



December 6, 2013

Larry Ambrose
President, INC
Via email

Mr. Ambrose,

Thank you for your recent correspondence on behalf of INC regarding open-space requirements in general development plans (GDPs).

My colleagues and I share INC's interest in growing the city's park lands. In the last five years, Denver Parks and Recreation has added more than 225 acres of park land and natural space to its portfolio, and is projected to add 140 more acres over the course of the next five years.

As you know, within the context of general development plans, the term "open space" applies to several types of publicly-accessible space: everything from parks to plazas to improved pedestrian zones. These spaces are critical to creating livable urban places, and that is why the Denver Zoning Code requires a minimum of 10 percent open space as part of any GDP.

In response to your raising this issue, city staff has looked at how open space requirements have been addressed over time. The city has not dealt with open space minimums formulaically. The intent behind the code language seeks to continue to ensure that 10 percent of the developable property in a general development plan be included as publicly accessible open space. Rights-of-way are not included as developable property. Moreover, because this is a *minimum* requirement, there is always the option of including open space amounting to more than 10 percent.

In recent years, the pattern has been to apply a net 10 percent minimum open space requirement to most of our GDPs. We recognize that the existing code language does not clearly address the question of gross area versus net area. To clarify the issue we are preparing to codify a singular approach based on our general practices. That clarification is proposed as part of the 2013 zoning code text amendment package.

When you and I met several months ago, it was helpful to discuss this issue. Your careful examination of the code language helped drive home for me and my staff the need to interpret and clarify city policy so that all parties have a full understanding of the code requirements. We

believe the language in the proposed zoning code text amendment package will allow us to be more consistent and transparent going forward.

As the zoning code text amendment package moves toward adoption, we will consider all feedback and will no doubt continue to edit the draft package.

I value the work of INC and I thank you for your collective commitment to improving livability in Denver. As always, I welcome the opportunity to meet with your committee(s) for further discussion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rocky Piro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rocky Piro, FAICP
Manager, Denver Community Planning and Development