



Polk Transportation  
Planning Organization

# Bylaws

Adopted as Revised: December 10, 2020

Proposed Amendments offered: TAC – 9-26-2024 / TPO – 10/10/2024.

*“These amendments will take effect when FDOT signs the Polk TPO’s (2023-24) Membership Apportionment Plan, based on Governor’s Direction.”*

TPO Staff edits, 9-11-2024

**Section 1: Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO).

**Section 2: Purpose and Organization**

- A. The TPO in cooperation with the State of Florida shall be responsible for carrying out the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process in the Lakeland/Winter Haven Urbanized Areas. The TPO shall provide the forum for cooperative decision-making by principal elected officials of general-purpose local government.
  
- B. The functions of the TPO shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - 1. Ensure the Lakeland/Winter Haven Urbanized Areas are eligible to receive Federal funding, including capital and operating assistance.
  
  - 2. Promote the coordination of transportation planning and programming in accordance with Title 23 U.S. Code, Section 339.175, Florida Statutes; and Sections 163.3161-163.3211, the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Act and Section 163.01, Florida Statutes.
  
  - 3. Adopt transportation work programs.
  
  - 4. Develop and adopt a transportation plan in accordance with the continuous, comprehensive and cooperative transportation planning process.
  
- C. The TPO shall appoint a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) as a standing committee.
  
- D. The TPO will create and maintain an Adviser Network as an alternate program to ensure citizen involvement in the transportation planning process.
  
- E. The Polk County Board of County Commissioners, under a Staff Services Agreement with the TPO, shall serve as staff to the Board and its committees.

F. To promote the coordination and integration of land use and transportation planning, the TPO shall sponsor a “Land Use and Transportation Forum.” The purpose and structure of this forum is outlined in Section 13.

**Section 3: TPO Board Membership**

A. Membership shall include principal elected officials of general-purpose local governments and representatives from the Florida Department of Transportation as designated by the Governor of Florida.

B. Members shall serve by virtue of office held and at the pleasure of the Governor.

C. There shall be 19 ~~23~~ voting members on the TPO Board. These voting members are apportioned as follows:

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Voting Members</b>
Polk County	5
City of Auburndale	1
City of Bartow	1
City of Haines City	1
City of Lakeland	6
City of Lake Wales	1
City of Winter Haven	2
<b>South County Bloc (Shared Voting Membership)</b>	
Fort Meade	1
Mulberry	
Frostproof	
<b>East County Bloc (Shared Voting Membership)</b>	
Lake Alfred	1
Dundee	
Eagle Lake	
Davenport	
Polk City	
Lake Hamilton	

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Voting Members</b>
Polk County	5

<a href="#"><u>City of Lakeland</u></a>	<u>6</u>
<a href="#"><u>City of Winter Haven</u></a>	<u>3</u>
<a href="#"><u>City of Haines City</u></a>	<u>2</u>
<a href="#"><u>City of Bartow</u></a>	<u>1</u>
<a href="#"><u>City of Lake Wales</u></a>	<u>1</u>
<a href="#"><u>City of Auburndale</u></a>	<u>1</u>
<a href="#"><u>City of Davenport</u></a>	<u>1</u>
<a href="#"><u>City of Lake Alfred</u></a>	<u>1</u>
<b>South County Bloc (Shared Voting Membership)</b>	
<a href="#"><u>City of Fort Meade</u></a>	<u>1</u>
<a href="#"><u>City of Mulberry</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>City of Frostproof</u></a>	
<b>Central County and Ridge Bloc (Shared Voting Membership)</b>	
<a href="#"><u>Town of Dundee</u></a>	<u>1</u>
<a href="#"><u>City of Eagle Lake</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>City of Polk City</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>Town of Lake Hamilton</u></a>	
<b>Total Number of TPO Board Members</b>	<b><u>23</u></b>

- D. The Florida Department of Transportation shall appoint a representative to serve as a non-voting advisor member on the TPO Board.
- E. When not serving as voting members, the representatives from the South County Bloc and ~~East County Bloc~~ [Central County and Ridge Bloc](#) shall participate in TPO Board Meetings as non-voting members (see Section 4).
- F. The governmental body of each governing entity so designated, shall appoint the number of members to the TPO Board from eligible elected officials. A copy of the government entity's meeting minutes which shall act as the record of members appointed, shall accompany written notification of the appointment(s). The Governor shall appoint individual members only when the local entity involved fails to appoint a member as required by law. TPO members shall serve an initial term of four years and may be appointed for additional terms by their governing body. Membership shall be terminated upon the member leaving elective office for any reason or by a majority vote

of the appointing governmental body. Vacancies shall be filled by the original appointing body.

