

Residents Demonstrate Increased Danger of Apartment Complex

In light of recent fire events in Colorado, California, and Maui, the residents of Pine Creek Village are questioning the City's decision to support the development of 232 apartments adjacent to one of their few evacuation routes. This new project will increase the size of the neighborhood by 16%, worrying residents that the additional 632 residents and 400+ vehicles will make an evacuation more dangerous and deadly.

Through a little research, the residents discovered that the State of Colorado does not require evacuation modeling for new developments and the City of Colorado Springs does not conduct evacuation planning; they respond to incidents as they happen.

In the development plan, DBG properties claim that an additional 400 vehicles will reduce traffic flows and the City Traffic Engineering Department has accepted this claim, pushing forward the proposed development. The residents who live in this area know better, so they posed the question, "Will their increasingly congested roads support an emergency evacuation?"

To answer this question, on 19 December 2023, the residents of Pine Creek Village conducted their own study to determine what would happen if they were given an evacuation notice due to a fire. Using only 150 vehicles (just 5% of estimated vehicles), residents converged on one of the single lane roundabouts that exit the neighborhood. In just over 1 minute, the roundabout became gridlocked, and it took 30 minutes to move everyone through it. This was on a clear day, there were no accidents or breakdowns, and no one was panicked.

The answer as to whether their roads will support an evacuation, the answer was, "No." In fact, the roads do not support the current population, let alone an additional apartment complex. Preserve Pine Creek Village, LLC conducted a survey of the evacuation study, and every respondent felt the conditions were "concerning" and "dangerous."

This leads to a larger problem Colorado Springs is seeing. New developments are popping up everywhere, and the influx of 20,000 new apartments in Colorado Springs over the next two years will only make an evacuation that more dangerous. For the residents of Pine Creek, the additional apartments mean life and death. They are asking City Officials to deny this

development because the infrastructure does not support the additional vehicles and it increases the risk to human life, including those who will live in this apartment complex.

“We conducted this study to show the city that the over-development now allowed by ReToolCOS will put lives at risk. Increased traffic isn’t just an inconvenience, it’s a safety issue. The traffic flow during this study was the politest traffic I have seen in COS. This won’t be the case when the risk of burning alive is real. Are our elected officials willing to accept the blood of Colorado Springs residents on their hands? If not, they need to deny this development and think about the impact of overdevelopment throughout the city.”

Stephen Parrish Sr., Pine Creek Resident, and trained Emergency Manager