



**Hillsborough County**  
**City-County**  
**Planning Commission**

Policies of the  
Hillsborough County  
City-County  
Planning Commission



February 2017



**Hillsborough County**  
**City-County**  
**Planning Commission**

# Planning Commission

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## MISSION

The Planning Commission, under the mandates of Chapter 163 Florida Statutes, the County Charter and Chapter 97-351, Laws of Florida, as amended, is the independent planning agency for Hillsborough County and municipalities therein. It is led by appointed citizens and serves all citizens of Hillsborough County by providing a vision for improving the quality of life.

The Planning Commission and its staff serve as agents to promote and coordinate the involvement of all citizens within Hillsborough County in comprehensive planning, public participation, growth management and environmental protection. The Planning Commission monitors the implementation of planning efforts and encourages innovation and creativity in achieving the Vision.

### 1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of these Policies is to establish a framework to guide the performance of the staff of the Planning Commission in accomplishing its responsibilities and mission.

### 2.0 STRUCTURE

2.1 THE PLANNING COMMISSION, as the Local Planning Agency for Hillsborough County, Plant City, Tampa, and Temple Terrace, is a consolidated organization consisting of a commission (board) and a staff of technical, professional and support personnel. The official position of the Planning Commission is that adopted by the Planning Commission, and the Chair (or designee) shall be the spokesperson for the Planning Commission.

2.2 ROLE OF STAFF: The primary function of the staff is to assist the Executive Director in his or her responsibilities in achieving the Work Program, Goals and Objectives of the Planning Commission. The staff performs a variety of professional, technical and support tasks, at the direction of the Executive Director.

2.3 ORGANIZATION: The professional staff shall be organized under the direction of the Executive Director.

### 3.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The role of the Executive Director of the Planning Commission is to lead the staff of the Planning Commission and to be the primary contact with the Commissioners, as well as between the staff and staffs of other agencies with which they interact. Leading the staff includes directing the development and allocation of resources, planning for the development of the agency and ensuring that the agency accomplishes its legislative mandate and Mission. The Executive Director is accountable for the overall programmatic, operational and fiscal integrity of the agency.

- 3.1 MONITORING: The Executive Director shall monitor the Work Program and Budget of the Planning Commission, and shall prepare periodic reports relating to the accomplishment of the Work Program and the status of the Budget.
- 3.2 PERSONNEL: The Executive Director shall manage the day-to-day activities of the personnel of the Planning Commission.
- 3.3 PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION: The Executive Director shall be responsible for the professional and technical assistance provided to the Planning Commission in the performance of the Work Program.
  - 3.3.1: A request for existing data or information from a Planning Commissioner shall be provided as soon as practical.
  - 3.3.2 A request for data or information that must be compiled or generated will be provided based on availability of staff time and other resources. The Executive Director may bring a request to the Planning Commission for review and approval before acting upon it, depending on factors such as time limitation, appropriateness or magnitude of the request.
- 3.4 REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL STUDIES & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The Executive Director shall report to the Planning Commission from time to time on requests for technical assistance or special studies.
- 3.5 MEETINGS: The Executive Director or other designated staff members shall be present as technical experts, as needed, at all regular and special meetings, hearings and workshops of the Planning Commission, as well as at all meetings of other public bodies where the Planning Commission appears in its official capacity. The Executive Director shall report to the Planning Commission actions taken by other public bodies with respect to Planning Commission business.

#### 4.0 PUBLIC INFORMATION

- 4.1 CLIENT AND CITIZEN INFORMATION: An ongoing information stream will be provided for clients and citizens highlighting the services, work efforts and accomplishments of the Planning Commission, for example: broadcasting meetings; hosting websites; issuing public notices and press releases; scheduling radio spots or television appearances; providing public forums, open houses, or interactive web events; and providing brochures, pamphlets, newsletters and reports.
- 4.2 ANNUAL REPORT: There shall be an Annual Report of activities of the Planning Commission. The Annual Report shall provide information about the agency's budget and financial performance, and describe the progress in achieving the Goals and Objectives of the Planning Commission in the previous year.

