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## TRAILSIDE AT COTTONWOOD CREEK

### PROJECT STATEMENT

APRIL 2019 – REVISED JULY 2019

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#### REQUEST

N.E.S. Inc. on behalf of Springs Land Ventures Investments LLC requests approval of the following applications:

1. A Rezone of 15.67 acres from OC/AO-CAD/SS (Office Complex with Airport Streamside Overlays) and PBC/AO-CAD/SS (Planned Commercial Center with Airport Streamside Overlays) to PUD/AO/SS (Planned Unit Development with Airport Streamside Overlays), for single-family detached residential development with a maximum density of 3.6 du/ac and a maximum height of 35 feet.
2. An amendment to the Cook Communications Concept Plan to change the designation of the 15.67-acre parcel from commercial and medical office use to single-family residential.
3. A PUD Development Plan for Trailside at Cottonwood Creek, comprising 56 single-family residential lots, with trails and open space.
4. A Final Plat for Trailside at Cottonwood Creek to create 56 single-family residential lots, with tracts for public utilities, private streets, utilities, landscaping, pocket park, open space, trails and detention.

#### LOCATION

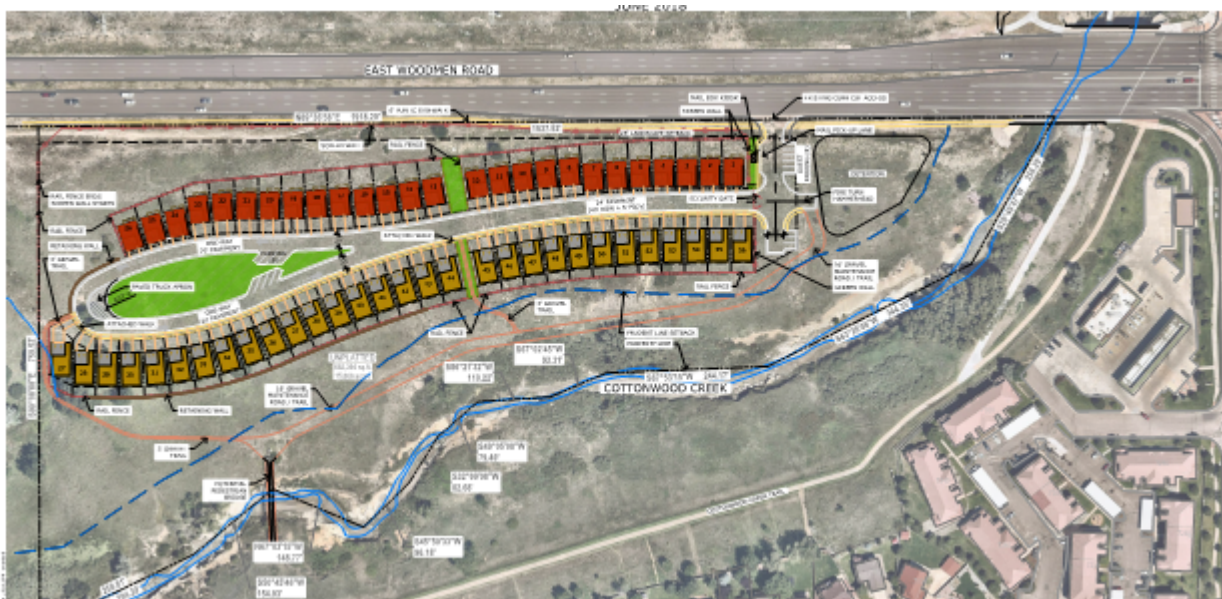
Trailside at Cottonwood Creek lies southwest of the intersection of East Woodmen Road and Austin Bluffs Parkway. The southern and eastern boundary of the property is formed by Cottonwood Creek.



