Master Plans

What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan is a long-range policy guide that represents a comprehensive overview of the future growth of a community. It is intended to establish a framework for orderly, efficient, and planned development. A Master Plan should be imaginative in projecting what the community can be while realistic in recognizing what is possible.

Why a Community Should Prepare and Adopt a Master Plan

- Fulfill statutory requirements. The Township Planning Act of 1959 states that "the planning commission shall make and adopt a basic plan as a guide for the development of unincorporated portions of the township." Similar language is found in the Municipal Planning Act for cities and villages.

- Improve legal basis for zoning decisions. With a Master Plan in place, zoning decisions consistent with the plan are likely to be presumed valid in court, shifting the burden of proof to the plaintiff.

- Investigate needs, problems, and opportunities. Research into existing land uses, natural features, population, community facilities, and thoroughfares provides the documentation upon which to base land use decisions.

BIRCHLER ARROYO ASSOCIATES, INC.

Planning & Transportation Solutions
for Michigan Municipalities