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# **Planning Your Project**

## *A Guide to the Planning Review Process*

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## CITY HALL NUMBERS

Main Number	440-255-1100
Cleveland Line (toll free)	440-942-8796
Building/Engineering	440-974-5785
City Manager's Office	440-974-5790
Community Development	440-974-5740
Economic Development	440-974-5739
Finance	440-974-5770
Fire Prevention	440-974-5768
Parks, Recreation & Public Lands	440-974-5720
Police	440-974-5789
Public Works	440-974-5780

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Introduction
- II. What is a Site Development Plan?
- III. When Site Development Plans are Required
- IV. Site Development Plan Requirements
  - A. Preliminary Site Development Plan
  - B. Final Site Development Plan
- V. Review Procedure
- VI. Conditional Use Permits (CUP): What they are and when they are needed.
- VII. Fees

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This guide was developed to assist developers and property owners who are seeking approval of site development applications for commercial, industrial or multi-family projects. This guide will outline the review process and expedite the approval of the project. At a minimum, approval of a site development plan requires a review by several City departments, including the Building and Engineering Department, the Department of Community Development, and the Police and Fire Departments. In addition, a project may require the review and approval of the Municipal Planning Commission. The requirements for a Municipal Planning Commission review are detailed in Section 3 of this booklet. To the extent that a project does not meet the requirements of the zoning or building codes, a variance(s) from the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals must be acquired.

Site plan requirements, development regulations and guidelines identified in this handbook are required by, and incorporated in, the City of Mentor Code of Ordinances, the City of Mentor's Comprehensive Plan or the City of Mentor's Design Guidelines for Commercial & Industrial Corridors. Copies of these development regulations, checklists and guidelines are available for review or purchase at the Department of Community Development in Mentor City Hall, or for review at the Mentor Public Library.

While general information on regulations and procedures are provided in this booklet; specific or technical questions regarding a project should be directed to the appropriate City department. A list of phone numbers for the various City departments is provided on the first page of this publication.

We welcome your investment in Mentor and in making it your "City of Choice".

## **II. WHAT IS A SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

A site development plan is a set of scaled drawings which shows how the site will be developed and what the building will look like when it is completed. Mentor's review procedures provide for an informal pre-review, a preliminary review and a final site plan review.

Site development plans are necessary to encourage the efficient use of land and to promote high standards in building layout, design, landscaping and construction. The site development plans are also intended to promote the goals of the City of Mentor's Comprehensive Plan, the Design Guidelines for Commercial and Industrial Corridors and the requirements of the City of Mentor Zoning and other applicable Codes.

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### **III. WHEN SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS ARE REQUIRED**

Site development plans are required when any of the following occur:

- New construction, reconstruction, or expansion in any zoning district, except for single family detached houses or duplexes in residential districts.
- Any development with parking spaces to be used by more than one business.
- The development of public or semi-public buildings.
- Any exterior change to a previously approved site development plan.

Administrative pre-review of a project is not required, but encouraged. The submission of four (4) copies or sets of plans to the Department of Community Development is necessary for this review; there is no fee or deadline for submission. Whether the project is ultimately reviewed administratively or by the Planning Commission; the pre-review affords the applicant insights, which ultimately can save time and money. A written letter will be sent informing the applicant of the various City Department's concerns.

The Department of Community Development will assist in determining whether administrative or Planning Commission review will be required.

If Planning Commission review is required, twenty (20) copies and/or sets of drawings must be received by the Department of Community Development, 21 days prior to the meeting. Planning Commission meetings are held every third Thursday; an annual schedule of submission deadlines and meeting dates is available at the Department of Community Development and the Mentor Public Library. Applications, which are incomplete or not accompanied by the appropriate fee, will not be placed on the agenda. In addition, the applicant is required to show ownership or control of the site.

If administrative review is determined to be appropriate, there is no application deadline. This review will occur as part of a building permit application, which is submitted through the Building/Engineering Department.

### **IV. SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

The following information is required for preliminary and final site plan review respectively. The plan should be clearly labeled, indicating whether preliminary or final site plan review is being requested.

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## **PRELIMINARY SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The preliminary plan provides an overview of the development, which will be reviewed by city staff and the Planning Commission. The preliminary plan affords all parties the opportunity to identify potential site problems before significant time and expense is incurred by the applicant. A final site plan approval is required before issuance of a building permit.

At a minimum, the preliminary plan must include the following:

- Name of the development and an indication that it is a preliminary plan.
- Name and address of the developer and property owner.
- North arrow.
- Scale: 1" = 50' or larger – **maximum size of plans not to exceed 42"**.
- Date.
- Number of sheets.
- Location and acreage of land-use within the development.
- Topographic map at 2' intervals (existing & proposed).
- Location, name and dimensions of adjacent buildings (existing and proposed).
- Buildings on-site, easements, streets and drainage ways.
- Preliminary provisions for storm water management.
- Preliminary provisions for utilities including:
  - size and location of existing facilities,
  - proposed connections and location of new utilities.
- Proposed parking layout with entrances, exits, circulation pattern and existing drives in the vicinity (including across the street).
- Preliminary building elevations.
- Trip generation study.
- Location of jurisdictional wetlands.