Along the south side of the Creek is a City open space and the Cottonwood Creek multi-purpose tier 1 trail. To south of the trail is the Newport Heights residential subdivision. The northern boundary of the site is formed by East Woodmen Road, which is a six-lane parkway.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is to develop the northern 7.2-acre area with 56 single-family detached lots. The gross density of the development will be 3.6 du/acre, with a net density of 8.8 du/ac. The southern 3.5-acre portion adjacent to the creek is proposed to be dedicated to the City of Colorado Springs for public drainage, utilities, open space and trails. A 4.8-acre tract encompassing the single-family lots is proposed to be for open space and private trails with a connection to the Cottonwood Creek Trail via the adjacent properties, for which an easement has been secured, and a proposed bridge to the west.



**Access:** Access to the property will be from East Woodmen Road via a 3/4-movement access to allow a left-in turn for westbound traffic on Woodmen Road. A new sidewalk will be constructed with the development along Woodmen Road, which will also provide connectivity to the Cottonwood Creek Trail, Briargate Trail, and Woodmen Trail east of Austin Bluffs Parkway.

This will be a gated community. Adequate access and maneuvering space is provided in front of the gate to ensure there is not conflict with traffic on Woodmen Road and to provide an adequate turning area. The development will be accessed via a private 24-foot wide street with a one-way couplet at the west end of the site. A sidewalk will be provided on the south side of the street only. The street will be marked as no parking to satisfy Fire Department requirements.

**Product Design:** The homes on the north side of the internal street will have tuck-under garages and will have a 3-story elevation at the front and a 2-story elevation at the rear. The homes on the south side will have a walk-out condition, with a 2-story elevation at the front and a 3-story elevation at the rear. This design accommodates the natural slope of the site. The homes will have varied architecture and setbacks will be staggered. The HOA will provide the architectural and covenant control for the neighborhood.

**Product Features:** The proposed single-family homes will be smaller units on smaller lots to provide more affordable housing for purchase in the local community. The target market will be the first-time homebuyer who is looking for a location that is accessible to services and facilities as well as open space and trails. The site has good access to commercial facilities; there is a small commercial center at the southwest corner of Austin Bluffs Parkway, and the larger Norwood Shopping Center with a grocery store a short walking distance to the south. There are also four elementary schools, a middle school, a YMCA, a Wal-Mart and Home Depot, and other retail and employment opportunities, including the St. Frances Hospital, within a mile of the site. The site is well-located for access to trails, with the confluence of the Cottonwood Creek Trail, Briargate Trail, and the East Woodmen Trail to the east of the site.

**Lot standards:** The lots will be a minimum of 2,600 square foot and will accommodate two different product types. The units will have a 6-foot side separation, which will translate to a 3-foot side building setback from the property line. The units will require a 75% 1-hour fire wall on the side walls as specified by the regional building code. The lots will all have a minimum 15-foot rear setback and all the lots will back onto open space. The front setback will vary; the majority of lots will have a 20-foot driveway and others have only an access apron.

**Parking:** All units will have a 2-car garage and 46 of the 56 units will have 2-car driveway parking. The HOA covenants will require residents to use their garages for parking, thereby ensuring that the driveways are available for guests.

#### 10.6 Garages, Driveways, Vehicular Parking, Storage and Repairs.

(a) No garage shall be converted to living space or altered or used for storage of material or other purposes which would prevent the use of the garage for the parking of the number of vehicles for which it was designed, except that Declarant may use a garage in one or more model homes for a sales office and/or a construction office.

Additional parking is provided, primarily for guests of those homes that do not have driveway parking. Eleven spaces are provided just outside the entry gate and an additional eleven spaces are provided adjacent to the pocket park.

**Open Space:** The southern 3.5-acre portion of the property adjacent to the creek is proposed to be dedicated to the City of Colorado Springs for use of drainage, open space, public & private trails and utilities. Additionally, a 4.8-acre tract enveloping the single-family lots will be retained for open space, landscaping, and private trails. A private trail connection will also be provided through the adjacent property to the west to connect to the Cottonwood Creek Trail via a proposed bridge. The proposed 16-foot utility access road through the open space will also serve as a trail for use by residents of the development and there will be 3-foot connectors to provide trail access from within the development. The connector trails on site as well as the trail through the adjacent easement will be maintained by the Trailside at Cottonwood Creek HOA. The one-way couplet creates an opportunity to provide a pocket park within the streetscape for residents.

