (2040) traffic volumes are less than originally anticipated by the MTCP. The half section roadway has been constructed within an 80-foot right of way with a 20-foot right-of-way reservation is identified in Tract A on the Sanctuary at Meridian Ranch PUD and Plat to accommodate the future full width section when the County determines it is necessary. El Paso County created and accepted the Rex Road right-of-way through Falcon Regional Park on April 2, 2024, which completes the connection of Rex Road between Meridian Road and Eastonville Rd.

#### **Parks and Open Space**

Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 includes 39.8 acres of open space tracts with trail connections to the extensive trail, parks and open space system within Meridian Ranch and the proposed extension of the regional trail. This remaining trail section completes the connection to Falcon Regional Park to the east. There is also a neighborhood park within The Sanctuary subdivision on the south side of Rex Road, which is within 0.5 miles for the lots within Rolling Hills Ranch North No. 2.

The proposed 39.8 acres of open space for the project substantially exceeds the 10% requirement for open space within PUDs as noted in LDC Chapter 4.2.6.(F)(8)(b) (10% of 88.17 acres is a requirement of 8.8 acres). The subdivision also exceeds the LDC requirement that 25% of the 10% total open space be contiguous and usable; 25% of 8.8 acres is a requirement of 2.2 acres. This requirement is satisfied by Tract A of Filing No. 2, which provides a contiguous and usable 38.9-acre open space area with regional and local trail connections.

As required by Section 8.5.3 of the LDC, the fees in lieu of park land dedication are currently \$295 per subdivision lot for Urban Parks and \$467 per subdivision lot for Regional Parks. The required fees in lieu of for this 202-lot development are:

Urban	\$59,590
Regional	\$94,334
Total	\$153,924

The regional park fees are offset by the dedication of land to the County for the Falcon Regional Park per the overall Parks Land Agreement for Meridian Ranch. Credit for the urban park fees will be requested through a Parks Land Agreement to offset the costs of constructing the proposed trail and landscape improvements within the open space tracts.

#### Drainage

A Final Drainage Report for Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 is submitted with this application package. The storm drain runoff will be collected by a series of inlets and storm drainpipe, then discharged into an existing natural drainage course to existing Pond G. Pond G is sized to safely convey the storm water flows away from the project without damaging adjacent property. A water quality facility is located on the south boundary of the project at Rex Rd. Runoff will be collected by the proposed storm drainage system and diverted through the water quality facility to allow for suspended solids to settle from the stormwater prior to being discharge downstream of Rex Rd.

#### Traffic

A Traffic Report prepared by LSC was submitted with the PUD/Preliminary Plan for Rolling Hills Ranch North Filings 1 & 2. This study is in keeping with past approved traffic studies and shows that no significant changes were projected for the improvements noted in the recent 2021 Sketch Plan study. The future extension of Rex Road abuts the southern boundary of Rolling Hills Ranch North. The construction of Rex Road as a half-section Urban 2-Lane Minor Arterial from Rolling Ranch Drive to Shelter Creek Drive was included as part of the Sanctuary at Meridian Ranch approved PUD/Preliminary Plan and Final Plat immediately to the south of Rex Road. This section of Rex Road is under construction and is expected to be open in the summer 2024. All subdivision streets will be classified as urban local

residential roads and two points of access onto Rex Road are provided at Shelter Creek Drive to the east and via a connection to Estate Ridge Drive in Estates at Rolling Hills Ranch Filing 2.

### Geotechnical Report

A Geotechnical and Soils Report prepared by Entech Engineering Inc. was submitted with the PUD/Preliminary Plan for Rolling Hills Ranch North Filings 1 & 2. The report notes that consideration should be given to several conditions on this site in planning and excavating the development including groundwater, expansive soils and sandstone/claystone materials. While groundwater should not impact the development of this site, an underdrain system can be considered for long term groundwater mitigation. Expansive soils are present on the site which will require mitigation for residential construction such as moisture treatments and over-excavation.

### **CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL**

The Final Plat for Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 is consistent with the Final Plat approval criteria set forth in Chapter 7.2.1.(D)(3)(f) of the LDC as follows:

- **The subdivision is in conformance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Master Plan;**

The proposed application conforms to the most recent 2021 Approved Sketch Plan and County Master Plans as noted above.

- **The subdivision is in substantial conformance with the approved preliminary plan;**

The Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 Final Plat is wholly consistent with the PUD/Preliminary Plan for Rolling Hills Ranch Filings 1 & 2 (PUDSP 23-005), which was approved by the Board of County Commissioners on May 9, 2024. The PUD/Preliminary Plan approval included PUD modifications/ deviations from ECM Section 2.5.2.(C)(4) relating to mid-block crossings to be spaced no greater than 600 feet apart and ECM 2.3.2 relating to intersection spacing for an urban local street.

