

# Memorandum

**To:** City Planning staff

**From:** Jim Strozier, Consensus Planning, Inc.



**Date:** January 30, 2025

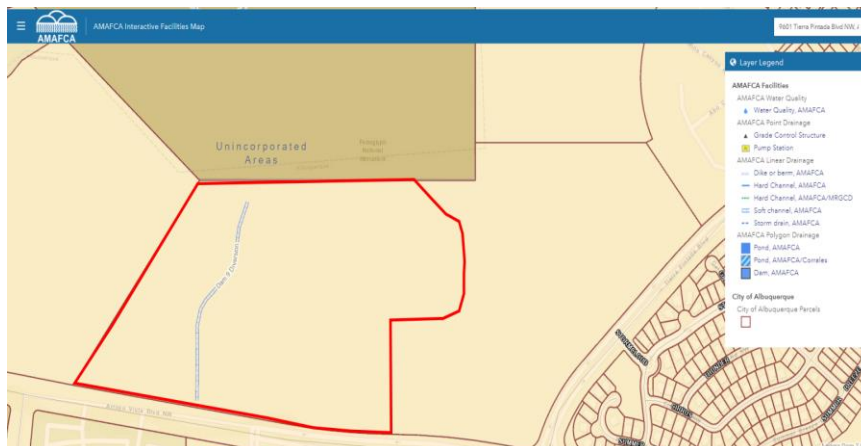
**Re:** Sensitive Lands Analysis for 9601 Tierra Pintada Boulevard NW

This memo responds to the Sensitive Lands criteria in IDO Section 14-16-5-2 and Section 14-16-2-6(B)(5) for the subject property located at 9601 Tierra Pintada Boulevard NW, west of the Tres Volcanes K-8 Community Collaborative Albuquerque Public School. We have analyzed the project site for the presence of sensitive lands and the constraints related to such lands. Three sensitive land features will be affected by the development on the subject property, including minor arroyos, steep slopes, and wetlands. The memo further expatiates on the steep slopes that will be impacted by the development.

## IDO Section 14-16-5-2

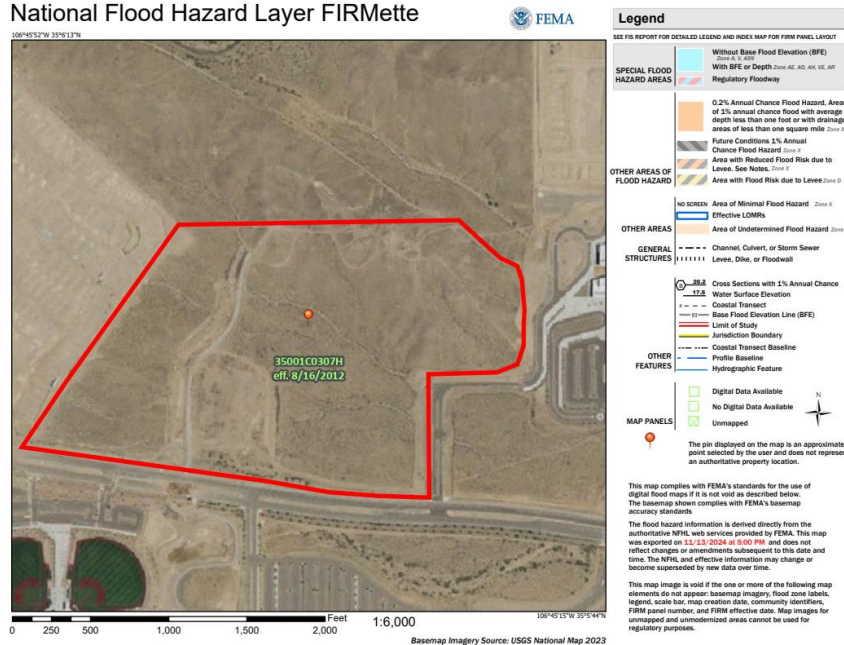
1. **Arroyos:** There are no significant arroyos that cross the subject property and with the development of the Inspiration subdivision to the west, all off-site flows have been eliminated.

The Dam 9 Diversion, which is a linear drainage soft channel is located on the west portion of the subject property. The purpose and need for this channel has been eliminated with the development of the Inspiration subdivision to the west (upstream). The development plans to remove this feature in conjunction with a grading and drainage plan. The Dam 9 Diversion will be removed with approval from AMAFCA.



2. **Floodplains and Specific Hazard Areas:** The subject property is not located in any designated floodplains or specific hazard areas.

National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette



3. **Irrigation Facilities (Acequias):** The site is not located in the Middle Rio Grande Valley and therefore has no existing irrigation facilities.
4. **Large Stand of Mature Trees:** There are no large stands of mature trees on the subject property.
5. **Outcroppings:** There are no rock outcroppings on the subject property.
6. **Significant Archaeological Sites:** The subject property has a Certificate of No Effect from when the Tres Volcanes Community Collaborative K-8 Albuquerque Public School (APS) was going through the City of Albuquerque development process. The subject property was originally proposed for a new High School and was included in the Certificate for the property.
7. **Steep Slopes and Escarpments:** The Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO) defines steep slopes as "Land with 9% slope or more". This property has significant grade changes from the north to south along starting on the northern edge of the property adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument. The proposed development on the site will result in steep slopes over 9% being graded to accommodate the development of a new single-family subdivision. Approval for the grading and the development of the site as proposed requires the review and approval of a Site Plan – EPC. This analysis is provided in support of that plan.

