INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

ISO 37108

First edition
2022-09

Sustainable cities and communities — Business districts — Guidance for practical local implementation of ISO 37101

Villes et communautés territoriales durables — Quartiers d'affaires — Recommandations pour la mise en œuvre pratique de l'ISO 37101 au plan local

Reference number
ISO 37108:2022(E)

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Published in Switzerland

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Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 268 *Sustainable cities and communities*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) committed to adopting 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) addressing a broad range of development issues. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved by 2030. However, UN SDG 11b specifies that by 2020 cities should embark on integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and resilience to disaster. Achieving these goals requires coordinated work by governments, the private sector, civil society and citizens.

Local governments play a key organizing role in building a more sustainable and desirable collective future. The SDGs can be seen as challenges but offer an opportunity for cities to find a new way to develop, minimizing their impact on the environment. As a Management System Standard (MSS), ISO 37101 represents a tool for achieving these goals by proposing a holistic approach to address the related challenges and is therefore consistent with this idea.

To enhance their economic dynamism, each country and metropolis concentrates headquarters, research and development (R&D), hotels and services in large business districts, flagships of their excellence. Even if these districts often include residential neighbourhoods, natural spaces and cultural amenities, they present singular characteristics regarding sustainable development. ISO 37101 provides a general framework for the cities as a whole. ISO 37104 offers practical guidance to all types of cities and other settlements on initiating, planning, implementing, measuring and managing sustainable development activities in a way that is holistic, inclusive and based on sustainability principles. The purpose of this document is to implement ISO 37101 and to provide guidance to business districts as specific urban districts (see 4.1). This document can assist local governments and all relevant interested parties in integrating a more sustainable holistic approach at all steps of the lifecycle of the business district: planning, design, construction, maintenance, operations, and renovation.

Establishing and implementing a sustainable development strategy has a number of benefits for a business district, at the local and national or international levels, such as:

— to design and improve both the built environment and unbuilt areas, by promoting better use of resources, enhancing levels of reuse and recycling of existing resources when possible, optimizing mobility and accessibility and bolstering the business district's integration into the surrounding area;

— to encourage initiative and interaction between all interested parties;

— to promote economic development and job growth, including in the surrounding area;

— to improve working and living conditions;

— to balance short-term and long-term perspectives in setting priorities and decision-making processes;

— to ensure sound and balanced finances throughout the business district's lifecycle;

— to get a better return of investment for the future;

— to promote and encourage pooling of resources between similar activities in the business district and the surrounding area;

— to improve environmental performance;

— to create a distinct identity and cultivate a sense of belonging among interested parties;

— to increase satisfaction and productivity;

— to develop new opportunities for wealth creation;

— better adaptability to changing contexts.

— to apply sustainable energy use and communication technologies, especially water, waste, electric energy, ICT technologies.

It is based on ISO 37101 and on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model, which can be briefly described as follows:

— Plan: establish objectives and processes necessary to deliver a strategy for the sustainable development of business districts in accordance with city and community purposes;

— Do: implement processes and achieve objectives;

— Check: monitor and measure established processes against policy, objectives and commitments, and report the results;

— Act: take necessary actions to improve performance.

Figure 1 illustrates how this document follows a PDCA approach in the management of sustainable development in business districts.

