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## Arizona gun range considering expanding to Montrose

*Colorado Outdoors leaders continuing dialogue with Marriott officials*

- **C2 offers indoor shooting range, full-retail firearms shop**
- **Fellow gun range owners say C2 could help interest in shooting sports locally**
- **Marriott officials were in town this week**

By MATT LINDBERG  
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Hunters and gun enthusiasts may have another place to spend time.

C2 Tactical LLC, self-billed as a premier indoor shooting range based in Tempe, Arizona, is currently in ongoing negotiations with Colorado Outdoors LLC to join the development project, according to Mayfly Outdoors President David Dragoo.

C2, per its Facebook page, is open to the public seven days a week for range time, personal training, retail sales and group events. It calls itself a “full-retail firearms and accessories one-stop shop.”

If a deal can be made, it would follow in the footsteps of Mayfly, the Montrose-based investment company that specializes in fly-fishing equipment that broke ground on its state-of-the-art headquarters within the C.O.P. in October 2017, as previously reported.

“I think it will fit the community well and be a regional draw for both hunters and gun enthusiasts. C2 is a high-quality product and this organization has an excellent reputation for doing a great job top-to-bottom,” Dragoo said. “Secondly, this would be a nice community attribute because this is not just a one-dimensional shooting range. It’s more of a destination.”

### Colorado Outdoors Project

The Colorado Outdoors Project is what Mayfly President David Dragoo previously said will be a “world-renowned business park” aiming to attract outdoor-focused industries to relocate to Montrose and include river restoration and high-end commercial, residential and industrial development.

The City of Montrose previously declared about 160 acres along the Uncompahgre River and across from the Justice Center (from North Ninth Street to Launa Drive) as blighted, in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Urban Renewal Act for the Colorado Outdoors Project. With nine other entities, including Montrose County and special taxing districts whose boundaries cover the acres, the city in 2017 formed an urban renewal authority (URA), to finance public infrastructure and improvements via a tax increment finance district (TIF).

Mayfly is expected to move from its current Montrose location at 11 Ponderosa Court to the new facility by the end of 2018. The entire Colorado Outdoors Project will likely take 10 to 15 years of development, Dragoo previously stated.

Montrose already has at least a few options for shooting ranges. The Montrose Rod & Gun Club has an outdoor and indoor gun range (which require membership to utilize). The outdoor facility is off U.S. Highway 50, one-quarter of a mile west of the turnoff to the South Rim of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. The latter, though, is in close proximity to the C.O.P. at 1211 6450 Road off the San Juan Bypass. The club’s 50-foot indoor range features 10 shooting lanes, with it often being most utilized by younger members of the club. Member Mark Rackay indicated he felt C2 wouldn’t affect the organization.

“I think it would be wonderful to have another range here that’s open to the public,” said Rackay, who writes a weekly outdoor column for the Montrose Daily Press. “BLM (Bureau of Land Management) land is muddy and has snow this time of year, so people don’t go out there. And the club’s ranges are for members, so having a year-round indoor range would give people access. This way the public could shoot year-round while the indoor range at the club is only open to members.”

Then there’s San Juan Shooting Range off Dave Wood Road. Its owner, Paul Miller, questioned whether or not an indoor facility could thrive here.

“I’ve been around a number of shooting ranges

over the years that have come and gone, and it’s hard for an indoor range to be in a small town,” Miller said, noting he could recall at least a half-dozen indoor shooting ranges closing throughout the state over the years. “It’s just so expensive to build those things to start with and you can only charge so much for people to go shooting, and you don’t always have the



number of people it takes.”

Miller, however, said he’ll be supportive of the company if it makes the move to Montrose.

“It will affect everybody somewhat, but I wouldn’t worry about that. Competition is a great thing,” Miller said. “I’d love to see them build it and I hope they’re successful, it can just be hard based on what I’ve seen. But a nice indoor range can draw more people, and the more people who get into shooting,

the nicer it is. It may even create some spinoff for us and work for everybody. It could be really good for us.”

