

# BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



**NOTE:** A Joint meeting of the Board Of County Commissioners, Environmental Protection Commission, and Planning Commission will be held on the 26th Floor Conference Center for the morning session only. The afternoon session will be held in the 2nd Floor Board Room.

## REVISED AGENDA - JANUARY 29, 1997

### COUNTY CENTER - 26TH FLOOR

### MORNING SESSION

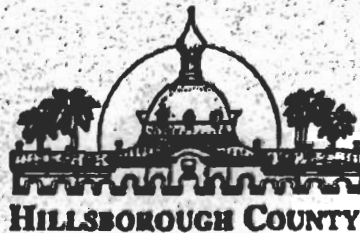
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|---------|--|--|
| 9:00 AM | CALL TO ORDER  | BOCC Chair Dottie Berger   |
|         | Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation                                  | Commissioner Thomas Scott  |
| 9:05 AM | Selection of Chair for Meeting                                     |  |
| 9:10 AM | Introductory Comments  | Dottie Berger, BOCC Chair<br>Jan Platt, EPC Chair<br>Mike English, PC Chair  |
| 9:20 AM | I. Cross-Organizational Performance Audit                          |  |
|         | A. Remarks   | Roger Stewart, Executive Director, EPC<br>Robert Hunter, Executive Director, PC<br>Daniel A. Kleman, County Administrator<br>Bob Edwards, Chair, IRC |
|         | B. Presentation of Final Report<br>& Recommendations               | Bob Melville and Skip Burnside,<br>David M. Griffith and Associates, LTD   |
|         | C. Presentation of Recommendation<br>Of Process for Further Review | Daniel A. Kleman, County Administrator   |
|         | D. Discussion  | BOCC, EPC, PC  |
| 12:00 N | Recess for Lunch   |  |

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**CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE  
AUDIT OF THE**

**Hillsborough County  
Florida**

**Planning Commission,  
Environmental Protection Commission,  
and Planning and Growth Management Department**



**January 16, 1997**



**DMG**

**DAVID M. GRIFFITH & ASSOCIATES, LTD.**

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**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY**  
**CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY**  
**CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AUDIT**  
**Executive Summary**

Our previous performance audits of the Hillsborough County Planning Commission (PC), Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) and Planning and Growth Management Department (PGMD) identified numerous potential cross-organizational performance audit issues. From that list, the County's Performance Management Team (PMT) for this project selected eleven audit issues. Our findings and recommendations concerning these eleven issues are summarized below and presented in greater detail in this report.

<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>Key Recommendations</b>	<b>Fiscal Impact (Annual)</b>
1. <u>Environmental Planning</u> - The coordination of planning issues is limited and regional planning duties are likely to expand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue current environmental planning roles (short-term)</li> <li>✓ Establish a stronger regional planning model (long-term)</li> </ul>	None Projected
2. <u>Transportation Planning</u> - The ambiguity of mid-term planning roles could cause planning gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop clear guidelines limiting the PC's role to long-range and multi-jurisdictional planning.</li> </ul>	None Projected
3. <u>Neighborhood Planning</u> - A clear neighborhood planning organizational policy is needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assign neighborhood planning to local jurisdictions and clearly limit the PC's role.</li> </ul>	None Projected
4. <u>CIP Reviews</u> - The PC's CIP review process is ineffectual and not legally required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Cease the PC's CIP reviews.</li> <li>✓ Develop criteria for reducing the number of CIPs reviewed.</li> </ul>	None Projected
5. <u>Zoning Reviews</u> - The PC and PGMD duplicate efforts and the BoCC's role is of limited value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Cease the PC's zoning reviews.</li> <li>✓ Limit the BoCC's review of ZHM recommendations and appeals.</li> </ul>	\$67,000
6. <u>Wetlands Permits</u> - Unnecessary duplication is limited, but coordination could be improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop a joint EPC-PGMD recommendation for coordinating pre-submission/DRC meetings.</li> </ul>	None Projected
7. <u>Wastewater Facility Permits</u> - The EPC and PGMD duplicate plan review/inspection efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Delegate wastewater facility plan reviews to PGMD, subject to DEP approval.</li> </ul>	\$14,000
8. <u>Water Facility Permits</u> - PGMD-Health Department coordination could be improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop concurrent or coordinated water facility review and inspection process.</li> </ul>	None Projected

Key Findings	Key Recommendations	Fiscal Impact (Annual)
9. <u>Resource Management</u> - PC work programming and funding do not promote accountability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Improve monitoring reports.</li> <li>✓ Institute joint work program and budget development procedures.</li> <li>✓ Refine funding methodology.</li> </ul>	None Projected
10. <u>Legal Support</u> - The County Attorney's Office could handle more PC and EPC legal duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assign EPC associate to County Attorney's Office.</li> <li>✓ Increase PC utilization of County Attorney staff.</li> </ul>	\$30,000
11. <u>Information Access</u> - GIS data, platforms and support services are fragmented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Improve County GIS leadership.</li> <li>✓ Standardize the GIS platform.</li> <li>✓ Support LINKS program.</li> </ul>	None Projected

While we found some duplication of effort among the three agencies, the unwarranted duplication of effort--at least in the context of each agency's respective legal role and autonomy--appears to be minimal. For most functions, such as environmental, transportation and neighborhood planning, there exists some potential for future duplication, but very little existing duplication. Even where we found some duplication (e.g., zoning reviews and wastewater facility permit processing), the costs associated with this duplication are minimal.

In the course of addressing the specific audit issues selected by the PMT, we identified other issues which we believe merit further analysis. These issues, which are discussed later in this report, could be addressed through a study of potential regionalization alternatives for the area's major planning and environmental management functions. For example, does the Tampa Bay metropolitan area need a stronger regional structure for addressing cross-jurisdictional planning or environmental management issues? If such a regional entity were in place, would the County continue to need an independent city-county PC or a quasi-independent EPC? Should a different board structure be considered for the EPC? Such issues should be addressed as part of a collaborative process involving all appropriate agencies and stakeholders.

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# INTRODUCTION

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# **HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY** **CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Project Background and Purpose**

The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) of Hillsborough County (the County), in response to state legislative mandates, has commissioned performance audits of several County programs to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. Earlier this year, performance audits were conducted of the Hillsborough County Planning Commission (PC), Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) and the County's Planning and Growth Management Department (PGMD).

The BOCC also directed that a cross-organizational study of PC, EPC and PGMD be conducted at the conclusion of the individual departmental performance audits. The intent of the cross-organizational study was to identify service duplication and other opportunities for improving inter-agency operations and performance. This study, by building on the earlier performance audits, addresses specific cross-organizational issues raised by those audits. By taking a broader, inter-agency perspective, this study also seeks to identify more effective strategies for meeting the County's planning and regulatory service needs.

According to 1995 population estimates, the County's population is 891,680. Within the County there are only three municipalities--the City of Tampa (with 286,320 residents), Plant City (25,670 residents) and the City of Temple Terrace (19,060 residents). The County is served by numerous other public agencies, including the School Board, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HARTline), Tampa Port Authority, Hillsborough County Aviation Authority, Tampa Sports Authority, Hospital Authority and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD).

One of the County's more striking characteristics, in addition to its having only three municipalities, is its relatively large (and rapidly-growing) unincorporated area. Of its 1,072 square miles, the County's unincorporated area comprises 931 square miles, nearly 87 percent of its total area. More interestingly, the unincorporated area represents the County's fastest growing area, at least in terms of population. From 1980 to 1990, population in the unincorporated area increased by 22 percent. From 1990 to 1995, the unincorporated population grew from 61 percent to 63 percent of the County's total population. The County estimates that 94 percent of its population growth since 1990 was attributable to the unincorporated area.

The County's role as a municipal services provider is at least as important as its role as a county government. It is the fourth most populous county in the State of Florida (the State) but, as a provider of municipal services to an unincorporated area of 560,630

residents, it also represents one of the State's largest cities. Its municipal services for the unincorporated areas include parks and recreation, road construction and maintenance, solid waste disposal, water and wastewater treatment, and emergency services. Its countywide services include human services and environmental protection.

The County is governed by the elected, seven-member BOCC, but the management of its executive branch is fragmented. An appointed County Administrator, who serves at the BOCC's pleasure, manages some of the County's largest organizational units, but several organizational units are managed by independently-elected constitutional officers (e.g., the Assessor) and quasi-independent, appointed boards (e.g., the PC). The County's FY96 operating budget was \$763.9 million and its FY96 capital budget was \$254.3 million. The County's most significant countywide revenue source is the property tax. The County also levies a municipal services tax unit tax (MSTU) on residents of unincorporated areas which generates substantial revenues for municipal services for those areas.

The County's planning and environmental regulation functions, which represent the principal focus of this study, are performed by three entities--the PC, EPC and PGMD. The PC is managed by an Executive Director who reports to an independent board appointed by the BOCC and the governing bodies of the three cities in Hillsborough County. The EPC is managed by an Executive Director who reports to the EPC board (which also serves as the BOCC). The PGMD is one of many organizational units managed by the County Administrator.

The PC is an independent city-county agency authorized by County Charter and state law. It serves as the official Land Planning Agency (LPA) for Plant City, Temple Terrace, Tampa and the unincorporated area of the County. The EPC is a quasi-independent agency authorized by County Charter and state law. It serves as the environmental regulatory agency for the County and cities of Plant City, Tampa and Temple Terrace and exercises many powers under its own legal authority as well as those delegated to it by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

PGMD is part of the Municipal Services Team under the County Administrator. Before its recent consolidation with the Building Department, PGMD had 134 positions and a FY96 operating budget of \$9.3 million. The new organizational structure provided for the merger of the Building Department and PGMD's Review Section and retained the Permit Services Center. PGMD's major functions include zoning and development reviews, selected infrastructure planning, short-range transportation planning, building inspections, administration of the Zoning Hearing Master and Vested Rights programs and policy planning for ecosystems and natural resources.

