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Letter to the Editor by Dave Closser

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Echo Canyon's (Kane Creek) impending traffic crisis ahead

Summarize - Echo Canyon's development in the Kings Bottom area has been approved, but concerns are raised about the inadequate width of Kane Creek Boulevard, the sole access road. The existing 18-foot road, already struggling with traffic, will be insufficient for the increased volume and heavy trucks expected during construction. The author urges the county to require road widening before construction begins to ensure safety for locals and visitors.

Editor,

Grand County recently granted preliminary plat approval to Echo Canyon, formerly Kane Creek Preservation and Development for their project in the Kings Bottom area.



Photo caption: An equipment operator hauls dirt across Kane Creek Boulevard at the Echo Canyon, formerly Kane Creek Preservation and Development project. File photo

The developer has agreed to build the 3.7 miles of roads within the project boundaries to Grand County road width standards, based on anticipated traffic loads. This includes a 50-foot width for the 1.4 miles of Kane Creek Boulevard running through the middle of the project.

But what about Kane Creek Boulevard from 500 West to the development that currently averages only 18 feet in width? The only requirement the county has placed on KCPD is to increase its width to 20 feet.

This doesn't really make sense. Kane Creek Boulevard within the proposed development will be 50 feet wide to meet county requirements for the anticipated traffic loads on that road. But the county is only requiring Echo Canyon to widen the sole access road to the development to 20 feet, the width the county code requires for an alley? And let's not forget the continued recreational traffic that will be passing through the project.

It's well known the existing road is barely sufficient, especially the narrow width, to safely handle the increasing levels of local and recreational traffic. As it stands now, the traffic volume is close to meeting the level that would require widening the road. But the traffic volume could double or triple once construction begins, including numerous large heavy trucks hauling cement, lumber and heavy equipment.

The existing road will clearly no longer be adequate to support the volume, and especially the nature, of the traffic.

It's highly unlikely the developer will take the initiative to widen the road, even to 20 feet. It's my hope the county will step in and require Echo Canyon to widen the road before construction begins, to protect the safety of the many locals and the many visitors that vacation here.

If they don't, large trucks, OHV's, camper `avans, cyclists and many other vehicles will be vying for space on a corner with 18 feet of pavement, no shoulders and a guardrail that is starting to fall into the Colorado River.

And for all we know, it may not even be technically feasible to widen the road on that tight corner. The Bureau of Land Management may not approve it. Or it may cost so much it can't be justified. Why not find out now, before construction begins?

Dave Closser
Moab