

Location and Extent Staff Report

Date: February 18, 2025

To: Douglas County Planning Commission

From: Brett Thomas, AICP, Chief Planner \mathcal{FT}

Jeanette Bare, AICP, Planning Manager \mathcal{JB}

Steven E. Koster, AICP, Assistant Director of Planning Services

Subject: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street

Project File: LE2025-002

Planning Commission Hearing:

March 3, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Platte River Academy Building Corporation (Platte River Academy) requests approval of a Location and Extent (L & E) application to provide improvements to the existing charter school site located at 4085 Lark Sparrow Street. The improvements are intended to provide small, outdoor learning spaces to serve existing students. The school is located east of Colorado Boulevard, between Lark Sparrow Street and Goldcrest Avenue. The site is located in the Primary Urban Area as designated on the 2040 Douglas County Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP).

II. APPLICATION INFORMATION

A. Applicant

Platte River Academy 4085 Lark Sparrow Street Highlands Ranch, Colorado 80126

B. Applicant's Representative

Alan McQueen, Director of Operations Platte River Academy 4085 Lark Sparrow Street Highlands Ranch, Colorado 80126

C. Request

Platte River Academy is requesting approval of an L & E application to provide improvements to the existing charter school site. Improvements generally include two shade canopies southwest of the school, two hyperdomes west of the school, and two 16-foot by 16-foot decks and nature trails north of the school.

D. Location

The existing school is located east of Colorado Boulevard, approximately 3,000 feet south of Highway C470. The attached vicinity map, zoning map, and aerial map highlight site location and existing conditions.

E. Project Description

Platte River Academy proposes improvements to the exterior of the existing school to provide outdoor educational opportunities while maintaining its existing operational scale. The proposed improvements will not increase student enrollment capacity or alter existing traffic patterns. Location specific improvements are identified below:

- Southeast of Building:
 - Two shade canopies with infrared heating.
 - Seating capacity for approximately 20 students.
 - Electrical infrastructure for climate control.
- West of Building:
 - o Two hyperdomes each accommodating up to 12 students.
 - Electrical heating systems.
 - Flexible space designated for teacher and student support services.
- North of Building:
 - Two 16-foot by 16-foot accessible decks with ramps.
 - Nature trail installation around existing detention pond.
 - o Education programming partnership with Highlands Ranch Water.

The applicant expects a phased construction schedule, with construction to commence in summer 2025 and potentially extend through summer 2027.

III. CONTEXT

A. Background

Platte River Academy was established in 1997. The existing school was constructed in 2002. Platte River Academy is chartered to serve students in grades Kindergarten through Eighth. The school is located on a 6.11-acre parcel that is zoned Agricultural One.

B. Adjacent Land Uses and Zoning

Existing single-family residential lots within the Province Center Planned Development are located east of the site. North of the site is a landscape tract within Province Center. Existing single-family residential lots within the Highlands Ranch Planned Development are located west of the site, across Colorado Boulevard, and south of the site, across Lark Sparrow Street. The following table reflects those zone districts and land uses surrounding the PD.

Zoning and Land Use

Direction	Zoning	Land Use
North	Planned Development	Landscape tract
South	Planned Development	Residential
East	Planned Development	Residential
West	Planned Development	Residential

IV. PHYSICAL SITE CHARACTERISTICS

A. Site Characteristics and Constraints

No existing physical conditions are present that constrain construction of the proposed improvements. The decks and nature trail to the north of the building are designed to maintain the current volume of the detention pond.

B. Access

Access to the school site is provided by Lark Sparrow Street to the south. The morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up traffic patterns will remain unchanged. No additional parking is required as student enrollment capacity and the number of staff are proposed to remain the same.

C. Drainage and Erosion

Engineering has reviewed the drainage conformance letter and found it to be acceptable. The current volume of the detention pond is maintained.

D. Floodplain

No mapped 100-year floodplain is present on the site.

