

Campus Master Planning; A Need for Standards

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ABSTRACT

Universities, particularly large ones, often operate as autonomously as towns, with their own police departments, residential neighborhoods, public transit, and power plants. Universities and towns also address similar issues such as future land use, housing development; public services such as utilities, parks, recreational facilities and libraries; public safety; and transportation, transit and parking. There are areas where towns and universities are different such as a university's focus on education, research, and learning facilities. There is also a difference in the primary planning tool with campus master plan versus the comprehensive plan for towns. This paper examined four campus master plans to determine whether a need exists to establish basic guidelines for campus master plans, to ensure they address the complex requirements of large campuses. The examination looked at both the uniformity and completeness of the four master plans. The results of the examination showed a wide variety of documents. The master plans lacked uniformity in basic areas such as implementation guidance, a summary of existing conditions, or even an executive summary. Additionally there were a number of core planning criteria that were incomplete (planning in land use, housing, and public safety). The conclusion of this evaluation is these plans are interesting and even insightful, but generally lack some basic areas of good planning. In particular there is a need for land use analysis for current or future growth management, inclusion of public safety planning, and a more complete explanation of methodology and data analysis.

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