

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



March 15, 2024
Revised October 7, 2024

Landmark Job No. 2633-003

City of Steamboat Springs
Planning Department
PO Box 775088
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

RE: Preliminary Plat and Major Variance Application Narrative
A consolidation of the Thunderhead Parcels & an adjustment of the boundary with Lot 2, Ski Hill
Subdivision, Replat of Parcel D
Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of Majestic Realty Co. and Steamboat Ski & Resort Corporation (Applicants), we are submitting this Preliminary Plat application to:

1. Consolidate the 'Thunderhead' Parcel which includes the following, previously unplatted tracts:
 - A. Tract D (Thunderhead Parking Lot),
 - B. Tract E (Thunderhead Condominiums), and
 - C. Tract F (Thunderhead Lodge).

These consolidation parcels were formerly known as Thunderhead Lodge, which was demolished in circa 2008 in anticipation for redevelopment. This consolidated parcel is shown on the Preliminary Plat drawings as Lot 1, Thunderhead Subdivision.

2. Adjust the resulting common property line with Lot 2, Ski Hill Subdivision, Replat of Parcel D (Ski Parcel). This previously platted parcel is shown on the Preliminary Plat drawings as Lot 2, Thunderhead Subdivision.

Because confusion may arise from Lot 2 being referenced on 2 separate plats, we have constructed this narrative to refer to the parcels as:

Thunderhead Parcel – The proposed Lot 1, Thunderhead Subdivision; and,
Ski Parcel – The proposed Lot 2, Thunderhead Subdivision.

Landmark Consultants, Inc. (Landmark) has coordinated with and has participated substantially in the preparation of this Preliminary Plat package to demonstrate compliance with the City of Steamboat Springs (City) development criteria. Some of the information depicted and described herein are informed by the design and production of an anticipated Development Plan application led by OZ Architecture. There may be adjustments based on coordination between that development plan and this Application.

Thank you in advance for your time and careful consideration of this application.

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



Specific Design Introduction:

This Preliminary Plat application intends to consolidate the Thunderhead parcels and formalize the site as a 'legal' development parcel as required by Section 713.A.4 of the Community Development Code. Additionally, the Applicants desire to shift the southern boundary of this consolidated parcel to accommodate the proposed extension of the Promenade along the ski area for an eventual continuation to the properties farther east, as shown on the Mountain Area Master Plan. Adjusting this property line will allow the completion of the primary promenade to connect to Ski Time Square Drive as well as the secondary trail extending along the ski edge to the adjacent property; both located on development parcels and not the Ski Parcel.

There are existing easement encumbrances that the Applicant is working on vacating, replacing or redescribing with the appropriate parties. These are private easements that do not burden the proposed building envelope, and most are relics from the past. Additional easements benefiting the public, such as for the future promenade extension along the ski area, are proposed and shown on the Preliminary Plat.

The subdivision improvements shown on the included plans were developed in harmony with the anticipated Development Plan application. The primary scope of work is focused on the realignment of the existing storm sewer for the 'unnamed tributary' of Burgess Creek and upsizing the 12" existing sanitary sewer main to 18".

During the DRT review, Staff requested that the promenade along Burgess Creek become a subdivision requirement and therefore it has been added to this Preliminary Plat application. As discussed with the City, this promenade depends on the proposed building as shown on the separate Development Plan application (PL20240125) for lateral support as well as an energy source for the required snowmelt system. It is the Applicant's intent to coordinate the construction of this promenade with the construction of the Development Plan improvements and therefore an Improvements Agreement will be required to record the Final Plat.

Lastly, the current zoning of the Thunderhead Parcel is G-2 and the Ski Parcel is OR. With the re-delineation of the properties, the zoning will need to adjust accordingly, and a Zoning Map Amendment application has been prepared to accompany this Preliminary Plat.

Criteria for Approval Analysis:

We have organized this narrative to generally coincide with CDC Section 713.D – Criteria for Approval.

713.D.1: The Preliminary Plat substantially conforms to all applicable requirements of this CDC, including requirements of the applicable zone district.