V. PROVISION OF SERVICES

A. Schools

Platte River Academy is chartered through the Douglas County School District.

B. Fire Protection

South Metro Fire Rescue (South Metro) provides firefighting and emergency medical services to the project area. South Metro reviewed the request and had no objection to the proposed improvements.

C. Sheriff Services

The Douglas County Sheriff's Office (DCSO) provides emergency services to the site. At the writing of the staff report, no response had been received from the DCSO or the Office of Emergency Management.

D. Water and Sanitation

Water and sanitation service is provided by Northern Douglas County Water and Sanitation District. At the writing of the staff report, no response had been received from the District. No additional water or sewer improvements are required for the outdoor learning spaces.

E. Utilities

Area utility service providers were provided a referral on this application. AT&T noted no conflicts with its long line facilities and Xcel Energy noted no objections with the project. CenturyLink noted its receipt of the request and that it will endeavor to respond within 30 days. The comments were provided to the applicant. No other utility provider issued comments at the writing of the staff report.

F. Other Required Processes and Permits

In addition to the L & E approval, the following permits and other approvals may be required prior to commencement of construction:

- · Engineering: GESC report and plans
- Building Division: Building permits for structures.

VI. PUBLIC NOTICE AND INPUT

Courtesy notices of an application in process were sent to adjacent property owners. At the preparation of the staff report, no adjacent property owners or members of the public commented on the proposal. Referral response requests were sent to required referral agencies on February 6, 2025. Referral responses are due at the conclusion of the referral period on February 20, 2025, or prior to the Planning Commission Hearing. The Highlands Ranch Community Association took exception to the proposal, noting concerns with the potential aesthetics of the hyperdomes and covered decks. Staff has requested that the applicant provide elevations of these facilities prior to the Planning Commission hearing.

Referral agency responses received to date are attached to the staff report for reference. Responses received through the end of the referral period will be provided to the Planning Commission prior to the hearing and added to the project record.

VII. STAFF ASSESSMENT

Staff has evaluated the application in accordance with Section 32 of the DCZR. Should the Planning Commission approve the L & E request, the applicant will be required to receive approval of all necessary permits prior to commencement of the project.

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LAND USE APPLICATION

Please complete, sign, and date this application. Return it with the required items listed on the Submittal Checklist to planningsubmittals@douglas.co.us. Submittals may also be mailed or submitted in person to Planning Services. NOTE: The Planning Commission or the Board of County Commissioners should not be contacted regarding an open application.

OFFICE USE ONLY PROJECT TITLE:
PROJECT NUMBER:
PROJECT TYPE: LOCATION AND EXTENT
MARKETING NAME: PLATTE RIVER ACADEMY OUTDOOR LEARNING PARK
PRESUBMITTAL REVIEW PROJECT NUMBER: PS2025-005
PROJECT SITE: Address: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street, Highlands Ranch CO 80126
State Parcel Number(s): 2231-063-00-005
Subdivision/Block#/Lot# (if platted): SW 1/4, Section 6, Township 6 South, Range 67 West of the Sixth Principal Meridian in unincorporated Douglas County.
PROPERTY OWNER(S):
Name(s): Platte River Academy Building Corporation
Address: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street, Highlands Ranch CO 80126
Phone: School phone: 303-221-1070
Email: amcqueen@prak8.org (Alan McQueen, Director of Operations); vhui@prak8.org (Vivien Hui, Project Manager)
AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: (Notarized Letter of Authorization is required from the property owner, unless the owner is acting as the representative)
Name: Alan McQueen, Director of Operations
Address: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street, Highlands Ranch CO 80126
Phone: school phone: 303-221-1070, cell 720-202-1929
Email: amcqueen@prak8.org (Alan McQueen, Director of Operations); vhui@prak8.org (Vivien Hui, Project Manager) To the best of my knowledge, the information contained on this application is true and correct. I have received the County's information sheet regarding the <i>Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse</i> .

