

**February, 2011**

**MASTER PLAN  
BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**



***Approved by the Planning Board,  
May 2011***

# **2011 MASTER PLAN BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**



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# I. Introduction

This plan is an official document, stipulated by the following state law.

## **M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 81D.**

A planning board, established in any city or town under section eighty-one A, shall make a master plan of such city or town or such part or parts thereof as said board may deem advisable and from time to time may extend or perfect such plan.

Such plan shall be a statement, through text, maps, illustrations or other forms of communication, that is designed to provide a basis for decision-making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality. The comprehensive plan shall be internally consistent in its policies, forecasts and standards, and shall include the following elements:

- (1) Goals and policies statement which identifies the goals and policies of the municipality for its future growth and development. Each community shall conduct an interactive public process, to determine community values, goals and to identify patterns of development that will be consistent with these goals.
- (2) Land use plan element which identifies present land use and designates the proposed distribution, location and inter-relationship of public and private land uses. This element shall relate the proposed standards of population density and building intensity to the capacity of land available or planned facilities and services. A land use plan map illustrating the land use policies of the municipality shall be included.
- (3) Housing element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives including programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing. This element shall identify policies and strategies to provide a balance of local housing opportunities for all citizens.
- (4) Economic development element which identifies policies and strategies for the expansion or stabilization of the local economic base and the promotion of employment opportunities.
- (5) Natural and cultural resources element which provides an inventory of the significant natural, cultural and historic resource areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the protection and management of such areas.
- (6) Open space and recreation element which provides an inventory of recreational and resources and open space areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the management and protection of such resources and areas.
- (7) Services and facilities element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public.
- (8) Circulation element which provides an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation systems.
- (9) Implementation program element which defines and schedules the specific municipal actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element of the master or study plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities or circulation system components and the anticipated costs and revenues associated with

accomplishment of such activities shall be detailed in this element. This element shall specify the process by which the municipality's regulatory structures shall be amended so as to be consistent with the master plan.

Such plan shall be made, and may be added to or changed from time to time, by a majority vote of such planning board and shall be public record. The planning board shall, upon completion of any plan or report, or any change or amendment to a plan or report produced under this section, furnish a copy of such plan or report or amendment thereto, to the department of housing and community development.

A city or town which has an established master or study plan under section eighty-one A and applies for a state grant from the commonwealth shall prepare and keep on file within such city or town an economic development supplement; provided, however, that such city or town shall not be required to prepare such supplement if such city or town has a supplement on file. Such supplement shall be at least one page in length and shall contain the goals of the city or town with respect to industrial or commercial development, affordable housing, and preservation of parks and open space.

### **Past and Present Members of the Open Space/Master Plan Committee:**

Gwen Broz  
Greg Burnham (resigned, 2008)  
Cheri Carty (Treasurer)  
Kris Casucci  
Philip Chaffee (resigned, 2009)  
Sarah Heller (Secretary)  
Cindy Scott (Chair, resigned 2009)  
William R. Simpson (Chair)  
Sharon Mahoney (resigned 2009)  
Philip Pierce (resigned, 2008)  
Ronald Starcher  
Tim Simon

### **History of Committee Activities**

The Master Plan Committee was created by a vote of the May 2006 Brookfield Town Meeting. The Selectmen appointed members to Master Plan Committee and it began meeting in February 2008. At the May 2008 Town Meeting, the voters approved the merger of the Open Space and Recreation Committee and the Master Plan Committee to ensure cohesion between the two plans.

The new Open Space/Master Plan committee created the slogan "Brookfield 2020, a Perfect Vision for the Future", a mission statement, "To create a long-term plan for the future of Brookfield based on the shared-vision of our citizens," and a vision statement, "The Master Plan Committee is dedicated to working together to hold public meetings, conduct citizen surveys and compile the necessary data to enable us to create a Master Plan for Brookfield that will balance the combined vision of its residents, the state of the environment and the growth of our community."

In June of 2008, the committee hired Central Mass Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) as a consulting partner for Phase I of the project, consisting of The Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP) as well as two chapters of the Master Plan (Economic and Housing). To reduce costs, the committee took on the production of a town-wide survey instead of contracting it out as is usually done. After extensive research and discussion,

a 10 page survey consisting of 7 sections was developed: General, Economic Development, Municipal Services and Infrastructure, Housing, Open Space and Recreation, Roadways and Bridges, and Public Transportation and Commuting. The survey was mailed to all households in the town in July 2008. In addition, several members of the committee have conducted door-to-door canvassing in order to increase the rate of response. Approximately 15% of households returned surveys.

In addition to the survey, the committee held public hearings throughout the process from 2008 through 2010 to explore Brookfield's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in the various areas of interest: Open Space And Recreation, Economic Development, Housing, Transportation, Zoning and Services.

The town appropriated \$20,000 to fund the Master Plan (\$10,000 at the May 2006 Town Meeting and an additional \$10,000 at the May 2008 Town Meeting). The Town has been most fortunate to have The Open Space and Recreation Plan almost entirely funded through private donations. An anonymous family foundation generously donated \$5,000 which was matched by another generous donation from two residents of Brookfield for a total of \$10,000. The vast majority of the cost was for consulting fees to guide the committee's research, to write the documents so that they comply with state specifications and to create the various land maps required. In addition to the money mentioned above, our consultant, CMRPC, obtained a \$6,000 "District Local Technical Assistance" (DLTA) grant to pay for the Economic Development Chapter.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan was approved by the state in 2010 and has been incorporated in its entirety into the Master Plan report as chapter 5. In addition, the Brookfield Heritage Landscape Inventory Report, completed in the spring of 2008 is incorporated into chapter 5 to fulfill the natural and cultural resources element of the Master Plan.

In order to save money, the committee decided not to contract with CMRPC for the remaining chapters. Different members of the committee took on the job of researching and drafting the remaining chapters. Cheri Carty wrote the Transportation Chapter and William Simpson wrote the Government Services Chapter. The committee contracted with Consultant Bill Scanlan to write the Land Use and Zoning Chapter. Ron Starcher created the matrix for the Implementation Chapter. Several members wrote the chapter summaries. All work was reviewed and revised by the committee as a whole and was completed by January 2011. In February 2011, the committee presented the final draft of the Master Plan to the Planning Board for their review. The Planning Board voted unanimously to approve the February 2011 draft of the Master Plan in May, 2011.

## Goals and Policies

**According to Massachusetts General Law**, the Master Plan will include a "Goals and policies statement which identifies the goals and policies of the municipality for its future growth and development. Each community shall conduct an interactive public process, to determine community values, goals and to identify patterns of development that will be consistent with these goals."

As outlined above in the History of Committee Activities, the committee did conduct an interactive public process consisting of public forums and a town-wide survey. Refer to the Appendices for the documentation of these activities.

Goals and policies statements are included at the end of each chapter. In addition, the chapter summaries (Section II) highlight the goals that the committee identified as meriting particular attention. Finally, the Implementation Chapter is a matrix of all the goals and objectives with the municipal entity responsible for implementation.