

10/24/2023

**RE: Lee Farm Sketch Plat Q & A**

Dear Resident,

Thank you for your interest in the Lee Farm Subdivision. The project is currently in the Sketch Plat phase. A sketch plat is a generalized land use plan for, and generalized layout of, an area proposed to be included within a subdivision. This is a required step for subdivisions in which new public improvements are necessary (e.g., streets, grading and drainage, and utility services).

Sketch Plat reviews require a 10-day notice and comment period, as specified in Title 18 of the Loveland Municipal Code. Notices are mailed to neighbors within a 300-ft radius of the property, signage is posted along adjacent rights-of-way and notices are posted on the City website at: [lovgov.org/currentplanning](http://lovgov.org/currentplanning) under “Neighborhood Notices”. Comments provided during the 10-day period are reviewed by the Director of Development Services. Applicants are always encouraged to incorporate feedback, where feasible.

The Current Planning office has received several similar questions about the Lee Farm subdivision. The response to these questions is provided below.

**Can this area (the Lee Farm Property) remain open space?**

The Lee Farm property is privately owned and has had residential development rights assigned to it for nearly 20 years. The original subdivision general development plan was approved by City Council in 2006, and a major amendment to the development plan was approved by Council in 2018. Both processes required a neighborhood meeting, and public hearings by Planning Commission and City Council.

The general development plan sets limits on the project, including the number of units (max 1030 – applicant is proposing 1010), product type (single-family, duplexes, townhomes, etc.), lot sizes and street connections. The approved general development plan is consistent with the Create Loveland Comprehensive Plan identifies the Lee Farm property as an appropriate area for residential development in the [Future Land Use Map](#). Given the entitlements afforded to this property, the City does not have the ability to require that the property remain open space.

The City does require a minimum outdoor recreation/open space area for all residential subdivisions. The minimum required outdoor recreation area is one acre for every 100 dwelling units. The Lee Farm subdivision is proposing 1010 units, which would require 10.01 acres of recreation space. As it currently stands, 71.71 acres of open space is proposed, including 12.59 acres of parks and recreation areas.

