



**BROOKS**  
DESIGN|BUILD

brooksdesignbuild.com  
PO Box 2749  
Basalt, CO 81621  
970 846 3216

February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Rebecca Bessey, Director

**Steamboat Springs Dept. of Planning & Community Development**

124 10<sup>th</sup> Street

Steamboat Springs, CO 80487

970.879.2060

## **RE: BUTCHERKNIFE CANYON ANNEXATION**

We are respectfully submitting the application for the Butcherknife Canyon Annexation. This is an application for annexation, a future land use map amendment, and a zoning map amendment to run concurrently through the City of Steamboat Springs Planning process.

### **Original / Existing Conditions**

This is a 24.14-acre property located to the northeast of downtown Steamboat Springs, which consists of four smaller parcels which collectively are referred to as “The Property”:

- Parcel #1 - 3.32 acres, a legal non-conforming site with multiple residential & agricultural structures
- Parcel #2 - 1.18 acres, a legal non-conforming property with a residential structure & small agricultural structures
- Parcel #3 – 2.28 acres, a non-conforming property with no improvements
- Parcel #4 – 17.36 acres, a non-conforming property with agricultural structures, public utility lines, the Butcherknife Trail, and the Woodchuck Irrigation Ditch

All four parcels are currently within Routt County and are zoned Agricultural Forest (AF). These (individual) parcels are considered non-conforming due to not meeting the 35-acre minimum parcel size within this zone district. The Steamboat Springs City Boundary runs along the southern and western edges of the application property. This property is located within the Urban Growth Boundary and is designated as Old Town Residential and Open Space on the Future Land Use Map, implying anticipation by the City for future annexation into the City Limits with densities consistent within the adjacent neighborhoods. It is also not designated as being habitat on the Important Wildlife Habitat Map.

In the northern portion of Parcel #4, there is a soft surface trail connecting Strawberry Park Road down to the trail system in the lower part of the canyon. In the canyon section of Parcel #4, the Woodchuck Irrigation Ditch flows through the property, paralleled by Butcher Knife Canyon Trail (soft surface) connecting Stehley Park (along North Park Road) to the Steamboat Springs Middle School & in Strawberry Park Elementary (both located in Strawberry Park), and primary utility lines for electricity, gas, water, and sewer.

### **Adjacent Properties**

The parcels located to the south of The Property along East Logan Ave, are a mixture of Residential Estate-2 (RE-2) and Residential Neighborhood 3 (RN-3). Parcels located to the Southeast along Amethyst Drive are zoned Residential Estate-2 (RE-2). Parcels located to the West are zoned Old Town Residential (OR). The parcels to the Northwest along Strawberry Park Road while within Routt County, are zoned Medium Density Residential (MRE) and have lot sizes which are consistent with the adjacent OR zone district within the City limits. To the Northeast, are the schools. Located to the East, on the opposite side of Amethyst, the parcels are zoned Residential Estate-2 (RE-2).

## **Proposed Improvements**

We are proposing to annex the Property into the City of Steamboat Springs. At the time of annexation, we are requesting zoning mix containing Residential Neighborhood 3 (RN-3), and Open Space & Recreation (OR). This is based on the existing / surrounding density patterns (regardless of the actual zone districts on paper) and utilizing zone districts that will allow the predictable and prescriptive development that the City of Steamboat Springs is seeking with new projects. We believe that these zone districts will allow for the property to be built out at appropriate densities with a hard edge as it transitions to the proposed open space to be preserved.

This neighborhood will have logical extensions of two existing roadways, Nob Street and Park Avenue. It will be easily walkable to the rest of the downtown Steamboat with comfortable walking distances to the Elementary, Middle, and High Schools. Given how the existing development surrounds the Property, we are viewing this annexation as an infill opportunity when compared to other projects located further from the Downtown Core. This proximity allows for realistic / alternative transportation mode shift.

The future neighborhood will have sidewalks (internal and adjacent) and design guidelines prioritizing the walkable pedestrian experience. A significant component of this project is relocating the current hazardous route along Strawberry Park Road that children utilize to get to the schools located to the North of the Property. Instead, we will be creating a “Safe Route to School” as described in the City of Steamboat Springs Road Standards. We are proposing not having a sidewalk located along Strawberry Park Road and instead locating to the interior of the neighborhood. This allows kids to be able to travel within a safer residential setting vs. along Strawberry Park Road. Strawberry Park Road has no sidewalk, a narrow roadway, and insufficient space to expand the road to add shoulders or add a sidewalk as the topography (as one travels to the north) quickly prevents adding improvements that would be functional nor providing a “destination”. Passing through the new neighborhood, the proposed sidewalk will tie into the existing soft surface added recently by this property owner with a paseo located between lots, which then connects to the existing soft surface trail leading to the schools.

