



Commission Office Staffing Structure

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Policy Research Process

Phase 1: Research & Idea Formulation

Commission and/or Commissioner determines problem to be solved and where it aligns with the strategic plan.

Policy staff may utilize Strategic Initiatives to help determine best match to strategic plan.

Policy Staff research and refine ideas for GPC discussion.

Phase 2: GPC Consideration

Commissioner presents research, idea, and alignment to the strategic plan for discussion at GPC.

Item further refined by GPC. If GPC wishes to proceed, item assigned to appropriate Charter Officer.

Commission Office Staffing Structure

- City of Gainesville Commission Staffing Structure
- Advantages and Disadvantages to Independent City Commission Staff
- City Commissions with Independent Staffers
- City/County Commissions Without Independent Staffers

Gainesville City Commission Staffing

- Currently, the Gainesville City Commissioners have no personal staff, and instead share four administrative assistants, who assist with scheduling and agenda setting.
- The Gainesville City Charter states that the Commission must deal with “all employees of the City solely through their respective Charter Officer”, implying that no employee can report to the City Commission rather than a Charter Officer.
- According to the City Attorney, a change to this structure would require a Charter Amendment

Advantages to Independent Staffers

- Potential for greater breadth of constituent and legislative services, and can lessen the workload for commissioners and executive assistants.
- Independent staffers can serve as a representative for the commissioners in meetings that commissioners cannot attend, which can mitigate the loss of information and communication that may otherwise occur.
- Staffers can also ensure emails and calls are answered to the highest capacity as each staffer could focus exclusively on one commissioner.

Disadvantages to Independent City Commission Staff

- Increased cost of at least \$150,000 plus benefits for a minimum of three additional staffers.
- Lack of clarity of whether there is a need for independent staffers for each commissioner since there is already existing staff to assist the commission in certain aspects of their jobs.
- Independent staffers could politicize the aide position, as they would report directly to the elected official rather than the Clerk's office. This may mean that the work done by the aide is more likely to help the elected official and their potential political prospects, rather than assist the city as a whole.

Examples of Commission Staffing Structure

Commissions with Independent Staffers

- Jacksonville, Florida
- Miami, Florida
- Tampa, Florida
- Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- Tallahassee, Florida

Commissions without Independent Staffers

- Alachua County, Florida
- Athens-Clarke County, Georgia
- Pembroke Pines, Florida
- Fort Collins, Colorado
- Boulder, Colorado
- Coral Springs, Florida
- Lakeland, Florida

Commissions with Independent Staffers

Jacksonville, Florida

- Each commissioner has an independent assistant who assists with constituent services.
- Under the Council Secretary, there is an Information Systems Administrator, and Administrative Assistant to the Council Secretary, a Chief of Research, a Chief of Administrative Services, a Chief of Legislative Services, and Legislative Assistants. There are two legislative services assistants, three administrative services assistants, and a research assistant. With this structure, independent assistants do not handle research or legislative assistance tasks.
- This structure is outlined by the Jacksonville City Charter

Commissions with Independent Staffers

Miami, Florida

- The Mayor has a Chief of Staff, a Deputy Director of Communications, and Economic Development and Resiliency Advisory, and Aide to the Mayor for Community Programs, a receptionist, and three special aides, with a budget of \$1,000,000 for staffing.
- The total staffing budget for the five commissioners is \$3,553,000, with each commissioner receiving 1/5th of the budget and the ability to staff their office as they choose.

Tampa, Florida

- Each council member has a legislative aide responsible for administrative, office, and research support. The ability of the Tampa City Council to create these staff positions is outlined in the City Charter.

Commissions with Independent Staffers

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

- Each commissioner and the mayor have a personal commission assistant, and there is one commission assistant who oversees the entire commission. The commissioners appoint and oversee their assistants, who assist with constituent services, budget support, and managing office expenses/supplies.
- This structure is set by the city charter.

Tallahassee, Florida

- Each commissioner has an independent aide who assists with administrative and research tasks. The mayor has three staffers.
- Tallahassee's charter grants the City Commission all powers that are not explicitly prohibited by the charter, while Gainesville City Commission only has powers that are explicitly given to them by the charter.

Commissions with Independent Staffers

Miramar, Florida

- Each city commissioner has a legislative aide, while the mayor has an executive assistant in place of a legislative aide. These aides are primarily responsible for clerical duties.
- The Miramar City Charter authorizes the City Commission to appoint a Commission Secretary, and delegates the additional power to the Commission to allow for commissioners to individually appoint their own secretary or secretaries.

Commissions Without Independent Staffers

Alachua County, Florida

- The commission has two staff members (Executive Coordinator and Executive Staff Assistant) housed under the Assistant County Manager who provide administrative support.