## 1.2 Scope of Services

The scope of services for this study was determined by a Project Management Team (PMT) representing the three entities being reviewed (i.e., the PC, EPC and PGMD). The PMT was established to oversee this project, approve the work program for the project and serve as a sounding board for discussing project issues, findings and recommendations.

At the outset of this project, we conducted an independent review of the final reports of our previous performance audits of PGMD, PC and EPC. We summarized the relevant findings and recommendations of these audits (see Appendix A) and summarized the potential cross-organizational issues. We then met with the PMT to discuss the cross-organizational issues identified in the four previous performance audits.

Using a collaborative assessment process and informal assessment criteria (e.g., potential duplication and cost savings, overall public benefit and quality of services), the PMT obtained a consensus on the specific cross-organizational issues to be addressed. We developed a work program for addressing the approved issues and presented it to the PMT for approval. The approved work program is presented in Appendix B and the issues selected by the PMT are summarized in the table below.

<b>Issue Title</b>	<b>Issue Summary</b>
No. 1 - Environmental Planning	To what extent, if any, should the PC, EPC or PGMD be more involved in environmental planning?
No. 2 - Transportation Planning	To what extent, if any, should the PC or PGMD be more involved in mid-level transportation planning?
No. 3 - Neighborhood Planning	What is the most cost-effective and appropriate organizational approach to neighborhood planning?
No. 4 - Capital Improvement Plan Reviews	Can or should the CIP review process be streamlined?
No. 5 - Zoning Reviews	What is the most appropriate alignment of roles and duties for zoning reviews?
No. 6 - Wetlands-Related Permit Processing	Can or should the permit approval process for wetlands-related developments be streamlined?
No. 7 - Wastewater Facility Permit Processing	Can or should the permit approval process for wastewater facilities be streamlined?
No. 8 - Water Facility Permit Processing	Can or should the permit approval process for water facilities be streamlined?
No. 9 - Resource Management	To what extent can planning resources be more effectively planned and managed?
No. 10 - Legal Support	How should legal support services best be provided?
No. 11 - Information Access and Utility	How should information technology strategies be modified to enhance customer services?

We targeted our fact-finding and analyses on addressing the specific issues set forth in the work program approved by the PMT. In other words, we agreed that the approved work program would take precedence in terms of defining the audit issues and scope. Consistent with applicable performance audit standards, we also incorporated the relevant work of the prior performance audits. As a result, our scope of services included the following tasks:

- Interview key managers and employees of the PGMD, PC and EPC, as well as the chairpersons of the PC and EPC and some members of the BOCC.
- Review applicable legal requirements and restrictions for the three agencies.
- Review current planning and regulatory roles and duties.
- Examine inter-agency planning and regulatory linkages.
- Obtain an adequate understanding of the scope and extent of current planning and regulatory efforts as they pertain to the above project issues.
- Identify alternative strategies for improving planning and regulatory efforts (e.g., reallocating resources or restructuring current roles and duties).
- Evaluate the potential impacts of alternative measures for improving planning and regulatory efforts.
- Determine the most appropriate implementation strategies.

Based on the PMT's direction, we limited our scope to the three entities being reviewed and for one issue, the County Health Department. Such external entities as SWFMWD and the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC) were excluded from the scope of our work. Due to the extensive interviews of municipal representatives, customers and other citizens conducted during the prior audits, we concentrated our interviews on employees with the greatest familiarity with the project issues.

### **1.3 Project Methodology**

As required by our contract with County, we conducted this study in conformance with the Government Auditing Standards of the U.S. Comptroller General (1994 Revision), commonly known as the *Yellow Book*. In particular, we employed the *Yellow Book* standards applicable to performance audits, some of which are highlighted below.

Section	Summary of Standard
2.8	Economy and efficiency audits may focus on the extent to which an entity uses the “optimum amount of resources” in services in a “timely manner”
2.9	Program audits may identify “factors inhibiting satisfactory performance and “ways of making programs work better”
6.1	Work shall be adequately planned (i.e., it should employ an audit plan and the “work of other auditors and experts” to satisfy audit objectives)
6.7	The significance of audit issues may be determined using qualitative factors (e.g., a program’s visibility and relative importance to citizens)
6.46	Evidence should provide a reasonable basis for findings
6.47	Evidence may be physical, documentary, testimonial and analytical
6.53	Evidence should be sufficient (i.e., persuasive to a reasonable person), competent (i.e., consistent with fact) and relevant (i.e., logically related to findings)
7.46	Significant issues which the auditors lack sufficient time or resources to pursue should be referred and, if appropriate, disclosed in the report

We conducted our study in full conformance with the Yellow Book field work standards for conducting performance audits, including independence and due professional care. We also employed internal quality control reviews of our work at suitable intervals.

Where appropriate, we relied on the work performed for the previous audits. Such work included analyses of service workloads and staffing levels, reviews of existing resources and processes, surveys of customers and employee attitudes and focus groups. As deemed necessary, we supplemented the prior audit work with additional analyses. For example, we conducted an additional review of applicable federal, state and local laws and court cases.

Upon completing our field work, we issued a draft report to the PMT, allowing a brief review period for the PMT to assess the accuracy of factual data. We conducted another meeting with the PMT to discuss our draft findings and recommendations. After receiving the PMT’s written response, we issued the final report to the PMT, along with any appropriate responses to the PMT’s comments. The final report is in the prescribed format.

Our methodology for the cross-organizational study had some important distinctions relative to the methodologies employed for the prior performance audits. The prior performance audits, for example, included the following tasks:

- An assessment of adherence to applicable laws and rules.
- Extensive on-site observations and analyses of business processes.
- Thorough surveys of customers and employees.

- An analysis of the adequacy of operating controls and procedures.
- An assessment of relations with employees and the general public.
- An evaluation of alternative service delivery methods.

In contrast, we incorporated the results of the detailed performance audits of PGMD, PC and EPC and took a second look at these agencies, but from a more countywide perspective. Rather than focus on performance issues limited to the individual entities, we concentrated on inter-entity issues, such as duplication, productivity barriers and other improvement opportunities. Our work was necessarily issue-driven and interview-based.

In the course of addressing the specific audit issues selected by the PMT, we have identified other issues which we believe merit further analysis. It is our view that these issues, which are outlined later in this report, require a broader, more strategic orientation. As such, we urge the BOCC to conduct a study of potential regionalization alternatives for some of the planning and environmental regulation functions addressed herein. As stated in Section 6.13 of the *Yellow Book*, "Much of the benefit from audit work is not in the findings reported or the recommendations made, but in their effective resolution."

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## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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## **2.0 - Audit Findings and Recommendations**

### **2.1 Environmental Planning**

#### **1. Cross-Organizational Issue**

*To what extent, if any, should the PC, EPC or PGMD be more involved in environmental planning?*

There is tremendous variation as to what is meant by “environmental planning,” differences in state regulations. In some states, environmental functions may include such issues as air pollution, plant and animal habitat, wetlands, water, wastewater, solid waste, rivers and greenways. In Florida, the Legislature has defined environmental issues to include air quality, water quality, soils, wildlife, aquatic life and noise pollution.

What is meant by environmental planning is a work in progress. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), in its 1995 *Ecosystem Management Implementation Strategy*, set forth a strategy for replacing traditional, reactive regulatory approaches with a more proactive approach to ecosystem management. In its 1995 Annual Report, the EPC acknowledged the need to emphasize new concepts consistent with the State’s initiative.

The related cross-organizational issue involves how the County should respond to the State’s initiative. Should it do more environmental planning than it does now? If so, which entity (or entities) should be empowered to lead this effort? To address this issue, we defined the scope and extent of current environmental planning efforts, examined inter-agency planning linkages and identified measures for improving the County’s environmental planning strategies.

#### **2. Findings and Observations**

Environmental planning is not a new concept, particularly in the State of Florida and Hillsborough County. Local governments in Hillsborough County were early practitioners of resource and habitat conservation and the EPC is evidence of this commitment. Local governments in Hillsborough County have a number of environmental management successes to their credit, including awards for promotional materials and the Hillsborough River’s designation as an *Outstanding Florida Water*, a distinction held by only two percent of the State’s water resources.

The BOCC has become increasingly involved in environmental planning issues, particularly in habitat preservation and the establishment of trails and greenways. While the EPC is an enforcement agency and the PC and PGMD possess planning authority, all three entities are encountering an increasingly-complicated array of environmental issues with long-term planning implications.

Of the three entities, the EPC has the most significant involvement in environmental issues. However, its involvement is regulatory and enforcement-related rather than planning-related. Its activities encompass the areas of research, permitting and testing, primarily for transportation-related, water-borne and other pollutants (e.g., CO, NO and VOC's). As a regulatory and permitting agency, the EPC's expertise in environmental issues will likely be of greater importance to a variety of public forums. The need for EPC's expertise could encompass new areas and result in additional staffing demands.

The PC's principal environmental planning role relates to the development of the conservation and coastal elements of Comprehensive Plans in the County. The PC staffs the Interlocal River Planning Board. The PC also assists the environmental planning efforts of local planning departments and neighborhood associations, develops environmental preservation media in concert with policies for implementing the Comprehensive Plan and coordinates Hillsborough River planning and greenways programs. The PC's role could increase, however, as concerns about resources, habitats and other environmental issues lead to greater interest in codification in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan provides a potential vehicle for expanding the PC's role in environmental planning.