**Landscaping:** A reduced landscape setback will be provided along Woodmen Road. The streetscape will include a 6' wide public sidewalk with 7' landscape strip adjacent to the road and 8' tree lawn behind the sidewalk. Adjacent to this a 6-foot concrete wall will act as a noise barrier for residents from traffic on Woodmen Road. Trees, shrubs, and landscape will be planted along Woodmen Road as required by



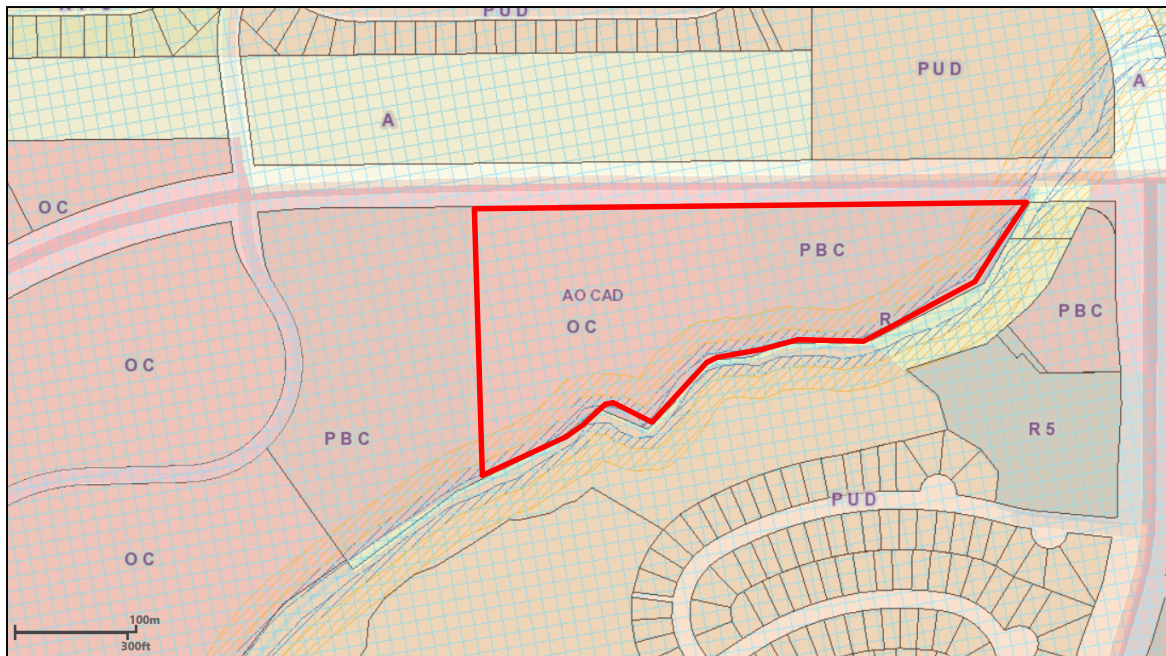
the City Landscape Ordinance. The internal landscaping will be focused on entrance features and the pocket park. A variety of ground cover and native vegetation will be used to enforce the areas disturbed by grading. The open space to the south of the maintenance road will be left in its natural state. Alternative compliance is being asked for Code Section 7.4.323.C.2 & 7.4.323.G that requires a buffer and screen wall on a property line common to a Nonresidential use. The existing topography and grade difference between the proposed residential development and the adjacent storage facility provides a physical and visual buffer, therefore additional planting and a screen wall is not needed for the intent of a buffer requirement.

**Drainage:** A private full-spectrum detention and water quality pond is proposed at the east end of the property, which will detain and treat all stormwater run-off from the single-family residential development. A prudent line has been established for the northern side of this section of Cottonwood Creek. The proposed development does not extend beyond the prudent line other than some limited grading.