There are 2 anticipated **variances** for this Preliminary Plat:

1. **Useable Lot Area** described in 602.D. (provided herein)
2. **Circulation** described in 604.D. (provided under separate cover)

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



The Applicant understands that the City's development standards apply to this project and they have made every possible attempt to comply within their interpretation. As in any application review, there may be differing opinions that will warrant further discussion. The Applicant is open to discussing concerns and collaborating with Staff as appropriate.

713.D.2: Each lot of the subdivision that is proposed for development shall be developable. Elements reviewed for developability include demonstrated ability to meet the requirements of this CDC in terms of zone district standards, development standards, and subdivision standards.

The Thunderhead Parcel has not previously been platted and therefore this preliminary plat application is required. The property was formerly developed as the Thunderhead Lodge. Remnants from that development are still evident today in the form of pavement, utilities and has been used by the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club and parking over recent years.

The Ski Parcel was previously platted as Lot 2, Ski Hill Subdivision, Replat of Parcel D. That parcel was previously reviewed and approved by the City and has recently been part of the Full Steam Ahead improvements by Alterra Mountain. Specifically, the Wild Blue Gondola, relocation of Christie Peak Express and the Steamboat Gondola, and the removal of the mountain coaster.

Zone District Standards: As described above, there are no exceptions to the zone district standards nor to the applicability described in CDC Section 200.E. Based on the lot line adjustment between the 2 parcels with different zoning, a Zoning Map Amendment is required to align the zoning delineation with the new property limits. This is a separate application concurrent with this Preliminary Plat.

Development Standards: Below is a summary of our analysis of the development standards described in CDC Article 4 as they pertain to this Preliminary Plat request:

401: Waterbody Setbacks: Per 401.B, "waterbody setbacks shall apply to all structures in all zone districts".

There are no structures proposed as part of this Preliminary Plat. An effective building envelope is resulting from the perimeter existing and proposed easements. These will create a building separation farther than the **Burgess Creek** 12-ft waterbody setback, which is the only waterbody subject to this requirement per the CDC.

Regardless, the ordinary highwater mark for Burgess Creek was delineated by Western Bionomics and surveyed by Landmark. The 12-ft waterbody setback is reflected in the plans.

402: Landscaping: The subject property is an active ski area with significant natural vegetation. CDC Section 402.D.5 – Landscaping Categories describes the following requirements for the 2 parcels based on their Zone District:

OR Zone District: Category A for Parking Lot Setbacks – There are no parking lots existing or proposed for the Ski Parcel, therefore this requirement is not applicable.

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



G-2 Zone District: Category B for Interior Landscaping. This requirement will be applicable to the future development proposals for this parcel. There is no action required at this time.

The existing parking uses on the Thunderhead parcel will be discontinued at the time of commencement of the proposed site improvements shown on the Preliminary Plat and the Development Plan (separate application). There are no landscaping requirements to address with this application.

403: Buffering, Screening, and Fencing: There are no intensive land uses proposed with the application and therefore no mitigation measures necessary.

404: Revegetation: The grading improvements shown on the Preliminary Plat drawings are expected to be minimal and related only to the infrastructure improvements (storm sewer, sanitary sewer and Burgess Creek Promenade). No overlot grading is proposed as part of the Subdivision scope.

The standards described in CDC Section 404.C are addressed as follows:

404.C.1: The limits of the grading for the proposed ski operations were confined to the extent practicable. The relocation of the storm sewer, while preserving existing trees and vegetation, will extend into the Ski Area parcel and is considered a temporary disturbance. By observation using aerial photography, there does not appear to be existing trees on the property subject to the preservation requirements shown in Table 404-1.

All areas disturbed are to be revegetated and monitored/maintained until ground cover meets or exceeds the City and State's requirements. Detailed plans, along with the Stormwater Management Plan, will be generated for construction permits as required.

404.E: The anticipated land disturbance is expected to be approximately 1.25-acres and therefore Revegetation Collateral for Large Lot Land Disturbance is not expected to be applicable.