The PGMD has been involved with a broad array of environmental programmatic issues in the unincorporated areas of the County. Its relevant activities have included the following:

- The Environmental Lands Acquisition Program (ELAP) - a local property-tax funded program to acquire sensitive lands.
- The Hillsborough River Greenways Task Force - a State-sponsored ecosystem demonstration program to convert acquired footpath rights of way and achieve other environmental objectives.
- The Greenways Master plan - the County is in the first year of implementation.
- The Trails Project - a series of trails in urbanized portions.
- The National Estuary Program (NEP) - a federally-funded initiative involving local governments coordinated by TBRPC to protect Tampa Bay.
- Habitat preservation planning - a County-mandated program to protect wildlife habitats from development.
- Florida Game and Fish Commission - assist with establishing a regional mitigation bank and streamlining the local regulatory review process for endangered species.

- Strategy for Linking Land and Water - developed in concert with the PC and SWFWMD.
- Wetlands area protection and management in sensitive areas - a long-standing County commitment to this policy.
- Coastal conservation and aquifer preservation (1986 Land Planning Act)

As a result of this growing commitment, PGMD has allocated two staff planning positions and one scientist position to environmental planning issues.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvement

The 1994 study by the Florida Advisory Council on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR), *Fiscal Impact of Comprehensive Planning Requirements on Florida's Counties and Municipalities*, stated that comprehensive planning is "typically deficient in considering and accounting for environmental quality and natural resource protection concerns." The historical deficiencies of comprehensive planning in meeting environmental issues are being recognized, at least at the state level.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), in its 1995 "Ecosystem Management Implementation Strategy," proposed a ecosystem management strategy with the following features:

- Place-based management which focuses more on overall ecosystem health issues than on specific media (e.g., air, water, land or wildlife)
- Common-sense regulation which through incentives fosters voluntary compliance and through "workable alternatives" emphasizes outcomes rather than the letter of the law
- Non-adversarial, voluntary partnerships between government agencies and citizens

It is difficult to project the impact of this new State initiative on the County and, in particular, on the environmental management roles of the EPC, PC and PGMD. Still, it is conceivable that it could result in a profound restructuring of the way the County and other local governments throughout Florida manage environmental issues.

Since the EPC was established, traditional (i.e., media-based, reactive and site-specific) regulatory approaches have largely achieved their objectives. By most measures, air and water quality have improved in the region. Nevertheless, by supplementing traditional regulation with planning, land acquisition, economic incentives and prevention, the State's new ecosystem management policy offers what State leaders believe will be a

more flexible (and effective) approach to managing biological and physical environments.

At least some implications for the Tampa Bay region are beginning to emerge. The focus of the new ecosystem management initiative on Ecosystem Management Areas (EMAs) and regional hydrological and ecological linkages could compel local governments to think more regionally. Recommended cultural changes could encourage the DEP and EPC to shift programmatic emphasis from pollution control to pollution prevention (e.g., increase technical assistance, economic incentives and new technologies). *Common sense* regulatory policies could promote the replacement of rigid, specialized compliance reviews with multi-disciplinary, cross-media review teams.

In its 1995 Annual Report, EPC acknowledged the need to emphasize new concepts consistent with the State's initiative. These concepts include stewardship, voluntary compliance, common sense regulation and place-based ecosystem management. As a result of these trends and the County's strong commitment to environmental protection, it appears likely that local government responsibilities and staffing levels will increase in the coming years, potentially in each of the planning and regulatory agencies.

The most critical management issue concerning environmental planning lies not in duplication, but rather in the coordination (and sufficiency) of environmental planning resources. Based on our interviews, we believe that the coordination of environmental management issues among planning agencies in Hillsborough County could be improved. As evidenced by such achievements as the Outstanding Florida Water designation, some coordination is taking place. However, the local governments in Hillsborough County do not have yet have a cohesive policy as to such matters as environmental planning roles, staffing requirements and priorities. As the Tampa Bay Region's local governments strive to implement the State's new ecosystem management initiative, a more regional, proactive and holistic approach to environmental planning could improve coordination.

#### 4. Recommendations

For the short-term, we recommend that the PC, EPC and PGMD continue their current roles in environmental management and planning as follows:

- The PC should continue to coordinate multi-jurisdictional environmental planning issues (e.g., air quality) and prepare the environmental elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- The EPC should continue to supervise environmental research activities, the permitting process in environmentally-sensitive areas and the testing of water and air quality.

- The PGMD and the municipal planning agencies in the County should continue to direct the implementation of environmental commitments in the Comprehensive Plan and discretionary environmental protection activities within their jurisdictions.

For example, the PGMD would continue to supervise environmental management issues in the County's unincorporated areas (e.g., specific habitat preservation and the establishment of specific *green* areas and trails).

For the long-term, however, we believe that a stronger regional forum for environmental planning and management will be needed. As environmental management becomes more proactive, and as the Comprehensive Plan addresses more environmental issues, additional staff resources could be required. As more local agencies become involved in environmental issues, the challenge of coordinating their activities could become more burdensome.

DEP's Ecosystem Management Implementation Strategy contemplates the creation of a Greater Tampa Bay EMA team. This team is intended to serve as a coordinating forum for action teams for the Hillsborough River, Alafia River, Little Manatee River, Manatee River and Tampa Bay. The Strategy also acknowledges a need to coordinate the various public agencies at the local level, including such state agencies as the DEP, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Department of Community Affairs and Division of Forestry, local entities such as the EPC and PC and regional entities such as the TBRPC and SWFMD.

We believe that local governments in the Tampa Bay Region should consider establishing a regional structure for addressing environmental planning issues. There are numerous structural alternatives that appear viable. The PC offers one alternative with strong planning capabilities, but its jurisdiction is limited to Hillsborough County. The TBRPC offers another alternative, but its planning capabilities are uncertain. An informal coordinating forum, such as the Greater Tampa Bay EMA contemplated by DEP, offers a third alternative worthy of consideration.

DEP's Ecosystem Management Implementation Strategy calls for the implementation of certain measures in 1997 and 1998. For example, by 1997, a process for building a network of public-private partnerships is required. By 1998, place-based management is to be implemented for at least ten EMAs, alternatives to the current regulatory process are to be put in place and the DEP is to be reorganized. These initiatives should provide an opportunity for the Tampa Bay Region to consider new organizational models for addressing regional environmental planning and management issues.

## 2.2 Transportation Planning

### 1. Cross-Organizational Issue

*To what extent, if any, should the PC or PGMD be more involved in mid-level transportation planning?*

There is little disagreement on which agencies should perform long-range transportation planning. However, the consensus dissolves regarding the appropriate agency for addressing such mid-range transportation planning issues as five-year traffic circulation planning, congestion management, road network service analysis and urban design studies.

The key cross-organizational issues are whether mid-range transportation planning needs are being adequately met and which agency provides the most suitable forum for meeting these needs. For example, which agency should establish traffic plans for corridors in the unincorporated area to link with the Land Use Plan? Should the County add staff to PGMD for this purpose or establish an arrangement with the MPO to assist in this area?

### 2. Findings and Observations

Transportation planning is accomplished at several levels in the County's organization. The principal roles of the PC, EPC and PGMG, which are summarized below, appear to be clearly delineated. As a result, there is little, if any, duplication of effort or overlap of services in transportation planning.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the principal transportation planning agency in Hillsborough County. Each jurisdiction with over 50,000 in population must have an MPO. The Hillsborough County MPO is responsible for long-range transportation planning in the County and coordinating transportation planning efforts among 17 agencies in the metropolitan area. These roles include:

- Prepare transportation projections (through its shared regional modeling resource, the Florida Standard Urban Transportation Modeling Structure).
- Develop 10- and 20-year transportation plans, the Transportation Element of County Comprehensive Plan and other transportation plans.
- Develop the Transportation Improvement Program, disadvantaged programs, transportation alternatives programs (e.g., rideshare) and related programs.
- Administer Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) funding and develop Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) priorities.

- Coordinate federal and state transportation issues and develop Air Quality Conformity reports for the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).
- Coordinate inter-jurisdictional transportation issues with other agencies (e.g., the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), HARTLine, the Expressway Authority, Pinellas County, Manatee County, Polk County and Pasco County).
- Facilitate public involvement in long-term transportation planning.

Hillsborough County's MPO has about ten staff with five staff dedicated to technical processes (e.g., GIS) and modeling and five staff dedicated to the development of alternatives programs (e.g., bicycles, pedestrians, buses and rideshare programs) and the administration of the MPO's planning process requirements. All MPO staff assist with Comprehensive Plan development. The MPO staff are housed at the PC. The County is one member of the MPO.

The EPC's principal involvement in transportation issues is regulatory and research-oriented, mainly on air quality issues (e.g., inspections and testing relating to pollutants and repair shops). The EPC provides input to the MPO on transportation planning issues and the development of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The EPC also provides input on ISTEA funding levels, Clean Air Act conformity issues and the impacts of emission reductions of trails and other alternatives planning projects. The EPC has only minimal contact with the PGMD with regard to transportation issues.

Traditionally, the PGMD's transportation planning role has been limited to a supporting role. It interacts with other agencies on transportation and traffic planning and implementation issues. Those entities include the Expressway Authority, HARTline, FDOT, and the MPO/Planning Commission. However, the PGMD has decided to increase its focus on transportation issues and recently created a Transportation Planning Unit. This new unit includes a Manager, an Assistant (who serves full-time as a liaison to outside agencies) and four planners. These staff are involved in *current planning* of transportation infrastructure. Their emphasis is on development review concurrency issues, not on long-range planning.

While there are numerous transportation issues facing the County, most of these issues relate to differences in program planning and philosophy (e.g., the level of commitment to alternatives like mass transit systems). Since the transportation planning roles of these agencies are clearly spelled out, there is little duplication or overlap among the three entities.

