



EarthRise design
 Interpretive planning + architecture
 Donald Watson, FAIA, CIP

**I am at the very beginning of a master plan process. What do I need to do?
 Terms commonly used in site master planning and interpretive planning**

Site master planning and interpretive planning begin with analysis of the existing conditions of site and facilities. This analysis helps to define the need, scope and budget for site, facility and visitor service improvements. It is important to analyze whether a proposed improvement will add to or will reduce long-term operation and maintenance costs.

There are many types of planning studies, some or all of which may be required to provide a comprehensive plan and needs assessment. Common definitions and planning report assignments are summarized in **Table 1** below.

EarthRise *design* provides comprehensive planning to include all or any part of the following requirements.

Table 1 Common terms of reference used in planning studies

	Common term	Topics covered	Related terms and studies
	Strategic Plan	Organizational plan, addressing mission, market niche, staffing, programs and activities. Budget and fund raising, constituent development and related critical needs. The plan may include future site and building requirements.	Stewardship Plan, Vision Plan, Comprehensive Plan.
	Master Plan	A physical plan and description of existing and projected future land use, showing site infrastructure and buildings present and projected, including zoning and other regulatory constraints	Comprehensive Plan, Site Master Plan, Site Plan, Facilities Plan.
	Interpretive Plan	Plan for presentation of the site to visitors, information and education, exhibits, graphics, signage, related media including landscape and architecture as elements of exhibits.	Exhibit plan Storyboard Interpretive script
	Environmental Assessment	Analysis of environmental aspects of a site including species surveys, assessment of biological diversity, conservation and reparation, areas excluded from access and/or locations suitable for roads, parking, buildings, trails.	Ecological survey Biodiversity survey Land Management Plan
	Facilities Audit	Existing conditions of infrastructure and structures and possible needs assessment. May include: physical conditions, energy and conservation measures, handicap accessibility and public use, risk assessment, preventative maintenance, including costs.	Structures Report, Facilities Survey, Property Survey.
	Historic Structures Report	Recommended or required for sites with historic buildings, artifacts, and /or historic landscape and/or other cultural/archeological features.	Archeological survey Acquisitions and Collections Policies.
	Feasibility Study	Used in real estate development and related studies to determine financial opportunities and limiting conditions of a proposal, with costs, revenues, and market assessment.	Market Analysis Census Tract Analysis Comparables Peer benchmarking

Source: Donald Watson, EarthRise *design*