

Definitions from Other Cities

Charlotte, NC

Impervious Ground Cover: Any structure or ground cover consisting of asphalt, concrete, stone, brick, terrazzo, roofing, ceramic tile or any other natural or man-made material that prevents the absorption of surface water into the soil.

Open space: An area of land or water, which is open and unobstructed including areas maintained in a natural or undisturbed character or areas improved for active or passive recreation. "Open space" shall not include water below the mean high water line located adjacent to the Catawba River and its impoundments, or areas covered with buildings, structures, streets, or off-street parking areas, but does include landscaping associated with such parking areas.

City of Durham, NC

Building Coverage: The horizontal area within the outside of the exterior walls of the ground floor of all principal and accessory buildings. Building coverage is set forth as a percentage of the total lot area.

Building Envelope: The area between all required setbacks within which a structure may be located.

Impervious Surfaces: A surface composed of any material that impedes or prevents natural infiltration of water into the soil. Impervious surfaces shall include but are not limited to roofs, solid decks, driveways, patios, sidewalks, parking areas, tennis courts, concrete or asphalt streets, or compacted gravel surfaces. Wooden slatted decks and the water area of swimming pools shall be considered to be pervious. Calculation of impervious surfaces for streets shall include the area compacted for pavement or gravel base.

Open Space: Areas of a development that allow for light, air, wildlife habitat, and for scenic and recreational use. Also included are areas designed to enhance the privacy or general appearance of a development. Private open space is open space that is owned by a corporation, individual, or home owners association. Public open space is open space owned by a governmental jurisdiction.

Passive Recreation: Recreational activities that do not require a developed site. This includes such activities as trails for walking, hiking, and horseback riding; and areas for picnicking.

Town of Chapel Hill, NC

Building Envelope: The three-dimensional space within which a structure is permitted to be built on a zoning lot, and which is defined by setback and height regulations.

Built-upon Area: That portion of a development project that is covered by impervious or partially impervious surfaces including buildings, pavement, gravel roads, recreation facilities (e.g. tennis courts), etc. (Note: Slatted decks and the water area of a swimming pool are considered pervious.)

Floor Area: The sum of enclosed areas on all floors of a building or buildings measured from the outside faces of the exterior walls, including halls, lobbies, arcades, stairways, elevator shafts, enclosed porches and balconies, and any below-grade floor areas used for access and storage. Not countable as floor area are open terraces, patios, atriums, balconies, carports, garages, breezeways, and screened porches.

Floor Area Ratio: A decimal fraction that, when multiplied by the gross land area of a zoning lot, determines the maximum floor area permitted within the zoning lot.

Impervious Surface: A surface composed of any material that impedes or prevents natural infiltration of water into the soil.

Open Space: Land devoted to uses characterized by vegetative cover or water bodies, such as agricultural uses, pastures, meadows, parks, recreational area, lawns, gardens, gardens, cemeteries, ponds, streams and the like.

Permanent Open Space: Open space which is legally dedicated as such but does not include easements.

Recreational Space, Improved: Any Recreational Land, including enclosed floor area, which is appropriately improved for the common active recreational use of residents of multifamily developments and planned developments. For sites that abut or include areas designated as future greenways in the Town's Comprehensive Plan, land dedicated for a public pedestrian and non-motorized vehicle easement along the greenway may be substituted for required improved recreation space.

Town of Davidson, NC

Built-upon Area: Built-upon areas shall include that portion of a development project and/or lots that are covered by impervious or partially impervious cover including buildings, pavement, gravel roads, recreation facilities (e.g. tennis courts), etc. (Note: Wooden slatted decks and the water area of a swimming pool are considered pervious.)

Floor area: The sum of the gross horizontal areas of each floor of the principal building and any accessory buildings or structures, measured from the exterior walls or from the center line of party walls. The term does not include any area used exclusively for the surface parking of motor vehicles or for building or equipment access, such as stairs, elevator shafts, and maintenance crawl space.

Floor area ratio (FAR): The total floor area of the building or buildings on a lot or parcel divided by the gross area of the lot or parcel.

Impervious ground cover: Any structure or ground cover consisting of asphalt, concrete, stone, brick, terrazzo, roofing, ceramic tile or any other natural or man-made material that prevents the absorption of surface water into the soil.

Open Space: Any area which is not divided into building lots, streets, rights-of-way, parking, or easements. In the farmhouse cluster or low-impact subdivision, open space may also include portions of private building lots subject to a permanent open space easement. Urban open space

assumes one or more of the forms detailed in Section 9 and may contain recreation equipment and amenities as indicated.

