WHAT SHOULD A PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN INCLUDE?

See the components in Figure 2 below.

Hillside Development Zone

Frequently asked questions about

Hillside Development Zones
WHAT IS the HDZ?
HDZ is an acronym for Hillside Development Zone. The HDZ is an overlay zone adopted by the City that is added to the existing zoning of a property. The mountainous areas surrounding Tucson exhibit steep slopes which may contain unstable rock and soils. Since development in these areas can be hazardous to life and property, construction methods which ensure slope stabilization and minimize soil erosion should be used.

Tucson’s mountains and foothills are valuable scenic resources which should be preserved. Dominant peaks and ridges should be protected in order to preserve the city’s unique visual setting, promote its economic well-being, and encourage tourism. Regulating the intensity of development according to the natural characteristics of hillside terrain, such as degree of slope, significant vegetation and landforms, soil stability, and existing drainage patterns, will allow for development in hillside areas while minimizing the physical impacts of such development.

The HDZ identifies these areas and provides development criteria that will maintain and enhance the scenic beauty of our city. Specifics about the HDZ process can be located in section 2.8.1 of the Tucson Land Use Code.

WHERE DO I BEGIN?
The HDZ process begins by arranging a meeting with staff to discuss your project. A preliminary plan will be very useful at this time. Staff will provide you with an application form and appropriate checklist (figure 1) that will help you complete the application. Once you have a complete package, including the site plan, landscape plan, elevations and fees, the application will be accepted.

Figure 1

THE HDZ CHECKLIST

- APPLICATION FORM
  Completed including owner and applicant signatures
- ONE COPY OF THE SITE PLAN, LANDSCAPE PLAN, AND ELEVATION PLAN to be reviewed in conjunction with development proposal
- ONE COPY OF THE OWNERSHIP PRINTOUT From the Pima County Assessor’s Office indicating property ownership
- ONE COPY OF THE ASSESSOR’S MAP From the Pima County Assessor’s Office indicating the configuration of the property
- FILING FEE

SHOULD I MEET WITH MY NEIGHBORS?
While not required, past experience has shown it very beneficial to understand and incorporate neighborhood concerns prior to completion of project design. A preliminary development plan is important at this time.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I DO?
Before proceeding too far into the HDZ process, you should contact Development Services and review the building and fire codes applicable to your project. You should also contact the City Engineer’s Office and Floodplain Engineering to check on floodplain and drainage issues that may affect your project. Both agencies are located in the Development Services Center building at 201 N. Stone Avenue (figure 3).

MAY I DRAW THE PLAN MYSELF OR DO I NEED TO HIRE A PROFESSIONAL?
You may draw the plans yourself and represent yourself during the HDZ process; however, more complex cases may require professional assistance for plan preparation and/or permits. Topographic maps and grading plans need to be professionally prepared.

WHAT DO I DO AFTER THE HDZ REVIEW IS COMPLETED?
The HDZ approval is valid only for the specific development as submitted. You must obtain building permits that reflect the conditions of the HDZ approval. Two copies of the HDZ plan will be stamped and signed by the planner. These are to be obtained by the applicant and included in the building permit submittal to Development Services. Permits cannot be obtained without the signed HDZ plans.

ARE THERE FEES INVOLVED?
There are no fees specifically for the HDZ review.