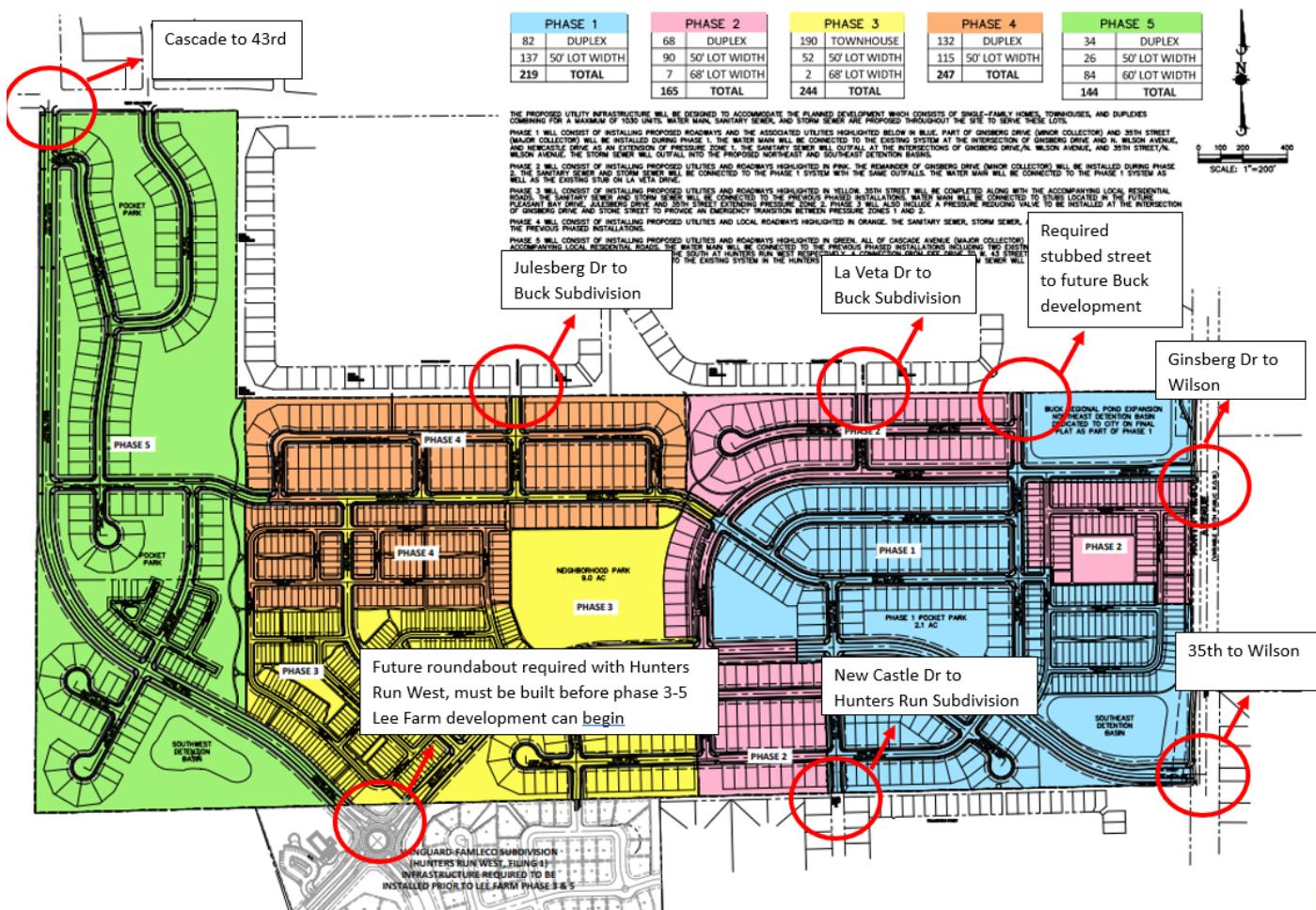
Outside of privately owned areas, there is some exciting open space and parks planning occurring near your neighborhood. The Parks & Recreation Department plays a very key role in the preservation of land within and around the city, and in the preservation of biodiversity and ecological resources associated with these lands. Specific to the area in question, Parks & Recreation recently purchased the 245-acre Dakota Ridge property immediately west of the Lee Farm site and other nearby proposed developments, to preserve land and protect ecological resources, biodiversity and viewsheds. This land was originally annexed for private development but will now be preserved in perpetuity. In addition, this land is connected to the city's 169-acre Skyline Natural Area to the south (and immediately west of the Namaqua Hills Subdivision), to provide a contiguous 400 acres of protected land and future passive recreation opportunities. On a larger scale, this preserved land, when combined with Loveland's 785-acre Prairie Ridge Natural Area to the north, and Larimer County's nearby Devil's Backbone Open Space to the west, provides a protected habitat area of over 2,600 acres immediately adjacent to the city's annexed boundary. In short, protection of biodiversity and ecological resources is extremely important to the city and the city aims to utilize available funding and grants to protect the most sensitive properties where feasible.

### **Why do the proposed streets connect into existing neighborhoods?**

Both the Buckhorn Village Subdivision and the Hunter's Run subdivision were built to provide future connection to the Lee Farm residential area, as required by adopted city standards. In other words, the requirement to connect the internal local street network is not an isolated requirement of the Lee

Farm development, but a coordinated requirement between the three adjacent subdivisions. In each subdivision there are roads that are currently stubbed out for future extension including Julesburg Dr, La Veta Dr, and New Castle Dr. (See Fig 1. Below)

The applicant sought to limit the traffic impacts of the Lee Farm Subdivision on neighboring subdivisions by ensuring that the denser portions of the Lee Farm development, including as duplexes and townhomes, were positioned along larger collector/arterial streets including Wilson and Cascade Avenues. This arrangement provides these units the most direct access to Wilson Avenue, limiting traffic impact to adjacent neighborhood local street networks.