Town of Cary, NC

Impervious Surface Area: Any hard-surfaced, man-made area that allows little or no infiltration of precipitation into the soil. Impervious areas include that portion of a development project that is covered by buildings; areas paved with concrete, asphalt or brick; gravel road; recreation facilities such as tennis courts; patios, decks, driveways, and streets.

Open Space: Any portion of a parcel or area of land or water which is maintained in a natural and undisturbed character. However, open space may include recreational facilities such as swimming pools, golf courses, greenways and tennis courts.

City of Winston-Salem, NC

Buildable Area: The area of a zoning lot remaining after the minimum setback requirements of this Ordinance have been satisfied.

Impervious Surface Cover: Any structure or material which significantly reduces or prevents natural absorption of storm water into the soil. Impervious surface cover includes any built upon area including, but not limited to, buildings or other structures with roofs, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, streets, and any concrete, stone, brick, asphalt, or gravel surface. For the purpose of calculating impervious surface coverage requirements pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance, calculation is based on the entire zoning lot and gravel or paver block for parking lots containing more than twenty-five (25) spaces is considered impervious at a rate of eight percent (80%) of the total area covered.

Open Space: The land uses for recreation, natural resource protection, amenities, and/or bufferyards. Open space may include, but is not limited to, lawns, walkways, active recreation areas, playgrounds, wooded areas, greenways, and water courses.

Open Space, Common: Open space within a development not in individually owned lots, which is designed and intended for the common use or enjoyment of the residents of the development.

City of High Point, NC

Open Space: An area of land or water intended to provide light, air, amenity, recreation and/or resource protection set aside in some permanent manner for public or private use and enjoyment. Open space includes, but is not limited to, preserves, parks, passive and active recreation areas, floodplains, plazas, squares, greenways, and waterbodies.

Open Space, Private: Open space owned by an individual, group, or organization for common use and enjoyment of the owners, residents or members.

City of Burbank, CA

Open Space means an area not occupied by above-grade parking, refuse facilities, or above grade structures other than driveways, recreational amenities, and other yard encroachments authorized by this Chapter.

City of Phoenix, AZ

Open Space, Active: Common open space with active recreational facilities, such as swimming pools, play equipment, ball fields, game courts, and picnic tables.

Open Space, Common: Land within or related to a development, not individually owned or dedicated for public use, that is designated and intended for the common use or enjoyment of the residents and their guests of the development and may include such complementary structures and improvements as are necessary and appropriate. Required open space is to be centrally located, be a minimum of 1,000 square feet of level surface area, and maintain a maximum grade of 4:1 at any point including its periphery.

Open Space, Passive: Common open space with passive elements, such as gardens, benches, fountains or the preservation natural vegetation.

Open Space, Usable: To be considered as usable open space or common space, the space must be centrally located within the development, project or neighborhood, have a minimum 1,000 square foot level bottom if also utilized as stormwater retention, be finished with turf or quarter minus decomposed granite, be adequately lit to ensure the safety of nighttime users, and be equipped with amenity improvements such as passive or active open space elements.

City of Greensboro, NC

Built-Upon Area. That portion of a development project that is covered by impervious or partially impervious cover including buildings, pavement, gravel areas (e.g. roads, parking lots, paths), recreation facilities (e.g. tennis courts), etc. (Note: wooden slatted decks and the water area of a swimming pool are considered pervious.)

Green Space: An open space available for unstructured recreation consisting of grassy areas and trees.

City of Boston, MA

Open space: open space in public ownership dedicated to or appropriated for active or passive recreational use or to the conservation of natural resources; including but not limited to the waterway areas, beaches, reservations, parks, and playgrounds within the boundaries of the City of Boston; or open space in private ownership for active or passive recreational use or for the conservation of natural resources.

Open Space Uses: golf driving range; grounds for sport, private; open space; open space recreational building; outdoor place of recreation for profit; or stadium uses.

Usable Open Space: space suitable for recreation, swimming pool, tennis court, gardens, or household service activities, such as clothes drying. Such space must be at least seventy-five percent open to the sky, free of automotive traffic, parking, and undue hazard, and readily accessible by all those for whom it is required.

City of Sacramento, CA

Open space: Means land and water essentially without improvements and used for public recreation, enjoyment or scenic beauty, conservation or use of natural resources, production of food or fiber, light and air or an environmental amenity.

