

Urban Redevelopment Strategies
(Fridays 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., Remote)
Instructors: Brad Segal and Marilee Utter

Spring 2021 Course Overview (DRAFT 10/09/20)

With instructors bringing more than 60 years of combined experience in the urban economic development field, this class features experiential learning showcasing Denver as a working laboratory for best practices and case studies. We will explore a variety of influences that guide the success and failure of real estate development projects, including market considerations, political realities, financing tools and public/private partnerships. Understanding the business of development will be a focus in this class because the private sector ultimately leads the way in implementing plans and designs. Topics to be explored include:

- An understanding of real estate development principles and economic development finance tools for projects, infrastructure and commercial districts
- The local, regional and national political influences that shape projects and districts
- The physical site constraints and opportunities that shape projects and districts
- The importance of leveraging resources and creating viable public/private partnerships
- The role of private developers, planners and economic development professionals in guiding projects and districts to success and/or failure

Classes will include interactive guest panels and periodic site tours. Readings will be topical and often include case studies from current projects and events. Students will be evaluated on a combination of class participation, critical thinking and projects.

The instructors are seasoned practitioners and consultants in the real estate and economic development fields and principals of firms with national reach, including Progressive Urban Management Associates Inc. and Citiventure Associates LLC. Information on the firms and principals are available at www.pumaworldhq.com and www.citiventure.com.

MURP Curriculum: This course is designed to address the MURP curriculum in several areas, including:

- *General knowledge of planning:* Economic development is an established emphasis within the planning profession, perhaps growing in importance in a changing economy. Fundamentals of real estate development and basic principles and best practices for economic development will be explored.
- *Planning skills:* The class will tap all of the basic skills required in planning and apply them to the economic development context. Class projects will challenge student's capabilities in research, written and oral communications, and critical analysis of projects and policies. We will utilize existing plans and policies to evaluate the pros and cons of economic development projects. We will focus on the realities of economic development policy-making by examining a variety of organizations, including governments, private organizations and public/private partnerships.
- *Values and ethics:* Economic development decisions, particularly in the use of incentives, require trade-offs that demand an understanding of civic values and the ethical implications of how

decisions relating to public resources are made. We will explore winners and losers in economic development decisions, and, using recent case studies, critique social equity issues and implications.

Assignments and Assessments

- **Mid-Term Paper & Presentation:** Students will submit a maximum 3-page paper exploring a topical development project that is currently being considered on the agenda of a local public authority (i.e. planning commission, redevelopment authority or city council), including attending a public hearing where the merits of the project are being debated. With assistance, the student will identify a public meeting with a (hopefully controversial) real estate development project being presented.

The paper will address the following:

- ✓ Brief description of the project;
- ✓ Identify redevelopment and financial tools being used to advance the project;
- ✓ Describe and quantify benefits being realized to the developer and community by the project;
- ✓ Identify any obstacles or challenges to the project;
- ✓ Offer brief impressions of the public meeting attended, including the role of developers, planners and other participants; and
- ✓ Drawing upon class presentations and discussions, offer your own ideas/recommendations on use of the redevelopment tools, and how to advance the project.

A 5-minute class presentation will present key observations within the paper. Both the paper and the presentation should dedicate roughly one third to project description, meeting description, and the student's thoughts and opinions. Students will be evaluated based on their professional communication skills of writing, public speaking and critical thinking.

(Total 20% of final grade – 15% paper/5% presentation)

- ✓ *Select project and identify public meeting – due by February 12*
- ✓ *Presentations and papers due March 13*

- **Term Project, Paper and Presentation:** The final term project will require students in groups of two to “adopt” a metro Denver redevelopment project or a commercial district that is utilizing many of the financing and organizational concepts that are explored in the class. If a redevelopment project, it must be site-specific and in the conceptual and/or pre-development phase (not yet built or under construction.) If a commercial district, it should have an existing organization guiding its development. Interviews with project principals such as city planners, private sector developers and designers will be involved and important to project understanding. Each group will undertake an investigation of the project or district and demonstrate a complete understanding of the following project characteristics:

- 1) goals and objectives for the project (or district), development team and community;
- 2) develop a profile for the project (or district), development team and community;
- 3) interview key players (minimum of three) in the project or district, including developers, district managers and public official(s),
- 4) describe and demonstrate an understanding of the financing structure for the project or district,
- 5) evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the financial structure and tools employed given the objective of the project,

- 6) make team recommendations for both the developer (or district manager) and community on how to best implement the project (or improve the district), including design, development approach, financing, community relations and project management issues.

A final paper (up to 10 pages narrative plus up to 5 pages of exhibits) and maximum 10-minute presentation to the class will be submitted. (50% of final grade – 40% paper/10% presentation.) Both the paper and the presentation should be organized in thirds to include project description, project financing tools and pro forma, student evaluation and recommendations for the proposed project. Students will be evaluated based on their professional communication skills of writing and public speaking as well as understanding of the development issues, financing tools and application of planning principles.

