

ter rate increase and the 2020 budget, will be Wednesday, Dec. 11. A copy of the proposed rates increase has been filed in the Triview office at 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 300, Monument, CO and is available for public inspection.

At 8:37 p.m., the board entered executive session §24-6-402(4)(b)(e) legal advice, negotiations.

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The next Triview board meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Dec. 11. This meeting has been changed to accommodate the state budget submission deadline of Dec. 15. Check the district's event calendar at [www.triviewmetro.com/home](http://www.triviewmetro.com/home) or call 488-6868 for meeting schedule updates. Board meetings are held at the dis-

trict office, 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 300, Monument. See also "Triview Metropolitan District" on Facebook, or [Twitter.com/@TriviewMetro](https://twitter.com/TriviewMetro).

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*El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Nov 5, 12, and 14*

## Final direction for 2020 budget given; Struthers Road/Gleneagle Drive intersection project progresses

*By Helen Walklett*

During November, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) gave final direction in the setting of the 2020 preliminary budget. The commissioners also made decisions relating to the intersection project at the junction of Struthers Road and Gleneagle Drive and confirmed appointments to the El Paso County Planning Commission.

### Preliminary balanced budget

At the Nov. 14 BOCC meeting, the commissioners gave their final direction on the preliminary balanced budget. Sherri Cassidy, the county's chief financial officer, reported that sales tax had come in stronger than anticipated and therefore there was an increase in revenue of \$355,000. Discussion on where best to assign this money centered on roads with the commissioners deciding to put \$345,000 towards transportation improvements. The remaining \$10,000 is being allocated to a rural marketing initiative for the upcoming census which had previously failed to secure grant funding.

Referring to the tight budget for 2020, Commissioner Mark Waller said, "There isn't a department or agency out there that feels like they got all they need in order to accomplish the mission. But they certainly got everything we had to give them and I feel confi-

dent about every single one of those agencies' abilities to continue and move forward with the allocation they got, as inadequate as it was."

Cassidy's team will now prepare the final resolution documents and return with them to the BOCC on Dec. 10 for final approval. Information about the 2020 budget can be found on the county website at [admin.elpasoco.com/financial-services/budget-finance/county-budget/](http://admin.elpasoco.com/financial-services/budget-finance/county-budget/)

### Struthers Road/ Gleneagle Drive project

At their Nov. 5 meeting the commissioners approved a memorandum of agreement to approve and accept two non-exclusive permanent easements, two temporary construction easement agreements, and two social warranty deeds for the Struthers Road/Gleneagle Drive intersection project. The deeds and easements are coming from property owned by Academy Gateway II, LLC at a cost of \$52,000.

The project, which will see a roundabout constructed in place of the current four-way stop, also includes drainage work and pedestrian improvements, both at the intersection and along the northeast side of Struthers Road. The county is funding the project. Work began in late June and the first phase is on schedule to be completed by the end of the year. The entire project is due to be completed sometime dur-

ing the first quarter of 2020. The county says it cannot be more specific at this time.

### Appointments to the Planning Commission

At the Nov. 5 meeting the commissioners unanimously approved the appointments of Thomas Greer and Eric Moraes as Associate Members to the El Paso County Planning Commission for a one-year term.

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**Above:** A pumping truck pours concrete as work continues on the Struthers/Gleneagle intersection project *Photo courtesy of Crystal Peak Design*

*El Paso County Planning Commission, Nov. 5 and 19*

## Amendments to Forest Lakes Phase II recommended for approval

*By Helen Walklett*

During November, the El Paso County Planning Commission recommended for approval an application for amendments to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) for Forest Lakes Phase II. The Commission also recommended for approval a variance of use to allow a vehicle rental business to operate from an existing property at Gleneagle Square.

### Forest Lakes Phase II

At its Nov. 5 meeting, the Planning Commission heard an application for amendments to the PUD for Forest Lakes Phase II which was approved as a combined PUD and preliminary plan by the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) in April 2019 (see [www.ocn.me/v19n5.htm#epbocc](http://www.ocn.me/v19n5.htm#epbocc)). The development is located northwest of the intersection of I-25 and Baptist Road to the southwest of the Town of Monument. The amendments do not increase the number of lots previously approved. Those remain at 180.

