

Fact sheet for planning levels

Planning level		Type of plan		
Local level (on the scale of a zone)		Zonal Urban Plan – Bucharest, Sector 2		
		Legislature	Executive	Judiciary
Municipal level	Municipality/ Town/ Commune	Local Council (Consiliul Local)	Mayor (Primar)	Local Tribunals/First Instance Courts (Tribunal/ Judecătorie)+ Prosecutor's Office (Parchetul de pe lângă judecătorie)
Sub-state level	County (Judet)	County Council (Consiliul Judeţean)	President of the County Council (Preşedintele Consiliului Judeţean)	County Tribunals (Tribunalul Judeţean)+ Prosecutor's Office Attached to the Court
State level	State (Stat)	State Parliament = Chamber of Deputies + Senate (Parlament = Camera Deputaţilor + Senat)	Government = Prime Minister + Ministers (Guvern = Prim-ministru + Ministere)	Courts of Appeal (Curtea de Apel) High Court of Cassation and Justice (Inalta Curte de Casaţie şi Justiţie) + Prosecutor's Office of the High Court (Parchetul de pe lângă Inalta Curte de Casaţie şi Justiţie)



Source: Bucharest City Hall (2020): Bucharest Sector 2 Zonal Urban Plan. Available at: <http://urbanism.pmb.ro/duat-su/dezbatere%20publica/puz%20-%20sector%202/plan.pdf> (13 January 2023)

Facts

Legal basis

- Law no. 350/2001 on Spatial Planning and Urbanism
- Ordinance no. 233/2016 of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration on the approval of the implementation methods and norms of Law no. 350/2001
- Governmental Decree no. 525/1995 on the endorsement of the General Urbanism Regulations
- the Romanian Civil Code
- The relevant sectoral laws, ordinances and standards (land, buildings, cadastre, environment, public health, etc.)
- Guiding documents for the elaboration of urban plans: Ordinance no. 176/N/16.08.2000 of the Ministry of Public Works and Territorial Management on the approval of the guidance on the elaboration, methodology and content of the Zonal Urban Plan; Ordinance no. 21/N/10.04.2000 of the Ministry of Public Works and Territorial Management on the approval of the guidance on the elaboration and approval of the Local Urbanism Regulations.

Competences

The Local/General Council is responsible for urban planning at the local level and ensures compliance with the upper-level spatial planning and urbanism documents and plans. The Local/General Council approves the Zonal Urban Plan (*Plan Urbanistic Zonal*) and its Local Urbanism Regulations (*Regulament Local de Urbanism*), which can then be enforced as a local planning law.

Elaborating and funding a Zonal Urban Plan is either the responsibility of the municipality, which puts the plan-making process out to public tender, or most often, it is the initiative of individuals or companies wishing to detail or even modify the provisions of the existing urban plans with the help of private architectural or urban planning offices and firms. In this last case, the elaboration of a Zonal Urban Plan is also conditioned by the prior issuing of an opportunity notice (*aviz de oportunitate*).

Binding force

The Local Urbanism Regulations text that is part of the Zonal Urban Plan can be enforced as a local planning law once approved.

Tasks and content

According to Law no. 350/2001, urban planning documents (urban plans) have a specific regulatory character and establish rules that apply directly to localities or parts of localities down to the level of cadastral plots/parcels, representing mandatory substantiation elements for issuing urbanism certificates (a document setting out the existing regulations for a specific plot).

Also, according to Law no. 350/2001, if an application for an urbanism certificate (*certificat de urbanism*) refers to changes that do not comply with the provisions of the approved urban planning documents, or if the site-specific conditions or the nature of the investment objectives impose it, the local administration has the right to condition the issuing of a building permit (*autorizație de construi*) on the elaboration and approval of a Zonal Urban Plan based on a prior opportunity notice¹ (*aviz de oportunitate*), or directly on the approval of a Zonal Urban Plan.

If the opportunity notice is approved, a new Zonal Urban Plan may be elaborated.