## **FINAL SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The plan indicates the exact layout, design and landscaping of the development. The plan must be in substantial compliance with the previously approved preliminary plan, and conform to the stipulations and/or the conditions placed on the preliminary plan by the Planning Commission. The final site plan shall include all the following information:

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- Date.
  - Number of sheets.
  - A boundary survey.
  - Location, width and size of all rights-of-way and easements (either publicly or privately maintained).
  - Location of adjacent property curb cuts within 50' of site (both sides of the street).
  - Ownership, use and zoning of adjacent property.
  - Minimum building set back lines.
  - Multi-family projects shall include: number, size and type of units.
  - Size, location and type of vehicular ingress and egress.
  - Location, type and height of fences, walls or screening.
  - Location of all parking spaces and bays, loading spaces and walkways.
  - Typical section of all drives and aprons.
  - Number of parking spaces required and provided.
  - Type of surface in parking and walk areas, including curbs.
  - Existing and finished grade by 2' contour intervals.
  - Flood plain and wetland delineation.
  - Erosion control methods during construction and permanent control practices.
  - Building elevations indicating architectural style, building materials, roof mounted HVAC units and other mechanical equipment.
  - Color rendering of the building & building material samples.
  - Drainage provisions for the site including:
    - calculations of existing and proposed storm water runoff;
    - location, size, type and grade of ditches, catch basins, inlets, pipes and other drainage structures.
  - Location and dimensions of existing and proposed sanitary service.
  - Letter from Lake County Sanitary Engineer indicating adequate sewer capacity to serve the project.
  - Building data including: number of floors, height, general use and floor area.
  - Location of existing and proposed water facilities (i.e. mains, valves, hydrants, etc.).
  - Letter from Ohio Water Service indicating an adequate supply of water available to serve the project.
  - Traffic impact study (if required by the City Engineer).
  - Written response to preliminary approval comments.
  - Landscape plan/tree management plan.
  - Electrical service plan (i.e. underground service versus overhead service).
  - Exterior lighting plan.
  - Location of refuse removal pad(s) and design of enclosures.
  - Location and size of all recreation and open space areas (if appropriate).

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## **V REVIEW PROCEDURE**

All preliminary and final site plans are reviewed by the Planning Commission and are subject to the same review procedure. Once the plans are received by the Department of Community Development, they are routed to several city departments for review and comment. The City Engineer reviews, at a minimum, the site plan for drainage impacts, right-of-way construction, traffic impact, and conformance with the Design Guidelines. The Police Department assesses the security needs and traffic patterns. The Fire Department reviews the sites as to the accessibility of fire equipment, fire hydrant locations, and building hook-up location. The Department of Community Development reviews the site plan for compliance with zoning regulations such as building height, set backs, parking requirements and landscaping. A representative from one (or more) city departments may contact the applicant should questions arise during the review of the project.

Comments regarding the project from all the departments having review responsibilities are returned to the Department of Community Development, comments are then compiled and a comprehensive report is prepared detailing the project and any administrative questions or concerns. This report and its associated exhibits (i.e., aerial photograph, zoning map, tax map and applicant supplied exhibits) are delivered to the Planning Commission members approximately one week prior to the Commission meeting. A copy of the staff report is sent to the applicant; additional copies can be mailed or faxed to the applicant's engineer or architect upon request.

At the Planning Commission meeting, the applicant (or his/her representative) should be prepared to make a brief presentation and answer questions that the Commission may have. The Commission may: approve a site development plan, approve the plan with stipulations or conditions, "table" the plan if they have additional questions or deny the application. Approval of a final site development plan expires twelve (12) months from the date of Planning Commission approval, unless a building permit has been obtained. The Commission, upon written request, may grant a single six-month extension by the applicant.

## **VI. CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS: WHAT THEY ARE AND WHEN THEY ARE NEEDED**

For some "uses", a conditional use permit (CUP) may also be required. A "conditional use" is a use not permitted as a matter of right, but may be permitted by the Planning Commission if it determines the use to be compatible with existing uses. A listing of conditionally permitted uses can be found in the zoning code (specifically Chapter 150.7). Such uses will include, but are not limited to: auto-related uses, drive-up windows, gasoline stations, pet shops, game rooms, and bars and lounges. A CUP application may be filed with the preliminary site development plan, and can be obtained from the Department of Community Development. At the time the application and fee is submitted; a notice sign is given to the applicant which must be posted on the property a minimum of five (5) days before the Planning Commission meeting. The City will notify adjacent property owners prior to the Planning Commission



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meeting, and they are invited to indicate their support or opposition to a project. A public hearing on the project will be held at the beginning of the Planning Commission meeting. If the CUP is approved by the Planning Commission, City Council has fifteen (15) days in which two or more members may request the CUP be reheard. Once the CUP is approved by City Council, no further action will be necessary. If fifteen (15) days pass and City Council takes no action on the Planning Commission's approval, it will stand as approved. Please note that the approval of the CUP does not constitute preliminary or final site plan approval.

**VII. FEES**

All submissions for site plan review must be accompanied by a check for \$50 plus \$10/acre payable to the City of Mentor. Applications for a conditional use permit (CUP) require a \$75 fee.