405: Exterior Lighting: Proposed lighting related to the Burgess Creek promenade has been included. This lighting was developed with the Development Plan (PL20240125) and those sheets extracted and attached to the plan set for reference.

406: Off-Street Parking: There are no parking requirements for this Application and no off-street parking is proposed.

407: Off-Street Loading: For this Preliminary Plat, there are no proposed land uses that receive or distribute vehicles, materials, or merchandise and there off-street loading is not required.

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



408: Refuse Management: There are no proposed improvements requiring refuse services as part of the Preliminary Plat application.

409: Snow Storage: There are no proposed improvements requiring snow storage as part of the Preliminary Plat application. The proposed Burgess Creek Promenade will have a snowmelt pavement system included, but the energy source will be from the proposed building being reviewed under PL20240125.

410: Performance and Operation: This Preliminary Plat application does not propose uses, offensive noise, smoke, vibrations, dust, odors, heat, glare, or other objectionable impacts that violate local, state or federal laws and regulations.

411: Technical Specifications: The proposed improvements shall conform with the City's Engineering Standards to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

412: Critical Improvements: There are no improvements required or proposed for the Ski Parcel. The Thunderhead Parcel has an existing storm sewer dividing the southern portion of the lot. To free the effective building envelope from this encumbrance, this storm sewer is proposed to be relocated as shown on the Preliminary Plat drawings. This work is expected to be considered a critical improvement to be coordinated with the proposed site preparation. Other identified critical improvements include the Burgess Creek Promenade and upsizing the existing 12" sanitary sewer main to 18". These are anticipated to be constructed or included in an Improvements Agreement in order to record the Final Plat (eventual goal of this Application).

413: Phasing: Phasing is not proposed with this Application.

414: Multi-Mode Facilities/Complete Streets: The Ski Parcel does not front on any rights-of-ways and has been substantially improved as part of the Base Area projects through the years. The Thunderhead Parcel fronts Ski Time Square Drive which is part of the URA's Ski Time Square Drive Turnaround and Complete Streets Improvements project. Revisions to this streetscape along the property frontage is proposed with the Development Plan, but not this Preliminary Plat.

The Mountain Area Master Plan (MAMP) describes and depicts a preliminary extension of the existing promenade to Ski Time Square Drive as well as along the Right-O-Way ski run (for general reference) to the properties east of the Thunderhead Parcel. Public pedestrian access is proposed along Burgess Creek for the purpose of connecting the end of the promenade near Slopeside Grill to Ski Time Square Drive. This is reflected on the Preliminary Plat drawings. An easement is proposed to accommodate an extension of another promenade along the ski area as shown on the referenced Development Plan. This 'southern' promenade is not included in as a subdivision improvement aside from the provided easement. Construction of the southern promenade is anticipated as part of the Development Plan (PL20240125).



Figure 2 from the Steamboat Springs Mountain Area Master Plan:



415: Clear Vision Setbacks: There are no new intersections or connections proposed with this application. Additional connections may be proposed with future Development Plans subject to this requirement.

416: Outdoor Storage: There is no outdoor storage proposed with this application.

417: Internal Sidewalks: Internal sidewalks are not required for this Preliminary Plat.

418: Retaining Walls: The Burgess Creek Promenade will require a retaining wall to contain fills necessary to raise the walkable and drivable platform of the promenade to accommodate ADA guidelines. The exposed face of this proposed wall is anticipated to be less than 6-feet in height.

419: Flood Damage Prevention: For the Thunderhead Parcel, the proposed effective building envelope is outside of the regulatory floodplain. However, there are flood management systems in place and a LOMR was issued in 2013 to reflect the modifications to the outlet structure for the twin box culvert under Ski Time Square Drive. Additionally, the flood flows through 'unnamed tributary to Burgess Creek' was determined to be contained within the existing 48" storm sewer and that flood hazard area was removed from the FEMA maps through a separate LOMR in 2019. While there are no proposed improvements impacting this system, care should be taken to protect and maintain the overflow structure and pipe for Burgess Creek as well ensure that the creek's cross section is not reduced through fill or

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



placement of any obstructions, nor is the creek's banks removed to create a breach. The Preliminary Plat includes proposed easements for those purposes.