- G. If a member is absent for three consecutive meetings, the TPO Chairperson shall send a letter to said member and the mayor of the government he/she represents. This letter shall indicate that meeting attendance is imperative for proper representation on the Board and request consideration be given to appointing a replacement member.

**Section 4: Shared Voting Membership – South County Bloc and ~~East County Bloc~~ Central County and Ridge Bloc**

- A. The South County Bloc and ~~East County Bloc~~ Central County and Ridge Bloc will each share one (1) voting membership spot on the TPO Board as outlined in Section 3C.
- B. The shared voting membership for each Bloc shall be rotated annually among the jurisdictions comprising each voting bloc. This rotation shall occur at the first TPO Board Meeting of each calendar year.
- C. The order of rotation for the South Bloc shall be as follows: Fort Meade, Mulberry and Frostproof. The order of rotation for the ~~East Bloc~~ Central County and Ridge Bloc shall be as follows: ~~Lake Alfred, Dundee, Eagle Lake, Davenport,~~ Polk City, and Lake Hamilton.
- D. If the voting member (or alternate) for a voting bloc is absent from a TPO Board Meeting, then another representative from that voting bloc may participate as a voting member. This substitute voting member shall be identified from among the other members of the voting bloc in attendance according to the order of rotation set forth in Section 4C.

**Section 5: Alternate Membership**

- A. A TPO Board member government may appoint an alternate member for one or more of its appointed TPO Board members by taking action during an official meeting.

- B. The alternate member must be an elected official and serve the same governmental entity or area that the regular member serves.
- C. An alternate voting member's term shall be for no longer than the term of the voting member he or she represents.
- D. Alternate members may attend and vote in place of absent voting members serving the same governmental entity at any TPO meeting.
- E. The member government entity shall notify the TPO Chairperson in writing that the appointed individual may act as an alternate member if the regular member cannot attend a meeting. A copy of the government entity's meeting minutes when the alternate member was appointed shall accompany this written notification.
- F. The TPO Board shall acknowledge appointments of alternate members by reading the notification of appointment into the minutes of the first TPO Board meeting following notification by the governmental entity.

## **Section 6: Officers and Duties**

- A. This section shall apply to the TPO Board and TAC.
- B. A Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be elected by voting members at the first scheduled meeting of each calendar year. Position may be held for no more than two consecutive years.
- C. Any voting member may nominate or be nominated as an officer. A TPO Board representative of the South County Bloc and ~~East County Bloc~~ Central County and Ridge Bloc may be elected and serve as Chairperson or Vice Chairperson whether they are currently serving as a voting or non-voting member of the Board. All officers shall be elected by a majority vote during a meeting when a quorum is present.
- D. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings. The Chairperson shall be responsible for pertinent correspondence and information releases. The

Chairperson shall assure that agendas are transmitted at least seven calendar days prior to any regularly scheduled meeting.

- E. The Vice Chairperson shall have and exercise all the duties and power of the Chairperson during his/her absence or inability serve. The Vice Chairperson shall also perform other duties as assigned by the Chairperson.
- F. If both the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson are absent from a meeting a temporary Chairperson shall be selected by a majority vote of the members present. The temporary Chairperson shall serve only until either the arrival of an officer or the end of the meeting.
- G. Any vacancy in the office of Chairperson or Vice Chairperson shall be filled by a majority vote of the members. Any Officer elected shall fill the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacant office.

## **Section 7: Meetings**

- A. This section shall apply to the TPO Board and TAC.
- B. The TPO Board and respective committees shall meet at least quarterly at a date, time and place acceptable to a majority of the voting members. At the last scheduled meeting of a calendar year a regular meeting schedule for the next calendar year shall be adopted by the board and standing committees.
- C. Other meetings may be scheduled by a majority vote of members present at any meeting. Notice of such meetings shall be given to members at least seven days in advance.
- D. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson person with a minimum notice of three calendar days and shall indicate the reason for the meeting.
- E. A quorum of the TPO Board shall consist of no less than nine voting members and shall be required to conduct all official business other than scheduling meetings.