The City of Steamboat is currently exploring the installation of storm surge ponds which would be constructed to mitigate large run-off events from flooding properties located downstream, adjacent to Butcherknife Creek through downtown Steamboat. We have been discussing this effort in good faith with the City Engineering Department as they have been applying for Federal grant monies.

In summary we feel that this project can be reviewed and approved as it has minimal impact to the City of Steamboat Springs or directly adjacent property owners, preserves the environmentally unique area of the Butcherknife Canyon, and furthers the goals represented within the Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan.

## **Sec. 725 ANNEXATION**

*725.B.2. No petition for annexation of land shall be approved until the petitioner and the City have negotiated and entered into a pre-annexation or annexation agreement governing the proposed development of the land, the timing and phasing of such development, provisions regarding the construction and maintenance of required infrastructure, pre-existing vested property rights, and any other matters as the City determines appropriate for inclusion in such agreement in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.*

Applicant’s Response: See attached draft of Pre-Annexation Agreement

### **725.C Criteria for approval**

*1. The proposed annexation is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other applicable adopted plans.*

Applicant’s Response: Conforms. The Future Land Use Map identifies this parcel as being both within the UGB line along with being developed at densities similar to that of adjacent neighborhoods. This site will be a natural extension of the street grid and existing urban neighborhoods of downtown Steamboat Springs.

Some of the applicable goals, policies, and strategies from the Steamboat Spring Community Area Plan Policy LU-2.1. Infill and redevelopment will occur in appropriate locations, as designated by the city.

Policy LU-2.2: Residential infill will be compatible in character and scale with the surrounding neighborhood  
Policy LU-3.1: New development will maintain and enhance the character and identity of existing residential neighborhoods.

Goal GM-1: Steamboat Springs will have a compact land use pattern within a well defined boundary

Policy GM-1.2: Urban development will be required to be located within the UGB

Strategy GM-1.2: Consider annexation of existing urbanized areas

Policy GM-1.3: Infill development and redevelopment will be promoted in targeted areas.

Policy CD-1.5: Infill and redevelopment projects shall be compatible with the context of existing neighborhoods and development

Policy T-2.1: New development shall include an interconnected pedestrian and bicycle system

Goal NS-1 Our community will work to maintain the health and integrity of the Yampa and Elk Rivers and their tributaries.

Goal OS-3. Enhance and expand our existing City of Steamboat Springs trail system

Policy SPA-1.2. Promote infill, redevelopment, and affordable housing in Old Town, but new development should preserve Old Town's historical character.

*2. The type, height, massing, appearance, and intensity of development that would be permitted by the proposed annexation will be compatible with surrounding zone districts, land uses, and neighborhood character and will result in a logical and orderly development pattern within the community.*

Applicant's Response: The proposed zoning successfully demonstrates the compatibility with the character of Residential Old Town. We believe that we are creating a scalable project that in time will be built out with an appropriate massing, scale, and character consistent with the surrounding zoning.

*3. The proposed annexation will be consistent with the purpose and standards of the zone district proposed for the land that is subject of the annexation.*

Applicant's Response: Conforms. We are proposing a mix of RN-3 and OR zoning as the most appropriate zone districts based on the gross lot area, buildable lot area, geologic constraints, topography, and surrounding zoning. Utilizing these zone districts will most effectively continue the existing pattern of development and create predictability for the City of Steamboat with the proposed future residential uses.

*4. The advantages of the proposed annexation substantially outweigh the disadvantages to the community or neighborhood.*

Applicant's Response: Conforms. This Property provides a unique opportunity to develop an extension to the existing downtown neighborhoods that has not presented itself elsewhere in and adjacent to the core of Steamboat Springs. While there have been some small properties that have been annexed into the City limits over the last 20+ years, none have been at a scale and were directly adjacent to the downtown core to make an appreciable difference in the market.