420: Accessory Building and Structures: There are no buildings or structures proposed with this Preliminary Plat application.

421: Open Space: Per CDC Section 421.D, the Residential, Commercial/Mixed Use developments require 15% minimum area for open space. The calculated required open space is as follows:

Subject Area: 108,166.2 SF
15% Requirement = +/- 16,225 SF
Provided: +/- 19,101.6 SF

Please refer to sheet C.110 for further information.

422: Large Format Retail Development: Not applicable to this Preliminary Plat application.

423: TND Frontage Type Standards: Not applicable to this Preliminary Plat application.

424: TND Building Type Standards: Not applicable to this Preliminary Plat application.

425: TND Hillside Strategies: Not applicable to this Preliminary Plat application.

426: Access: The Thunderhead Parcel has access from Ski Time Square Drive which shall be further defined through the Development Plan process. The Ski Parcel access was previously reviewed and approved and memorialized on the Ski Hill Subdivision, Replat of Parcel D, File No. 14469 under note 7: *"The subject property has access to public right-of-way via that easement described in Book 583 at Page 238"*.

Staff determined that a variance is required as this is a new application. Please refer to the response to CDC Section 604.D and the variance included later in this document.

427: Postal Facilities: Not applicable to this Preliminary Plat application as there are no land uses or facilities proposed that necessitate postal service. The Development Plan for the Thunderhead Parcel will address this requirement.

Below is a summary of our analysis of the development standards described in CDC Article 6, 602 (General Standards):

602.D Useable Lot Area – The Ski Parcel property has substantial portions of the parcel with existing slopes that exceed 30%, which is advantageous and necessary for the current and on-going ski area land-use (consistent with the OR Zone District) and makes this property unique compared to any other commercial or residential type development proposed in similar topography. Restricting substantial portions of the property to satisfy this requirement will

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



interfere with the continued operation as a summer and winter recreational amenity of the community and therefore the Applicant is requesting a variance to this standard described later in this document.

The Thunderhead Parcel also has areas within the property boundary that exceed 30% slopes. This occurs in the northeast corner along the embankment of the access drive to the neighboring Parcel B. This area is encumbered by an easement affording Parcel B access as recorded at reception number 543178. This easement is expected to shrink as part of the URA's Ski Time Square Drive Turnaround and Complete Streets Improvements. Regardless, the proposed grading shown on the Preliminary Plat drawings will eliminate these slopes and therefore this Code section is satisfied for Lot 1.

Based on the G-2 zoning, Proposed Lot 1's minimum useable lot area is calculated as equal to the the '*maximum lot coverage (%) multiplied by the gross lot area of the site*'. Therefore:

Zone G-2: maximum lot coverage is 65%.

Proposed Lot 1 = 108,167 square feet.

Minimum useable lot area: 65% X 108,167 SF = 70,309 SF

Proposed Lot 1: (area within the effective building envelope) = 92,100 SF (complies)

602.E Blocks – there are no blocks or street system proposed for this Preliminary Plat.

604.D Circulation: There are no streets or drives proposed with this Preliminary Plat. Legal access to Lot 1 is via Ski Time Square Drive. For the Ski Parcel, there are no driveways proposed with this Preliminary Plat. The Ski Parcel access was previously reviewed and approved and memorialized on the Ski Hill Subdivision, Replat of Parcel D, File No. 14469 under note 7: *"The subject property has access to public right-of-way via that easement described in Book 583 at Page 238"*.

Staff determined that a variance is required as this is a new application. Please refer to the variance information included later in this document.

602.G Vegetation and Site Grading: This Preliminary Plat Application proposes re-alignment of an existing storm sewer pipe, replacing a smaller diameter sanitary sewer and the Burgess Creek Promenade. Disturbed areas outside of pavements and gravel surfaces are proposed to be revegetated per City requirements.