Open Space, Residential (Usable). "Residential (usable) open space" shall be composed of outdoor areas designed for outdoor living, recreation or landscaping, including such areas on the ground and on the decks, balconies, porches, and roofs, which are safe and suitably surfaced and screened. Such areas shall be on the same lot as the dwelling units they serve, and shall be designed and oriented in a manner that make the best practical use of available sun and other climatic advantages. Landscaped setback yards that are not designed for outdoor use shall not be considered usable open space.

City of Solano Beach, CA

Open Space, Private: That open space directly adjoining the units or building, which is intended for the private enjoyment of the occupants of the unit or building. Private open space shall in some manner be defined such that its boundaries are evident. Private open space includes private patios or balconies, and front, rear, or side yards on a lot designed for single-family detached or attached housing.

Open Space, Usable: Outdoor or unenclosed area on the ground, or on a deck, or terrace, designed and accessible for outdoor living, recreation, pedestrian access, or landscaping, but excluding streets, parking facilities, driveways, utility or service areas, private open space, and any land to be dedicated to the city as open space.

City of San Mateo, CA

"Open space" means that portion of a site that has not been covered by buildings, structures, or parking areas or driveways. Open space areas include but are not limited to parks, playgrounds, beaches and waterways.

"Usable open space" means outdoor area on the ground, balcony, deck, porch, or roof which is designed, improved, developed and maintained to be used for outdoor living, recreation, or garden purposes. However, for purposes of receiving a bonus to increase the floor area ratio (FAR), not more than ten percent of improved roof decks, roof gardens or roof recreation facilities will be granted. The minimum standards for a roof used for gardens, decks or recreational purposes shall be established by resolution of the City Council. Further, off-street parking and loading areas, driveways, and required sidewalks are not counted in calculating usable open space.

(a) Private Usable Open Space.

(1) "Residential private usable open space" means open space adjacent to a dwelling unit or units designed and reserved for the use of the occupants.

(2) "Commercial/executive private usable open space" means open space which is improved for the use of employees and guests of the development, such as an inner courtyard.

(b) Common Usable Open Space.

(1) "Residential common usable open space" means open space accessible to all occupants of a residential complex. Pedestrian and bicycle paths, swimming pools, and tennis courts are typical forms of residential common usable open space.

(2) "Commercial/executive common usable open space" means open space in the form of a plaza, square, court, or other urban space which is at least seventy-five percent open to the sky, free from automotive traffic, and accessible to the public at large. (Ord. 1981-27 § 17, 1981; Ord. 1978-18 § 46, 1978).

City of Berkeley, CA

Usable Open Space: Outdoor space, including natural and landscaped ground areas, pools, patios, decks and balconies designed for active or passive recreational use and which is accessible to the occupants of a building on the same lot.³

Salt Lake City, Utah

Open space means any area of a lot which is completely free and unobstructed from any structure or parking areas. Landscaping, walkways, uncovered patio areas, light poles and other ornamental features shall not be considered as obstructions for purposes of this definition. Driveways that provide access to parking lots shall not be considered as an obstruction subject to the driveways not exceeding twenty percent (20%) of any required yard area that they provide access through.

Delray Beach, Florida

Open Space: All areas of natural plant communities or areas replanted with vegetation after construction, such as: revegetated natural areas; tree, shrub, hedge or ground cover planting areas; and lawns. Water bodies cannot be used to calculate open space areas.

Madison, Wisconsin

Usable open space is that part of the ground level of a zoning lot, other than in a required front or corner side yard, which is unoccupied by driveways, drive aisles, service drives, off-street parking spaces and/or loading berths, principal buildings, accessory buildings other than greenhouses or swimming pool domes approved as a conditional use and is unobstructed to the sky except for greenhouses or swimming pool domes. This space of minimum prescribed dimension shall be available to all occupants of the building, shall not be graveled, and shall be usable for greenery, drying yards, recreational space, gardening, greenhouses, and other leisure activities normally carried on outdoors. Usable open space may be paved for recreational use provided sufficient barriers are installed which are designed, constructed and maintained to prevent the illegal entry and parking of motor vehicles. Where and to the extent prescribed in these regulations, balconies and roof areas, designed and improved for outdoor activities, may also be considered as usable open space. Ground level for this purpose may include open terraces above the average level of the adjoining ground, but may not include a permanently roofed-over terrace or porch.