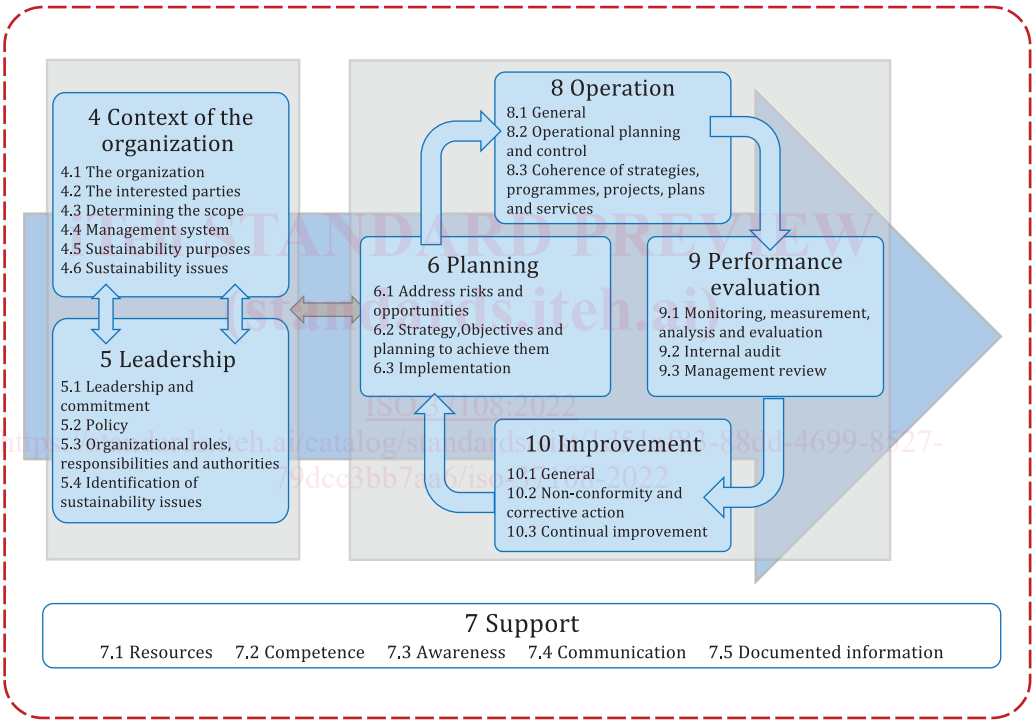

Figure 1 — Overview of the guidance contained in this document

NOTE Clauses 1 to 3 (Scope, Normative references and Terms and definitions) are not shown in the figure as they are clauses that contain information not specifically related to the technical or guidance part of the document.

Sustainable cities and communities — Business districts — Guidance for practical local implementation of ISO 37101

1 Scope

This document provides guidance on how to implement and maintain a management system for sustainable development in cities and communities according to ISO 37101 in the context of a business district.

This document defines the business district and presents the procedure to follow to establish and implement a sustainable development policy and continuous improvement initiative for the duration of the business district's lifecycle.

This document identifies the general principles of sustainable development management and how to apply them in a business district, within both new developments and in operations to upgrade and renovate existing ones. It relates to all interested parties and all stages of the business district lifecycle, including planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance and renovation.

This document is intended to serve as the basis for assessing and improving economic, social, environmental, infrastructure, and governance outcomes and to provide guidance for conducting comparative analyses for business districts.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 37101, *Sustainable development in communities — Management system for sustainable development — Requirements with guidance for use*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 37101 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
accessibility
ease of reaching and using a service or facility

Note 1 to entry: The requirements relating to accessibility depend on the needs of the *users* (3.10) and the activities carried out over the course of the lifecycle of the business district and its facilities.

Note 2 to entry: Accessibility includes barrier-free access to the business district and its facilities for users with reduced mobility.

Note 3 to entry: Accessibility includes the access to services and their availability, e.g. water supply, energy supply, waste management, public amenities, transportation, parking, healthcare and recreational facilities.

[SOURCE: ISO 11620:2014, 2.2, modified — Notes 1, 2, and 3 to entry have been added.]

3.2
business district
delimited area of a community with business services as the predominant economic activity

Note 1 to entry: A business district can combine working, living and social spaces, natural spaces, comprising constructed elements, public, semi-public as well as private areas and infrastructures, that contribute to its unity, resilience and user-friendliness, in which context, the semi-public areas are private areas opened to the public.

Note 2 to entry: A business district typically features high-density business activities and commercial space, requiring an efficient supply of municipal, transportation and public services, and having a *governing body* (3.6) with clear responsibility.