Applicant Signature



Project Narrative

Platte River Academy Outdoor Learning Spaces

Location and Extent Hearing Submission

Background and Purpose

Platte River Academy (PRA), established in 1997, built the current site in 2002 which became operational in 2003, serves K-8 students in Douglas County. Currently, student support services and small group instruction occur in shared spaces such as hallways and room corners, which presents challenges for providing focused, private educational support. This project aims to enhance our educational environment through strategically designed outdoor learning spaces while maintaining our existing operational scale.

Project Overview

The proposed improvements will add approximately 1,400 square feet of year-round four seasons instructional space without modifying the building's existing footprint. These enhancements will create dedicated areas for student support services and innovative outdoor learning environments that align with our educational mission.

Location-Specific Improvements

Southwest Corner Development

- Two shade canopies with infrared heating
- Seating capacity for 20+ students
- Electrical infrastructure for climate control
- Designed for both whole-class and small group instruction

West Space Enhancement

- Two hyperdomes, each accommodating up to 12 students
- Electrical heating systems
- Flexible space designated for teacher and student support services
- Suitable for small group instruction and intervention services

North Space Integration

- Two 16'x16' accessible decks with ramps
- Nature trail installation around existing detention pond
- Designed to maintain current detention pond volume
- Partnership with Highlands Ranch Water (formerly Centennial Water) for educational programming

Educational Benefits

The outdoor learning spaces will serve multiple educational purposes:

- Provide dedicated areas for small group instruction and intervention services
- Support STEM education through hands-on engineering experiences
- Enable environmental education including water conservation studies
- Facilitate nature-based learning and plant life cycle observation
- Create opportunities for civil engineering instruction through interpretive signage and activity zones

Student Capacity and Traffic Impact

The proposed outdoor learning spaces project will <u>not</u> increase student enrollment capacity at Platte River Academy or alter existing traffic patterns. These new educational spaces are designed to enhance the learning environment for our current student population by:

- Redistributing existing small group instruction and support services from indoor common areas to purpose-built outdoor spaces
- Providing alternative learning environments for current classrooms and instructional staff
- Supporting existing educational programs with improved facilities
- Maintaining current student count limits and staffing levels

The project's scope is limited to improving instructional space quality and does not include any modifications that would expand the school's enrollment capacity. As such:

- No additional student seats will be added.
- No new staff positions will be created
- Morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up traffic patterns will remain unchanged
- Parking requirements will stay consistent with current usage
- No impact to peak hour traffic volumes on adjacent roadways

STEM Integration

The project integrates academic curriculum with practical learning experiences through:

- Engineering-focused interpretive signage along the nature trail
- Activity zones demonstrating principles of construction, load distribution, and forces
- Hands-on learning opportunities in civil and structural engineering design
- Water conservation and environmental science education in partnership with Highlands Ranch Water
- Real-world applications of STEM concepts through campus infrastructure

Compliance with 2040 Douglas County Comprehensive Master Plan

The proposed outdoor learning spaces project aligns with several key objectives of the 2040 Douglas County Comprehensive Master Plan:

Education and Community Resources

- Enhances existing educational facilities without expanding development footprint
- Strengthens community assets through improved educational infrastructure
- Supports the plan's goal of maintaining high-quality educational facilities within established neighborhoods

Environmental Stewardship

- Incorporates sustainable design principles through outdoor learning environments
- Promotes environmental education through partnership with Highlands Ranch Water
- Maintains existing drainage patterns and detention pond functionality
- Adds educational components about water conservation and natural systems

Land Use Efficiency

- Maximizes use of existing school property without expansion
- Improves facility functionality without increasing density or traffic impact
- Maintains compatibility with surrounding land uses

Community Character

- Preserves neighborhood scale and character
- Enhances existing institutional use without changing community impact
- Supports the plan's vision for sustainable community development

Economic Development

- Strengthens educational infrastructure, supporting property values
- Invests in existing community assets
- Promotes STEM education, supporting workforce development goals