- The PC, in its role as staff to the MPO, is responsible for overall and long-range planning and for developing the Transportation Elements of Comprehensive Plans of the local jurisdictions in Hillsborough County.

- The PGMD is responsible for short-range transportation planning, implementation of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, and development of trip reduction and other programs in the unincorporated portions of the County.
- The EPC is responsible for air quality testing and research and the permitting of roads in environmentally-sensitive areas.

The joint PC-MPO staffing arrangement appears to work well and should not be changed (except in the context of developing a more comprehensive, long-term regional planning strategy and organizational structure. The immediate issue is whether there is a serious gap in the provision of transportation planning services, especially in the area of mid-range transportation planning.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvement

The principal transportation planning issue in the County is not short-range planning (the principal responsibility of the PGMD) nor long-range planning (the principal responsibility of the PC/MPO) but mid-range planning. While the PGMD is involved with current planning issues and the PC is involved with ten- to twenty-year planning issues, there is no consensus on the appropriate organizational forum for five-year transportation planning issues.

The outstanding transportation issues include the following:

- Transportation plan implementation.
- Corridor management issues.
- Level of service analysis on the County's road network.
- Urban design studies.
- Transportation program alternatives implementation.

In the view of the project team, these issues could be resolved through the development of guidelines for assigning organizational responsibility. If the PC and PGMD fail to arrive at a consensus as to their respective roles, the likelihood of duplication and additional organizational tension between the two agencies could increase. This is particularly true given the PGMD's desire to increase its transportation planning capabilities.

#### 4. Recommendations

One of the PC's major responsibilities is long-range transportation planning. Given the regional nature of long-range transportation planning, we believe that the PC's role should be continued.

Transportation planning issues with a multi-jurisdictional impact or long-term issues requiring more immediate policy commitments should be the PC's responsibility. Transportation planning issues with a mid-term time horizon dealing with specific projects in the unincorporated area should be the PGMD's responsibility. However, even when the PC has lead responsibility, it should closely coordinate its efforts with PGMD.

The following guidelines should form the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two agencies:

- Long-range transportation planning should be the PC's responsibility.
- Multi-jurisdictional transportation issues (whether short-range, mid-range or long-range) should be coordinated by the PC.
- Mid-range and short-range transportation issues not requiring multi-jurisdictional coordination should be handled by local jurisdictions.
- Transportation infrastructure implementation should be the local jurisdiction's responsibility (e.g., PGMD or municipality).
- Alternatives programs which reflect available policy options to local jurisdictions should be the responsibility of the local agency.
- Assistance to local jurisdictions on all transportation planning and program issues should continue to be a PC role.

As a result of these guidelines, the County should avoid undue expansion of PGMD's transportation planning capabilities which could only be achieved through additional staffing and duplication with the PC. Instead, the County should contract with the MPO to establish traffic plans for minimum corridors in the unincorporated area to tie in with the Land Use Plan.

## **2.3 Neighborhood Planning**

### **1. Cross-Organizational Issue**

*What is the most cost-effective and appropriate organizational approach to neighborhood planning?*

Like environmental planning, neighborhood planning is an area of increasing interest among professional planners and governmental policy makers. As planners have struggled to define neighborhood planning, a conceptual framework for neighborhood planning has begun to emerge.

Like community policing in law enforcement, neighborhood planning is a way of bringing the discussion of land use and related policy choices to the neighborhood level. At the jurisdictional level, land use and other planning issues may be viewed by citizens as daunting -- particularly in jurisdictions as large as Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa. As a result, at a jurisdictional level, the unique (and often conflicting) needs of individual neighborhoods are easily overlooked.

Neighborhood planning may be viewed as a mechanism to focus planning policy discussion at the lowest unit of a city or county--a neighborhood (which itself can mean many things). Neighborhood planning also may be viewed as a way to control development or design in an area where the defining characteristics differ from other portions of that jurisdiction. These community definitions may take on the force of commitment in a comprehensive plan or be treated as less formal guidelines. In either form, neighborhood planning represents a planning *self-help* or *empowerment* tool.

Neighborhood planning, as with its parallel efforts in other governmental service areas, is a concept which is topical in today's policy environment. While it may be a passing policy fad, neighborhood planning is an attempt to focus policy choices on the lowest possible unit as practical. Determining the most appropriate organizational strategy for neighborhood planning requires an understanding of current approaches to, and projected future needs for, neighborhood planning.

### **2. Findings and Observations**

In Hillsborough County, interest in neighborhood planning has grown, particularly in the City of Tampa, the large and distinctive communities in the County, and in the Brandon area. Both the PC and PGMD have become more involved with neighborhood planning efforts in recent years. The EPC's scope of responsibility does not include neighborhood planning.

In its role as the developer of Comprehensive Plans, the PC has had the greatest involvement in the neighborhood planning concept. Most recently, this interest has taken

the form of an attempt to develop a community plan for central Hillsborough County. Originally conceived as a neighborhood plan for Brandon, this effort grew until it encompassed six other surrounding areas (i.e., Lomona, Durant, Mango, Valrico, Seffner and Bloomingdale).

The Central Hillsborough Plan is not viewed by staff as being entirely successful because of this accretion of diverse community planning areas. The Central Hillsborough County Plan also lacked an agreement on the specific criteria to be utilized in community planning. At the time we conducted interviews, we were advised by staff that additional neighborhood planning was on hold until a philosophy and process could be developed and agreed upon by the appropriate parties.

The PC has promoted neighborhood planning efforts in other parts of the County as well. It has supported the City of Tampa on its neighborhood planning efforts. It has been involved with *quasi-neighborhood planning* efforts such as strategic plans for Balm and Wimauma and an economic development plan for Ruskin. It works with neighborhood associations in the County. Other communities, such as the Lutz and Keystone areas, have expressed interest in neighborhood plans. The BOCC adopted a *Neighborhood Bill of Rights* to foster community awareness of local planning issues and opportunities for citizen involvement in planning.

In its role as an implementing agency of the Comprehensive Plan, the PGMD has also encountered more significant interest in neighborhood or community planning. This is in part because of the BOCC's policy directive to heighten the community focus of its services. The PGMD has initiated (or considered initiating) several neighborhood planning projects, including the Northwest Area Community Plan (which was never completed). It should be noted that the PGMD was not involved with the Central Hillsborough Plan (according to the PC, however, the PGMD's involvement was requested).

### 3. Opportunities for Improvement

Conceptually, neighborhood planning represents an attempt to focus policy choices and services on the smallest community unit possible and practical. Before this objective can be effectively accomplished in the County, however, we believe that certain procedural and organizational issues should be resolved. These issues are described below.

In our view, neighborhood plans should not unduly limit the latitude of local jurisdictions to implement the more strategic, County-wide elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Neighborhood land use decisions usually have few impacts outside the neighborhood. The Comprehensive Plan represents the County's commitment to goals and policies guiding land use, zoning, transportation, housing, public services, wetlands, coastal preservation, economic development, and other areas. These policy commitments are Countywide in nature, but also encompass commitments to specific areas of the County. Including neighborhood plans as specific elements of the County's Comprehensive Plan

would, in our view, risk potential conflict among Countywide and neighborhood goals as well as pose serious legal implications.

The process utilized to develop neighborhood plans should be based on practical and cost-effective standards. Neighborhood planning may be desirable from the perspective of involving local citizens in the development of planning guidelines at the lowest practical geographical level. However, the need to obtain this community input must be reconciled with the County's budgetary constraints. The failure to establish reasonable limits regarding procedural issues such as the frequency and structure of public meetings, the roles of volunteers and the use of surveys could make it difficult to conduct neighborhood planning in a cost-effective manner.

A clear organizational strategy for implementing neighborhood planning is needed. While there is no significant duplication of neighborhood planning efforts now, we believe that, unless lead responsibility for this function is clarified, duplication and further organizational friction could result, especially if neighborhood planning demands multiply. Neighborhood planning offers a potentially valuable discretionary tool for community-oriented government. If the County is committed to neighborhood planning, it should plan and organize its implementation to the extent that the implementation of other community-oriented services (e.g., community policing) have been planned and organized.

#### 4. Recommendations

We recommend that the County continue its efforts to develop a neighborhood planning approach that can be used as a discretionary tool for supporting the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. However, these plans should only be developed once the PC and PGMD have agreed upon the alignment of responsibilities and a standard approach, including criteria for inclusion, content and process implementation and adoption.

Neighborhood plans should be advisory rather than legally binding. They should represent development guidelines for design, consistency and other statements of character in a community. As local implementation guidelines, rather than part of the Comprehensive Plan, neighborhood plans should be the responsibility of each jurisdiction's planning department, not the PC. For the unincorporated portion of the County, the PGMD should have responsibility for neighborhood planning. The PC's role should be to support the development of a standardized process.

Upon request, the PC should assist the PGMD and other local planning offices with the development of standard guidelines for neighborhood plans. These guidelines should include such factors as the following:

- Criteria for determining the planning area - recent experience (e.g., the Central Hillsborough planning project) indicates that relatively small and consistent areas work best for community planning.
- The scope of the plan (e.g., the community characteristics to be included)--the focus could be on a localized implementation of the Comprehensive Plan or on other issues (e.g., design guidelines).
- The procedures for developing neighborhood plans—the frequency and structure of public meetings; the roles of volunteers in performing staff work and the use of surveys should be defined.

Neighborhood planning should be viewed as an implementation approach for the Comprehensive Plan. As such, local planning offices should take the lead in developing the neighborhood plans and the PC's role should be limited to providing guidance to maximize the consistency of neighborhood plans with Comprehensive Plans. If a local jurisdiction desires the PC to develop a neighborhood plan, then the local jurisdiction should contract with the PC for this service and fund the contract with local revenues.

