

April 28, 2022

Ryan Tefertiller, AICP
Planning Manager
Land Use Review Division
City of Colorado Springs
30 S. Nevada Avenue, #105
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Re: Letter of Introduction – Cimarron Apartments

Ryan:

On behalf of FORMATIV, this letter describes, in general terms, the intent of the multi-family residential development that is being proposed within the Transition 2 Sector of Colorado Springs. The site is located at the northeast corner of E. Cimarron Street and S. Weber Street. This submittal consists of FBZ Development Plan for entire site, and Waiver of Replat – 6 Lots to be considered as one.

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Project intent:

Our team has holistically considered the appropriate development for this transitioning neighborhood. We have been careful to understand the programmatic needs of the neighborhood, the contextual grain of Downtown Colorado Springs, and the architectural character that can best complement the future of an energetic environment. All of these must combine to nurture smart development, engaging streetscapes and thriving urban activity. Particular emphasis and energy must be focused upon the pedestrian experience that connects our site to the urban fabric and form a relationship with downtown Colorado Springs. Our primary goal for the project is to increase density by providing high quality living, an active pedestrian environment at street level, and create an iconic building at the corners of East Cimarron Street and South Weber Street.

Project Overview:

Our team seeks to infill the existing parking lot with a 7-story, multi-family building-type consisting of 5 stories of 206 market-rate apartments that sit on a Podium of parking. This parking is wrapped with 8 walk-up units, a double-height entry Lobby and 2-stories of Amenity. A total of 214 units are included in this development. We have carefully studied the location and nearby adjacencies to determine views and positioning of the building. The residential program will be formed in a 'W'-shape creating two unique courtyards connected by a west facing pool and spa deck. We have placed the open end of the 'W' to face west, giving the occupants within the units, as well as in the courtyards and pool deck, amazing views of Pikes Peak and Cheyenne Mountain. At the northeast corner of E. Cimarron Street and S. Weber Street we placed the double-story, Main Entrance and Lobby, which serves as a hub for 2 stories of Amenity. We feel this

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location allows for a 24-hour environment that remains lit at night and brings a welcoming to the corner throughout the day and evening. Similarly, along both Weber and Cimarron Street, we have located walk-up units with mezzanines. These walk-up units continue the pedestrian environment through humanly scaled forms such as front stoops, an enhanced landscape, and private patios that meet the public sidewalk.

Density Bonus:

The project has achieved 50 density bonus points with the possibility of 7 more potential points for a total of 57 density bonus points which is above the required 5 points needed to achieve 2 additional levels. The point breakdown is as follows: 3 points for pedestrian alley improvements (burying overhead utilities 2pts, and screening utilitarian elements 1 pt). 42 points for market rate housing units (first 10 units 2pts, remaining 204 units 40 pts). 5 points for bicycle storage (first 15 secured 2 pts, remaining 30 bike racks 3 pts). Potential bonus points are as follows: 2 points green building design (high efficiency water heaters). 3 points for reducing the heat island effect (high albedo roof membrane 2 pts, podium recreation area for occupants 1 pt). 2 points for overall building materials (stucco and cementitious panel made with 20% recycled materials).

Parking:

The complete program meets the city's parking requirements. We have provided a 214-stall, at grade, 2-story parking garage wrapped along Cimarron and Weber Street by walk-up units, a double-story Lobby and amenity space. Hidden from the pedestrian movement along Weber and Cimarron Street, the alley side of the garage is where we have located access to parking, utility connections, trash, and service.

Architectural Character:

Our initial assessment of the site and neighborhood guided our design ideas on what type of architectural character the project should embody. We believe that using masonry with large, glazed openings allows for a more traditional skin to create an appropriate rhythm throughout the building's massing along the ground floor. The use of prefinished metal panel at the corners help define the extent of the building's form while allowing units above the Podium to recede in both plan and three-coat stucco finish, to provide additional focus to our landscape design at podium terraces and streetscape. Likewise, fiber cement continues to aid in breaking up the long façades while adding a modern accent, warmth, and an inviting character to the composition. Lastly, through the placement of a double-height Lobby, finished in both wood and large expanse of glass, we look to capture the intersection of E. Cimarron and S. Weber Street. We believe the cadence and materiality the exterior encompasses both the mindfulness of the adjacent residential neighborhood and the feel of urban living and development.