**Utilities:** Utilities will be provided in the private street within public easements and will connect to the existing public facilities within and adjacent to the site. An existing sanitary sewer line and easement that runs diagonally from the northwest corner of the site will be rerouted around the proposed single-family lots. It will reconnect to the 30-foot sanitary sewer easement that runs through the southern part of the property and connects over Cottonwood Creek via an aerial pipe. A 16-foot gravel road will be provided for access to the existing and proposed sanitary sewer manholes, which will also serve as a recreational trail for the development.

## PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

### A. Zone Change



This application proposes to rezone the 15.67 property from office and commercial use to single-family detached residential development. The property is also subject to the Airport and Streamside Overlays. The site is not located in any of the zones within the Airport overlay that restrict residential development. A notice will be placed on the property when platted to alert homebuyers of potential noise from aircraft using the airport.

In accordance with Section 7.3.508.F.4 of the Zoning Code, Streamside overlay zone sites with an active prudent line setback are exempt from all streamside overlay regulations. As noted above, this site has an active prudent line within which no development is proposed and, therefore, the streamside overlay regulations do not apply.

The proposed rezoning of this property from office and commercial use to single-family detached residential development meets the requirements of Section 7.5.603 of the Zoning Code as follows:

**1. The action will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience or general welfare.**

The proposed rezoning of the parcel for residential uses will better serve the public interest and general welfare as it will provide a smaller, more affordable, single-family product that will provide additional housing choice in an area dominated by traditional single-family neighborhoods. There is already a substantial amount of commercial and employment development in the area. The integration of higher density residential development in this location will serve as a transition from the established single-family neighborhood to the south to Woodmen Road and the commercial uses along it. The project represents infill development that can benefit from and contribute to the existing commercial, recreational, employment, and public facilities in the immediate area.

**2. The proposal is consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.**

The site is in an area designated as a New/Developing Activity Center on the City's PlanCOS Vision Map. These are in the process of developing or have recently been developed. The proposed rezoning to higher density residential adds to and complements the mix of employment and commercial zoning in the area and is consistent with the comprehensive plan designation.

Plan COS identifies the Cottonwood Creek neighborhood as an Established Suburban Neighborhood. The project supports policies regarding infill and investment in mature and developed areas. The proposed uses will provide an additional housing choice in terms of density, type of residential, and levels of affordability in the established neighborhood.

PlanCOS supports a range of housing densities in all developing and new neighborhoods in order to promote housing for all and seeks to target higher densities in proximity to open space, major thoroughfares, activity centers, and transit services. The location of this proposed multifamily use adjacent to Woodmen Road and Austin Bluffs Parkway, close to activity and employment centers, and with easy access to multiple trails and open space, furthers this objective of the Comprehensive Plan. There is currently no transit in this part of the City, but we understand that there are plans to provide transit connections to the Hospitals in the north of the City.

**3. Where a master plan exists, the proposal is consistent with such plan or an approved amendment to such plan. Master plans that have been classified as implemented do not have to be amended in order to be considered consistent with a zone change request.**

The Norwood Master Plan was approved in 1997 and is considered to be implemented, as it is more than 80% developed. The Master Plan designates this site and the adjacent property to the west as Research and Development. These properties have remained vacant for over 20 years since the approval of the Master Plan. Since 1997 changes in technology and the market have resulted in less demand for research and development uses. The grade of these properties also creates challenges to development, particularly for a research and development facility, which typically would need a large area of level ground. The adjacent property is now under construction as a self-storage facility on the northern part of the parcel with the southern steeper part of the parcel retained as open space. The proposed single-family product on the subject site accommodates the grade challenges into the overall site design and also retains open space in the southern steeper part of the property.

**4. For MU zone districts the proposal is consistent with any locational criteria for the establishment of the zone district, as stated in article 3, "Land Use Zoning Districts", of this chapter. (Ord. 94-107; Ord. 97-111; Ord. 01-42; Ord. 03-157; Ord. 12-76).**

The proposal is not in a MU zone district.

**B. Concept Plan Amendment**

The Cook Communications Concept Plan originally approved in 2009 identifies the east part of the site for commercial use, consistent with the PBC zoning, and the west side of the site for medical offices, consistent with the OC zoning. This request proposes to amend the Cook Communications Concept Plan to change the designation of the 15.67-acre parcel from commercial and medical office use to single-family residential.

