

# Town of Londonderry, New Hampshire

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Planning – Zoning – Economic Development – Conservation

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Planning Board

**FROM:** Kellie Caron, Deputy Town Manager & Director of Economic Development

**DATE:** October 8, 2025

**RE:** Summary of Amendments – LZO Section 5.2 Planned Unit Development (PUD)

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### **Background**

On **July 7, 2025**, the Town Council adopted the following motion:

#### **Motion 2: Direct Town Manager to Draft Amendments**

*I move that the Town Council direct the Town Manager to prepare draft amendments to the Planned Unit Development ordinance and proceed in accordance with the process outlined in Section 8.6 of the Londonderry Zoning Ordinance. The proposed amendments should address the following: Clarify the purpose and objectives of the ordinance to support housing diversity, infrastructure efficiency, and environmental protection; Amend the review process to include enhanced public participation through multiple public meetings and hearings; Establish clear, measurable development standards for open space, affordable housing, mixed-use development, and environmental protections; and Strengthen the criteria and justification required for any modifications or waivers to ordinance standards.*

Pursuant to this directive, staff conducted a comprehensive review of Section 5.2 (Planned Unit Development) using **APA (American Planning Association) guidance, New Hampshire statutory authority (RSA 674:21), and ordinances from peer New Hampshire municipalities.** The attached amended draft reflects both the Council's directive and contemporary best practices in land use regulation.

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## **Summary of Changes**

The amended ordinance includes the following substantive updates:

### **1. Purpose & Objectives (Sec. 5.2.2)**

- Clarifies PUD objectives consistent with the Council's July 2025 motion.
- Expands focus on **housing diversity, mixed-use opportunities, infrastructure efficiency, environmental protection, and economic vitality.**

### **2. Definitions (Sec. 5.2.3)**

- Revised to align with APA and NH community standards.
- Clarifies key terms including **Planned Unit Development, Density Bonus, and Open Space.**

### **3. Administration & Review Process (Sec. 5.2.4)**

- Incorporates **pre-application consultations, conceptual Planning Board discussions, and community input sessions.**
- Requires structured public hearings and written findings.
- Implements Council directive for **enhanced public participation.**

### **4. PUD Master Plan & Submission Requirements (Secs. 5.2.5 & 5.2.9)**

- Requires comprehensive **Master Plan submission** supported by a **checklist adopted by the Planning Board.**
- Establishes measurable standards for **land use, density, open space, housing, and environmental protections.**

### **5. Eligibility & Permitted Uses (Secs. 5.2.6 & 5.2.7)**

- Establishes tract size thresholds
- Clarifies permitted/prohibited uses and expressly support **mixed-use development** where appropriate.

### **6. Standards of Development (Sec. 5.2.8)**

- Introduces a **Density Bonus Framework** (up to 25% above baseline) linked to community benefits: affordable housing, open space preservation, sustainable design, public amenities, and mixed-use integration.
- Adds measurable criteria for building height, parking, setbacks, and buffers.
- Requires covenants and easements to be recorded with municipal enforcement provisions.

## 7. **Planning Board Review Criteria (Sec. 5.2.8)**

- Expands evaluation to include fiscal impacts, infrastructure adequacy, preservation of natural and cultural resources, and public benefits.
- Strengthens standards for **harmonious mix of uses** and **sustainable design**.

## 8. **Interpretation, Application, and Fees (Secs. 5.2.10–5.2.12)**

- Clarifies the **PUD Master Plan as the controlling document**.
- Establishes fee-setting authority under the **Town Council Land Use Fee Schedule**.

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### **References Used**

- **Town Council Motion 2, July 2025** – directing amendments to Section 5.2.
- **APA Planning Advisory Service Reports:**
  - PAS Report 545, *The Principles of Planned Unit Development* (APA, 2006).
  - PAS Report 556, *Innovative Tools for Zoning and Subdivision* (APA, 2007).
  - PAS QuickNotes No. 12, *Planned Unit Developments*.
- **New Hampshire Statutes:**
  - RSA 674:21, *Innovative Land Use Controls*.
  - RSA 676:4, *Planning Board Procedures on Subdivision and Site Plans*.
  - RSA 677:15, *Appeals of Planning Board Decisions*.
- **Municipal Ordinances Reviewed:** Amherst, Bedford, Durham, Exeter, NH.

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### **Conclusion & Next Steps**

The revised Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance implements the Town Council's July 2025 directive, incorporates APA best practices, and strengthens Londonderry's regulatory framework for innovative, mixed-use, and sustainable development.

The Planning Board's task is to review the draft, provide feedback, and participate in work sessions to refine the language prior to public hearing and Town Council consideration.

## **Tentative Timeline**

### **Planning Board (PB)**

- October 8, 2025 – Introduction & Work Session: Presentation of initial amendments; Board discussion and feedback.
- November 12, 2025 – Work Session: Incorporation of revisions based on October session; further refinement.
- December 2025 (Date TBD) – Public Hearing: Formal public hearing on the proposed amendments, consistent with the Londonderry Zoning Ordinance.

### **Town Council (TC)**

- January 5, 2026 – First Reading: Council consideration of Planning Board recommendations following work sessions and hearing.
- January 19, 2026 – Public Hearing & Adoption: Final Council review and vote on ordinance amendments.