**Figure 1** Proposed Lee Farm development transportation connections, as required by City transportation standards.

## How is the increased traffic on Wilson being managed?

The Lee Farm Subdivision sketch plat includes two connections to Wilson Avenue, one at the southeast corner (35<sup>th</sup> St) and another in the northwest corner, just south of the future Buck

Regional Pond expansion (Ginsberg Dr). Both connections must be completed with the first phase of the Lee Farm Development to ensure sufficient and safe access.

The Lee Farm Subdivision is one of three residential subdivisions currently being reviewed between 29th and 57th adjacent to Wilson. With each development will come additional street infrastructure that is designed to improve road safety including traffic intersection improvements, pedestrian walkways, enhanced pedestrian crossings, and other traffic control devices.

As a result of these proposed developments, the posted speeds along Wilson will be reduced to 40 mph to reflect the driving characteristics of a 4-lane arterial through a residential corridor. Regarding pedestrian safety, the City transportation group is very familiar with the incident history for this area and is currently working with developments to ensure the transportation infrastructure will meet City street standards make for a safer road network.

As for speed monitoring, there are several different ways that the City's Traffic division monitors driving behavior. One of which is multiple trailer mounted traffic cameras that are deployed to a different part of the city each Monday. Monitoring stations are frequently deployed along Wilson Avenue to collect data and improve transportation safety in Loveland. As a citizen, you are always welcome to reach out to the City traffic department and request the City to follow up on a particular roadway or an area.

### **How is water, drainage, infrastructure being managed?**

As part of the review process, all development applications are subject to City standards specific to planning, transportation, emergency access and fire (LFRA), stormwater management, water/wastewater, and power utilities among others. Each review of the project involves extensive coordination across these departments to ensure that standards are being met and the overall system is designed to function effectively. The project is not circulated for public comment until all review staff have ensured that the project meets City standards and is consistent with the Lee Farm General Development Plan.

City review has ensured that the Lee Farm Sketch Plat:

- Adheres to the approved general development plan and City development code standards including setbacks, lot size, open space requirements, buffering requirements, etc.

- Proposed drainage and runoff are managed on-site through detention swales or other means and will not impact adjacent properties.
- The City has adequate capacity to serve water and power to the Lee Farm development as proposed.
- Proposed street networks meet City transportation requirements.
- LFRA has sufficient emergency access and street naming conventions are approved.
- Provides appropriate connectivity to the adjacent Parks and Recreation's property.

Details of each will be completed with the review of the final drawings. There may be minor adjustments between sketch and final plat, as these details are managed. Any significant changes would require an additional neighborhood comment period.

### **How does the City access the environmental impact of the proposed development?**

As part of the development review process, applicants are required to provide a site inventory map delineating all mature vegetation, irrigation canals and ditches, wildlife habitat and corridors, wetlands, and linkages to open space and natural areas among other environmental conditions. Properties that contain or are within 100 feet from an environmentally sensitive area as defined by the City of Loveland Unified Development Code and in the Environmentally Sensitive Area Report and Site Inventory Mapping requirements must work with a qualified biologist to prepare and Environmentally Sensitive Areas Report (ESAR). The report identifies and assesses the potential impacts of development on environmentally sensitive areas (and vice-versa) and specific measures to mitigate such impacts. Based on the findings of the report, the applicant must use mitigation measures including buffer areas, landscaping with native vegetation, visual screening, modifications to the proposed project design, and other measures necessary to adequately protect the environmentally sensitive areas.

### **When will construction occur?**

The applicant team is still going through their entitlement process and is only in the sketch plat phase. Given this, construction will not occur for some time. A conservative estimate is 12-18 months before they will break ground. This is subject to change and is contingent on the developer's schedule, interest rates, and product availability as well.

Thank you for the time you took to provide comments and engage in the development review

process. Stay informed about the future progress of the Lee Farm Subdivision development as well as all other development proposals throughout the City by visiting: [lovgov.org/cda](http://lovgov.org/cda)

Best,

Marika Kopp  
Planner II – Current Planning  
City of Loveland  
970-962-2721  
Marika.Kopp@cityofloveland.org