- **The subdivision is consistent with the subdivision design standards and regulations and meets all planning, engineering, and surveying requirements of the County for maps, data, surveys, analyses, studies, reports, plans, designs, documents, and other supporting materials;**

The Final Plat for Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 2 is consistent with all subdivision design standards, subject to the approved PUD modification/deviation and alternative landscape plan referenced above.

- **Either 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, or, with respect to applications for administrative final**



**plat approval, such finding was previously made by the BoCC at the time of preliminary plan approval;**

A finding of adequate supply of water in terms of quantity, quality, and dependability to meet El Paso County's the 300-year requirement was issued by the County Attorney's Office and approved by the BoCC with the PUD/Preliminary Plan.

- **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.**

Meridian Service Metropolitan District will provide sanitary sewer service to the project. The District has an established sewage disposal facility. The current capacity allocated to MSMD at the PBHWTP is 0.086 MGD and the total capacity available at the BSWTF is 2.2 MGD for a total of just under 2.3 MGD. The available capacity of the wastewater treatment facilities is sufficient to accept the anticipated flows from Meridian Ranch at full build-out.

- **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)];**

The Geotechnical and Soils Report notes that consideration should be given to several conditions on this site in planning and excavating the development including groundwater, expansive soils, and sandstone/claystone materials. These conditions can be mitigated by established engineering methods.

- **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;**

The Final Drainage Report indicates that storm drain runoff will be collected by a series of inlets and storm drainpipe, then discharged into an existing natural drainage course to existing Pond G. Pond G is sized to safely convey the storm water flows away from the project without damaging adjacent property. A water quality facility is located on the south boundary of the project at Rex Rd. Runoff will be collected by the proposed storm drainage system and diverted through the water quality facility to allow for suspended solids to settle from the stormwater prior to being discharge downstream of Rex Rd.

- **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.

- **Necessary services, including police and fire protection, recreation, utilities, open space and transportation systems, are or will be available to serve the proposed subdivision;**

The road, utility, stormwater, and parks infrastructure for Meridian Ranch is already established or approved with previous subdivision. Meridian Service Metropolitan District will provide central water and sanitary sewer service to the project. Mountain View Electric Association, Inc. will supply electricity service and Black Hills Energy will supply natural gas. Falcon Fire Protection Department will provide fire protection services to the proposed development.

- **The final plans provide evidence to show that the proposed methods for fire protection comply with Chapter 6 of this Code;**

A Fire Protection Report demonstrating compliance with the International Fire Code and Chapter 6.3.3. of the Land Development Code is included with the Final Plat submittal.

- **Off-site impacts were evaluated and related off-site improvements are roughly proportional and will mitigate the impacts of the subdivision in accordance with applicable requirements of Chapter 8;**

Off-site traffic impacts were evaluated in the Traffic Report prepared for the approved PUD/Preliminary Plan. As described above, the future extension of Rex Road abutting the southern boundary of Rolling Hills Ranch North Filing No. 1 is approved and under construction and expected to be open in the summer 2024. The Final Drainage Report evaluates storm drain runoff and the subdivision provides for collection and conveyance to existing Pond G. A water quality facility is located on the south boundary of the project at Rex Rd.

No other off-site impacts were identified during the PUD/Preliminary Plan process.

- **Adequate public facilities or infrastructure, or cash-in-lieu, for impacts reasonably related to the proposed subdivision have been constructed or are financially guaranteed through the SIA so the impacts of the subdivision will be adequately mitigated;**

The road, utility, stormwater, and parks infrastructure for Meridian Ranch is already established or approved with previous subdivision. A Subdivision Improvements Agreement identifying the proposed public improvements is included with this Final Plat. The Financial Assurance Estimate submitted with the Final Plat itemizes all proposed public improvements that will be financially guaranteed by the developer.

Regional Park fees are offset by the dedication of land to the County for the Falcon Regional Park per the overall Parks Land Agreement for Meridian Ranch. Credit for the urban park fees will be requested through a Parks Land Agreement to offset the costs of constructing the proposed trail and landscape improvements within the open space tracts.

- **The proposed subdivision meets other applicable sections of Chapter 6 and 8; and**

The proposed subdivision meets the applicable sections of these parts of the Code, subject to the PUD modification/deviation and alternative landscape plan approved with the PUD/Preliminary Plan.

- **The extraction of any known commercial mining deposit shall not be impeded by this subdivision [C.R.S. §§ 34-1-302(1), et seq.].**

There are no known commercial mining deposits on the site. A search of the County Assessors records indicates that there are no mineral estate owners on the property.

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