- F. A quorum of the TAC shall consist of no less than nine voting members and shall be required to conduct all official business other than scheduling meetings.
- G. All meetings and hearings will be open to the public. It is the policy of the TPO Board to encourage public involvement throughout the decision-making process. The TPO shall maintain an adopted Public Participation Plan (PPP). This plan shall govern all public involvement activities of the TPO.
- H. Voting shall be by voice, but a member may have his/her vote recorded in the minutes upon request. A roll call vote shall be held upon request. All other questions or procedures shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

## **Section 8: TPO Adviser Network**

The TPO Adviser Network, (TAN) will serve as an alternate mechanism for citizen involvement with the objective of increasing public involvement especially by members of minority and low-income households. To be formed through community outreach efforts, the Adviser Network will provide a less formal, more extensive structure for soliciting public participation and comment.

### **A. Recruitment**

The TPO will solicit members of the Adviser Network through the publication of newspaper advertisements and other print material, as well as advertisements on the TPO and **Citrus Connection** ~~Polk Transit~~ websites. Member jurisdictions of the Polk TPO and **Citrus Connection** ~~Polk Transit~~ will be asked to encourage residents with an interest in transportation to join the Adviser Network. Direct mailings will be sent to community, professional and neighborhood associations and regular speaking engagements to civic groups will provide another opportunity to solicit participation. Each year, the TPO will establish a target for attendance and participation at neighborhood or community meetings especially for groups traditionally underrepresented in transportation decision-making. Staff will attend these meetings to learn more about community needs, to provide information about the TPO, and to solicit membership on the Adviser Network. There will not be a set limit or maximum level of membership on the Advisory Network.



Members will be permitted to continue their participation on the network as long as their availability and interest dictate.

#### B. Member Participation

Members will have the option of receiving material on transportation plans, projects and services in either an electronic or accessible print format. Social media, e.g., Facebook and ~~Twitter~~, will be used to disseminate information and collect public comments with links to the TPO and **Citrus Connection** ~~Polk Transit~~ websites as appropriate. Staff will maintain both traditional and electronic e-mail address lists for direct mailings to the Adviser Network.

Regular meetings of the Adviser Network will be scheduled to coincide with, provide an opportunity for early public comment on, the development of major work products for the TPO and **Citrus Connection** ~~Polk Transit~~ to include the Unified Planning Work Program, Long Range Transportation Plan, priority transportation projects and the Transportation Improvement Program, Transit Development Plan. and Program of Projects.

The meetings will be held in central, accessible locations, and members will have the option to participate either in-person or through an interactive webcast of the meeting. The meetings will be re-broadcast on Polk Government Television (PGTV) and available for on-demand viewing online through the TPO and **Citrus Connection** (~~LAMTD~~) websites.

Meetings will be publicly noticed per the requirements of the TPO Public Participation Plan.

If, under emergency or pandemic conditions, TPO staff are unable to conduct such meetings, alternative engagement strategies will be followed, in accordance with the Public Participation Plan.

Staff will solicit comments and recommendations from the members in attendance at the Adviser Network meetings. Participants viewing the meetings online (during or after the live meeting) will be given an opportunity to provide comments as well.

C. Documentation

Comments and recommendations formulated through the Adviser Network will be compiled and reported to the TPO Technical Advisory Committee, TPO Board and Lakeland Area Mass Transit District (LAMTD), d/b/a, Citrus Connection Polk Transit Board of Directors for their use and consideration. These public comments as well as information on the disposition of these comments will be included in quarterly progress reports to grantor agencies.

D. Effective Date

The Adviser Network will be officially established an alternate program for public involvement upon approval by the Florida Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration.

**Section 9: Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**

A. Purpose and Authority

The authority of this Committee shall be set forth by the TPO pursuant to Section 339.175, F.S. The TAC provides technical review, supervision and assistance to the TPO on transportation planning matters for Polk County. Additional responsibilities may be defined from time to time by the TPO.

B. Voting Membership

TAC membership shall include representatives from local, state and federal public agencies with an interest in transportation issues. Members shall serve by virtue of office held. The voting membership shall be comprised of the following representatives or their designee:

Jurisdiction	TAC Member
<b>City of Auburndale</b>	City Manager
<b>City of Bartow</b>	City Manager
<b>Central Florida Regional Planning Council</b>	Executive Director
<b>City of Davenport</b>	City Manager
<b>Town of Dundee</b>	Town Manager
<b>City of Eagle Lake</b>	City Manager
<b>City of Fort Meade</b>	City Manager
<b>City of Frostproof</b>	Town Manager
<b>City of Haines City</b>	City Manager
<b>City of Lake Alfred</b>	City Manager
<b>Town of Lake Hamilton</b>	City Manager
<b>City of Lake Wales</b>	City Manager
<b>City of Lakeland</b>	Planning Manager
<b>City of Lakeland</b>	Transportation Planner
<b>City of Lakeland</b>	Public Works Director
<b>Lakeland Area Mass Transit District (LAMTD), d/b/a, Citrus Connection</b>	<del>Director</del> <u>General Manager</u>
<b>City of Mulberry</b>	City Manager
<b>City of Polk City</b>	City Manager
<b>Polk County</b>	Land Development Director
<b>Polk County</b>	Roads & Drainage Director
<b>Polk County School Board</b>	Planning Specialist
<b>City of Winter Haven</b>	City Manager
<b>City of Winter Haven</b>	Public Works Director