The Zonal Urban Plan is an urban planning instrument which specifically regulates and coordinates the integrated urban development of particularly complex areas of the locality or those with a certain urban dynamic. It ensures also

¹ The opportunity notice was introduced from 2009 as a preliminary procedure prior to the elaboration of a Zonal Urban Plan and must be submitted for approval in order to determine the pertinence of modifying the provisions of the existing urban planning documents through a new Zonal Urban Plan.

The content of the opportunity notice document was regulated as a simplified Zonal Urban Plan; therefore, it consists of a written part (a technical brief) and a graphical part (specifying the area which is the focus of the Zonal Urban Plan, the main zoning and the mandatory urban planning indicators, how accessibility is to be ensured, the necessary public facilities, the utilities network, parking and transport capacities).

the correlation of the integrated urban development programmes designed for a specific area with the provisions of the General Urban Plan (PUG).

The Zonal Urban Plan (PUZ) regulates the land-use in the main functional areas of the city (historical centre, industrial zones, recreational zones, residential zones, etc.) or at least at the scale of a group of plots/parcels and sometimes even large and complex plots. Similarly to the General Urban Plan, it has Local Urbanism Regulations attached. The Zonal Urban Plan can modify to a certain extent² some of the provisions of the General Urban Plan. On occasion, notwithstanding the provisions of the General Urban Plan, some particularly complex areas will need to be regulated in detail by future Zonal Urban Plans.

The Zonal Urban Plan regulates the type of street front (continuous or discontinuous), the functional area, the maximum building height, the floor space index, the ground space index (or the building coverage ratio), the building set-backs in relation to the side and rear limits of the plot, and the set-back distances in relation to the street front. It consists of a written part (the technical brief and the Local Urbanism Regulations that detail the provisions of the Zonal Urban Plan) and several plans (the spatial/urban context and the relationship to the approved urban planning documents; a detailed assessment; the urban planning regulations – general zoning and provision of the public utilities network; the land ownership and the property transfers).

Depending on the complexity of the area to be regulated, several different notices/permits (*avize*) might be necessary, mainly issued by the public utilities, the municipal transport and traffic authority, the Ministry of Culture and subordinate bodies, etc. Also, if the complexity of the area requires it, substantiation studies (analytical, consultative or prospective) might be necessary, similar to the elaboration of the General Urban Plan.

A specific type of Zonal Urban Plan is dedicated to protected built-up areas, following a more complex methodology for its elaboration.

Process, duration, participation

In the case of a Zonal Urban Plan initiated and financed by the state or by the municipality (usually for central areas, protected areas, buffer zones related to monuments, or the provision of public facilities), a public bid is organised, in which private firms and offices submit an application. Most often, however, individuals or private firms initiate the elaboration of the Zonal Urban Plan with the help of private offices or firms.

Usually, the whole process takes several months, from the initiation and elaboration of the plan to submitting it for approval and ultimately its endorsement.