Pre-Application Issue List:

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1. Utility coordination with CSU and plan reviewers is a major focus. Communication is ongoing and progress is being made.
2. Continued coordination with the city on the landscape design in the ROW
3. Height Warrant request (below)

Height Warrant Request:

We would like to formally request a height warrant for an additional story to be used specifically to increase Lobby Amenity at the northeast corner of the building. **We are not requesting an adjustment to overall building height, only the acceptance of an additional story within our current envelope at the height of mezzanines within unit walk-ups and parking.** We believe this addition will not only enhance building program and increase activation at the corner of E. Cimarron and S. Weber but will also substantially meet the 5 criteria for a warrant in the following ways:

5.4.3.1 Is the requested warrant consistent with the intent of the form-based code?

- Yes, as emphasized that we are not wanting to increase the height of the building, granted under Density Bonus, but create an additional level, in-line with unit mezzanines, for additional amenities off the double-height Lobby.

5.4.3.2 Is the requested warrant, as well as the project as a whole, consistent with Section 4 – Design Guidelines of the form-based code?

- Yes, including the emphasis of creating activated Double Frontage and location of services away from the public way.

5.4.3.3 Is the requested warrant reasonable due to the proposed project's exceptional civic or environment design?

- Yes, as we believe we are achieving this in not only in our Podium design, but more importantly in the design for an enhanced pedestrian way along both E. Cimarron and S. Weber Street with landscape treatments (Soil Cells – utilized in previous important Civic enhancements) within our planters that allow for a greater pedestrian experience while still adhering to code compliant clearances.

5.4.3.4 Is the requested warrant consistent with the Downtown Master Plan?

- Yes, we believe by revitalizing the existing deteriorated paved parking lots into the proposed amenity-rich, multi-family apartment, will bring residents into the downtown and maximize streetscape vibrancy in alignment with the Downtown Master Plan.

5.4.3.4 Is the requested warrant consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan?

- Yes, we believe this project, and its future tenants will help create a vibrant neighborhood in alignment with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Compact Parking Percentage Increase Warrant Request:

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In addition to our height warrant request, we would also like to formally request a parking warrant for the project's 62% compact parking stalls. Due to site constraints and the inclusion of active use along Cimarron and Weber, we are only able to meet our 1 stall/unit ratio by providing more compact spaces than is currently allowed in the zoning code (40%). This warrant meets the 5 criteria points in the following ways:

5.4.3.1 Is the requested warrant consistent with the intent of the form-based code?

- Yes, this warrant keeps our podium to two levels and retains our 1 stall/unit ratio.

5.4.3.2 Is the requested warrant, as well as the project as a whole, consistent with Section 4 – Design Guidelines of the form-based code?

- Yes, including the retention of active use along Cimarron and Weber with at least 60% fenestration along our shopfront areas and keeping services/entrances away from the public way.

5.4.3.3 Is the requested warrant reasonable due to the proposed project's exceptional civic or environment design?

- Yes, as we believe we are achieving this in not only in our Podium design, but more importantly in the design for an enhanced pedestrian way along both E. Cimarron and S. Weber Street with landscape treatments (Soil Cells – utilized in previous important Civic enhancements) within our planters that allow for a greater pedestrian experience while still adhering to code compliant clearances.

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- Yes, we believe this project, and its future tenants will help create a vibrant neighborhood in alignment with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Please review our attached FBZ Development Plan and Waiver of Replat. If you have questions or need additional information prior to your review, please let us know. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of this exciting project!

Letter of Introduction – Cimarron Apartments
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Regards,
Davis Partnership Architects

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'G. Cantu', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Guadalupe Cantu, AIA
Senior Associate