

**CARLISLE MASTER PLAN**  
**FAQ SHEET (updated)**  
MPAC April 4, 2019

Carlisle seeks to develop a comprehensive long-range master plan that addresses both short-term needs and long-term goals for the town. The Master Plan, developed through a community process, will inform town policy, guide decision makers and inspire members of the community to participate in Carlisle's ongoing improvement as a sustainable community.

**Why do we need a master plan?**

- As the population ages, school enrollment declines, town costs rise, income and housing values stagnate and climate change looms, Carlisle **needs new ideas and bold leadership** to maintain our values and sustain our high quality of life. **The Master Plan will create a citizen's forum to discuss our financial, demographic, and physical challenges and opportunities with town-wide participation.**
- Every year, the BOS, FinCom, and School Committee tackle the difficult process of prioritizing the Town's needs and associated costs without a comprehensive and long-term perspective on future investments. **The Master Plan will create a road map (with targets & metrics) for the town to plan for expenditures over multiple years, prioritize future community needs and measure progress towards meeting these goals.**
- Carlisle's land, assets and financial resources are limited: embracing the interests of stakeholders and balancing priorities through a master plan process will build consensus and manage expectations. **An integrated planning approach that takes input and builds consensus among interested stakeholders will result in a comprehensive action plan that addresses both short-term needs and long-term goals.**

**Why we need to hire a Master Plan Consultant?**

It will be very difficult to undertake the year-long master planning process without a professional planning team because:

- Some of the issues that need to be addressed in Carlisle are highly contentious: we need an objective planning professional with expertise and credibility in order for us collectively to make decisions and overcome the obstacles we face. Town volunteers, no matter how highly respected and/or capable, will not be seen as impartial.
- The planning process will involve:
  - at least 1,100 hours of professional time
  - 4-6 professionals in fields ranging from urban planning, community engagement, sustainability, architecture, landscape architecture, transportation, ecology, civil engineering, economics, and urban design
  - 10-14 public meetings with the MPAC, town boards, and the community-at-large as well as several topic-oriented focus group meetings

The Master Plan Steering Committee and many Carlisle citizens have spent two years and over 1,500 volunteer hours to get us to this point. The MPSC and the MPAC will likely spend the same over the coming year to support the planning effort and ensure the success of this process.

## Master Plan Committees

- **The Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC)** is made up of 7 members and has the following responsibilities:
  - Develop master plan process, work plan, schedule and fee estimate
  - Manage RFP process for hiring and procuring a planning consultant
  - Coordinate and manage master plan process and planning consultant
  - Report to Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, and FinCom
- **The Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC)** is made up of 39 members and has the following responsibilities:
  - Participate in regular master plan meetings (every 2-3 months)
  - Provide input to MPSC and consultants on community interests and concerns
  - Act as a resource to community members on master plan content and process

## Master Plan Process

- Consultant-led master planning process anticipated to take 12 months, kicking off in September 2019 and wrapping up September 2020
- Planning process will have three phases:
  1. Data Gathering & Analysis
  2. Master Planning Alternatives & Ideas
  3. Implementation Strategy & Documentation
- In addition to regular meetings with the MPSC, the engagement strategy will include 4-5 meetings with the MPAC and key town boards as well as up to 4 community-wide public meetings.

## Master Plan Costs

- The **total budget** for the Master Plan including consultant fees and ancillary Town costs is **\$160,000**.
- The budget for hiring a **Master Plan Consultant is \$135,000** including consultant expenses. This number was determined by the MPSC and is based on a scope of work mock up (includes 4-6 professionals engaged for the one-year process) and research from comparable local towns who spent between \$143,000 and \$277,000 on their master plans.
- The budget for **ancillary Town costs is \$25,000** and will include costs related to GIS mapping, community meetings, printing and materials.

## What do we get with a Master Plan?

- Strategic Road Map for prioritizing and implementing town priorities
- Strategy to address financial, demographic, regulatory, and physical planning challenges
- Engagement of community leaders in ongoing town improvements
- Identification of priority projects w/ conceptual budgets & implementation steps
- Geographical Information System (GIS) Database updated
- Basis for comprehensive policy and zoning amendments including updating Open Space/Recreation and Housing Production plans

## **8 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO ENSURE THE MASTER PLAN WILL BE FUNDED**

1. Put up a yard sign
2. Write a letter to someone you know on a town board or committee
3. Call Members of Town Committees that you know to inform them and help them understand and support the warrant article to fund a master plan
4. Show up at Board of Selectmen (April 9 and 23) and FINCOM (April 22) meetings between now and town meeting where these topics will be discussed
5. Write to the Mosquito Editor before Town Meeting (350 words or less - deadlines are Monday April 8 & 22) – even if it is just a couple of sentences on why undertaking the master plan is important to you. Include your name and address.
6. Tell your friends
7. Post a message online in one of the social media groups that town voters tend to frequent
8. Bring a friend (or two) to Town Meeting