Andrea Barlow, of NES Inc., on behalf of the applicant and developer, told the commissioners that the main reason for the amendment request was to ask for a finding of water sufficiency for quality, quantity and dependability with the preliminary plan. Under recent changes to the county's Land Development Code, a finding for water sufficiency at the preliminary plan stage allows the executive director of planning and community development to approve all subsequent final plat requests administratively. Barlow said it was the applicant's intention to request this if the BOCC approves the application.

Barlow described the other amendments as minor and as improvements to the original approval. They include the addition of a sixth tract for stormwater detention, relocation of the detention ponds out of the wetland areas in response to neighbors' concerns, and the adjustment of lot lines. Planned culverts over the drainage way would be replaced by a bridge structure that would span the wetland area and retaining walls and a guard rail would be added to Mesa Drive for safety.

Kari Parsons, Planner III, Planning and Community Development Department, said the county had notified 28 adjoining property owners. Responses included concerns about density, traffic noise and light pollution, wildlife and environmental impacts, water and wastewater, the impact on native American history in the area, and issues concerning trail access and

the emergency access road. Parsons said that matters such as density had already been set when the PUD was approved and that this hearing was only to consider the amendments.

The applicant also requested approval of pre-site grading with the preliminary plan. Barlow addressed concerns raised about this, particularly whether the necessary permits are in place. She told the commissioners that the plans had been reviewed by the Army Corps of Engineers and that its conclusion was that no permit was needed if, as is the intention, the existing roads are used for access during the pre-grading process.

The commissioners had no questions for Barlow or county staff. No member of the public spoke in support. Three spoke in opposition. Miles Cottom, an attorney with Alpern Myers Stuart, LLC representing some of the neighbors, said that his clients believed permitting was required for the pre-grading work and urged the commissioners to delay their decision until that was in place. He said that the grading would directly abut the wetland area and that there would be runoff, albeit unintentional.

Judy von Ahlefeldt, a citizen, said that while she understood what was being considered had a very narrow focus, she had concerns about the apparent increasingly limited scope for public comment on wider matters. She was also concerned by the possibility that final plats could be approved administratively in the case of a development that had a history of controversy. Carol Johnson, a neighbor, said, "I know this has been approved but it needs to be read into the record that we are not happy with this. You should, as a board, know that we are banked up through the National Forest, that we've had three fires within the last 10 years and had to vacate and here you're putting all this density up next to the mountain. And nobody cares about the wildlife, nobody cares about any of this. All you care about is ticking off what is in your requirements."

Responding to the criticism of the public hearing process, Commissioner Tom Bailey said, "I feel that the attacks on the process, the attacks on the people up here as not caring are more than a little unfair because this has been before the [Planning] Commission and the Board of County Commissioners several times as we saw over the years. All of these issues, everything that people have brought up today,

have been debated and considered and it's not that we don't necessarily agree. It's just that the concerns don't rise to the level where we can legally stop a landowner from developing that property and that's the reality of it." He continued, "We are trained. We get a lot of information. We get staff inputs. We've considered this much more than the hour or so that we've devoted to it today."

Parsons told the commissioners that while a finding of water sufficiency at the preliminary plan stage would allow the applicant to request administrative approval of final plat requests, both the BOCC and the executive director of planning and community development have the ability to elevate applications to a public hearing. She added that adjoining property owners would be notified of final plat requests and be able to comment ahead of this decision. Addressing the pre-site grading concerns, she outlined the county's handling of the process from start to finish which included ongoing inspections described by the applicant's engineer as "very robust."

The commissioners voted unanimously to recommend the application for approval. It is now due to be heard at the BOCC meeting on Dec. 12.

### Variance of use at Gleneagle Square

A request for a variance of use to allow a vehicle rental business to operate from the former Loaf 'N Jug at Gleneagle Square was approved unanimously and without further discussion at the Planning Commission hearing on Nov. 19. The property is located slightly to the northeast of the Struthers Road and Gleneagle Drive intersection. The request was made by Bucher Design Studio on behalf of the tenant, Nate Vaccari. If approved, the variance would allow the applicant to have a maximum of five employees serving approximately 30 customers per day with a total of 10 rental vehicles stored on the property at any time. It would also allow a private car wash bay on the property. The request will now be heard at the Dec. 12 BOCC meeting.

### County Master Plan workshop

The public is invited to participate in the Master Plan visioning process. A meeting is scheduled for Dec. 11, 6 p.m. at 2880 International Circle, Colorado Springs, and will be hosted by the Master Plan Steering Committee.

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