



Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Planned unit development (PUD) ordinances allow developers flexibility to depart from existing zoning requirements in exchange for fulfilling an established set of planning criteria. PUDs are also called planned residential developments (PRDs) or urban planned developments (UPDs).

The benefits of PUD can include more efficient site design and lower infrastructure and maintenance costs. Ordinances can also be written to require or incentivize public benefits such as affordable housing or open space in exchange for regulatory flexibility and assumed cost savings. Tools like [density bonuses](#) and [parking reductions](#) can help underwrite the cost of incorporating low- and moderate-income units into a project, either through established incentive programs or implemented on a case-by-case basis through development agreements.

BACKGROUND

PUDs are frequently created as floating or overlay zones. Alternatively, land slated for a known project could be rezoned as a PUD. Standards will vary based on the intent of the ordinance. For example, a PUD ordinance designed to add diverse housing forms to a single-family area could allow smaller lot sizes, attached dwellings, or flexible setbacks. A jurisdiction should determine the mix of uses to be permitted in the PUD district, lot size requirements, and guidelines for building height, bulk, design and site orientation. Open space allowances may be important for large properties or on those where the density is greater than the surrounding zone.

TOOL PROFILE

Objectives

[Housing Options in Expensive Markets](#)

[Missing Middle Density](#)

Type of Tool

Development types

Project Type

Single family

Multifamily

Ownership

Rental

Affordability Level

Market-rate incentives and tools



[Design guidelines](#) complement PUD ordinances and can help ensure appropriate community design and compatibility with adjacent properties. Connecting PUDs to the overall fabric of the community through good design, traffic circulation and site requirements is essential for success and community buy-in. Review of proposed PUDs is often site- and project-specific.

Designating PUDs or offering them as a development option are good techniques to motivate redevelopment of brownfields or vacant properties in urban centers. PUDs are generally directed at market rate developments, but subsidized projects can locate in PUDs as well. Because of the special nature of PUDs, and their potential to create housing forms that differ from neighboring properties, cities often stipulate affordable housing as a PUD component through development agreements or in exchange for density bonuses. This can be particularly helpful for growing, expensive housing markets and for ensuring that affordable housing choices are developed as a part of new development.