There are no known existing trees that are subject to Table 602-1 within the proposed building envelopes. There are trees shown for removal on the Preliminary Plat drawings, generally around the magic carpet, but these are all smaller than the 12-inch caliper threshold.

602.H Drainage: The proposed grading on the Thunderhead Parcel generally maintains historic drainage patterns. The existing storm sewer that divides this lot is proposed to be realigned as

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



shown on the Preliminary Plat drawings. Please refer to the provided Drainage Letter, prepared in accordance with City Engineering Standards, for additional information.

602.I Easements and Dedications: There are multiple existing easements on both the Thunderhead Parcel and Ski Parcel. The Applicant is working with the adjacent Torian Plum and Parcel B property owners to redescribe, vacate or create easements to align with the Burgess Creek drainage, the Promenade completion, and utilities. These easements will have permissions and uses extended to the public (City) as appropriate. The improvements shown on the anticipated Development Plan will be coordinated and inform the location of the proposed easements. The easements shown on the Preliminary Plat drawings are therefore subject to change as designs evolve.

Please note that the City, or other public entities, do not have described interests in the easements to be modified and therefore an Easement Vacation application is not required. Please refer to the easement exhibits drawings included with the Preliminary Plat for additional information.

602.J Utilities: The subject parcels have access to or are already being served by existing utilities. As no facilities requiring water or sewer are proposed with this Preliminary Plat, no water improvements are indicated. There is an existing 12" diameter sanitary sewer main under the proposed Burgess Creek Promenade that is proposed to be upsized to 18" as shown on the plans. Relocation of existing dry utilities will be necessary to clear the anticipated building zone and will be coordinated with the appropriate utility provider.

602.K Postal Facilities: Please see common response provided for Section 427 above.

602.L Open Space, Parks and Amenity Space: Please see common response provided for Section 421 above.

602.O Critical Improvements: Please see common response provided for Section 412 above.

602.P: Phasing: Phasing is not proposed with this Application.

602.Q Flood Damage Prevention: Please see common response provided for Section 419 above.

713.D.3: The Preliminary Plat conforms to all other applicable regulations and requirements including, but not limited to state law, the Steamboat Springs Municipal Code, any capital improvement plan or program, or any Improvements Agreement or Development Agreement for the property.

The Preliminary Plat conforms to all applicable regulations and requirements to the best of our knowledge and belief.

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



713.D.4: The Preliminary Plat shall be compatible with the character of existing or planned land development pattern in the vicinity and shall not adversely affect the future development of the surrounding area.

The Ski Parcel is part of the larger Steamboat Ski Area. The surrounding area largely depends on the continued success and operation of the ski area vs. being adversely impacted. This parcel remains compatible with the character of the area and community.

The Thunderhead Parcel has been desired to be redeveloped by the community for over a decade. The URA's mission to stimulate redevelopment is further exemplified by their Ski Time Square Drive Turnaround and Complete Streets Improvements project along its frontage.

This Preliminary Plat is a step towards enabling the Thunderhead Parcel to be redeveloped and advance the goals of the Steamboat Springs Mountain Area Master Plan.

713.D.5: The land proposed for subdivision shall be physically suitable for development, considering its topography, the presence of steep or unstable slopes, existing natural resource features such as wetlands, floodplains, and sensitive wildlife habitat areas, and any environmental hazards such as avalanche or landslide paths, rockfall hazard areas, or wildlife hazard areas that may limit the property's development potential.

This Preliminary Plat is intended to create a legal lot to satisfy CDC Section 713.A.4. for the Thunderhead Parcel. There are non-jurisdictional wetlands within the proposed effective building envelope that were developed as part of an existing, registered water quality facility, they are not considered jurisdictional, and no 404 Permit is required. The previously described flood hazards control systems are proposed to be continued as shown on the Preliminary Plat drawings.

Variance Requests:

As described above, the following variances for the Preliminary Plat for the have been identified through this analysis:

Standard to be Varied: 604.D Circulation: "All commercial lots shall abut a public street or private street."