## **2.4 Capital Improvement Plan Reviews**

### **1. Cross-Organizational Issue**

<p><i>Can or should the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) review process be streamlined?</i></p>
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The PC conducts reviews of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) documents generated annually by each jurisdiction in the County. These reviews are conducted for all CIP projects, whether these projects involve the renewal of existing infrastructure (e.g., public facility reroofing or road overlays) or the expansion of infrastructure (e.g., new facilities or roads).

The cross-organizational issue is whether this review is needed and, if so, to what extent it should be streamlined. To address this issue, we reviewed the legal basis for the current CIP review process, the current allocation of responsibilities, current County policies and procedures related to CIP submission, development, review and approval, and the overall effectiveness of the review process.

### **2. Findings and Observations**

Florida's Growth Management Act requires cities and counties to adopt comprehensive plans, in part to help ensure adequate funding for infrastructure and effective transition for new development. Chapter 86-191, Laws of Florida, enacted in 1986, requires the

linking of infrastructure to the issuance of development permits; public facilities and services must support development concurrent with the impacts of development.

The PC has interpreted current law, such as Chapter 163.3194(2) Florida Statutes, Chapters 75-390, 78-523 and 86-407 Laws of Florida and local law as enabling them to conduct CIP reviews. It is the PC's position that its role of advising the BOCC on the compliance of proposed development decisions with the Comprehensive Plan requires it to review proposed CIP projects.

Other reasons for the CIP reviews include the following:

- To ensure that annual CIPs conform to the Comprehensive Plans' six-year CIE Schedule of Improvements timetable.
- To control urban service area expansion.
- To ensure the consistency and accountability of CIPs submitted by jurisdictions in the County.
- To support the mapping of public infrastructure in the County.
- To review potential cross-cutting planning issues in the County.

The CIP reviews are performed by one PC employee over a two-week period, accounting for only about ten percent of this person's time. During the rest of the year, this PC employee is involved in infrastructure and environmental planning and updating relevant portions of the Comprehensive Plan (e.g., wastewater, solid waste and stormwater facility issues). The costs associated with this process appear to be negligible. CIP issues also are addressed during the ongoing development and review of Comprehensive Plans.

Conceptually, the PC's review of local CIPs is intended to ensure the conformity of CIPs to Comprehensive Plans. The PC believes that its CIP reviews have helped ensure that the CIPs better reflect the intent of the Comprehensive Plans. The question is whether the current review process is the most effective tool for achieving this objective.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvement

The PC's review of CIPs is, by design, duplicative. Given the relatively low cost of this review, and the important public policy rationale for ensuring the consistency of development decisions with Comprehensive Plans, we believe that this degree of duplication is acceptable. However, we do not agree that the PC is legally required to perform this function as it currently performs it.

The major problem with the current process is not that it is duplicative, but rather that it is of limited utility. First, from the time when the local jurisdictions submit their CIPs to the PC, the PC has only two weeks to review the CIPs and report its findings of consistency. Second, the PC's report is vague; no projects are typically listed, described or evaluated in terms of their consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

In our view, the PC's current review of CIPs is superficial. Moreover, since there are only two weeks available to perform CIP reviews, there are limited opportunities within the current process to make the review more meaningful. For example, the problems experienced with the County's 1992-93 parks bond issue could continue. Despite the bond issue's passage and the first new park going on-line this year, there are insufficient funds to operate the park. The County's CIP and operating budget are not integrated and no forcing mechanism exists for ensuring adequate operating funds for new facilities.

#### 4. Recommendations

We recommend that the PC eliminate the current two-week review of CIPs submitted by local jurisdictions. The PC should, however, continue to review CIP consistency during its ongoing review of CIP projects and increase these ongoing contacts using a team management approach. The PC should develop more selective criteria for determining which CIP projects require review. We also recommend that the County more effectively integrate its capital and operating budget processes.

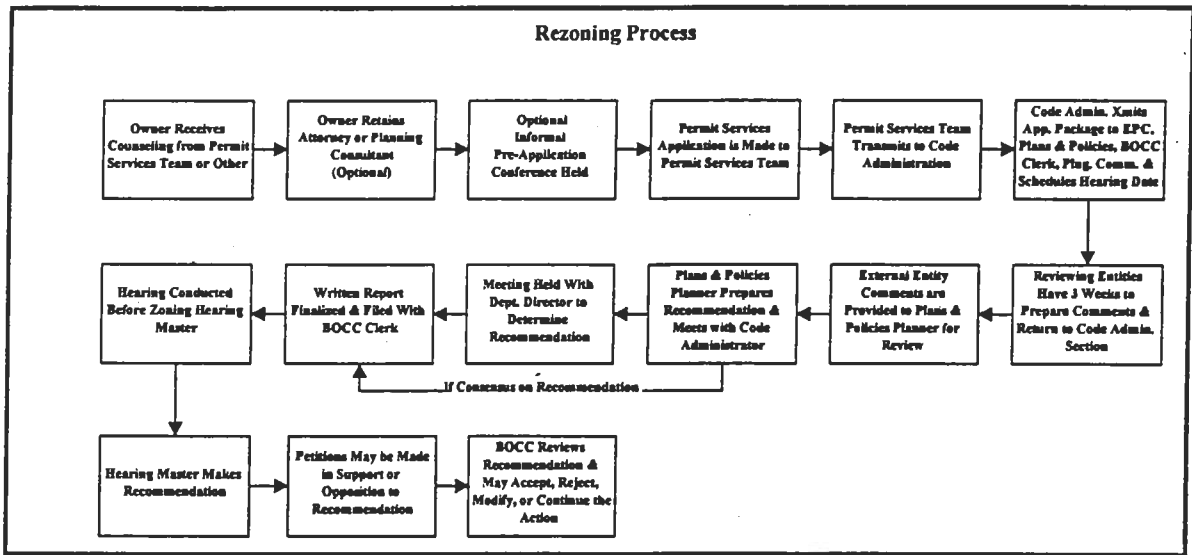
### 2.5 Zoning Reviews

#### 1. Cross-Organizational Issue

*What is the most appropriate alignment of roles and duties for zoning reviews?*

The zoning review process involves the County's PGMD and the PC, as well as the BOCC and contract Zoning Hearing Masters (ZHM's). The PGMD's Code Administration Section coordinates the zoning review process and reviews zoning requests for consistency with the Land Development Code (LDC). The PC's Countywide Planning Team analyzes and preparing reports on zoning requests for consistency with the local government's Comprehensive Plan. The ZHM conducts the initial public hearing for a rezoning request. PGMD Codes Administration Section and PC Countywide Planning Team staff participate in the ZHM public hearing.

The County's rezoning process may be depicted as follows:



Following receipt of the ZHM's recommendation, requests may be made to appear before the BOCC in support of or opposition to the recommendation. The BOCC, on a land use agenda, reviews the ZHM recommendation and may accept, reject, modify, remand back to the ZHM for further review, or continue the action. The BOCC land use agenda serves as the second public hearing. PGMD Codes Administration Section and PC Countywide Planning Team staff participate in the BOCC public hearing.

## 2. Findings and Observations

As indicated by our June, 1996 Performance Audit of PGMD, we believe that the staff involved in the zoning review process are sufficiently knowledgeable, experienced and capable to fulfill their duties. Our review of a sampling of land use application summary reports prepared by staff confirms this conclusion. Our review of similar reports prepared by PC staff on rezoning requests revealed a good working knowledge of the goals, objectives and policies contained in the County's Comprehensive Plan.

As illustrated by the table below, reports for the last two fiscal years demonstrate a high degree of consistency between the BOCC's final action and the original staff recommendations for land use/zoning reviews.

Year	Submitted	Consistent	Percent
1995	262	250	95.4
1996 <sup>1</sup>	274	260	94.9

This high degree of consistency appears to reflect high BOCC confidence in its staff. It also could reflect effective interaction among planning agency staff. However, given the BOCC's broad scope of duties and range of public policy initiatives, it also begs a

<sup>1</sup> As of August 31, 1996

question about the need for the BOCC's intensive involvement in the zoning review process.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvements

Our review of selected land use application summary reports prepared by PGMD and PC staff revealed some degree of duplication between the two entities. While each agency's primary focus is on their particular area of responsibility (i.e., the LDC for PGMD and the Comprehensive Plan for the PC), each agency addressed issues within the other's purview to varying degrees. In our view, this represents a minor duplication of effort.

A more significant problem pertains to the BOCC's role in zoning reviews. Our interviews of parties closely associated with the zoning review process indicated that the BOCC's review of ZHM recommendations is of dubious utility. Over the years, the BOCC's review has evolved into a full-blown second hearing, especially when a request is made to appear before the BOCC or a case is otherwise brought to the BOCC's attention by a constituent.

It is estimated that the BOCC spends two full days per month on zoning issues BOCC often serves as the broker of last resort between the developer and neighborhood. Because the process forces the smallest decisions into the public arena, the BOCC has less time for more critical issues. In our view, the BOCC's excessive involvement reduces the benefit of the ZHM review process, and renders the ZHM's role to one of facilitating the consent agenda for non-controversial rezoning requests.

### 4. Recommendations

We recommend that one agency be charged with sole responsibility for conducting zoning reviews. Both the PC and PGMD could perform the review work currently conducted by the other, thereby eliminating the need for duplicate reports and multiple staff to attend the meetings and hearings associated with the zoning review process. Since the PGMD administers the LDC, a critical vehicle for implementing the Comprehensive Plan, we believe that the PGMD is the most appropriate agency to conduct zoning reviews.

We also recommend that the BOCC should dramatically limit its review of ZHM recommendations. In order to appear before the BOCC at land use agenda meetings, petitioners should be required to file briefs identifying errors, omissions and disputed findings of material facts with relation to the ZHM's recommendation. All such briefs should be reviewed by the County Attorney's office for legal sufficiency prior to a petitioner being authorized to appear before the BOCC at a land use agenda meeting.