That might not be the case on the retail side, though. The Gun Depot, 1210 N. Townsend Ave., buys, sells and trades new and used guns and related items. Its owner, Steve Smith, said he didn’t relish the idea of more competition, but stressed his

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In the 36th round, Vance Couturier steps up for the spelling word at the Montrose County School District Spelling Bee on Wednesday night at Columbine Middle School. (Sydney Warner/Montrose Daily Press)

## Un-BEE-lievable

*Columbine seventh-grader wins district spelling contest again*

- **Couturier says he studied with help from his mother**
- **Competition lasted 46 rounds**
- **Winner to participate during state competition in March**

became the back-to-back MCSD Spelling Bee champion. He previously won while in the sixth grade.

He outmatched 17 other competitors from Johnson, Oak Grove and Pomona elementary schools, as well as students from Columbine and Centennial

middle schools. The competition did not feature high school students, as well as those from Cottonwood and Northside elementary and all Olathe schools.

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By ANDREW KISER  
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The Montrose County School District Spelling Bee was 46 rounds in and two participants were still left standing: Vance Couturier and Cullen Masterson.

In the end, neither contestant actually spelled a word wrong. But after the two went toe-to-toe for 30 straight rounds between them alone, moderator John Steele gave Couturier the sudden death word: raita.

The Columbine seventh-grader proceeded to correctly spell the name for the side dish found in Indian cuisine. With “raita” correctly recited, Couturier

# RANGE

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business' niche is products that aren't 100-percent new, so it might not matter.

"There's not really room in the pot for another spoon," Smith said.

*"It was a really good meeting. They're really positive on the community and really like the market and how Montrose is poised for growth right now."*

## Bill Bell

City manager

The talks with C2 are just one component of the project in the works; other aspects of the Colorado Outdoors Project also are progressing. Officials with Marriott on Feb. 6 were in Montrose meeting with City Manager Bill Bell, Drago and Realtor John Renfrow, among others, to continue discussions on the previously announced 100-room TownePlace Suites. Designed as an extended-stay hotel with a kitchen in each room, hotel officials are looking at building their property to anchor the north end of the development.

It would be the first hotel to be built in Montrose since August 2005, when the Hampton Inn opened its doors, according to Doug Casebier, owner of D&K Construction Management Inc. in Montrose that built it. D&K is responsible for constructing almost 90 hotels across the nation, including 22 in Colorado,



Workers continue to make progress at the site of the Colorado Outdoor Project, pictured above, as seen earlier this week. Local officials are currently negotiating with C2 Tactical, among other companies. (Sydney Warner/Montrose Daily Press)

and several local projects.

Bell said specific details about the Marriott hotel, such as construction and its timeline, are still in the works. But, he noted he was encouraged.

"It was a really good meeting. They're really positive on the community and really like the market and how Montrose is poised for growth right now," Bell said. "They're sold on the community and really supportive of Montrose and the Colorado Outdoors Project. Now it will just come down to cash flow"

Ideally, a family-style restaurant would open nearby on the property to complement the hotel as well, the city manager indicated.

Bell, also a member of the Montrose Urban Renewal Authority, said its board had a productive conversation on Feb. 5 with a developer out of Colorado Springs about the potential for what housing could look like on the south end of the Colorado Outdoors Project site. The housing aspect would come into play during phase 2, which would come after workers construct about 1.5 miles of roadways and utilities within the central 40 acres of the site (phase 1) that got underway in January.

Dragoo indicated he was feeling good about the latest C.O.P. developments.

"Our conversations with these businesses

are very positive, and the site visits are making an impact as people can see the substantial amount of activity going on," he said.

C2 officials weren't available for comment for this story. For more information about the company, visit [c2tactical.com](http://c2tactical.com).

*Matt Lindberg is the managing editor for the Montrose Daily Press and an award-winning journalist. He's a University of Kansas graduate with years of experience in the news business, as well as a father of two and a husband. Follow him on Twitter@MattLindberg.*

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