This variance request is found under a separate cover and has been previously provided to Staff.

Standard to be Varied: Useable Lot Area described in 602.D. This is for the **Ski Parcel**.

The Ski Parcel property has substantial portions of the parcel with existing slopes that exceed 30%, which is advantageous and necessary for the current and on-going ski area land-use (consistent with the OR Zone District) and makes this property unique compared to any other commercial or residential type development proposed in similar topography. Restricting substantial portions of the property to satisfy this requirement will interfere with the continued operation as a summer and winter recreational amenity of the community.

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



Criteria #1: *The Variance will not injure or adversely impact legal conforming uses of adjacent property, or the applicant has accurately assessed the impacts of the proposed Variance and has agreed to mitigate those impacts.*

Useable Lot Area: Ski Parcel: Slopes greater than 30%:

The steep slopes exist with or without the Preliminary Plat approval. The modification of one leg of the property boundary will not adversely impact adjacent properties as it does not modify land use, and the adjacent properties will continue to be protected through the OR zoning standards and the normal development review process. Accordingly, there should not be any injury or adverse impact to adjacent legal conforming uses.

Criteria #2: *The variance is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other applicable adopted plans.*

The predominant goal for this Preliminary Plat application is to prepare the Thunderhead Parcel for long-awaited redevelopment. The inclusion of the Ski Parcel is solely to adjust the common property line to contain the improvements shown on the anticipated Development Plan within the confines of the proposed limits of the Thunderhead Parcel. The Right-O-Way ski run will not change, nor will the existing ski easement benefiting Torian Plum.

The proposed project is compatible with the following goals, policies, and strategies of the Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan:

- Goal LU-2: Our community supports infill and redevelopment in core areas.
- Policy LU-2.1: Infill and redevelopment will occur in appropriate locations, as designated by the City.
- Policy GM-1.3: Infill development and redevelopment will be promoted in targeted areas.
- Policy CD-1.4: Encourage high quality site planning and design.
- Policy CD-2.2: Create a functional mix of uses in new neighborhoods and development areas.

The Preliminary Plat will also include easements necessary to complete the Promenade connection to Ski Time Square Drive which is described as a **high priority** in the project activities list for the URA and is shown throughout the MAMP.

Criteria #3: *The Variance application meets either the criteria for unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty, as applicable, or the criteria for an acceptable alternative.*

b. Acceptable Alternative: The proposed development provides at least one of the following acceptable alternatives to the standard:

- i. The alternative achieves a result that is equal to or better than the code standard to which a variance is being sought; or
- ii. The purpose and intent of the code standard will not be achieved by strict application of the standard in the particular circumstances; or

Thunderhead Beach Preliminary Plat Narrative



iii. **The application of other code standards, purposes, or intents will be improved by varying the standard.**

The purpose and intent of the OR Zone District is, “to provide areas for public or private recreational uses, open space preservation, and other similar uses”.

Alterra has invested substantial time and resources to improve the overall operation and experience for summer and winter users, including to provide new facilities for beginner skiers and riders. This effort has already been supported by the City of Steamboat Springs community as evident in the approved Development Plan applications for the relocation of the current gondola, improved pedestrian access and gathering spaces at Gondola Square.

Limiting development on arbitrary topographical slopes for a purpose that specifically requires steeper topographical gradients interferes with this particular purpose and intent of the recreational use. The interests of the City and the community can be fully protected in the development review process for individual applications as they arise.

The Applicant proposes a solution that is like the same variance request that was approved for the Green Horn Ranch preliminary plat (PPV-21-03) through a **development agreement**, which is expected to be required by the City Council as a condition of approving the variance requested. This development agreement will be recorded and referenced on the Final Plat.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have during your review. Thank you in advance for your time and careful consideration.

On behalf of the Applicant,

Sincerely,
Landmark Consultants, Inc.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Erik Griepentrog", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Erik Griepentrog, P.E.
Vice-President