



COLORADO
Department of Transportation

5615 Wills Blvd, Suite A, Pueblo, CO 81008

September 20, 2023

Cody Humphrey
Director of Planning
La Plata Communities, Inc.
9540 Federal Drive, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

RE: Emergency Access - Ovation Residential Development SH21

Mr. Humphrey:

This letter is in response to the discussion of emergency access and potential emergency evacuation to Powers Blvd. (SH21) from the proposed Ovation residential subdivision on Chapel Ridge Dr between the Old Ranch Road and InterQuest Pkwy interchanges.

As you're aware, SH21 is and will remain an access restricted freeway with access only to be granted at grade separated interchanges. Also, Section 3.3(1) of the State Highway Access Code (SHAC), does not allow for emergency access points for side development, nor any other unexpected breaks in the access control, for roadways classified as a freeway.

Notwithstanding no formal permitted emergency access point near this development, emergency evacuation directly from the development to SH21 is not precluded, see Section 3.6(4) SHAC.

CDOT is part of the interjurisdictional mutual aid contemplated in the Pikes Peak Regional Office of Emergency Management's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). In accordance with the EOP, the State and emergency agencies, under the direction of an incident commander, may provide assets to support an emergency, control access to and traffic around the area affected by any disaster or emergency, and provide emergency traffic control equipment and traffic control, including the establishment of emergency traffic routes. Emergency traffic routes could include direct access to SH21 across fence lines if necessary. The incident commander has the responsibility and authority to implementing traffic control arrangements in and around the incident scene as well as requesting additional resources from CDOT.

The Emergency Evacuation Plan specifically states the following:

- El Paso County has numerous major thoroughfares, including multiple Interstate and U.S. Highways, which provide critical access to rural and urban areas. Control of the roadways rests primarily with the law enforcement agency having jurisdictional authority. During a

mass evacuation event, decisions on traffic flow and evacuation routes are controlled by the IC in conjunction with the local law enforcement having jurisdiction. Traffic control operations will be coordinated from the ICP. All decisions on road closures, evacuation routes, or other traffic control functions should be communicated from the IC to the ECC. A pre-identified OEM Liaison could be used to accomplish this.

- During an emergency, clearing the roads for emergency response, evacuation, and movement of resources becomes critical to response and recovery operations. El Paso County Department of Transportation and COS Public Works in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Colorado Traffic Incident Management System (TIMS), shall coordinate emergent road clearings and maintenance with partner agencies through aid agreements.

CDOT commits to providing all necessary support in the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the area. The nearest CDOT maintenance facility is less than one mile away from this subdivision and we will be able to quickly respond. This emergency support could include setting up detours, creating temporary evacuation routes with potential direct access to SH21, and setting up needed traffic control.

Sincerely,



Jason Nelson, PE

Region 2, Traffic and Safety Engineering Program Engineer