- 4.3 COMMUNITY DESIGN AWARDS PROGRAM: There shall be an annual Community Design Awards Program of the Planning Commission. The Community Design Awards Program shall be organized by the Executive Director or designee, with the assistance of the Public Information Committee.

## 5.0 GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

- 5.1 PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO PUBLIC OFFICIALS: The staff shall provide professional and technical assistance to public officials in accordance with the annual Work Program. Except as provided herein for special requests, the scheduled public assistance functions shall be limited to technical or professional planning matters.
- 5.2 THE OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION: There shall only be one official position of the Planning Commission, which shall be the position adopted by either a consensus or a vote of the Planning Commission. When the position of the Planning Commission is requested of the professional staff in the absence of the Chair, the official position of the Planning Commission shall be presented by staff.

## 6.0 GOALS, WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET

- 6.1 GOALS: The Planning Commission's strategic plan and its Goals and Objectives shall be reflected in each annual Work Program and Budget.
- 6.2 WORK PROGRAM: The Executive Director shall prepare a Work Program based on legislative mandates, ongoing requirements, requested studies, technical assistance and the direction and priorities of the Planning Commission, reflecting the formal/informal input of the jurisdictions and other clients. The Work Program shall accompany the Requested Budget and be submitted to the Planning Commission.
- 6.3 REQUESTED BUDGET: The Executive Director, with the guidance of the Planning Commission, shall prepare the Requested Budget for Planning Commission review and approval.
- 6.3.1 Requested Budget: The Executive Director shall prepare a Requested Budget based upon the Planning Commission direction and priorities and with formal/informal input from Hillsborough County, Tampa, Temple Terrace, Plant City and others receiving Planning Commission services. The Requested Budget, including (1) previous year's expenditures, (2) the current year's Budget and (3) expenditures to date, shall be presented to the Planning Commission for consideration. The Executive Director shall also report on the expected need for significant equipment purchases. Upon approval by the Planning Commission, it shall be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).
- 6.3.2 Adopted Budget: Upon adoption of the final BOCC Budget each year, the Executive Director shall report to the Planning



Commission, and if necessary, prepare a revised budget for review and approval.

## 7.0 CODE OF PROFESSIONALISM

- 7.1 **APOLITICAL:** The staff members of the Planning Commission shall confine their work time activities to the technical or professional planning assistance required of them as staff members. When, during the course of their employment, staff members are called upon to present their technical or professional planning views or recommendations, such staff members shall not express their personal political views or opinions.
- 7.2 **GIFTS TO STAFF MEMBERS:** In order to retain their independence, staff members shall politely decline all gift offers from members of the communities they serve; however, the Executive Director and the staff shall be at liberty to accept dining and event invitations not otherwise prohibited by law from any member of the community they serve.
- 7.3 **EQUAL ASSISTANCE TO ALL:** Staff members shall treat all members of the community they serve with respect and consideration, without exception.
- 7.4 **STANDARDS:** The Planning Commission advocates standards of professionalism, including participation in recognized professional organizations and striving to improve and broaden technical knowledge through office automation.

## 8.0 PLAN AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

In order to simplify the procedures for Comprehensive Plan adoption and amendment, procedures (e.g., manuals, agreements) shall be prepared for unincorporated Hillsborough County, Tampa, Temple Terrace and Plant City. These procedures should be simple and clear and shall be reviewed by the staff with subsequent changes brought before the Planning Commission for approval.

## 9.0 ATTORNEY

The Planning Commission shall be represented by an attorney, since many of the responsibilities of the Planning Commission involve legal matters. The attorney is considered a key source of advice for both the staff and the Planning Commission.

