An Introduction to the Facilities Planning Process: Area Development Plans

An Online Continuing Education Course for Engineers

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An Introduction to the Facilities Planning Process: Area Development Plans

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1. INTRODUCTION

This course provides an introduction to the Area Development Planning (ADP) process that is commonly used in developing new project sites. The planning procedures described are a guide that can be modified to suit specific project requirements. They provide a logical process intended to lead to a successful end result.

1.1 Land Use Planning: The Big Picture. Nomenclature varies from jurisdiction-to-jurisdiction, but the overall land use planning process can be thought of as having three principal phases:

- *Master Planning*
- *Area Development Planning*
- *Site Planning*

A *Master Plan* typically encompasses a major jurisdiction such as a city, town or large urban district. An *Area Development Plan* typically encompasses a sub-region of a *Master Plan* such as a large residential, commercial or industrial development. A *Site Plan* typically encompasses a sub-region of an *Area Development Plan*, such as a shopping or mixed-use complex. This course is about the process typically used to produce an *Area Development Plan.* This course is intended to give a picture of a generic process that can serve as a guide in developing a project-specific plan.

1.2 Area Development Plan. The ADP is facility planning at the small area or sub-area level which falls between master planning for an entire development and site planning for individual buildings. Figures 1 through 4 illustrate the four levels of planning resolution usually employed. The ADP process includes the phases:

- *Identification*
- *Evaluation*
- *Implementation*

Identification includes defining the goals and objectives, verifying the program requirements, developing functional relationships, defining spatial relationships, providing an inventory of the area and accomplishing a site visit. *Evaluation* includes the development of a site analysis that graphically shows the developmental opportunities and constraints for the area. Alternative conceptual plans are developed for evaluation and a determination of a final area development plan is accomplished. *Implementation* consists of the financial, functional and logistical steps needed to accomplish the development activity.

1.3 Design Team. The ADP and site planning processes should be the responsibility of an interdisciplinary team of design professionals. This multi-professional approach to the planning process helps assure that all aspects of the man-made and natural characteristics of the area being planned are properly and thoroughly considered. Plans are prepared to provide a comprehensive solution to the program requirements

addressing environmental assessment of actions, design quality, and

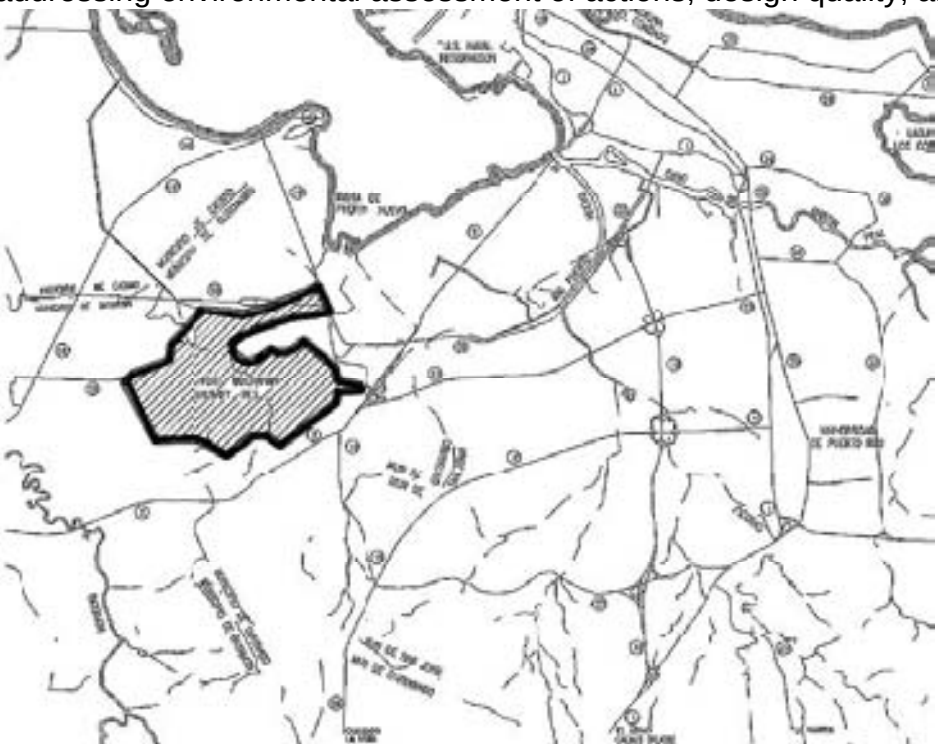

Figure 1
Vicinity Scale

Figure 2

Development Scale

Figure 3
Area Scale

Figure 4

Project Scale

The interdisciplinary team should be identified at the beginning of the planning process so that its expertise can be applied from the outset. The membership of the team and the team leader will be determined by the functional requirements of the project. There are typically four major components of a planning and design team: landscape architecture, land planning, civil engineering, and architecture. The landscape architect may take the lead role because of the expertise required in area and site planning. Other professionals such as mechanical and electrical engineers, hydrologists, geologists, and historic preservationists may be included in the process as warranted by specific conditions. Intended ld also be involved throughout the pr he plan.