The Concept Plan amendment contuses to satisfy the review criteria set out in Section 7.5.501.E of the Zoning Code as follows:

**1. Will the proposed development have a detrimental effect upon the general health, welfare and safety or convenience of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the proposed development?**

See A.1 above.

**2. Will the proposed density, types of land uses and range of square footages permit adequate light and air both on and off the site?**

The project proposes one row of homes on each side of a single access street with a landscaped island provided within the one-way couplet. The homes all back on to open space. This provides adequate light and air for the development.

**3. Are the permitted uses, bulk requirements and required landscaping appropriate to the type of development, the neighborhood and the community?**

The proposed residential use is appropriate for the neighborhood as it will add to the mix of uses in the area and will offer additional housing choice. The 2-3 story single-family residential units are consistent with the bulk of nearby commercial and residential properties. The project provides landscaping in accordance with the requirement of the City's landscape ordinance with exception to providing a buffer

along the west property line. Alternative compliance is being requested as described in the landscape section of the project description.

**4. Are the proposed ingress/egress points, traffic circulation, parking areas, loading and service areas and pedestrian areas designed to promote safety, convenience and ease of traffic flow and pedestrian movement both on and off the site?**

A single private access road is proposed with a turnaround that can accommodate emergency vehicles. A sidewalk will be constructed along Woodmen Road and an internal sidewalk is provided on the south side of the road, which will provide pedestrian access to the development. The sidewalk will connect to the internal private breeze trails. These internal trails will provide multiple connection options to City Multiuse Trails.

**5. Will the proposed development overburden the capacities of existing streets, utilities, parks, schools and other public facilities?**

The proposed residential development will generate less traffic than the office/commercial development proposed on the approved Concept Plan. The developer will be required to pay fees in lieu of park and school dedication. Existing utilities serve this property or can be extended from the adjacent property to the west.

**6. Does the proposed development promote the stabilization and preservation of the existing properties in adjacent areas and surrounding residential neighborhoods?**

The proposed single-family use will help to stabilize the neighborhood by adding to the complementary mix of uses in the neighborhood and adding to the housing choice in the area.

**7. Does the concept plan show how any potentially detrimental use to use relationships (e.g., commercial use adjacent to single-family homes) will be mitigated? Does the development provide a gradual transition between uses of differing intensities?**

The single-family development will provide a transition between the existing single-family neighborhood to the south and the office/commercial development along Woodmen Road. The existing topography, proposed landscaping and open space will also help to buffer the residential use from surrounding properties and from traffic on Woodmen Road.

**8. Is the proposed concept plan in conformance with all requirements of this Zoning Code, the Subdivision Code and with all applicable elements of the Comprehensive Plan?**

The Concept Plan conforms to the applicable requirements of the Zoning Code, the Subdivision Code and Comprehensive Plan.

**C. PUD Development Plan**

The PUD Development Plan satisfies the review criteria set out in Section 7.3.606 of the Zoning Code as follows:

**A. Consistency with City Plans: Is the proposed development consistent with the Comprehensive Plan or any City approved master plan that applies to the site?**

See A.2 and A.3 above.

**B. Consistency with Zoning Code: Is the proposed development consistent with the intent and purposes of this Zoning Code?**

The proposed development is consistent with the intent and purpose of this Zoning Code as the single-family residential use is compatible with the mixed nature of the surrounding area and will not negatively impact existing neighborhoods or create a nuisance to adjacent properties.

**C. Compatibility of The Site Design with The Surrounding Area:**

**1. Does the circulation plan minimize traffic impact on the adjacent neighborhood?**

There is no directly adjacent neighborhood to this development; the neighborhood to the south is separated by Cottonwood Creek and access to it is off Austin Bluffs Parkway. This development will access directly off Woodmen Road and traffic will be contained within the development, as it will be served by a single, dead-end, private access road, which will be gated.