- 9.1 **PRESENCE AT MEETINGS:** The attorney shall, at the request of the Chair or a majority of the Planning Commission or the Executive Director, be present at the regular meetings of the Planning Commission or at special meetings, hearings and workshops of the Planning Commission. The attorney shall attend committee meetings upon the request of the chair of the committee or the Executive Director.
- 9.2 **REVIEW OF ALL OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS:** The attorney shall review all official documents of the Planning Commission prior to their being

brought before the Planning Commission. Official documents include but are not limited to proposed resolutions, procedures manuals, contracts, reports and other documents selected by the Executive Director for review by the attorney.

- 9.3 WORKING RELATIONSHIPS: The attorney shall give advice to both the staff and the Planning Commission. When advice is sought by the staff, it shall be coordinated through the Executive Director.
- 9.4 SELECTION AND REPLACEMENT: The selection and replacement of the attorney shall be proposed by a majority of the Members (defined in the By-Laws) of the Planning Commission.

## 10.0 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES

Selection of professional consultants and service providers (“Contractual Services”) for the Planning Commission shall be in accordance with all State and local laws governing the selection and this Policy. Solicitations for Contractual Services shall be communicated in a manner reasonably calculated to ensure notice and the opportunity for interested consultants and service providers to submit qualifications and proposals.

10.1 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES NOT EXCEEDING \$35,000: The Executive Director shall cause an appropriate scope of services to be prepared for each service required, and shall have the authority to approve contracts for Contractual Services not exceeding \$35,000 (“Minor Contracts”), according to the following procedures. Price may not be the determining factor, but the rationale for selection of the Contractual Services provider shall be documented in writing, including, but not limited to, experience of the firm or individuals, availability of personnel, capabilities, qualifications, past performance and quality of service.

10.1.1 Minor Contracts: After reviewing at least three (3) written proposals, the Executive Director is authorized to select the Contractual Services provider having the qualifications best suited to the task or project. (Written proposals shall include facsimile or other electronic communications.) In the event the Executive Director or designee determines that the desired services are only available from a single source, or if less than three (3) proposals are obtained, the Executive Director may contract with the sole source or the preferred Contractual Services provider. Prior to entering into a sole source contract, the Executive Director shall make reasonable efforts to obtain competing proposals and provide documentation for the determination. Modifications or amendments to Minor Contracts shall not exceed a total of 50% of the original contract amount or a cumulative total of \$35,000, whichever is less.

10.1.2 Alternative Process for Minor Contracts: In lieu of the selection process set forth in Subsection 10.1.1 above, the Executive Director

may, with the assistance of a staff committee (the "Staff Committee"), develop a list(s) of approved Contractual Services providers for specialized services routinely utilized by the agency, for example, consultants providing certain types of services such as group or meeting facilitators. To initiate this process, the Executive Director shall invite requests for qualifications, and the Staff Committee shall develop standards or criteria for use in certifying (for purposes of creating the list) that the interested Contractual Services provider is qualified to render the required services (an "Approved Provider"). Subsequently, at least biennially for as long as the services may be needed, the Executive Director shall issue a renewed request for qualifications. Interested Contractual Services providers may also make application for certification at any time by submitting the information required per the most recent request for qualifications. The Executive Director may select any Approved Provider from the list, and shall document the file as to the rationale for selection.

10.1.3 Emergency: If the Executive Director determines in writing that an immediate danger to the public health, safety or welfare, or other substantial loss to the Planning Commission requires emergency action, the Executive Director may procure Minor Contracts necessary to avoid the immediate danger or loss without regard to the requirements of Section 10.1.

10.2 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES EXCEEDING \$35,000: For any Contractual Services contract in excess of \$35,000 ("Major Contracts"), the professional staff shall evaluate the proposals for such contracts in accordance with the criteria set forth in this Section. Major Contracts shall be approved by the Planning Commission, upon the recommendation of the professional staff.