Each request should be scrutinized as to whether or not it identifies material errors, omissions and disputed findings of fact which could effect the ZHM's recommendation. If the factual basis of the ZHM's recommendation is sufficiently challenged, the case

should be remanded back to ZHM for re-hearing in light of the new information. If legal sufficiency for a hearing before the BOCC is not found by the County Attorney's Office, the request should be denied and the item should be included on the consent agenda and summarily accepted. The County Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the PGMD, should develop administrative rules to govern this new process.

The County also should explore appeals process alternatives for ZHM findings that do not require the BOCC's extensive involvement. The BOCC could exercise final authority over zoning matters in some perfunctory manner, if legally necessary, but we recommend that appeals be delegated to another entity, such as the Planning Commission or a Zoning Appeals Board. Even though Florida law affords local governments final authority over quasi-judicial matters and that the Snyder case deems the zoning process as quasi-judicial, we believe that the BOCC has more significant public policy roles to play than serving as an appellate body for ZHM recommendations.

While the benefits of the above recommendations are difficult to quantify with precision, we believe that there will be some cost impacts over the next five years. The County Attorney's Office will incur the costs of reviewing all briefs filed in petition to appear before the BOCC on zoning matters for legal sufficiency. The BOCC, BOCC support staff, PGMD staff, and PC staff will benefit to the extent that BOCC land use agenda meetings are significantly shorter. While this will probably not result in the ability to delete any positions, it will free up time for these staff to work on other tasks, thereby resulting in improved productivity or reduced staffing needs.

The PC's Work Plan indicates that 1.24 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) are assigned to zoning review activities. The annual cost for salaries and benefits for the PC staff assigned to performing these responsibilities, assuming 100 percent of the Senior Planners time and 24 percent of the Executive Planner's time, is approximately \$67,000. Over a five-year period, the amount would be \$335,000. This represents the potential savings if the PC were to cease performing zoning reviews.

## **2.6 Wetlands-Related Permit Processing**

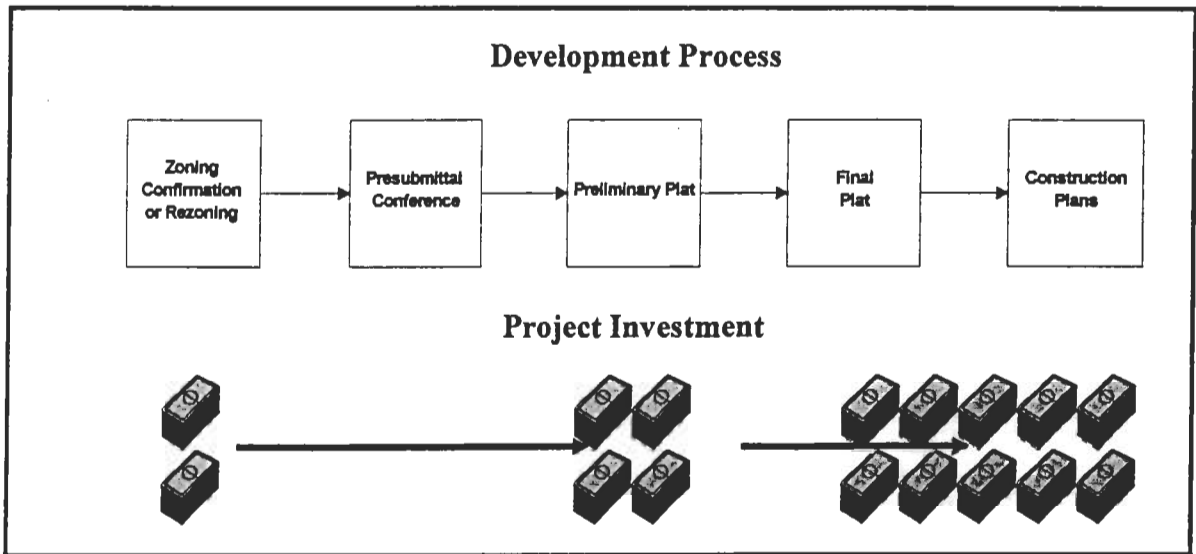
### **1. Cross-Organizational Issue**

*Should the permit approval process for wetlands-related developments be streamlined?*

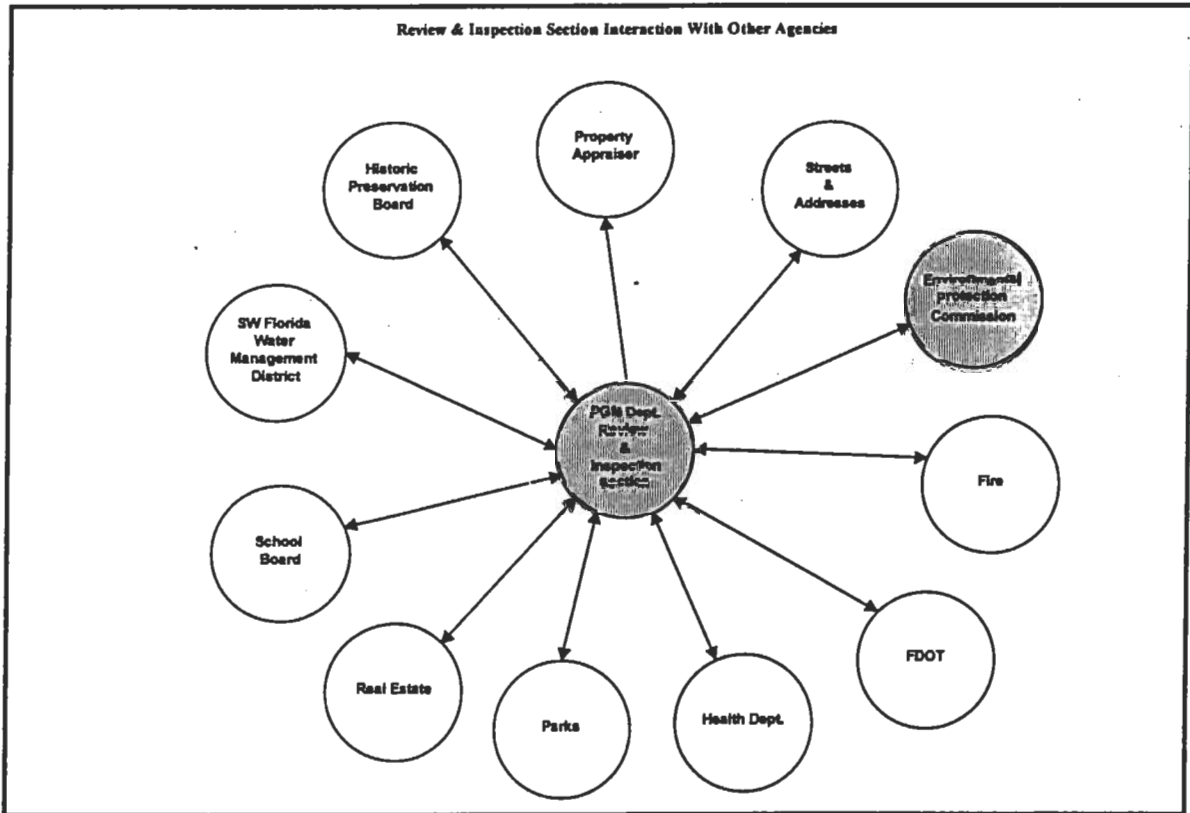
The development review process is administered by the PGMD's Review and Inspections Section. The development review process involves confirming appropriate zoning or petitioning and obtaining approval of preliminary plats, final plats and construction plans (pre-submission reviews are optional).

This process is designed to provide citizens undertaking development activities with increasing levels of assurance regarding the acceptability of their project as it proceeds through the development process. Its intent is to assure that major land use and project design issues are resolved at the preliminary phases of project development, thereby minimizing the need for major changes at the construction stage. This assures that potential *project-stopping* issues are resolved while the investment in the project is relatively small.

The development process for subdivisions in Hillsborough County may be depicted by the following chart.



The PGMD's Review and Inspections Division facilitates the review of development review applications for County entities both internal and external to the Planning and Growth Management Department. The nature and time frames associated with this review are specified in the LDC. The graph on the following page depicts the nature of this interaction between the Review and Inspections Section and external entities in facilitating these reviews:



Determinations as to whether wetlands exist on a particular development site and the delineation of any wetland boundaries are within the jurisdiction of the EPC's Wetlands Management Division. This process is governed by Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, and Rule Chapter 62-340, Florida Administrative Code. The statutes and rules mandate that all state and local wetland regulatory programs use the same wetland definition and delineation methodology (see EPC Rule Chapter 1-11, which guides EPC's day-to-day operations). Rezoning petitions and subdivision and commercial development review applications are subject to EPC's review and approval.

The cross-organizational issue is whether the reviews performed by the PGMD and EPC are duplicative and, if they are duplicative, the extent to which the duplication is unnecessary and inefficient.

## 2. Findings and Observations

In our recent performance audit of the PGMD's Review and Inspection Section, we found it to be functionally well-organized. Based on a limited survey of other counties, we also found that the number of employees dedicated by PGMD to development review was within a reasonable range of the staffing levels of other similarly-situated Florida Counties.

Similarly, in our recent performance audit of the EPC's Wetlands Management Division, we found it to be operating within applicable state and local laws. In addition, we found

the Division's management to be knowledgeable and its employees to be well-organized. Together, PGMD and the EPC appear to be successfully achieving their paramount mission in this area--that is, to prevent improper developments in the County's wetlands.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvement

In a recent performance audit, the EPC's Wetlands Management Division was recognized for meeting with property owners who have plans for future development that affect wetlands and for providing informal comments on those plans. The same audit criticized the division for not attending pre-submission and development review committee meetings and for missing development review deadlines established in the LDC and administered by the PGMD's Review and Inspection Section.

