

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

And why do we prepare one?

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A Master Plan is a blueprint for the future. It is a long range, comprehensive document, which is intended to guide growth development in a community or region for the next 10 to 20 years. The Master Plan sets public policies regarding growth and development. It includes analysis, recommendations, and proposals for the community's population, economy, housing, transportation, community facilities, and land use. The Master Plan is based on public input, surveys, planning initiatives, existing development, physical characteristics, and social and economic conditions. 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.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Master Plan process begins with an inventory and analysis of existing conditions, including a review of the area's regional setting, development history, and population characteristics. Upon completion of this analysis, the Planning Commission will host Community Visioning Meetings to gather public input. Goals and objectives will then be

formulated. Finally, the Planning Commission will develop a Future Land Use Plan for the region or community. Upon completion, a public hearing will be held as required by law.

MASTER PLAN VS. ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning is a regulatory mechanism for controlling the classification and regulation of land use. It is law. The Zoning Ordinance controls land uses based on today's conditions. Unlike the Zoning

Ordinance, the Master Plan is a set of policies, not a law. While the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map regulate land use today, the Master Plan is intended to guide land use decision-making over the long term (10 to 20 years). The Master Plan is a community's "vision" while the zoning ordinance contains the rules that govern the path to that vision. The Master Plan forms the basis upon which zoning decisions are made.



WHY DO WE PREPARE A MASTER PLAN?

Local Planning Commissions shall make and approve a master plan as a guide for development within the region or community. In addition, the zoning ordinance should be based upon a plan designed to promote and accomplish the following objectives:

- Encourage use of land in accordance with their character and adaptability.
- Conserve natural resources and energy.
- Meet the needs of residents for food, fiber, and other natural resources, places of residence, recreation, industry, trade, service, and other uses of land.
- Insure that uses of land be situated in appropriate locations and relationships.
- Avoid overcrowding of population and lessen congestion of transportation systems, and other public facilities.
- Facilitate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, water supply, recreation, education, and other public improvements.
- Promote public health, safety and general welfare.

Planning is an opportunity for residents and the broader community to work together to make a difference for generations to come.