10.2.1 Scope of Services: The scope of services for Major Contracts shall be carefully prepared, and expert assistance may be obtained when deemed necessary by the Executive Director.

10.2.2 Evaluation Criteria: The selection process for Major Contracts shall utilize the following evaluation criteria, where appropriate, which shall be scored according to the value assigned to each category relative to the importance of that particular criterion to the project:

- (a) Special experience with the type of project;
- (b) Qualifications of the firm;
- (c) Qualifications of the staff designated for the project;
- (d) Firm's current capability to undertake the project;
- (e) Performance on similar projects;
- (f) Quality of the written proposal submitted;
- (g) On time;

- (h) Cost;
- (i) Failure on similar projects;
- (j) Originality on approach to project;
- (k) Grasp of scope, needs, and special circumstances of project;
- (l) Sensitivity to local issues (e.g., citizen/political concerns);
- (m) Conflict of interest - other clients, investments, relationships to interested boards, commissions, authorities, councils; and
- (n) Schedule.

10.3 CONTRACT DOCUMENTS: The Planning Commission and the Contractual Services provider shall execute a written contract which includes standard contract language, a budget (i.e., the mutually agreed upon price), the description/scope of the work to be performed, and a date for completion. A "short form" standard contract approved by the Planning Commission Attorney may be used by the Executive Director for Minor Contracts. Contract documents for Major Contracts and those not utilizing the Planning Commission's "short form" contract shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission Attorney.

10.4 WAIVER: In the case of emergency or extraordinary circumstances, the Planning Commission staff may find it necessary to recommend a waiver of the above policies and procedures for certain Major Contracts. In such event, consideration of the staff recommendation for a waiver shall be placed on the Planning Commission meeting agenda as a separate item for consideration and determination prior to consideration of the proposed contract. No waivers or contracts shall be approved if prohibited by state or local laws.

10.5 MONTHLY REPORTING: At each regular meeting of the Planning Commission, the Executive Director shall provide a report on the status of all Contractual Services contracts, and other such contracts which are expected to be negotiated in connection with the Work Program. The report shall include, without limitation, the scope of services, the purpose or need for the services, and a time-line for the services and the related project. The Planning Commission may override the Executive Director's recommendation for Major Contracts by vote of a majority of the Members. Each calendar quarter, the Executive Director shall provide a report to the Planning Commission summarizing all pending and anticipated Contractual Services contracts.

10.6 CONSULTANT AND SERVICE PROVIDER DIVERSITY: The Planning Commission seeks to assure diversity in the selection of consultants for Contractual Services and in the procurement of commodities. For procurement of commodities, it shall be the policy of the Planning Commission to utilize Hillsborough County's purchasing and procurement system.

- 10.6.1 Ensuring Diversity: Participation of any qualified Minority Business Enterprise (defined in Section 288.703, Florida Statutes) shall be encouraged in the Planning Commission's solicitation and selection process for Contractual Services. The Executive Director shall ensure that Planning Commission's standard operating procedures accommodate this diversity policy.
- 10.6.2 Non-Discrimination: No person or firm shall be excluded from participation in or discriminated against in any manner whatsoever, in connection with the Planning Commission's award of any Contractual Services contract, on the grounds of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, political affiliation or marital status.
- 10.6.3 Annual Report: The Executive Director shall prepare an annual report for the Planning Commission identifying the Contractual Services contracts executed during the previous twelve (12) month period, including utilization of Minority Business Enterprises.