Project Phasing and Timeline

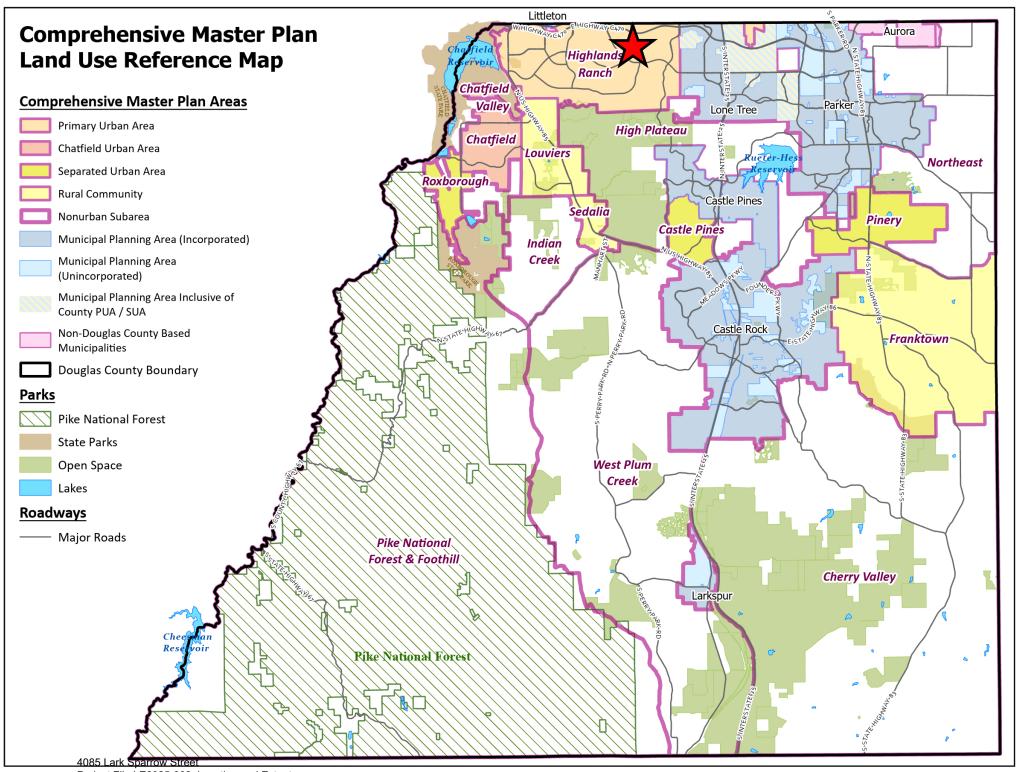
The implementation of the outdoor learning spaces will be executed in phases, with construction planned to begin in summer 2025 and potentially extending through summer 2027. This phased approach allows for:

- Strategic implementation based on fundraising success within our school community
- Minimal disruption to ongoing school operations
- Flexibility to adjust design elements based on community feedback and needs
- Efficient resource allocation as funding becomes available
- Careful coordination of construction activities during summer breaks

The exact timing and sequence of improvements will be determined by the success of our fundraising efforts within the school community. This approach ensures responsible fiscal management while maintaining our commitment to enhancing the educational environment.

Conclusion

This enhancement of our campus addresses current space utilization challenges while providing innovative outdoor learning environments. The project maintains our existing operational scale while significantly improving our ability to deliver quality education and support services to our current and future student population. Through thoughtful design and integration with our curriculum, these improvements will create meaningful educational opportunities without impacting the surrounding community's traffic patterns or the site's current functionality.



