



Mayor Phil Bandy

**CITY OF EAGLE**

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Council: Steve Guerber  
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Norm Semanko  
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August 20, 2008

Ada County Board of County Commissioners  
200 West Front  
Boise, ID 83702-7300

SUBJECT: 200600219-PC – Dry Creek Ranch Planned Community

Dear Commissioners:

In 2006, the City of Eagle began a planning process to study the foothills north of Beacon Light Road, a region consisting of approximately 49,000 acres that was designated as an area of special concern in the City's 1999 Comprehensive Plan. During the planning process, the City engaged public agencies, land owners, and citizens to analyze the potential of the foothills for development. Data collected from the review of land ownership, recreational uses, land cover and slope, hydrology, flora and fauna, and view sheds resulted in the creation of a constraints chart and map. While this data was highly critical in determining opportunities and constraints to developing the foothills, it did not address land use densities and intensities, transportation impacts, infrastructure needs, or population. Thus the City determined that a sub-area plan, the North Eagle Foothills Planning Area, was necessary to establish guidelines and objectives to best address the type of sustainable development that could occur in the area while maintaining the desired vision of the community. The work of committed community participants was (and remains) a keystone to the development of the sub-area plan.

The City has continued to voice concerns about urban development occurring in unincorporated Ada County in the form of Planned Communities without consideration of the impacts upon neighboring cities. In light of this concern, the City invited the proposed Dry Creek Ranch Planned Community development ownership to join in a joint planning process for the Foothills. While Dry Creek declined participation (and were not included), areas to the north and west of the Dry Creek development were included.

The comments included herein are based on conversations between the City of Eagle and the Ada County Board of County Commissioners. At the July 29, 2008, joint meeting, the BOCC requested that the City review dry Creek development area for the potential inclusion into the City of Eagle Comprehensive Plan. The City has put considerable time and effort into developing a constraints-based plan that focuses on compatibility with the natural surroundings, establishing live, work, and play environments, and the need to balance landowners' development desires with the community's values and identity. With this understanding, these comments will focus on how the Dry Creek Ranch development compares to the goals, policies, and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan:

	<b>Eagle Comprehensive Plan</b>	<b>Dry Creek -Ada Co</b>
<b>Acres Total</b>	<b>49,000</b>	<b>1,414.9</b>
Residential	13,479 (27.5%)	659 (46.6%)
Non-residential	690 (1%)	82.6 (5.8%)
Constrained	27,735 (57%)	451.9(31.9%)
Public/BLM Land	5,389 (11%)	0
Open Space	19,600 (40%)	606 (42%)
Natural	20%	498 (35.2%)
Park	20%	108 (1.2%)

<b>Residential</b>		
Units	24,000	4,300
Gross density	0.5	3.04
Net density	1.7	6.53

<b>Commercial/Retail/Office</b>		
Acres per Household	0.029	0.019

<b>Build out population</b>	<b>57,600</b>	<b>10,320</b>
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The following data is stated in the Comprehensive Plan:

- The overall gross density for the North Foothills Planning Area is to remain at 1-unit per two-acres (24,000-units on 49,000-acres) for those lands defined as buildable, i.e. those lands that are on slopes of less than 25% and not located within the floodway.
- 690-acres (or 1% of the total area) is designated for non-residential community centers (mixed use), which are areas of the highest density, greatest variety of uses, and civic buildings of regional importance.
- The goal for open space to be provided is 18,000-acres (40%) formed by clustering uses, transferring density, creating easements, and other available means. Open space is to include the most sensitive resources of the property (floodway/riparian, 25%-plus slopes, scenic viewpoints), lands contiguous to public lands (BLM), and a contiguous, integrated network of land spanning the area.

In contrast, the Dry Creek proposal reflects the following:

- The overall gross density for the development is 4.36-units per acre or roughly eight (8) times higher than the City of Eagle Comprehensive Plan.
- Commercial/Mixed use areas planned for 131-acres or 9% compared to 1% as forecasted in the City of Eagle Comprehensive Plan.
- Proposed open space equals of 38% compared to 40% of the site as desired in the City of Eagle Comprehensive Plan.

While Dry Creek Ranch in many ways mirrors the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to providing open space and community centers, in other matters it far exceeds the tolerances and sensitivities of the natural eco-system and the community.