- ✓ *Select project and submit written one-page outline of approach by February 19*
- ✓ *Submit project status report, one-page outline by March 19*
- ✓ *Presentations and papers due April 30*

- **Attendance & Participation/Weekly Discussion Points:** Worth 30% of final grade. 15% attendance and class discussion participation and 15% bringing up to three brief written discussion points to each class based upon the week’s reading and/or immersion assignments (“*evidence of thought*”).

Notes on Attendance, Participation & Preparation: There are three components to your attendance and participation grade:

- First, given the experiential nature of the class, attendance is mandatory unless excused for religious holiday, personal health issue or emergency. If you plan to miss class, make sure to notify Brad or Marilee beforehand. Each unexcused class will incur a 2% deduction from your final grade.
- Second, participation is a fundamental part of your experience in this class. Participation does not just mean “showing up”, nor does it mean responding to each and every question posed. It means actively involving yourself in the discussion by showing up on time, completing all readings before class, actively listening to who is speaking, asking pertinent and pointed questions, offering opinions respectfully, respecting all other viewpoints and otherwise being “deeply present” in class.
- Third, many of the classes will include presentations from seasoned professionals. It is a matter of basic respect to be prepared for these guests and their topics. Therefore, to demonstrate that you are prepared, we are requiring that students come to each class with up to three discussion points on the week’s topic and readings (i.e. “*evidence of thought*”).

Draft Course Outline 10/09/20

	Topic	Guests: Proposed	Reading
Jan 22	Introductions/ Intro to Redevelopment	None	Metropolitan Revolution PUMA Global Trends Pandemic Update
Jan 29	Real Estate Development Fundamentals: Part 1	Kim Koehn	Marilee’s “Acid Test” APA Pro Forma article
Feb 5	Real Estate Development Finance: Part 2	Mark Tompkins	TBD
Feb 12	Special Districts: When, Where and How	Anna Jones, CLA Tom George, Spencer Fane	APA Planning with Improvement Districts;

Feb 19	Fundamentals of Urban Renewal and TIF	Cameron Bertron, EnviroFinance Group Tracy Huggins, DURA	DURA website; Citizen's Guide to Urban Renewal
Feb 26	Fundamentals/Innovation in Community Outreach	Anne Kuchenmeister, Michael Baker International Bree Davies, P.U.M.A.	Article in Truthout
Mar 5	Public/Private Partnerships	Gretchen Hollrah, City of Denver	ULI P3 articles
Mar 12	Midterm Presentations & Papers Due		
Mar 19	Project Case Study: Adaptive Reuse	Joe Vostrejs, City Street Charlie Woolley, St. Charles	TBD
Apr 2	Project Case Study: Englewood TOD	Dan Poremba and SKB/Tryba Team	TBD
Apr 9	Project Case Study: East Colfax N'Hood	Irene Aguilar, City of Denver Brendan Greene, ECCC	TBD
Apr 16	Project Case Study: Urban Land Conservancy	Aaron Mirapol, ULC	TBD
Apr 23	Project Case Study: Affordable Housing	Kimball Crangle, Gorman	TBD
Apr 30	Final Project Presentations & Paper Due		
May 7	Course Evaluation and Feast		

Other Notes (from the Department...)

Absences, Tardiness and Homework: Except for documented health, religious, family or emergency reasons, we will not accept excuses for absences, tardiness or papers not submitted. Unexcused absence incurs loss of two percentage points, and tardiness counts for half of an absence.

Plagiarism: Students are expected to know, understand and comply with the ethical standards of the university, including rules against plagiarism. Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas or words without acknowledgement. The following are considered to be forms of plagiarism when source is not noted:

- ✓ Word-for-word copying of another person's ideas or words
- ✓ The "mosaic" (i.e. interspersing your own words here and there while, in essence, copying another's work)
- ✓ The paraphrase (i.e. the rewriting of another's work, while still using their basic ideas or theories)
- ✓ Fabrication (i.e. inventing sources)
- ✓ Submission of another's work as your own
- ✓ Neglecting quotation marks when including direct quotes

Please visit the UC Denver Writing Center for assistance on plagiarism and on general writing help.

Communication: Unless otherwise noted, we will contact you via Canvas. In addition, syllabi and readings will be posted on Canvas. Since Canvas uses your official school email address (ending with email.ucdenver.edu), please make sure you check this address regularly or have it forwarded to your personal email account.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who want academic accommodations must register with the Disability Resources and Services (DRS) at UC Denver. Once a student has been registered with DRS, DRS will review the documentation and assess the student's request for academic accommodations in light of the documentation. DRS will then provide the student with a letter indicating which academic accommodations have been approved. Once you provide us with a copy of DRS's letter, we will provide any accommodations that DRS has approved.

Office Hours: We don't offer set office hours, but will gladly make ourselves available by e-mail or appointment. Often, best times to meet with us are before or after Friday classes.