4085 LARK SPARROW STREET

LE2025-002 ZONING MAP



LEGEND

PROJECT SITE

A1 - AGRICULTURAL ONE

PD - PLANNED DEVELOPMENT



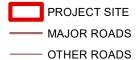


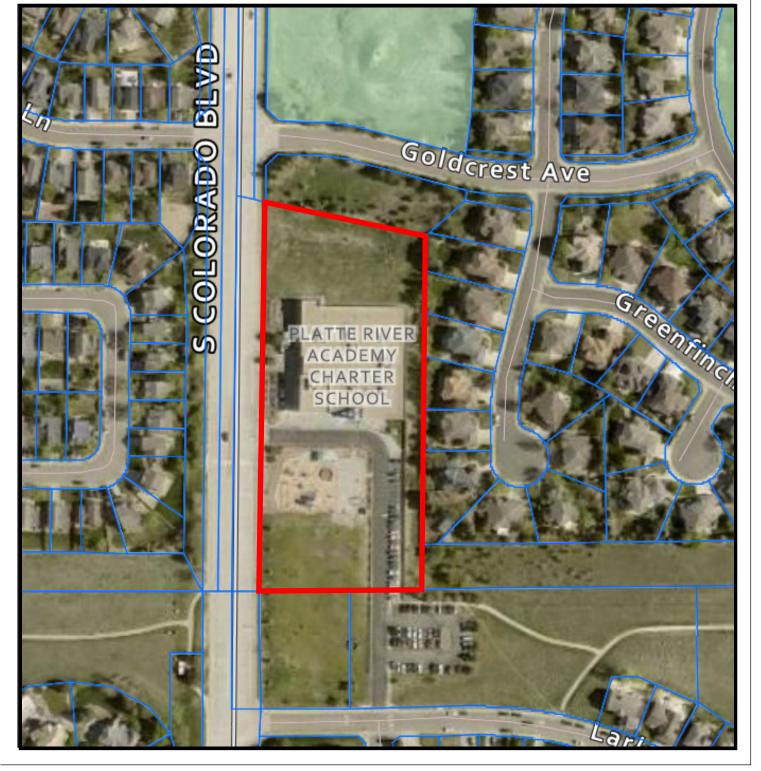
4085 LARK SPARROW STREET

LE2025-002 AERIAL MAP



LEGEND







Initial Referral Agency Response Report

Project Name: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street

Project File #: LE2025-002

Agency	Date Received	Agency Response	Response Resolution
Addressing Analyst	02/11/2025	No comment.	No action required.
AT&T Long Distance - ROW	02/06/2025	Summary of response letter: There should be no conflicts with the AT&T long line facilities.	No action required.
Building Services	02/10/2025	Verbatim response: Permit is required, please visit Douglas County's web site for requirements and call 303-660-7497 if you have any questions.	Comments provided to applicant.
CenturyLink	02/07/2025	Summary of response letter: CenturyLink acknowledged receipt of the request and endeavors to respond within 30 days.	Comments provided to applicant.
Comcast			
Douglas County Health Department Douglas County			
School District RE 1			
Engineering Services	02/12/2025	Summary of response letter: Engineering requested the 100-year water surface elevation of the detention pond be provided on the L & E exhibit. Engineering noted GESC plans and report will be required if more than 50-cubic yards will be disturbed.	Comments provided to applicant.
Highlands Ranch Community Association	02/10/2025	Verbatim response: The Highlands Ranch Community Association ("HRCA") appreciates the opportunity to review and opine on this Application. Based on the limited information provided in this eReferral, and similar to the comments reflected on "Planning Review Comments 02-06-2025.pdf," we are concerned with the aesthetics of both the two 15'ø hypedomes and two 16'x16' covered decks with radiant heating. No information on the HEIGHT, COLOR, or MATIERALS are provided for these improvements on either the PLANS or within the PROJECT NARRATIVE. As such, the HRCA **TAKES EXCEPTIONS** to this application and reserve the right to review supplemental information regarding the elements noted above.	Comments provided to applicant.
Highlands Ranch Metropolitan District	02/18/2025	No comment.	No action required.
Highlands Ranch Water and Sanitation District	02/18/2025	No comment.	No action required.