EPC Wetlands Management Division staff indicated that they are not attending pre-submission meetings at offices of PGMD's Review and Inspection Section for the following reasons:

- The information that they need to conduct a meaningful review (e.g., the set of 1979 aerial photographs that serve as a hard copy GIS system) are not readily transportable to the site of those meetings.
- EPC staff believe that the written comments they provide to PGMD staff for discussion at pre-submission meetings is as helpful as their presence is without access to their hard copy data.
- When EPC staff did attend pre-submission meetings, they felt they received significant pressure from applicants and PGMD staff to commit to projects without sufficient information or make determinations beyond the scope of their authority or responsibility.
- EPC staff believe that they can more effectively assist land owners with potential wetlands issues at their offices during business hours.

Wetlands Management Division staff indicated that they are missing some development review deadlines, but they believe that many delays are beyond their control. In some cases, a considerable amount of review time passed while the application and accompanying documents were forwarded from the Review and Inspection Section to the Wetlands Management Division (a judgmental sample reviewed indicated a significant number of cases over a several month time period in which this occurred). In other cases, the review is late because the reviewer is waiting for additional information from the applicant or PGMD and fails to *stop the clock*.

There were no instances of unnecessary duplication identified between the Wetlands Management Division and PGMD's Review and Inspection Section. Based on our fact-finding, however, we believe that the development review process would benefit from

increased coordination between EPC's Wetlands Management Division and PGMD's Review and Inspection Section.

#### 4. Recommendations

PGMD should coordinate an effort to document the information specifications for each stage of review and the corresponding level of assurance to be conveyed the property owner at each stage. This effort should ensure the participation of both internal and external development review agencies and the County Attorney's Office. Once a consensus is reached, the LDC should be revised to incorporate the group's recommendations.

Representatives of the EPC's Wetlands Management Division and PGMD's Review and Inspection Section should meet to discuss the following issues:

- Possible codification of the pre-submission meeting process to substitute the EPC's written comments for their physical presence at the meetings.
- The feasibility of making the EPC's approval a prerequisite to the PGMD's pre-submission meeting.
- The feasibility of EPC only attending those DRC meetings involving matters where they have denied a permit.
- The possibility of moving pre-submission and DRC meetings to the EPC's Wetlands Management Division Office.
- The possibility of co-locating the offices of both organizations to improve coordination in performing the development review process.

The EPC-PGMD team should then submit a joint recommendation to the Executive Director of the EPC and the County Administrator.

Since there were no significant instances of unnecessary duplication identified between the Wetlands Management Division and Review and Inspection Section, the recommendations provided herein will not generate measurable cost savings. Rather, the recommendations in this section are designed to achieve greater consensus and cooperation between the EPC and PGMD. Some costs will be incurred for staff to participate in the problem-solving team. These costs will likely be realized as opportunity costs (e.g., the participating staff being unable to perform other assignments). The ultimate implementation costs could vary depending on the proposed resolution.

## 2.7 Wastewater Facility Permit Processing

### 1. Cross-Organizational Issue

*Should the permit approval process for wastewater facilities be streamlined?*

PGMD's Review and Inspection Section is responsible for reviewing wastewater collection/transmission system plans and inspecting such systems after construction. System plans must be approved and facilities must pass inspection prior to the County accepting the facilities. The focus of the Review and Inspection Section's review is design and construction quality, system operability, and system component quality and operability.

The EPC's Water Management Division also reviews wastewater collection/transmission system plans and inspects such systems following construction. System plans must be approved and facilities must pass inspection prior to being placed into service. The focus of the Water Management Division's review is the construction and operability of the system components which provide environmental safeguards. System requirements are governed by Chapter 403, Florida Statutes, which are administered by DEP. DEP has delegated authority to EPC to enforce the state requirements and splits its review fees with the EPC. The EPC receives 70 percent of the fees; for FY96, EPC received \$63,534.

Section 403.1815, Florida Statutes, provides that the DEP may grant to any county or municipality, upon request, the authority to independently regulate collection laterals of 10 inches or less in size which may be connected to any water system or sewerage system owned by the county or municipality. The issue is whether the County's current permit approval process is burdened by unnecessary duplication or other inefficiencies.

### 2. Findings and Observations

In our recently-completed performance audit of the EPC, we concluded that the EPC's permit approval process for wastewater facilities effectively met its established objectives. DEP representatives informed us that the Water Management Division performed its functions well and was very conscientious about protecting the environment. The DEP clearly considers the EPC delegation as a model for programs in other counties. The delegation agreement between the EPC and DEP regarding domestic wastewater permitting, compliance, and enforcement is a premier agreement that maximizes personnel resources and reduces duplication with DEP.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvements

The EPC's Water Management Division and the PGMD's Review and Inspections Section are in the evaluation period of a new concurrent submittal test program which

began October 15, 1996 and will end December 15, 1996. The intent of the test program is to determine if the concurrent review process reduces the review time for developers seeking approval of wastewater collection systems. The test does not, however, provide for the concurrent final inspection of such systems.

We believe that concurrent plan review represents a positive step toward more efficient customer service. It recognizes that any time saved during the development process translates into lower costs to consumers. Still, we believe that the opportunity exists to go further. By eliminating the need for duplicative plan reviews and inspections by the EPC and PGMD, it appears that the County could also realize some cost savings of its own.

#### 4. Recommendations

Although it will require the approval of the Florida DEP, the EPC's Water Management Division and the PGMD's Review and Inspection Section should develop a more efficient certification process. We believe that, with appropriate training in performing environmental reviews and inspections, and subject to the oversight of EPC's Water Management Division, PGMD's Review and Inspection Section personnel could satisfactorily conduct wastewater collection system reviews and inspections.

In our view, this approach would maintain the integrity of the environmental review process while minimizing duplication and ensuring increased coordination and time savings in the development process. This model would also seem to be applicable to the other political subdivisions in Hillsborough County to the extent that those jurisdictions have qualified staff capable of performing such tasks and the willingness to perform them.

The EPC's Water Management Division currently has one professional engineer dedicated to the collection system program. The salary and benefits cost of that position totaled about \$48,000. Since that position about 30 percent<sup>2</sup> of her time performing wastewater collection system reviews and inspections for the county, the potential savings attributable to eliminating this task is about \$14,400 for one year and \$72,000 over five years. These paper savings would be possible only if the Water Management Division delegated wastewater collection system plan reviews and inspections. This estimate assumes that the county would continue to receive the same share of fees from DEP.

It is anticipated that some start-up costs would be incurred in developing and implementing a certification program. However, in the longer term, it is anticipated that the maintenance and monitoring of the certification program would require less time than

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<sup>2</sup> The position also spends 17.5 % of her County work time performing administrative functions related to the program. To the extent that the Planning and Growth Management Department assumed these administrative functions without additional funding, an additional savings up to \$8,400 per year could be realized or \$42,000 over five years.

the time required to conduct duplicate reviews. This will either free the Professional Engineer to take on other duties or negate the need for additional half-time position in the Water Management Division.

## **2.8 Drinking Water Facility Permit Processing**

### **1. Cross-Organizational Issue**

*Can or should the permit approval process for water facilities be streamlined?*

The PGMD's Review and Inspection Section is responsible for performing the review of drinking water distribution system plans and the inspection of such systems following construction. System plans must be approved and facilities must pass inspection prior to the County accepting the facilities. The focus of the Review and Inspection Section's review is the quality of design and construction, the operability of the system, the quality and the operability of system components.

The County Health Department's Environmental Health Section is responsible for administering the provisions of the Florida Safe Drinking Water Act, Sections 403.850 - 403.864, Florida Statutes. DEP, which has overall responsibility for administering these statutory requirements, delegated its duties to the Health Department. These provisions govern the review of drinking water distribution system plans and the inspection of such systems following construction. System plans must be approved and facilities must pass inspection prior to being placed in service. The focus of the County Health Department's review is on assuring that such systems are constructed and maintained in such a manner as to minimize health risks to the public.

County Health Departments are organized and administered under the County Public Health Unit Program of the Florida Department of Health. Technically, County Health Department Employees are state employees and County Public Health Units are considered state entities. Funding for these programs is provided by the state. As such, any potential duplication of effort between these agencies impacts both the State and County.

### **2. Findings and Observations**

According to the Florida Department of Health's Environmental Health Program Office, the Hillsborough County Health Department is one of the premier units in the State. Hillsborough County's water supply is regarded as healthy (in terms of applicable standards) and environmentally-safe. Clearly, any streamlining of the water facility permit approval process should not put the County's water quality at risk.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvement

There appears to be little communication or coordination between PGMD's Review and Inspection Section and the County Health Department regarding the water facility plan review and inspection function.

### 4. Recommendations

Staff of the County Health Department and PGMD's Review and Inspections Section should meet and identify opportunities for reducing development time and costs through coordinated or concurrent review of drinking water distribution system plans and in the performance of inspections. The process to be used in achieving such coordinated or concurrent review, if any, should be documented and an implementation schedule determined.

Because County Health Department drinking water distribution systems plan reviews and inspections are not funded by the County, there are no potential cost savings to the county which would result from increased communication or coordination. Any savings would be to developers of such systems, the benefit of which could be passed on to consumers.