*5. The proposed annexation will minimize any adverse impacts on the natural environment, including water quality, air quality, wildlife habitat, vegetation, wetlands, and natural landforms.*

Applicant's Response: Conforms. We are proposing to avoid the environmentally sensitive areas along the Woodchuck Ditch and within Butcherknife Canyon and are not proposing any residential development within this area. The steeper slopes located on the southern area of the Property will also be preserved from any residential development. It is our intent to donate a significant portion of the property in this area to the City of Steamboat.

*6. The proposed annexation is consistent with any adopted guidelines or requirements for the inclusion of affordable housing in new development or annexation proposals.*

Applicant's Response: Conforms. We are proposing to develop this property with smaller lots and greater densities which creates affordability by design as the smaller lot sizes limit the eventual home sizes.

## **724 COMMUNITY PLAN AMMENDMENT**

### **724.C Criteria for Approval**

#### **2. Future Land Use Map Amendments**

*Future Land Use Map Amendments shall also be evaluated using the following additional criteria:*

- a. *The current Future Land Use Map does not provide sufficient land with the proposed land use designation, and the location proposed is the best site to provide such designation.*

Applicants Response: We are proposing an amendment to the FLUM to allow for better utilization of the property while furthering the goals of the Community Area Plan. We are seeking a balance of how the property is best utilized by dispersing some of the density along Amethyst while preserving large portions of the property containing environmentally sensitive features now and in the future.

- b. *The change in land use designation is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan.*

Applicants Response: The FLUM currently designates this Property as having densities matching Old Town Residential and Open Space. We are proposing to develop the western portion of the property at these densities and then dispersed density along Amethyst, while preserving the Butcherknife Canyon area containing the environmentally sensitive area located in the lower portions of the canyon.

## **720 ZONE MAP AMMENDMENT**

### **720.B Criteria for Approval**

1. *The Zone Map Amendment will be consistent with the purpose and standards of the proposed zone district.*

Applicant's Response: Conforms. This zoning proposal is in response to our proposed annexation and development of the Property that is not currently within the City Limits. This application furthers the goals and direction of the SSCAP as this zoning amendment conforms to the Future Land Use Map in which this parcel is currently designated as Old Town Residential like densities mixed with Open Space.

2. *The type, height, massing, appearance, and intensity of development that would be permitted in the proposed zone district will be compatible with surrounding zone districts, land uses, and neighborhood character and will result in a logical and orderly development pattern within the community.*

Applicant's Response: Conforms. This zoning will be an extension of the existing land use patterns and community character from the adjacent and surrounding properties. The proposed zoning of RN-3 and OR will significantly regulate the Property now and in the future to best maintain the character of the existing surrounding neighborhoods.

3. *The advantages of the proposed zone district substantially outweigh the disadvantages to the community or neighborhood.*

Applicant's Response: Conforms. As previously mentioned, the proposed zoning is the most appropriate zoning for this parcel of land.

4. *The proposed amendment will minimize any adverse impacts on the natural environment, including water quality, air quality, wildlife habitat, vegetation, wetlands, and natural landforms.*

Applicant's Response: Conforms. The proposed zoning preserves the environmentally sensitive areas within Butcherknife Canyon. The steep slope areas located at the Southern knoll and along Butcherknife Canyon will also be preserved with no residential development. The installation of storm surge ponds will act as a buffer system for large storm run-off events affecting downstream properties along Butcherknife Creek within the existing City Limits. The donation of the Butcherknife Canyon area to the City of Steamboat Springs will further preserve the area and make it available in perpetuity to the people of Steamboat.

5. *One of the following conditions exists:*

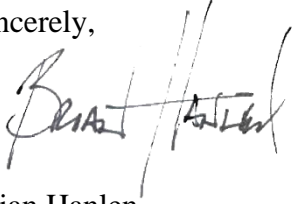
- a. *The proposed amendment substantially furthers the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other applicable adopted plans; or*
- b. *The proposed amendment is necessary to respond to changed conditions since the adoption or last amendment of the Official Zone Map; or*

*c. The proposed amendment will correct an error on the Official Zone Map.*

Applicant's Response: Conforms to a. & b. By zoning this Property RN-3 and OR, the character and scale of downtown will be maintained throughout the property. The surrounding zone districts were retroactively applied in 2001 to existing subdivisions after the development had already occurred and well before the TND zoning districts were adopted. The proposed zone districts offer the best opportunities for a site like this to have predictable development.

Please let us know if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Hanlen", written over a horizontal line.

Brian Hanlen

President, Brooks Design / Build, Inc.

CC

George Eck

Laura Stout