Note 3 to entry: Frequently business districts present large building density, high floor area ratio, dense population and the number of working population higher than that of residents, with significant incoming and outgoing flows of people and services

Note 4 to entry: For the purpose of the implementation of this document, the business district should have some form of governance.

3.3
business environment
environment of doing business
relevant external market factors and conditions involved in the process of entrance, production, operation and withdrawal of the entities doing business

Note 1 to entry: The quality of the environment of doing business contributes significantly to the overall attractiveness and economic dynamism of a business district.

3.4
facility
collection of assets which is constructed, installed or established to serve an entity's need

Note 1 to entry: A facility can be a part of a building, a whole building or a set of multiple buildings and can include adjoining engineered works (such as roads and alleys) which, considered as a whole, serve a specific function.

Note 2 to entry: The term refers to the physical elements and their use.

[SOURCE: ISO 6707-4:2021, 3.1.6, modified — Notes 1 and 2 to entry have been added.]

3.5
governance framework
strategies, policies, decision-making structures and accountabilities through which the organization's governance arrangements operate

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC TR 38502:2017, 3.1]

3.6
governing body
person or group of people who are accountable for the performance and conformance of the organization

Note 1 to entry: The governing body is part of the *governance framework* (3.5).

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 38500:2015, 2.9, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.7
business district organization
organization that is tasked with implementing the *business district's* (3.2) management system for sustainable development

3.8
social responsibility
responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour that:

— contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society;

— takes into account the expectations of stakeholders;

— is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour; and

— is integrated throughout the organization and practised in its relationships

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.18, modified — Notes 1 and 2 to entry have been deleted.]

3.9
sponge city
comprehensive approach adopted to integrate technical measures within urban planning and a construction process in order to effectively control urban rainfall runoff, through infiltration, stagnation, storage, purification, use and drainage

Note 1 to entry: The objective is to minimize the damage to the original natural hydrological characteristics and water ecological environment caused by urban development and construction activities, in order to enable cities to have good resilience in adapting to environmental changes and resisting natural disasters, i.e. cities behave like a "sponge". The aim is to realize natural accumulation, natural infiltration and natural purification during urban construction, to achieve multiple benefits of restoring urban water ecology, to conserve urban water resources, to improve urban water environment, to ensure urban water security and revive urban water culture.

Note 2 to entry: The following equivalent terms to "sponge city" are used:

In the USA: Low Impact Development (LID);

In Australia: Water Sustainable Urban Design (WSUD);

In the UK: Sustainable Drainage Systems;

In New Zealand: Low Impact Urban Design and Development (LIUDD);

In Germany: Water-sensitive urban development;

In France: Ecoquartier policy.

3.10
user
organization or person who uses or intends to use a building or built structure, *facility* (3.4) or service, public or semi-public spaces, within the business district

3.11
smart city
city that increases the pace at which it provides social, economic and environmental sustainability outcomes and responds to challenges such as climate change, rapid population growth, and political and economic instability by fundamentally improving how it engages society, applies collaborative leadership methods, works across disciplines and city systems, and uses data information and modern technologies to deliver better services and quality of life to those in the city (residents, businesses, visitors), now and for the foreseeable future, without unfair disadvantage of others or degradation of the natural environment

Note 1 to entry: A smart city also faces the challenge of respecting planetary boundaries and taking into account the limitations these boundaries impose.

Note 2 to entry: There are numerous definitions of a smart city; however, the definition that is used within TC 268 is the official one agreed to by the ISO Technical Management Board.

[SOURCE: ISO 37122:2019, 3.4]

3.12
resilient city
city able to prepare for, recover from and adapt to shocks and stresses

Note 1 to entry: A resilient city can resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of disasters and shocks in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of essential basic structures and services in a sustainable way, and through risk-management practices. It involves interested parties and especially citizens in disaster risk reduction through co-creation processes; reduces vulnerability and exposure to natural and human-made disasters; and increases its capacity to respond to disasters, shocks and other unforeseen chronic stresses through enhanced preparedness.

