

MEMORANDUM

To: Development Services staff
From: Richard D. Cannone, AICP for Tina Axelrad, Zoning Administrator
Date: September 28, 2021
Re: **Denver Zoning Code (DZC) Clarification—** Rule of Measurement - average elevation for Base Plane calculations DZC § 13.1.2.2 and 13.1.3.2.

Summary

The July 1, 2021 Text Amendment to the DZC modified the Rules of Measurement for the Base Plane calculations within Sections 13.1.2.2.C and 13.1.3.2.C by deleting the following language, *“Measurements for purposes of establishing a base plane shall be rounded to the closest whole number.”* As a result, applicants have been receiving conflicting direction on how to determine their Base Plane.

Discussion

Sections 13.1.2.2. establishes two base planes (Front and Rear) on a zone lot or a building specific base plane for all SU, TU, TH, RH (excluding M-RH), E-MU-2.5, MU-3 and RO-3 zone districts. Section 13.1.3.2. establishes a single base plane on a zone lot or a building specific base plane for all other zone lots. Overall height for all buildings and structures on the zone lot are measured from a base plane. The Base Plane is the horizontal plane established at the average elevation of original grade.

In determining the average elevation, the following methods could be used:

- a. Round the spot grades to the nearest foot, average the spot grades, and round the average to the nearest foot; or
- b. Round the spot grades to the nearest one tenth of a foot, average the spot grades, round to the nearest one tenth of a foot; or
- c. Round the spot grades to the nearest one hundredth of a foot, average the spot grades, round to the nearest one hundredth of a foot.

Some surveys submitted for permitting round to the nearest tenth and others to the nearest hundredth.

Clarification

To ensure the greatest accuracy, spot grades shall be rounded to the nearest one hundredth of a foot. Once the spot grades have been averaged, the final base plane measurement shall be shown to the nearest one-hundredth of a foot. In the case that the survey is drafted where the spot grade elevations are shown to the nearest one-tenth of a foot, the City will accept this approach. However, once the spot grade elevations have been averaged, the final measurement must be shown to the nearest one-hundredth of a foot.

If you have further questions, please contact your supervisor or Zoning Administration.