**2. Do the design elements reduce the impact of the project's density/intensity?**

The design features that reduce the projects intensity include the substantial area of open space surrounding the residential units, the staggered setbacks of the units and the inclusion of a pocket park at the west end of the street, which breaks up the streetscape as well as providing an amenity for residents. **The west end of the site near Lot 27 is graded to accommodate a trail connection and includes a 3-rail fence on the west side of the lot. The trail connection is located within the 15-foot buffer and adjacent to an open space tract on the adjacent property. This trail connection will have minimal use by residents on the west end of the site as another more centralized trail connection is provided.**

**3. Is placement of buildings compatible with the surrounding area?**

The placement of the buildings takes into account the required separation from Cottonwood Creek, which is compatible with other buildings in the area. The residential units also have separation from Woodmen Road to provide mitigation from traffic noise. **Lot 27, which is closest to the adjacent property to the west, is oriented with minimal windows facing the proposed trail and the neighboring open space. In the northwest portion of the site the residential development sits approximately 50' lower than the finished floor of the storage facility. The self-storage facility is approximately 168' from the shared property line and the nearest lot on the north side of this residential development is approximately 105' from the property line, thus providing a 273' building separation between the two uses.**

**4. Are landscaping and fences/walls provided to buffer adjoining properties from undesirable negative influences that may be created by the proposed development?**

The proposed single-family development will not create undesirable negative influences. There is a substantial separation between this development and the established residential neighborhood to the south and the open space area adjacent the creek provides adequate buffering. A split rail fence is proposed along the western boundary. The proposed storage facility to the west is located at a sufficient distance and elevation difference that additional buffering is not considered necessary.



**5. Are residential units buffered from arterial traffic by the provision of adequate setbacks, grade separation, walls, landscaping and building orientation?**

A substantial setback, downward slope, and 6-foot concrete wall are proposed along the northern boundary adjacent to Woodmen Road to provide a buffer to the traffic noise to the benefit of future residents.

**D. Traffic Circulation:**

**1. Is the circulation system designed to be safe and functional and encourage both on and off-site connectivity?**

This development will access directly off Woodmen Road and will be served by a single, dead-end, private access road, which will be gated. This provides safe and functional access to the site for residents. Appropriate turning facilities are provided for emergency vehicles and mailboxes are provided outside the gated area.

**2. Will the streets and drives provide logical, safe and convenient vehicular access to the facilities within the project?**

The proposed single-family homes will have direct access off the private street. [

**3. Will adequately sized parking areas be located to provide safe and convenient access, avoid excessive parking ratios and avoid expanses of pavement?**

All units will have a 2-car garage and 46 of the 56 units will have 2-car driveway parking. The HOA covenants will require residents to use their garages for parking, thereby ensuring that the driveways are available for guests. Additional parking is provided, primarily for guests of those homes that do not have driveway parking. Eleven spaces are provided just outside the entry gate and an additional eleven spaces are provided adjacent to the pocket park.

**4. Are access and movement of handicapped persons and parking of vehicles for the handicapped appropriately accommodated in the project design?**

The proposed sidewalk along Woodmen Road will meet ADA requirements and ADA compatible crossing ramps will be provide at the Woodmen Road entrance development. The sidewalk along the south side of the street will also be designed to meet accessibility criteria.

**5. As appropriate, are provisions for transit incorporated?**

There is no transit service to this part of the City.

**E. Overburdening of Public Facilities: Will the proposed development overburden the capacities of existing and planned streets, utilities, parks, and other public facilities?**

The proposed development is within the capacities of the existing public facilities, utilities and streets. The developer will pay cash fees in lieu of park and school land dedication.

**F. Privacy: Is privacy provided, where appropriate, for residential units by means of staggered setbacks, courtyards, private patios, grade separation, landscaping, building orientation or other means?**

Staggered setbacks are incorporated and all the units have private patios and yards and back onto open space. A 3-rail wooden fence is proposed to provide definition of the private rear yards **and the side yards where lots abut the trail connections. An open space tract is provided in the north west corner of the property. Alternative compliance is requested for this area in regards to buffers required between**

the adjacent non-residential use to the west and this residential use, specifically for the buffer planting and opaque fencing requirements. The required 15' separation is provided and a 3-rail fence is located along the property boundary and along the individual lot property lines adjacent to the open space. The existing topography provides a significant physical and visual buffer between the uses. This residential development sits approximately 50' lower than the finished floor of the storage facility. The self-storage facility is approximately 168' from the shared property line and the nearest lot on the north side of this residential development is approximately 105' from the property line, thus providing a 273' building separation between the two uses.