Because the steep slopes are located throughout the subject property, it is not practicable to save all the areas impacted by this feature and provide appropriate grading and drainage plans for the anticipated single-family lots along with safe streets and sidewalks that meet the DPM maximum slope requirements. There are two primary slope areas that are existing on the property that are larger than the 9% threshold. On the north edge of the property adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument, the slopes will be preserved and any scarring that has

occurred throughout the years is planned to be restored, preserved, and enhanced. This area is also much steeper and is consistently over 15% slope and has had significant scaring and damage from off-road vehicles.

The steep slope areas south of the Monument boundary along the east edge of the property are planned to be removed when development occurs. This approach is consistent with the prior site planning for the high school. Much of the steep slope area to the south and eastern edge of the property were planned to be graded to accommodate the required parking.

The steep slope on the subject property cover approximately 9.03 acres of the 60.08 acre (approximately 15%) proposed neighborhood. It is not practicable to save all of these feature areas and provide stable single-family lots or safe streets that meet the DPM maximum slope requirements. Currently, drainage flows from the existing slopes from the north to south as defined by the conceptual grading and drainage plan. The Site Plan intends to preserve and restore approximately 5.90 acres of the steepest slopes that are adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument on the north boundary. This allows for part of this sensitive land to be maintained and restored from over-use while allowing development appropriate to the site and consistent with DPM design criteria. This Site Plan efficiently protects steep slopes to the best of its ability compared to other proposed development in the past, such as the proposed APS high school, where the current K-8 school is which would have leveled all of the steep slopes for a surface parking lot.



*Slope Map (Yellow Represents Slopes over 9%)*

This Site Plan – EPC shall comply with IDO 5-2(C)(2)(h) Steep slopes and escarpments. And 14-16-5-2(J)(2) site design and sensitive lands - landscaping adjacent to major public open space. Disturbed areas shall be reseeded and/or planted with low-water, low-maintenance, native, or naturalized plant materials appropriate adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument. It prioritizes the preservation of sensitive land features where practicable and includes a restoration plan to ensure the site's ecological resilience as described in the attached



Restoration Plan for treatment of disturbed areas and amenities adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument. The Site Plan – EPC prioritized the protection of steep slopes adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument and proposes restoration of these areas, which is balanced with the need to grade some steep slope areas needed to develop the property and accommodate the subdivision layout to provide housing.



*Preserved Steep Slope and Escarpment Areas (in red dashed line)*

This property has special circumstances that impact the ability to develop the property in a way that balances the adjacency and restoration of the steep slope area adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument. Preservation of the entire property that is impacted by the areas over 9% slope will create a significant hardship for this development. All access to the property is from the south, Arroyo Vista Boulevard; it is adjacent to the Inspiration subdivision to the west which has a significant grade change; City requirements for grading and street design; and the adjacent APS property all create restrictions that impact the ability to develop the property.

The steep slope areas are internal to the site and will not have any significant material adverse impact to surrounding properties.

8. **Wetlands:** Based on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services National Wetlands Inventory, there are riverine wetlands (arroyos) that cross the subject property. These natural channels are currently dry and have not had water flow in them for a significant amount of time. Upstream development has essentially dried up these natural arroyos. These riverine do not contain any wildlife or biodiversity that is essential to the area. Based on changes to the upstream properties, the flows to this property have been eliminated.



***Applicant Response:*** *There are no designated wildlife habitat areas and corridors on the subject site.*

e. Natural or geologic hazard areas or soil conditions, such as unstable or potentially unstable slopes, faulting, landslides, rock falls, or expansive soils.

***Applicant Response:*** *There are no natural or geologic hazard areas or soil conditions on the site. The existing hills and steep slopes along the northern edge of the property will be preserved and restored based on significant damage and scaring associated with prior off road vehicle use.*

2. Lands that show evidence of slope instability, landslides, avalanche, flooding, or other natural or manmade hazards shall not be included in platted lots.

***Applicant Response:*** *The land on the subject site does not show any evidence of slope instability, landslides, avalanche, flooding, or other natural or manmade hazards.*

3. New structures intended for human occupancy are prohibited within 100 feet in any direction of any perennial stream, public lake, reservoir, or element of a public water supply system unless the City Engineer determines that a smaller setback would adequately protect water quality and wildlife habitat.

***Applicant Response:*** *There is no perennial streams, public lake, reservoir, or element of a public water supply system within 100 ft of the subject site.*

4. Natural features to be protected shall be identified in a site analysis as part of a Framework Plan or with any Site Plan or plat when a Framework Plan is not required.

***Applicant Response:*** *The steep slopes adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument proposed to be restored and preserved have been identified by this Site Plan application.*

## **Conclusion**

The Site Plan-EPC strengthens the character of the surrounding area and provides needed housing that will comply with the provisions of the PC zone and the Westland Master Plan (PC Framework Plan). While the sensitive land features on the site cannot be entirely avoided, the Site Plan mitigates harmful and aesthetic impacts to the maximum extent practicable.