Note 2 to entry: A resilient city is still able to thrive regardless of the hazards, shocks and stresses it faces. It has a focus on lesson learning, continuous improvement and building back better after disasters.

[SOURCE: ISO 37123:2019, 3.7]

3.13
compliance obligations
requirements that an organization mandatorily has to comply with as well as those that an organization voluntarily chooses to comply with

[SOURCE: ISO 37301:2021, 3.25]

4 Context of the organization

4.1 Understanding the organization and its context

4.1.1 General

A business district is of significant importance to the economic attractiveness and job market of the municipality or region within which it is located. At the same time, a business district generates several negative side effects and impacts, such as an increase in energy and water consumption, waste production and traffic.

Business districts usually have a dedicated form of governance framework to carry out the management locally according to the specificities of the surrounding local government.

According to the context applicable to the business district and its administrative and management arrangements, any entity can be the organization identified and designated to initiate and implement a sustainable development management system for a business district. It can be a certain type or a combination of certain types of institutions including, e.g. the government administration of the business district, public authorities, development and construction companies.

Once the business district organization is defined, the governance framework should be put in place.

The business district undergoes a lifecycle that can be divided into the following main stages: planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance and renovation. All of these stages can be distinguished in terms of objectives, actors involved, fields of action dealt with and tools used. They can be of different duration and intensity depending on the business district. Key performance indicators (KPIs) for the different stages are shown in Annex A.

A management system for sustainable development in cities can be implemented in a business district at any stage of its lifecycle. For already existing business districts the management system can be implemented at the current stage. For planned new business districts it should be implemented as early as possible.

4.1.2 Business district characteristics

A business district is a type of urban development that meets some or all of the following criteria where applicable:

— density (floor area) of office buildings greater than other types of buildings;

— total office footprint area as the majority of the total land area;

— a group of buildings with surrounding public or semi-public space and infrastructure that can provide business activity space for enterprises in different categories of industries (e.g. service and entertainment industry) at the same time;

— on-site presence or programming of facilities and business services to support innovation and trade functions, e.g. business hotels and restaurants, business centres affiliated with a network, meeting rooms and conference centres, theme buildings offering a range of services;

— the majority of the people circulating and coming to the business district are related to commercial and business activities.

NOTE 1 Residents who are also employees in the business district are counted only as employees, in order to avoid redundancy.

NOTE 2 The items listed are illustrations only. Users of this document can make adjustments or propose different classifications according to the national context of each country.

A business district frequently includes certain functional areas of service facilities, e.g. offices, hotels and apartments, with provision of services such as finance, trade, consulting, R&D, Meetings, Incentives, Conferences/Conventions, Exhibitions/Expositions/Events (MICE).

A business district usually promotes benefits such as economic attractiveness, economic dynamism, job creation, innovation, efficient use of resources, facilitated mobility, and well-preserved heritage, among others.

Usually, a business district and its components are more dynamic than other parts of the city and therefore it goes through different phases of its lifecycle more quickly than other types of urban development.

Textbox: Types of business districts

— Business complex;

— Central business district;

— Cultural and creative business district;

— Financial business district;

— MICE;

— Science and technology business district.

4.1.3 Practical needs for achieving sustainable business districts

4.1.3.1 General

The practical needs defined in 4.1.3.2 to 4.1.3.8 represent the essence of a sustainable business district.

For consistency in achieving the SDGs, it is crucial for business districts to address these practical needs, either for new or existing ones.

NOTE Some examples are provided in Annex B as case studies to illustrate how business districts distinguish themselves by focusing on the practical needs when achieving sustainable development.

