

ARAPAHOE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
MAY 5, 2026
6:30 P.M.

SUBJECT: CASE NO. LE25-004 – TALL GRASS PARK LOCATION AND EXTENT

RAYE FIELDS, PLANNER II

PURPOSE AND REQUEST

The applicant, Stream Landscape Architecture, proposes improvements to Tall Grass Park, including two pickleball courts, grading, adding concrete and soft surface trails, a boardwalk, a vault restroom, a picnic area, and revegetation of areas within the park.

LOCATION AND VICINITY MAP

Tall Grass Park is 9.17 acres and located northwest of the corner of S. Picadilly Road and E. Quincy Avenue, at 21250 E. Oxford Avenue. The park, owned by Trails Park and Recreation District (TPRD), is located within the Saddle Rock Highlands Subdivision, and zoned Mixed Use (MU).



Park (shown in red)

BACKGROUND

Tall Grass Park was approved in 2010 through Location & Extent case LE10-002. The park was developed with a multi-use play field in the center, playground, picnic shelter and walking trails.

A technical (administrative) amendment was approved in 2012 (Case TA12-103) for addition of retaining walls. This park serves as a neighborhood park for the Saddle Rock Highlands subdivision and is intended to be accessible from the neighborhood without need to drive and as such, does not have a parking lot. There is adjacent street parking along Oxford Avenue.

Tall Grass Park is looking to expand amenities to the local community by providing two new pickleball courts and improving park infrastructure, which includes improvements to grading, adding concrete and soft surface trails, a boardwalk, a vault restroom, a picnic area, and revegetation of park areas. The park hours of operation will be from 5am to 10pm. The pickleball courts will be located 255 feet from the residential properties to the south, and 290 feet from the residential properties to the west. These courts will be unlit.

ANALYSIS OF THE LOCATION AND EXTENT APPLICATION

1. The Comprehensive Plan

The subject property is identified as “Urban Residential/Single-Family Detached and Attached” in the Comprehensive Plan. This designation contains primarily residential development with a variety of housing types combined with non-residential secondary land uses that are complementary and supportive, including schools and parks. This proposal is consistent with the following goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan:

- *Policy NL 3.1 Encourage Development that Supports Healthy Communities*

This project will include new pickleball courts and updated walking paths to encourage community movement and health.

- *Policy NL 3.2 Provide All Residents and Workers with Opportunities for Recreation and Physical Activities in Close Proximity to Homes, Schools, Employment Centers, and Community Facilities*

The existing park is located within the Saddle Rock Highlands Subdivision as an excellent resource for surrounding residential properties. The additions to the park will increase the amount of recreational activities available to residents. The park is also directly connected, via sidewalk, to Dakota Valley Elementary School and is within 500 feet of a retail area containing a Walmart, gas station, several restaurants, and other commercial facilities.

- *Policy NL 3.3 Encourage the Provision of Community Gathering Places*

The project will encourage community sports with the addition of two pickleball courts and gathering areas that are shaded and not located near the pickleball courts.

- *Policy NL 3.5 Ensure Public Facilities and Services are Accessible to Persons of All Ages, Incomes, and Abilities.*

The project scope includes adding vault toilets that will be serviced frequently, and will be open to access during park hours, 5am- 10pm, ensuring public facilities accessible to park users.

2. Land Development Code

Section 5-7.3 of the Land Development Code covers the policy and regulatory aspects of a Location and Extent. This includes specific review, general requirements and procedure

for Location and Extent applications. A Location and Extent does not have specific approval criteria but may be approved upon the finding that:

5-7.3.B.1.a. No road, park, public way, ground, or space, no public building or structure, and no major facility of a public utility shall be constructed or authorized in the unincorporated areas of Arapahoe County unless and until the proposed location and extent thereof has been submitted to and approved by the Arapahoe County Planning Commission.

The proposed park additions require approval of a Location and Extent application.

5-7.3.B.1.b. Routine extensions of public utility lines and minor modifications to existing utility lines and/or facilities shall not be subject to this procedure.

The proposed project is more than a routine extension and is not a minor modification to an existing park and is therefore not exempt from the Location and Extent procedure.

3. Referral Comments

Comments received during the referral process are summarized in Attachment A. There are no outstanding comments at this time.

4. Neighborhood Outreach

The applicant held a community meeting on March 17, 2025, at the Trails Recreation Center building, located at 16799 E. Lake Avenue, Goldrush Room, in Centennial. Approximately seven people attended. The purpose was to present the new park design, construction impacts, and answer questions from the public. The applicant indicated that overall the feedback was good, especially about the vault restrooms and pickleball courts. There were concerns about resurfacing materials and noise from the pickleball courts, which the applicant took into consideration when designing the park updates by adding buffers for noise at the pickleball courts and ensuring safe materials would be used when resurfacing walkways to prevent slipping or falling in winter months.

STAFF FINDINGS

Staff has reviewed the plans, supporting documentation, and referral comments. Based upon review of applicable policies and goals in the Comprehensive Plan, review of the development regulations, and analysis of referral comments, our findings include:

1. The proposed LE25-004, Tall Grass Park- Location and Extent, generally conforms to the Arapahoe County Comprehensive Plan.
2. The proposed LE25-004, Tall Grass Park- Location and Extent, meets the Arapahoe County Land Development Code, zoning regulations, and procedures stated in Section 5-7.3 for consideration and approval of a Location and Extent application under the Land Development Code.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Considering the findings and other information provided herein, Staff recommends approval of case LE25-004, Tall Grass Park- Location and Extent.

CONCURRENCE

Arapahoe County Public Works Development Planning and Engineering Services Divisions have reviewed the application and are recommending conditional approval of this case.

ALTERNATIVES

The Planning Commission could take the following actions:

1. Approve the Location and Extent as proposed or with modifications.
2. Continue the Location and Extent to a time and date certain for more information.
3. Deny the Location and Extent amendments.

PLANNING COMMISSION DRAFT MOTIONS – LE25-004, TALL GRASS PARK LOCATION AND EXTENT

Approve

In the case of LE25-004, Tall Grass Park Location and Extent, I have reviewed the staff report, including all exhibits and attachments, and have listened to the staff presentation and any public comment as presented at the hearing, and hereby move to approve the proposed Location and Extent as presented in the staff report.

Staff provides the following Draft Motions listed below as general guidance in preparing an alternative motion if the Planning Commission reaches a different determination:

Deny

In the case of LE25-004, Tall Grass Park Location and Extent, I have reviewed the staff report, including all exhibits and attachments, and have listened to the presentation and any public comment as presented at the hearing, and hereby move to deny the proposed amendment to the Land Development Code.

1. *State new findings in support of denial as part of the motion.*

Continue to Date Certain:

In the case of LE25-004, Tall Grass Park Location and Extent, I move to continue the hearing to [date certain], 6:30 p.m., to obtain additional information and to further consider the information presented.