## 11.0 EMPLOYMENT

- 11.1 PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE: Recruitment of employees shall be with the aim of attracting the very best and dedicated personnel to the Planning Commission and be done by highlighting the conditions of employment with the Planning Commission as a total package.
- 11.2 STAFF DEVELOPMENT: Incentives shall be developed and implemented to encourage the pursuit of excellence and the longevity of the staff. These incentives shall be developed by the Executive Director and included in the Budget as necessary.
- 11.3 EXIT INTERVIEWS: The Executive Director shall request an exit interview with each member of the professional staff who is terminating employment with the Planning Commission for reasons other than those covered in sections 11.5 and 11.6 below.
- 11.4 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY: The Planning Commission shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, political affiliation, or marital status in any form or manner against its employees or applicants for employment. The Planning Commission shall abide by the *Hillsborough County Affirmative Action Plan*.
- 11.5 SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY: The Planning Commission adopts and shall utilize the provisions of Hillsborough County's "Drug Free Work Place Policy" (Human Resources [Human Resources Department Policy 1.4](#), effective October 1, 2015, as amended from time to time) and all related

substance abuse rules, policies, disciplinary and other procedures, for all agency employees, volunteers, interns and job applicants.

11.6 REDUCTION IN FORCE: When certain conditions cause it to become necessary to reduce the number of employees of the Planning Commission, a Reduction in Force procedure will be followed.

11.6.1 Rationale for the Policy: Certain conditions related to lack of funds or lack of work may cause it to become necessary to reduce the number of employees of the Planning Commission. In accord [with Civil Service Rule 11.7](#), policies and procedures must be in place and be followed as the standards for dismissal of an employee(s) through "Reduction In Force."

11.6.2 Intent of the Policy:

- (a) The policy is intended to meet the requirements of Civil Service Rule 11.7 as well as to be fair, consistent with prevailing practices in local government and standard in its application of layoff procedures within the Planning Commission.
- (b) This policy applies to classified employees. Unclassified employees may be laid off without respect to the procedures covered in this policy.
- (c) It is the intent of the policy that Planning Commission classified employees will compete for retention solely within their classification in the agency based on seniority and other factors as set forth herein, i.e. no "bumping" to previously held classifications.

11.6.3 Procedures:

- (a) The Executive Director of the Planning Commission shall cause these procedures to be implemented in accord with Civil Service Rule 11.7.
- (b) The Executive Director will cause the layoff to occur in relation to Budget and/or Work Program demands, resources or efficiencies.
- (c) The area of layoff will be agency-wide. The Executive Director will identify the class(es) of positions and the number of positions to be reduced within each affected classification.
- (d) When Reduction In Force conditions exist, the Executive Director shall cause Individual Retention Worksheets and Retention Registers per the forms at the end of this section to be compiled.
- (e) The criteria for evaluation and retention of employees within the affected classification(s) are: 1) seniority; 2) performance rating; and 3) veterans' preference. The credit or preference assigned to consideration of these factors is set forth in the Individual Retention Worksheet per the form at the end of this section. In the event the scores of two or more employees are tied, the Executive Director shall decide which of the employees shall receive preference based upon such criteria as performance evaluation relative scores.
- (f) Using Retention Worksheets and Retention Registers, the Executive Director will cause lists to be prepared, as appropriate, identifying employees for "removal from employment" and/or "return to former status" for classified employees as follows:

REMOVAL FROM EMPLOYMENT		
<u>Classification Code</u>	<u>Class Title</u>	<u>Position Number</u>
(Temporary and substitute employees doing like work will be dismissed before any tenured employee is laid off.) (Initial probationary employees doing like work in affected classification(s) will be dismissed before any tenured employee is laid off.)		

RETURN TO FORMER STATUS		
Classification Code	Class Title	Position Number
(Probationary-in-class employees will be returned to former status before a tenured employee(s) in the affected classification is laid off.)		