C. Alternate Membership

If a specified voting member (listed by title in Section 9B.) does not wish to represent their agency at meetings of the TAC, he/she may designate an individual defined herein as "designee." The designee shall be considered and recognized as the voting member thereafter. Designees must be specified as voting members using a form approved by the TAC. Voting members may authorize one or more individuals defined herein as "alternate voting

members" to be considered and recognized as voting members in their absence on a periodic basis.

D. Non-Voting Membership

Non-voting membership shall include representatives from the agencies listed below:

Florida Department of Transportation District One  
Bureau of Air Monitoring and Mobile Sources  
Division of Air Resources Management  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection

District 1 of the Florida Division  
Federal Highway Administration  
United States Department of Transportation

Florida Energy Office  
Bureau of Community Assistance  
Division of Housing and Community Development  
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

E. Terms

The term of office for voting members shall coincide with their tenure in one of the member positions specified in Section 9B.

F. Attendance

If a voting member or designee is absent for three consecutive meetings and is not represented by an alternate at these meetings the TAC Chairperson shall send a letter to said member and the manager of the government he/she represents. This letter shall indicate that meeting attendance is imperative for proper representation on the committee and request consideration be given to appointing a designee (or replacement designee) or member alternate(s).

G. Subcommittees

The TAC shall, from time to time, create ad hoc subcommittees as necessary. The TAC shall dissolve an ad hoc subcommittee when its work has been

completed. The Chairperson shall be an ex-officio member of all subcommittees.

## **Section 10: Transportation Disadvantaged Program**

### A. Designated Official Planning Agency (DOPA)

1. The TPO shall be the Designated Official Planning Agency for the Polk County Transportation Disadvantaged program pursuant to Rule 41-2 of the Florida Administrative Code (~~FAS~~ **FAC**).

### B. Membership

1. The TPO Board shall elect a voting member to serve as Chairperson of the Local Coordinating Board concurrently with its annual elections of officers. The chairperson shall serve until his or her term has expired, or he or she are otherwise replaced by the Designated Official Planning Agency.
2. The TPO Board shall **ratify** members of the Local Coordinating Board who are local representatives of state agencies.
3. In accordance with Chapter 427, Florida Statutes, the TPO Board shall **appoint** all other members of the Local Coordinating Board.

## **Section 11: TPO Executive Director**

- A. The TPO Executive Director is responsible to the TPO Board and will oversee and coordinate all aspects of the transportation planning and programming process.
- B. The TPO Executive Director will act as liaison between the TPO and TAC.
- C. The TPO Executive Director shall assist the Chairperson for the TPO and TAC in preparation and dissemination of agendas, notices, correspondence and reports.

- D. The TPO Executive Director shall be authorized to take such actions as may be required consistent with applicable statutes, ordinances and agreements to enable the TPO to achieve its purposes.
- E. The TPO Executive Director shall be authorized to sign all Federal Transit Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Florida Transportation Disadvantaged Commission, and Florida Department of Transportation invoices for reimbursement of transportation planning expenses.
- F. The TPO Executive Director shall be authorized to grant time extensions to Consultant Services Authorizations for a time period not to exceed sixty (60) days.
- G. In the absence of the TPO Executive Director, the TPO Administrator shall be authorized to perform any duties of the TPO Executive Director including, without limitation, those duties authorized by this Section 11.

## **Section 12: Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the voting members of the TPO Board provided a copy of the proposed amendment is sent to every member at least seven calendar days before action is to be taken.

## **Section 13: Land Use and Transportation Forum**

The purpose of the Land Use and Transportation Forum is set forth as follows:

- A. Provide a medium for an open discussion and exchange of ideas on land use and transportation issues.
- B. Promote consistency between land use and transportation plans and policies.
- C. Foster development of integrated land use and transportation policies.
- D. Provide a means of education on related issues.

The Land Use and Transportation Forum will be convened on a periodic basis by the TPO staff in consultation with its participants. All meetings will be open to the public and noticed as such. TPO staff shall maintain a mailing list to be used to send notice of meetings. This list shall include area land use and transportation planners, past attendees, and the media.