## **G. Pedestrian Circulation:**

### **1. Are pedestrian facilities provided, particularly those giving access to open space and recreation facilities?**

A sidewalk is provided along the south side of the street and this will connect to the public sidewalk along Woodmen Road, which will provide access to the Cottonwood Trail and associated open space. Internal open space is also provided adjacent to the creek and this will be accessed by trails. There will also be a private connection from the site through adjacent properties to the Cottonwood Creek Trail via the aerial utility crossing structure.

### **2. Will pedestrian walkways be functionally separated from vehicular ways and located in areas that are not used by motor vehicles?**

The proposed sidewalk and trails are functionally separated from traffic. The only traffic using the private road will be those accessing the 56 units in the gated development.

## **H. Landscaping:**

### **1. Does the landscape design comply with the City's landscape code and the City's landscape policy manual?**

The landscape design is consistent with the City landscape code and policy manual with exception to Code 7.4.323.C.2 and 7.4.323.G that requires a landscape buffer and opaque screen along the common property line between nonresidential and residential use. Alternative compliance is being requested to consider the existing topography grade difference between uses as satisfactory in providing a buffer between the uses.

### **2. The use of native vegetation or drought resistant species including grasses is encouraged. The City's landscape policy manual or the Community Development Department's landscape architect can be consulted for assistance.**

Native vegetation has been used. The open space within the development will be left in its natural state and graded areas will be reseeded with native grasses.

## **I. Open Space:**

### **1. Residential Area:**

**a. Open Space: The provision of adequate open space shall be required to provide light, air and privacy; to buffer adjacent properties; and to provide active and passive recreation opportunities. All residential units shall include well designed private outdoor living space featuring adequate light, air**

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**and privacy where appropriate. Common open space may be used to reduce the park dedication requirements if the open space provides enough area and recreational facilities to reduce the residents' need for neighborhood parks. Recreational facilities shall reflect the needs of the type of residents and proximity to public facilities.**

The southern 3.5-acre portion of the property adjacent to the creek is proposed to be dedicated to the City of Colorado Springs for use of drainage, open space, public & private trails and utilities. Additionally, a 4.8-acre tract enveloping the single-family lots will be retained for open space, landscaping, and private trails. A private trail connection will also be provided through the adjacent property to the west to connect to the Cottonwood Creek Trail via an aerial crossing structure.

**b. Natural Features: Significant and unique natural features, such as trees, drainage channels, slopes, and rock outcroppings, should be preserved and incorporated into the design of the open space. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board shall have the discretion to grant park land credit for open space within a PUD development that preserves significant natural features and meets all other criteria for granting park land credit.**

The land adjacent to Cottonwood Creek is to be retained as open space, which will protect the streamside environment. The homes will be a combination of tuck-unders and walk-outs, which will work better with the natural slope of the site than the previously proposed commercial/office use.

**2. Nonresidential and Mixed Use; Natural Features: The significant natural features of the site, such as trees, drainage channels, slopes, rock outcroppings, etc., should be preserved and are to be incorporated into the design of the open space.**

N/A

#### **D. Final Plat**

The property is currently unplatted. The Final Plat for Trailside at Cottonwood Creek will plat the 15.67-acre parcel into 56 lots and tracts for private streets, utilities, landscaping, parks, open space, trails and detention. The Final Plat meets all the requirements of the subdivision regulations as set out in Section 7.7.303 of the City Zoning Code.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the above assessment, the proposed rezoning, Concept Plan amendment, PUD Development Plan and Final Plat for Trailside at Cottonwood Creek to allow the construction of 56 single-family homes is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Zoning Code, the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, the review criteria for PUD Development Plans and the requirements of the subdivision regulations.