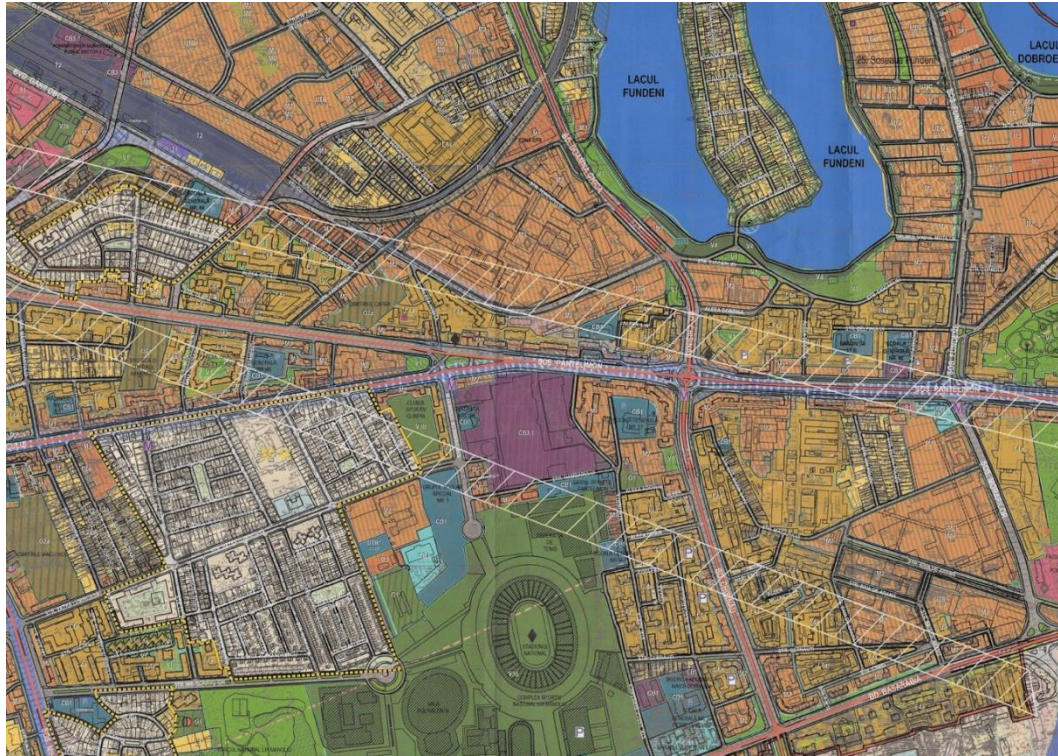
According to Law. no 350/2001 on Spatial Planning and Urbanism, public participation (information and consultation activities) is compulsory in spatial planning and urbanism activities, therefore the public must be involved in all phases of the decision-making process, starting with the intention of elaborating the documentation.

Duration of validity

The duration of validity of a Zonal Urban Plan is decided during its approval by the Local Council.

² According to Law no. 350/2001, a Zonal Urban Plan may modify the prescriptions of the General Urban Plan provided the value of the regulated floor space index is not increased by more than 20%. However, some exceptions for increasing the existing floor space index are allowed in the case of Zonal Urban Plans for future industrial parks, science and technology parks, areas for supermarkets, hypermarkets, retail parks, etc.

Details of the plan



Source: Bucharest City Hall (2020): Bucharest Sector 2 Zonal Urban Plan. Available at: <http://urbanism.pmb.ro/duat-su/dezbatere%20publica/puz%20-%20sector%202/plan.pdf> (13 January 2023)

Characteristics

Localisation of the area

The image above is a detail of Sector³ 2 of Bucharest. Though the city as a whole is regulated by the General Urban Plan, for several reasons each sector opted to elaborate its own Zonal Urban Plan, which is broadly similar to the General Urban Plan in terms of scale and complexity. However, the most common Zonal Urban Plans regulate smaller areas, down to the scale of several plots.

In the image above, the area within the black dotted line is a former industrial area (*Platforma Antefrig*) proposed to be converted into a mixed-use area with an increased density and several high-rise buildings.

The provisions of Bucharest's General Urban Plan (elaborated in 2000) preserved the existing industrial activities in the area, while the Zonal Urban Plan of Sector 2, elaborated in 2020, followed a different scenario.

Particularities of the procedure and/or contents

Like the regulations the General Urban Plan, the zoning plan details the main functional areas (marked in different conventional colours) of the city, allowing areas with a certain degree of homogeneity to be identified. Such homogeneous areas, called territorial reference units (*Unități Teritoriale de Referință - UTR*), become areas with similar provisions, which define the main building characteristics that any future building or planning permit will have to take into account.

Any building permit issued by the local administration certifies that the submitted project complies with the provisions of the approved Zonal Urban Plan.

³ For administrative purposes, the city of Bucharest is divided into six 'sectors', similar to the French *arrondissements*. In terms of administrative organisation, every sector has its own city hall, while the city of Bucharest is administered by the General City Hall.

Notes and links

Bucharest City Hall (2020): Bucharest Sector 2 Zonal Urban Plan. Available at:
<http://urbanism.pmb.ro/duat-su/dezbatere%20publica/puz%20-%20sector%202/plan.pdf>

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