Understanding that the Comprehensive Plan is a visioning document and that development does not always quite correspond to the intended goals, the M3 project is an example of a development that closely resembles the desired outcome of the Comprehensive Plan:

### M3 Density Calculations

Base Density			
	Acres	Units/Acre	Total Units
<b>Base Density</b>	6,005	0.5	3,003
<b>Community Centers</b>	88	2.5	220
<b>Neighborhood Centers</b>	240	9.3	2,240
<b>Base Density Subtotal :</b>			<b>5,462</b>

Open Space Bonuses			
	Acres	Units/Acre	Total Units
<b>Required Open Space (20%)</b>	1,201		
<b>Regional Open Space</b>	880	1	880
<b>Excess Community Open Space</b>	321	0.5	161
<b>Open Space Subtotal:</b>		<b>2,402 (40% of Site)</b>	<b>1,041</b>

Permanent Open Space Funding Bonus*			
	Base Units	Bonus	Units
<b>Funding Bonus Subtotal</b>	6,503	10%	650

Total Units (Base + Bonuses)				
	Base	Open Space	Funding	TOTAL UNITS
	5,462	1,041	666	<b>7,169</b>

*\*only applies if property is supplying land in excess of the 20% minimum and that land will allow public use and access.*

Applying the constraints methodology of the Comprehensive Plan, Dry Creek Ranch would be measured as follows:

### Dry Creek with Eagle Comprehensive Plan Constraints

Base Density			
	Acres	Units/Acre	Total Units
Base Density	1,414.9	0.5	707
Community Centers	63.5	2.5	159
Neighborhood Centers	19.1	9.33	178
<b>Base Density Subtotal :</b>			<b>1,044</b>

Open Space Bonuses			
	Acres	Units/Acre	Total Units
Required Open Space (20%)	282.98		
Regional Open Space	323.02	1	323
Excess Community Open Space		0.5	0
<b>Open Space Subtotal:</b>		<b>606 (42.8% of Site)</b>	<b>323</b>

Permanent Open Space Funding Bonus*			
	Base Units	Bonus	Units
<b>Funding Bonus Subtotal:</b>		1,367	0.1
			137

Total Units (Base + Bonuses)			
Base	Open Space	Funding	TOTAL UNITS
1044	323	137	<b>1,504</b>

*\*only applies if property is supplying land in excess of the 20% minimum and that land will allow public use and access.*

The City's constraints based plan would result in a significantly less dense project, calling for a 65% reduction in the buildable units. At 1,504 units the property is receiving a development entitlement over 20 times larger than those currently entitled under Ada County's rural zoning (RR & RP).

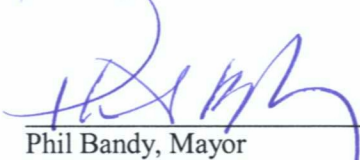
Though the city recognizes that any development will have impacts, the city plan works to balance the positive aspects of development (increased tax base, employments and creating unique communities) with the intrinsic values of the foothill (habitat, open space and recreation) expressed by the community. A 65% reduction in density would result in a similar reduction in the impacts/demands on the public infrastructure (police, fire, sewer and roadways) and to the natural systems (drainage, groundwater, flora and fauna).

The Comprehensive Plan and the North Eagle Foothills Planning Area were created to assure the protection of natural resources, open space, habitat, sensitive ridgelines, and steep slopes in accordance with the wishes of the public and existing residents (those of the City as well as those of rural Ada County). The plan also gives developers a set of criteria to aid them in developing projects that are in harmony with expected goals and objectives. The plan has been designed to reduce impacts on wildlife,

open space, viable access and recreation while attempting to prevent stretching the capabilities of key infrastructure (State Highway, aquifer, etc.) beyond a reasonable and planned level. If developments are approved in the Central Foothills without applying the constraints similar to those in the City's North Eagle Foothills Planning Area, it is very likely that the density and intensity of the Dry Creek Ranch development will be at odds with what makes this area a desirable place to live. As a result, we recommend that the Ada County Board of Commissioners deny this application at the densities currently proposed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment in this matter.

Sincerely,



Phil Bandy, Mayor

cc: Eagle City Council  
Jay Gibbons, Planning and Zoning Administrator, Ada County Development Services  
Ashley B. Ford, Planning Project Manager, WRG Design, Inc.