



**Vertex Consulting Services, LLC**  
455 Pikes Peak Avenue, Suite 101  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3672  
719-733-8606

## **Project Statement**

June 28, 2023

City of Colorado Springs  
Planning and Development Department  
Attn: Daniel Sexton, Principal Planner  
30 S. Nevada Avenue, Suite 701  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Re: Karman Line (a.k.a. Norris Ranch) – Zoning Project Statement

To the City of Colorado Springs Planning and Development Department

Please accept this document as the Project Statement for the Zoning application pursuant to the Karman Line annexation, formerly known as Norris Ranch.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AND/OR LAND USES PROPOSED**

Karman Line is located in El Paso County, Colorado, and includes approximately 1,783 acres of vacant agricultural land. The property is located at the northwest corner of Bradley Road and Curtis Road, approximately one mile east-southeast of Schriever Space Force Base and is immediately north of a planned Colorado Springs Utilities reservoir, known as Gary Bostrom Reservoir (aka Upper Williams Creek Reservoir).

In addition to the future reservoir site, which is proposed to be located to the southwest and west of Karman Line, the property is surrounded by approximately 17,000 acres of State Land Board-owned property to the east and southeast, State and Federally-owned land to the northeast, and rural residential-zoned land (five-acre minimum lot sizes) in unincorporated El Paso County to the north and northwest. Adjacent to the subject property to the northwest is an approximately 600-acre parcel, also zoned for rural residential (five-acre minimum lot sizes) as well as an approximately 530-acre parcel zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development), both of which are still located within unincorporated El Paso County.

The land included within the Karman Line development consists of mostly rolling hills and gradual drainageways in the eastern, southern, and northern portions of the property and more

significant undulating topography along the western boundary. The western portion of the property features subtle arroyos, more diverse vegetative cover including pine trees and prairie shrubs, as well as pockets of unique rock outcroppings. The elevated topography of the property affords views of the Colorado Front Range extending from areas located north of Colorado Springs to the Spanish Peaks near the Colorado/New Mexico state line. In fact, the north end of the property sits at almost 6,300 feet above sea level, which is comparable in elevation to the south end of the US Air Force Academy near the Interstate 25 and North Academy Boulevard interchange.

The property is positioned in the upper reaches of several drainage basins and sub-basins, most notably Jimmy Camp Creek and Upper Williams Creek. Both drainages possess significant ecological features, including riparian habitat and wildlife migration corridors. In addition, both drainages have been planned by the City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County for future recreational opportunities as part of the greater regional trails system and the aforementioned Colorado Springs Utilities reservoir.

The owner of Karman Line, which is Norris Ranch Joint Venture, LLC, is proposing to develop a master-planned community to include a variety of land uses. More specifically, the Land Use Plan proposes to allow for approximately 45 acres of light industrial and office land uses along Curtis Road in the northeastern portion of the property, nearest to Schriever Space Force Base (SFB). The Plan also depicts additional commercial/retail (totaling approximately 105 acres) and mixed-use development (totaling approximately 100 acres) along Curtis Road and Bradley Road, both of which are US Department of Defense Access Roads and have been identified in the Pikes Peak Area Council of Government's 2018 Joint Land Use Study as "Critical Military Routes." The commercial/retail and mixed-use components of the project are intended to serve the traveling/commuting public, area residents, and the employees and enlisted soldiers at Schriever SFB.

Further into the property moving north and west from Bradley Road and Curtis Road, the Land Use Plan transitions the proposed land uses into localized areas of high-density residential (20-22 du/ac) located along the main "spine" road through the development, as well as medium density residential (6-10 du/ac) mainly located central to the development in an area that largely surrounds a planned 30+ acre school site. As the plan for development extends towards the western and northern boundaries of the property, the Land Use Plan anticipates lower residential densities, including low density residential areas (3-6 du/ac) adjacent to the internal medium density areas, and rural residential densities (0.4-1.0 du/ac) in areas located adjacent to the more rural properties in unincorporated El Paso County.

The property owner is requesting approval for annexation into the City of Colorado Springs and approval of the Land Use Plan with a maximum number of dwelling units for the overall development of 6,500 units. The property owner is requesting to zone the property Agricultural

as a holding zone. The owner acknowledges that further analysis will be required concurrent with any future zoning application for lands encumbered by the floodplain and/or major drainageway, not to include the agricultural holding zone, to determine if the streamside overlay (SS-O) must be applied. This analysis may conclude that the streamside overlay (SS-O) will not be required or applicable with future zoning action.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

The following section provides an analysis of how the proposed zoning is in compliance with the Zoning Approval found in Section 7.5.704 of the UDC.

- 1. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the goals and policies of the Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan, with other plans and policies adopted by the City Council; and with the purpose statement of the proposed zone district(s).*

The Code states the following as the purpose of the Agricultural zone district: “This zone district accommodates large lot residential development and agricultural purposes on lands that are, in most cases, on the periphery of the City limits but may become more urban in the future. Land uses are as indicated in Table 7.3.2-A: Base and NNA-O District Use Table. The activities permitted in the A zone district should not be detrimental to adjacent urban land uses. The types, size, and intensity of permitted uses encourages and protects agricultural uses until urban development occurs. This zone district may serve as a holding zone for future development of recently annexed properties.” (emphasis added)

The proposed zoning action will serve as a holding zone for the land being concurrently requested for annexation into the City limits.