Initial Referral Agency Response Report

Project Name: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street

Project File #: LE2025-002

Agency	Date Received	Agency Response	Response Resolution
Northern Douglas			
County Water and			
Sanitation District			
Office of Emergency			
Management			
Province Center HOA			
South Metro Fire	02/12/2025	Summary of response letter:	Comments provided to applicant.
Rescue		South Metro Fire Rescue has no objection to the proposed Location and Extent.	
Xcel Energy-Right of Way & Permits	02/19/2025	Summary of response letters: Xcel was provided with new information and plans from the applicant and no longer objects to the project.	Comments provided to applicant. Applicant followed up with Xcel and provided additional information regarding the
	02/14/2025	Xcel noted the proposed location of the two hyperdomes encroaches upon underground primary distribution facilities, and requests to view the updated documents before they are finalized.	project.

Brett Thomas

Cc: CHOY, PAM <pc2914@att.com>; duanew cwc64.com <duanew@cwc64.com>; jt cwc64.com <jt@cwc64.com>

Subject: 4085 Lark Sparrow St Littleton, Colorado Douglas County eReferral #LE2025-002

Hi Brett,

This is in response to your eReferral with a utility map showing any buried AT&T Long Line Fiber Optics near 4085 Lark Sparrow St Littleton, Colorado. The Earth map shows the project area in red. Based on the address and/or map you provided, there should be NO conflicts with the AT&T Long Lines, as we do not have facilities in that area.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Ann Barnowski Clearwater Consulting Group Inc 120 9th Avenue South Suite 140 Nampa, ID 83651 Annb@cwc64.com



The attached google earth maps are intended to show approximate locations of the buried AT&T long line fiber optic cable. The maps are provided for informational purposes only. In no way should the maps be used for anything other than general guidelines as to where the fiber is or is not and any other use of these maps is strictly prohibited.

Brett Thomas

From: Easement, Nre < Nre. Easement@lumen.com>

Sent: Friday, February 7, 2025 1:19 PM **To:** Brett Thomas bthomas@douglas.co.us

Cc: Sheridan, Veshon < Veshon. Sheridan@lumen.com>

Subject: RE: P864734***Douglas County eReferral (LE2025-002) Is Ready For Review

Good afternoon. We have received your request for an encroachment and have set up a Lumen project accordingly. Your project number is P864734 and it should be referenced in all emails sent in for review.

Please do not reply to this email. Your project owner is VeShon Sheridan and they can be reached by email at Veshon. Sheridan@lumen.com with any questions that you may have regarding this project.

Requests are addressed in the order received, Lumen will endeavor to respond within 30 days.

Have a great day!

Best Regards,

Cheyanne Hobbs
Project Coordinator
Faulk & Foster
214 Expo Circle, Suite 7
West Monroe, LA 71291
Cheyanne.Hobbs@lumen.com

Our fee policy applies to Lumen dedicated easements only.

If your request involves public ROW or a Public Utility easement, the fee does not apply. If this is the case, please reply all to advise.

www.douglas.co.us Engineering Services

February 12, 2025

Alan McQueen
Director of Operations
Platte River Academy
4085 Lark Sparrow Street
Highlands Ranch, CO 80126

DV 2025-082

Subject: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street (Platte River Academy) – Location & Extent

Dear Alan,

Plan Review Summary:

Submitted to Engineering - 2/6/25 Comments Sent Out - 2/12/25

Engineering has reviewed this project and have the following concerns and comments:

Location & Extent Comments

Comment #1-Prior to the approval of this L&E, the engineering review fee (\$1000) will need to be paid.

Comment #2-On the L&E exhibit, please include the 100-yr. water surface elevation of the detention pond.

Comment #3-The drainage compliance letter is acceptable.

Comment #4-The following item may need to be submitted for review and approval:

 GESC Plans & GESC Report (if more than 50-cubic yards will be disturbed a GESC Permit would be required)

If you have any questions, please give me a call.