4.1.3.2 High quality services

Business districts should provide the users with access to high quality services, e.g. working environment, housing, healthcare and recreation. Such services promote the welfare of the users. The services provided in the business district should meet high-quality standards such as in the following areas:

— mixed-use development allowing for a social mix;

— economic activities of all types of companies;

— opportunity to take part in shaping the life and trajectory of the business district;

— fitness for purpose;

— planning for indoor and outdoor comfort (e.g. air quality);

— minimum or no noise pollution;

— safety, health and security;

— quality infrastructure to facilitate easy mobility and accessibility of the area and all the premises;

— availability of essential services, e.g. rapid response, health care, public and local government services;

— adequate parking;

— energy efficient consumption buildings;

— conservation and improvement of natural spaces and biodiversity;

— aesthetic values such as landscape and architectural features that consider the local heritage;

— stable and efficient energy provision;

— high performance telecommunication services.

High quality services are of vital importance. They enable and support attraction and retention of talent in a business district. A decent and secure environment should always be the focus in order to promote and retain attraction and talent retention.

The assets in the business district (buildings and outdoor space) should meet high standards. Therefore, high quality public and building property services should be provided.

Services provided by third parties are also of high importance and should also contribute to improving living and working conditions for employees and residents. A high-quality natural environment should be maintained, by avoiding environmental impacts where possible and making improvements where it is not possible.

4.1.3.3 Vitality

Business districts should be vibrant during the day and night, on both weekdays and on weekends. It is therefore important that business districts offer vital and diverse experiences for employees, visitors and residents.

Creating and improving local branding can promote or influence vitality of the business district. Holding big events (e.g. international forums, sporting events) or annual special activities are examples of initiatives that promote the vitality of business districts.

Also, vitality can be improved by adding commercial and other recreational facilities. This optimizes the living and working environment for all users and attracts talent and investors.

4.1.3.4 Industrial agglomeration

Industrial agglomerations are important economic drivers for business districts and should be encouraged. Moreover, they can attract businesses with similar interests along the supply chain to unite and cooperate in order to minimize the unnecessary running cost for each business hence increasing efficiency and sustainability.

When defining the industrial structure of a business district, targeting leading companies should be focused on. This can initiate a driving force for industrial agglomeration which can build an industrial chain hence inspiring or encouraging economic innovation.

4.1.3.5 Business environment

A friendly business environment in a business district is essential for organizations. Therefore, it is important to improve the business environment by optimizing the overall support in terms of good policies, promoting businesses through good but affordable local services and responding to their needs when required.

This business-friendly environment should include:

— facilitation to start new businesses and easy access to local permits when needed;

— easy access and use of infrastructures;

— flexibility in utilize and re-utilize spaces that addresses the dynamic nature of business districts;

— promotion and support of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);

— promotion of business activities that will attract new investments;

— promotion of business and creating synergies across the city/cities and region.

4.1.3.6 Smart city approach

State-of-the-art technologies and disruptive innovations require the existence and application of digital solutions. Therefore, the access to digital and smart infrastructures should be strengthened. In fact, a smart city approach with digital technologies is fundamental for sustainable development, which forms the basis of a modern business district.

The smart city approach represents a new trend of urban development which offers good opportunities to enhance the competitiveness and the sustainability of urban areas. The smart city approach should always be in support of the overarching goal of sustainable development. It depends not only on an adequate policy system, planning and construction implementation, but it also requires feedback and behaviour adjustment during the operational stage.

The smart city approach should allow for the use of digital technologies (e.g. blockchain platforms), plus monitoring and feedback collection via infrastructure, e.g. an interoperable smart city platform based on big data technologies. This includes fields such as urban ecology, energy use, transportation systems and operational management, as well as smart public services, e.g. governance, housing services, education and cultural services, health security systems, industrial service platforms.

4.1.3.7 Resilient city approach

In times of climate change and other disruptive events, a business district needs a high degree of resilience to face unexpected incidents.

This should be supported by pooling the competences and knowledge present in the business district as well as allowing for easy accessibility to outside services and help.