The Code states the following as the Applicability statement for the SS-O district: “The SS-O district encompasses all land within the stream channel, stream adjacent wetlands, and within the inner and outer buffers, as represented by the SS-O district boundaries as shown on the official zoning map, and all land within one hundred and fifty (150) feet of the outer buffer. SS-O district requirements are not applicable to those wetland areas that extend beyond the mapped SS-O district boundary. However, wetlands that are wholly or partially outside of the mapped SS-O district shall be analyzed and protected as indicated or recommended by a Land Suitability Analysis, when required.”

The approximately 1,800 acres being zoned includes a small portion of land within the FEMA designated floodplain along the eastern boundary, flat prairieland in the center of the area being zoned, and a drainageway along the western ¼ of the area. City Planning staff has completed the review of the zoning request treating the 1,800 acres as one large parcel. Small portions of the 1,800 acres do include a seasonal stream, therefore, staff has requested the entire 1,800 acres be included in the SS-O.

The property owner is requesting to zone the property A-SSO as a holding zone. The owner acknowledges that further analysis will be required concurrent with any future

zoning application for lands encumbered by the floodplain and/or major drainageway, to determine the if the streamside overlay (SS-O) must be applied, or if it may be removed. This analysis may conclude that the streamside overlay (SS-O) will not be required or applicable with future zoning action.

- 2. The rezoning will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare.*

The proposed zone will serve as a holding zone. It is not the intent of the owner to develop the site with lot sizes of one dwelling unit per five acres and additional zoning actions will be required to implement the land uses being requested in the concurrently requested Land Use Plan. The land remaining vacant under the holding zone will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare.

- 3. The location of the lands in the zoning map area being amended are appropriate for the purposes of the proposed zone district(s).*

All land being requested for zoning to the A-SS-O zone district are within the boundaries of the requested Karaman Line Annexation. The requested zone meets the purpose statement by “serv[ing] as a holding zone for future development of recently annexed properties”.

- 4. If the application proposes to rezone a small area of land, the application demonstrates that the size, scale, height density, and multimodal traffic impacts of the proposed rezoning are compatible with surrounding development or can be made compatible with surrounding development through approval conditions.*

This criteria is inapplicable as the requested zone area is well over 1,000 acres in size.

- 5. If the application proposes to rezone a relatively small area of land, the application demonstrates that the change in zoning will not create significant dislocations of tenants or occupants of the property, or that any impacts are outweighed by other public benefits or progress toward other Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan goals that would be achieved by approval of the application.*

This criteria is inapplicable as the requested zone area is well over 1,000 acres in size.

- 6. If a Land Use Plan or amendment to a Land Use Plan accompanies the application, the Land Use Plan or amendment complies with the applicable criteria in in Subsection 7.5.514C.3 (Land Use Plan Criteria).*

Please see the Project Statement submitted with the Karman Line Land Use Plan application for a full analysis of this criteria. The Agricultural zone will not allow for implementation of those land uses requested in the Land Use Plan and will serve as a holding zone.

7. *The application is consistent with any approved Concept Plans in the area for which the map is being amended or includes or is accompanied by a provision that approved Concept Plans that have been classified as implemented do not have to be amended in order to be considered consistent with an amended zoning map.*

The requested Agricultural zone is a holding zone, therefore, analysis of the Concept Plan is inapplicable due to subsequent zoning actions being required to implement the intended land uses. Please see the Project Statement submitted with the Karman Line Land Use Plan application for a full analysis of this criteria as it applies to the proposed land uses.

8. *If the application is for creation of an ADS-O district, the approval criteria applicable to the creation of the text of the ADS-O district in Section 7.2.607D.47.5.702 (Decision) shall also apply to consideration of the zoning map amendment required to create or amend the boundaries of the ADS-O district.*

The request is not for creation of an ADS-O district, therefore, this criteria is inapplicable.

9. *If rezoning to a PDZ district, the proposed PDZ district provides significant community amenities or other benefits, as determined by the Manager, that promote the achievement of Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan goals and would not otherwise be required of the applicant under this UDC or other City or governmental regulations.*

The request is not for creation of an PDZ district, therefore, this criteria is inapplicable.

10. *Complies with the additional standards of the base zone district where the property is located (see Article 7.2 (Zone Districts)) or in an overlay district that applies to the property (see Part 7.2.6 (Overlay Districts))*

The request includes the SS-O district as part of the holding zone request. The owner acknowledges that further analysis will be required concurrent with any future zoning application for lands encumbered by the floodplain and/or major drainageway, not to include the agricultural holding zone, to determine the if the streamside overlay (SS-O) must be applied. This analysis may conclude that the streamside overlay (SS-O) will not be required or applicable with future zoning action.