

Woodcliff Lake Master Plan: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Woodcliff Lake is preparing a new Master Plan for the first time in almost 20 years and we need your help!

What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan is generally described as a general plan for the future of a municipality, providing a blueprint of what the Borough is like now and what we want our town to be in the future. It also gives us a long-range view of where we are going and helps to guide decisions that our Borough will make about the future of land use and development. The Plan includes text, diagrams and maps.

The Master Plan must include two required elements:

1. **A statement of the goals and objectives of the plan:** This includes principles, policies and standards on which plans for the Borough are based.
2. **A Land-use Element:** This section provides a vision for the future possibilities of development. It provides a useful tool for decision makers (such as elected officials) to guide growth and development, to inform developers as they seek to advance projects, and for residents and others to make known their desire for growth and change in the future. A municipal zoning ordinance must be substantially consistent with the Land Use plan element or designed to effectuate the Land Use Element.

However, a Master Plan can include additional elements as well. The Woodcliff Lake Master Plan will also include the following elements: Circulation, Utilities, Community Facilities and Schools, Conservation and Open Space, Sustainability, Economic Development, and Historic Elements. We will also include an Implementation chapter which will summarize the recommendations detailed in each of the elements and identify short- and long-term actions to implement the recommendations.

Why is a Master Plan Important?

The Master Plan serves as the basis for the zoning ordinance and every zoning ordinance must either be substantially consistent with the land use plan element of the master plan, or designed to effectuate that plan element. Because of the importance of the Master Plan, New Jersey law requires that it be reexamined, updated and/or revised at least every 10 years. If the Borough does not undertake this 10-year review the Borough's zoning ordinance loses its presumption of validity.

Who approves and adopts a Master Plan?

A Master Plan Subcommittee has been formed to work with the Borough's consultants to prepare the document. The Planning Board approves the Master Plan.

When was the last Master Plan for Woodcliff Lake adopted?

The Borough adopted a 1985 comprehensive master plan. Between 1985 and 2002, the Borough adopted periodic review and reexamination reports. A Master Plan Update was prepared in 2002. Master Plan reexamination reports were adopted in 2008 and 2019. There have also been Broadway Corridor studies undertaken between 2008 and 2019. The current effort will provide the Borough with an opportunity to revise, revisit and improve the previous planning efforts to create a plan which aligns with the current needs and interests of the community.