Sincerely,

Chuck Smith

Development Review Engineer

SOUTH METRO FIRE RESCUEFIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE



Brett Thomas, AICP, Chief Planner Douglas County Department of Community Development, Planning Services 100 Third St Castle Rock Co 80104 303.660.7460 303.660.9550 Fax

Project Name: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street (Platte River Academy) – Location and Extent

Project File #: LE2025-002 S Metro Review # REFSI25-00022

Review date: February 12, 2025

Plan reviewer: Aaron Miller 720.989.2246

aaron.miller@southmetro.org

Project Summary: The applicant, Platte River Academy, requests approval of a Location and Extent (L & E)

to provide improvements to the existing school site located at 4085 Lark Sparrow Street. Improvements generally include two shade canopies southwest of the school, two hyperdomes west of the school, and two 16'x16' decks and nature trails north of the school.

Code Reference: Douglas County Fire Code, 2018 International Fire Code, and 2021 International Building

Code with amendments as adopted by Douglas County.

South Metro Fire Rescue (SMFR) has reviewed the provided documents and has no objection to the proposed Location and Extent. Applicants and Contractors are encouraged to contact SMFR regarding the applicable permit and fire code requirements for the proposed project.



Right of Way & Permits

1123 West 3rd Avenue Denver, Colorado 80223 Telephone: 303.285.6612 violeta.ciocanu@xcelenergy.com

February 19, 2025

Douglas County Planning Services 100 Third Street Castle Rock, CO 80104

Attn: Brett Thomas

RE: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street, Case # LE2025-002 - AMENDED RESPONSE

In lieu of new information and plans provided, Public Service Company of Colorado's (PSCo) Right of Way & Permits Referral Desk has no objection with the above-captioned project.

Because the hypedomes are easily movable, PSCo advises that all risk and responsibility for the two hypedomes encroaching upon or being in the immediate vicinity of the underground electric distribution facilitites and easement lies solely with the property owner. Additionally, should the structure be damaged or destroyed due to PSCo's use of this easement at any time in the future, the property owner will be responsible for making repairs at their own expense.

When any digging is commenced on the property, PSCo reminds you of your lawful duty to contact the Utility Notification Center of Colorado (UNCC) two days before starting the work. They can be reached at 811. UNCC will mark the locations of the various underground utilities on the ground.

Please retain this letter in your permanent property records.

Violeta Ciocanu (Chokanu) Right of Way and Permits

Public Service Company of Colorado dba Xcel Energy

Office: 303-285-6612 – Email: violeta.ciocanu@xcelenergy.com



Right of Way & Permits

1123 West 3rd Avenue Denver, Colorado 80223 Telephone: 303.285.6612 violeta.ciocanu@xcelenergy.com

February 14, 2025

Douglas County Planning Services 100 Third Street Castle Rock. CO 80104

Attn: Brett Thomas

RE: 4085 Lark Sparrow Street, Case # LE2025-002

Public Service Company of Colorado's (PSCo) Right of Way & Permits Referral Desk has determined **there is a conflict** with the above captioned project and it **is denied**.

The proposed construction of the two hypedomes is evidently encroaching upon the PSCo easement designated for underground primary electric distribution facilities. This encroachment poses potential risks and conflict with the existing infrastructure.

PSCo requests that the easement be clearly delineated on all relevant plans and documents. This includes showing the precise location of the easement in relation to the proposed structures.

PSCo requests to view the updated documents before they are finalized.

The property owner/developer/contractor must complete the application process for any new electric service, relocation or modification to existing facilities via xcelenergy.com/InstallAndConnect. It is then the responsibility of the developer to contact the Designer assigned to the project for approval of design details.

Additional easements may need to be acquired by separate document. The Designer must contact the appropriate Right-of-Way Agent.

As a safety precaution, PSCo would like to remind the developer to contact Colorado 811 for utility locates prior to construction.

Violeta Ciocanu (Chokanu) Right of Way and Permits

Public Service Company of Colorado dba Xcel Energy

Office: 303-285-6612 - Email: violeta.ciocanu@xcelenergy.com