- (g) Following such actions, the Executive Director will cause a final list to be prepared certifying the name(s) of those to be laid off as follows:

<u>Classification Code</u>	<u>Class Title</u>	<u>Position Number</u>

- (h) Once identified, the Executive Director will make every attempt to notify the affected employee(s) in writing at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to effective date(s) of layoff. There shall be, where possible, 90 calendar days notice to affected employees. Notice will be given to the affected employee(s) via a written Reduction In Force Letter. In no case shall the letter be provided any later than two (2) weeks prior to the effective date(s) of layoff.
- (i) The Civil Service Board will be notified of the pending layoff via copy of the written *Reduction In Force Letter*.
- (j) The *Reduction In Force Letter* will provide the reason for layoff and the effective date, and establish an opportunity to meet with the Executive Director.
- (k) If any affected employee believes that these procedures were not correctly applied by the Executive Director, the affected employee shall request a review and determination within ten (10) business days after receiving written notice of the layoff. The review request shall be delivered to the Executive Director in writing and shall state the specific reason(s) for the review.

In the event such a request is received from any affected employee, at the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission, the Chair shall appoint an ad hoc Reduction-In-Force Review Committee, consisting of three (3) board Members, which shall review and consider the requests(s) to determine



whether the Reduction-In-Force (RIF) procedures were correctly applied.

It is important to note here that this is a challenge to the application of the Planning Commission's RIF procedures and not a grievance through Civil Service regulations.

After appointment, the ad hoc Reduction In Force Review Committee shall meet and render a written decision within thirty (30) calendar days to the employee. The decision of the Committee is not appealable to the Planning Commission.

#### 11.6.4 Re-employment Procedures:

- (a) The name of each employee laid off under these procedures will be placed on active lists of eligibles by Civil Service and shall be retained on such eligibles list as specified in Civil Services Rules.
- (b) Also applicable to re-employment are the provisions of [Civil Service Rules, particularly section 11.7.g.](#), incorporated here by reference.
- (c) Following separation, former employees will be considered for vacant positions in classifications for which they are qualified in accordance with Civil Service Rules.

## INDIVIDUAL RETENTION WORKSHEET

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS OF POSITIONS TO BE REDUCED \_\_\_\_\_

Complete for each position within each affected classification.

EMPLOYEE NAME _____	
CLASS TITLE _____	
CLASS CODE _____	POSITION NUMBER _____
CURRENT BENEFITS DATE _____	
INITIAL PROBATION WITH HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE? _____ (yes) or (no)	
TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE? _____ (yes) or (no)	
SUBSTITUTE EMPLOYEE? _____ (yes) or (no)	
PROBATIONARY IN CLASSIFICATION? _____ (yes) or (no)	
IF YES, FORMER CLASSIFICATION _____	

Assign points to each item A. through C.

<b>A. SENIORITY</b>	1. CALENDAR MONTHS IN AFFECTED CLASSIFICATION (1/2 point for each month) _____
	2. CALENDAR MONTHS OF CONTINUOUS SERVICE IN OTHER POSITIONS (NOT INCLUDING MONTHS PER 1. ABOVE) COVERED BY HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE LAW (1/4 point for each month) _____
<b>B. CURRENT OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING.</b>	Average the scores from the two most recent 12 month evaluations after converting the two ratings to a numerical value (Outstanding 100 points; Exceptional 75 points; Successful 0 points; Marginal -25 points; Unsatisfactory -50 points). Any average score equal to or greater than 50 points, shall be multiplied by a factor of 2. _____
<b>C. ADD 5 POINTS IF QUALIFIED FOR VETERAN'S PREFERENCE OR 10 POINTS IF A QUALIFIED DISABLED VETERAN</b>	_____
<b>TOTAL POINTS: _____</b>	

**RETENTION REGISTER**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS OF POSITIONS TO BE REDUCED \_\_\_\_\_

Complete, using a separate Retention Register for each affected CLASSIFICATION, from individual retention worksheets, in rank order, highest points to lowest.

NAME	TOTAL RETENTION SCORE
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____

REMARKS, IF ANY \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12.0 VIOLATIONS

The Executive Director and the entire staff shall abide by these policies. Violators shall be reprimanded and consistent violators shall be dismissed.

13.0 DEFINED TERMS

Capitalized terms not otherwise defined in these Policies shall have the meaning defined in the By-Laws.