



# Planning Implementation Tools Planned Unit Development



Center for Land Use Education

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## TOOL DESCRIPTION

The term Planned Unit Development (PUD) is used to describe a type of development and the regulatory process that permits a developer to meet overall community density and land use goals without being bound by existing zoning requirements. PUD is a special type of floating overlay district which generally does not appear on the municipal zoning map until a designation is requested. This is applied at the time a project is approved and may include provisions to encourage clustering of buildings, designation of common open space, and incorporation of a variety of building types and mixed land uses. A PUD is planned and built as a unit thus fixing the type and location of uses and buildings over the entire project. Potential benefits of a PUD include more efficient site design, preservation of amenities such as open space, lower costs for street construction and utility extension for the developer and lower maintenance costs for the municipality.

## COMMON USES

### *Urban Redevelopment*

Redesigns for older urban areas face many challenges. Traditional zoning does not have the flexibility to address the need for mixed uses for buildings, changes in building setbacks, non-motorized transportation, environmental protection and possible brownfield regulations all within a confined space. The area for redevelopment is planned all at once so land uses complement each other. Using a PUD allows for innovative uses of spaces and structures to achieve planning goals.



### *Potential Uses*

- ◆ Traditional Neighborhood Design
- ◆ Preserve openspace
- ◆ Brownfield redevelopment
- ◆ Urban infill and redevelopment
- ◆ Mixed use development



Figure 1. Plan and photographs of Harbor Park, Kenosha.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### CREATION

Any municipality with zoning authority is able to establish ordinances for PUDs. The municipality must have adopted zoning and subdivision ordinances and should have a comprehensive plan. While a PUD allows for flexible project design, standards are needed to protect public health and safety and to assure design quality and conformance to an overall plan. Some examples of standards or criteria to be included in PUD regulations include:

#### **What is a floating zone?**

A floating zone is similar to a conventional zone in that it describes the permitted uses, setback requirements, and other standards to be applied in the zone. Unlike conventional zoning districts, however, the floating zone is not designated on the zoning map. Once enacted into law it “floats over” of is available for use in any designated area in the ordinance. When an application for its use is approved, it is affixed to a particular parcel through an amendment to the zoning map.

- Areas where PUDs are allowed
- Developer provision of land and capital improvements for public uses.
- Dimensions and grading of parcels and a ceiling on the total number of structures permitted in the development.
- Permissible land uses
- Population density limits.
- Amendment procedures.
- Schedule of development and assurance of completion.
- Preservation of architectural, scenic, historic, or natural features of the area.

The PUD ordinance should clearly spell out the review process, opportunities for public involvement, and procedural guidelines. Besides these standards, the community’s comprehensive plan should provide the overall context within which the proposed development needs to fit.

### ADMINISTRATION

There are four general steps to developing a PUD:

#### **1. Pre-application conference**

The developer consults with planning staff for ordinance and process clarification and discusses initial project plans.

#### **2. Site plan review**

The site plan review consists of a detailed site analysis of existing features, often an on-site walkabout, and a discussion about project goals and possible design solutions.

#### **3. Preliminary development plan**

The plan includes specific documents and maps giving a legal description of the project, a detailed site plan and supporting maps. The plan commission holds a public hearing at which the developer presents the PUD proposal and the planning recommendations are made available for public review.

#### **4. Final development plan**

The final plan contains the detailed engineering drawings of the entire site and process for completion of the project. The entire site plan for the PUD will be reviewed as a single entity. The plan commission would, at this time, approve recording the plat.

## *Report Card: Planned Unit Development*

<b>Cost</b>	Money or staff resources required to implement tool.
<b>B</b>	The developer usually pays all project costs. Staff time or a paid consultant will be needed to create the ordinance and for project review.
<b>Public Acceptance</b>	The public's positive or negative perception of the tool.
<b>B</b>	Generally accepted if public has input to design of the ordinance and possible issues are addressed. When a PUD is proposed, the public will need to be brought in early in the project so they have time to clearly understand the project and have concerns addressed prior to the final public hearing. Misunderstandings could result in costly delays and even rejection of a project.
<b>Political Acceptance</b>	Politician's willingness to implement tool.
<b>A</b>	Politicians generally accept this as it is market and developer driven. If the public accepts the plan, politicians will also.
<b>Equity</b>	Fairness to stakeholders regarding who incurs costs and consequences.
<b>B</b>	PUDs are perceived as fair because the developer pays for all project costs. Concerns arise when the project receives a public subsidy or results in additional long-term costs for the municipality. There could be a negative impact on the surrounding neighborhoods if the project is not designed properly.
<b>Administration</b>	Level of complexity to manage, maintain, enforce, and monitor the tool.
<b>B</b>	The ordinance may be slightly harder to create and a PUD proposal may involve additional meetings as compared to a standard subdivision project.
<b>Scale</b>	The geographic scale at which tool is best implemented.
<b>Municipal to County</b>	This tool works for both urban and rural projects. Towns have used this tool when approving a golf course and surrounding development.

### GRADING EXPLANATION

A - Excellent

B - Above Average

C - Average

D - Below Average

F - Failing

Comments and grades were derived from a Delphi process conducted with practicing planners and educators in 2005

## WISCONSIN EXAMPLES

Figure 2. South Pier District, City of Sheboygan.



### South Pier District, City of Sheboygan

The 42-acre brownfield site, at the convergence of the Sheboygan River and Lake Michigan was previously used for storage of coal, salt, fertilizer, and petroleum. The land was critical to the economy of Sheboygan as it was the last significant piece of municipal land on the city's waterfront that remained available for development. After receiving a considerable amount of public input, concept plan design guidelines were created for the mixed-use development (i.e., family resort development, riverfront promenade, lakefront eco park and trails, retail and office development, live/work development, etc.) and construction started.

### Harbor Park, Kenosha

Harbor Park is a 69 acre redevelopment site in downtown Kenosha bounded by downtown Kenosha, Lake Michigan, and the Southport Marina. The project will transform former industrial land into public gathering places, a promenade, visitor attractions, and a residential neighborhood. Goals of the project include creation of a new community civic and cultural focal point, generation of year-round activity to bring people to the downtown area, establishment of a new residential neighborhood and the creation of a family-oriented destination as well as new economic development opportunities.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

McMaster, Mary (n.d.) *Planned Unit Developments*. Planners Web Article 490 available at <http://www.plannersweb.com/wfiles/w490.html>

Armstrong, Melissa et al (1992). *Community Planning Handbook: Tools and Techniques for Guiding Community Change*. Michigan Society of Planning Officials, Rochester, MI.

*Zoning*, adapted by Kevin Struck. <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/pubs.html>

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