Athens-Clarke County, Georgia

- The Clerk of Commission has one employee, a Deputy Clerk, and both provide administrative and clerical support for the ten commissioners.

Pembroke Pines, Florida

- The commission has two full-time and one part-time staffers for the entire commission, city manager, and assistant city manager, who are staffed under the clerk's office

Commissions Without Independent Staffers

Fort Collins, Colorado

- A staff member from the City Manager's office provides administrative and constituent services support.

Boulder, Colorado

- The entire commission shares one staff member, the Assistant to the City Council, who provides administrative and policy support.

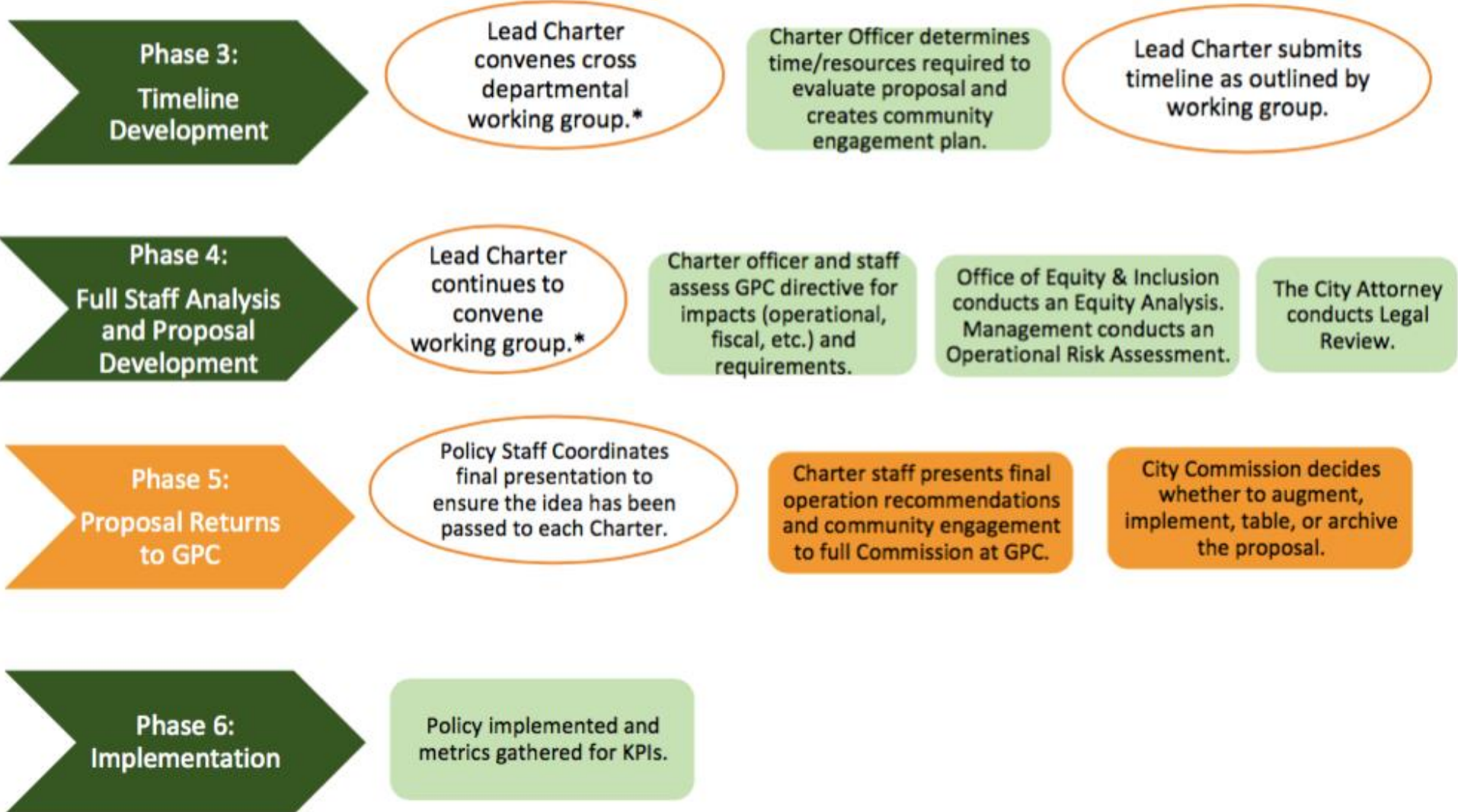
Coral Springs, Florida

- The four commissioners and mayor share an administrative manager, staffed by the clerk's office.

Lakeland, Florida

- The mayor and commission have an administrative assistant and office associate. The City Manager also provides clerical staff when needed.

Policy Research Process



Discussion?