

What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan, or comprehensive land use plan, is a blueprint for the future. It is a comprehensive document, long-range in its view, that is intended to guide development for the next ten to twenty years. The Master Plan sets public policies regarding growth and development. The information and concepts presented in the Master Plan are intended to guide local decisions on public and private uses of land, as well as the provision of public facilities.



When a community reviews its master plan, the following five topics should be considered. Where significant changes have taken place or are anticipated, the master plan should be updated.

- **Evaluation of the Goals, Objectives and Policies:** What has been achieved? Have recent changes impacted these goals, objectives, or policies?
- **Data:** Is the base data current? How have economic conditions or development impacted the data?
- **Public Opinion / Political Current:** In what ways have public opinion or community philosophy changed since the previous plan?
- **Rezoning and Capital Improvements:** Are the zoning districts generally consistent with the future land use plan, and the timing of capital improvements discussed in the plan?
- **Local and Regional Changes:** Have there been any developments of concern in the community, or in nearby communities, that affect underlying principles, policies or land uses in particular areas?

Area Plans. Often certain parts of a community need special attention. These smaller areas within the community may provide an opportunity to accommodate growth, correct blighted conditions, or to fill a specific need in the community. In some cases, an area plan may address all of those issues. While area plans are still a general guide for action, they often provide a clearer concept for how an area should change over time. Often, these area plans can be used as a foundation for economic development strategies, showing property owners how the community wishes to guide change and address the vision of the master plan.



Master Plans
Recreation Plans
Downtown Plans



Parking Studies
Community Visioning
Zoning Ordinances



Place Making
Traffic Engineering
Transportation Plans



Access Management
Form-Based Codes
Expert Witness Services