## 2.9 Resource Management

### 1. Cross-Organizational Issue

*To what extent can planning resources be more effectively planned and managed?*

The County has made a significant investment in land use planning. Together, the PGMD and PC have a \$13.1 million operating budget and 193 FTEs. Excluding the positions recently absorbed from the Building Department, the PGMD has 134 FTEs. The department's FY96 budget was \$9.3 million. The PC's annual budget for FY96 was about \$3.8 million with \$3,450,000 appropriated by the County from ad valorem tax revenues and \$350,000 from transportation planning grants. It has 59 FTEs.

The cross-organizational issue is whether the PGMD and PC employ adequate management techniques to ensure that their considerable resources are effectively used. Questions to be addressed include the following:

- Is the process for implementing, and monitoring the implementation of, the Comprehensive Plan satisfactory?
- How should planning resources be planned, scheduled and managed?

- To what extent should annual work programs and schedules be more effectively coordinated between the PC and PGMD?
- How should funding mechanisms be altered to facilitate the most efficient use of planning resources?

In addressing these questions, we hoped to identify opportunities for improving the County's resource management practices pertaining to planning. In particular, we explored more effective and efficient ways to program and schedule planning work, set planning priorities and allocate planning resources.

## 2. Findings and Observations

Comprehensive planning activities are performed by multiple agencies (many agencies produce draft elements of the comprehensive plan), e.g.:

- PC prepares, monitors and updates the future land use, intergovernmental coordination, conservation and aquifer recharge, public facilities, capital improvements and coastal management and deep water port elements.
- PGMD prepares the stormwater, solid waste and sanitary sewer elements.
- Housing and Community Development prepares the housing element.
- Parks and Recreation prepares the parks and recreation element.
- The Tampa Port Authority prepares the port element.
- Aviation Authority prepares the aviation element

The PC coordinates the preparation of comprehensive plans and monitors their implementation. Local jurisdiction planning offices, like the PGMD, are responsible for implementing land development codes and other development actions consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Overall, both the PC and PGMD have experienced expenditure decreases in recent years. From FY90 to FY96, for example, the PC's staffing levels dropped from 76 FTEs to 59 FTEs and its annual operating budget decreased from \$4.4 million to \$3.8 million. From FY91 to FY96, PGMD's expenditures were also reduced and its staffing levels (excluding permitting, engineering and records management staff) decreased from 72 FTEs to 32 FTEs. These cutbacks have strained each agency's ability to fulfill its obligations and, if they continue, will likely compel the two agencies to rethink their allocation of resources.

One illustration of fiscal pressures, and their impact on inter-agency relations, involves the implementation of the County's Comprehensive Plan. State law requires all development decisions to comply with the Comprehensive Plan and requires the PC, as the County's LPA, to evaluate the Comprehensive Plans every five years. The results of the evaluation are presented in an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR).

PGMD staff prepare internal quarterly reports to track the status of Comprehensive Plan implementation tasks. For example, the *Comprehensive Plan Implementation Status Report* indicates by element in matrix format such items as objectives, tasks, staff assignment, target date and status. The Quarter II report for the Future Land Use Element prepared April 30, 1996 includes the following excerpts:

<b>Objectives/ Policies</b>	<b>Task and Products</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Objectives C-26:C-30 and related policies	Reassess I-75 standards and execute new mixed use categories. LDC Amendment Proposal.	SA	Qtr. 4	Work to begin Qtr. 3 (subject to more North Area Planning Team staff)
Policy 2E-2.2	Create Treaditional Neighborhood district and standards. LDC Amendment Proposal.	NS	Qtr. 4	Work to begin Qtr. 3.
Objectives and policies in Goals 1E-5E	Develop work program for implementing community design policies (e.g., tasks, products, and timelines). Work Program.	JA	Qtr. 2	Deleted from department work program by management.

While the quarterly PGMD status report illustrated above does not reflect official PGMD policy, it is an effective management tool for helping staff set work priorities. It provides clear objectives, a concise statement of tasks to be performed, a clear assignment of tasks to a responsible staff person, a target date and a concise statement of current task status. However, the recent staff reductions have adversely affected PGMD's efforts to complete all implementation tasks in a timely manner.

The PC's annual work program represents its principal tool for planning and scheduling work. The work program organizes tasks by jurisdiction (i.e., Hillsborough County, City of Plant City, City of Tampa, City of Temple Terrace and Areawide). Annually, the PC meets with the governing body of each political subdivision to obtain their consensus regarding the activities which will be performed by the PC on the local entity's behalf. Once the jurisdiction's work program is approved, PC staff track their time by relevant work program item. The PC issues month and yearly status reports, showing hours by work program item.

The PC's work program is funded by a countywide ad valorem tax which is deposited in the County's general fund. The Special Act requires that the BOCC approve the PC's operating budget. While the PC provides LPA functions for the City of Tampa, Plant City and Temple Terrace, and its work program is negotiated with each political subdivision,

the cities do not contribute any of their operating funds to the PC's operating budget. However, the citizens of these cities contribute through the countywide ad valorem tax.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvement

We believe that the County's planning resources can be more effectively coordinated. In August, 1996, for example, the PC's Executive Director wrote a letter to the PC documenting his concerns about outstanding compliance issues pertaining to the Comprehensive Plan. Based on our interviews of PC and PGMD staff, we have summarized these compliance issues (and each agency's response) as shown below.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>PGMD Response</b>	<b>PC Response</b>
1-Has LDR been updated to reflect Community Design Component provisions?	Complicated issue; project set aside due to other BOCC priorities.	Minor issue and relatively inexpensive to address.
2-Has LDR been amended to include a neo-traditional option?	Not a CP issue; PGMD will address it, but code could be difficult to change.	Not a CP implementation issue.
3-Has LDR been amended to allow for more urban character?	Allowed via PDU rules, but need stronger incentives (e.g., density).	Community design issue, could be costly to implement.
4-Has LDR been expanded for home-based employment options?	Allowed via PDU rules, but need stronger incentives (e.g., density).	Community design issue, could be costly to implement.
5-Has LDR been amended to create rural design option?	Allowed via PDU rules, but need stronger incentives (e.g., density).	Community design issue, could be costly to implement.
6- Has LDR been amended to create neighborhood design option?	Not a CP issue; BOCC rejects office/residential district applications due to neighborhood oppositions.	Not a CP implementation issue.
7-Have shoreline construction standards been developed?	Not a CP issue; CP creates problem by designating rural areas as nonrural.	Community design issue, could be costly to implement.
8-Have agricultural stormwater service standards been set?	Allowed via PDU rules, but need stronger incentives (e.g., density).	Community design issue, could be costly to implement.
9-Have bulk electric line/new residential development separation distances been set?	EPC and Port Authority address via own ordinances; not a County issue.	CP implementation issue.

Issue	PGMD Response	PC Response
10-Is Livable Roadways Report included in LDC?	Complicated and may not be possible.	CP issue and gubernatorial directive.
11-Has Community Design meeting been scheduled?	Policy not legally defensible.	CP implementation issue.
12-Has home-based employment meeting been scheduled?	Allowed via PDU rules, but need stronger incentives (e.g., density).	BOCC discussion follow-up item.
13-What is status of Citrus Park plan?	Citrus Park plan is not a CP issue.	Citrus Park plan is not a CP issue.
14-Has LDC been revised to reflect changes in I-75 Corridor plan?	Good idea, but since I-75 concept has fundamentally changed, impractical.	Major issue, but easy fix.

In our view, the PC and PGMD staff responses underscore the need for the two agencies to improve communications. In several instances, the compliance issues raised by the PC appear easily resolvable. In a few others, it appears that the PC and PGMD need to discuss possible changes to the Comprehensive Plan. In any event, the fact that the issues surfaced through a public forum speaks volumes about their current relationship.

One of the more intriguing and challenging portions of the County's Comprehensive Plan is the Community Design Component of the Future Land Use Element. Among other things, the Community Design Component distinguishes urban and suburban life styles, promotes neighborhood design considerations, and sets forth "Principles for Good Neighborhoods" which permit traditional development patterns, such as mixed-use neighborhoods, larger parks, reduced parking requirements, reduced lot and setback requirements and more flexible home business regulations. Theoretically, community design concepts are intended to counter urban sprawl associated by many planners with many current zoning practices.

The Community Design concept is accountable for most of the compliance issues on the above list. While the concept enjoys the support of the BOCC and many PC and PGMD staff, PGMD staff have raised serious questions about implementation of the concept. For example, to what extent should neo-traditional concepts be mandated for residential developments if the market demand for these concepts is insufficient? This raises an important question--If the PGMD believes that the concept has significant implementation barriers, should not the PC and PGMD be addressing these issues and bringing them to the attention of the BOCC?

The PC monitors the implementation of the Comprehensive Plans. PC's FY96 *Work Program Status Report* is primarily a narrative report which describes activities performed to date. It includes as an attachment a matrix which summarizes key staff recommendations and governmental actions. As illustrated by the excerpt presented

below, the matrix format includes such items as date, subject, staff recommendation, PC recommendation/action and local government action.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Staff Recommendation</b>	<b>TPC Recommendation /Action</b>	<b>Local Government Action</b>
Oct. 9	BOCC Impact Fee Task Force 1995 Report	Consistent w/Comp. Plan. Approval w/ revisions.	Approval w/ additional revisions.	BOCC mtg. Oct 12/95, Nov 2/95
Oct. 9	HC: LDC Text Amendments/ 2nd Group 1995	Briefing/Information Only.	Discussion. (Refer to TPC Nov 13 Reg Mtg.)	(Refer to TPC Nov 13 Reg Mtg.)
Oct. 16	TA: Plan Amendments	Briefing/Information Only.	(Refer to TPC Oct 25 Wrkshp.)	(Refer to TPC Oct 25 Wrkshp.)
Oct. 25	Technical changes to PC Polcies	Briefing/Information	Receive and file. Schedule for Nov. 13 TPC Reg Mtg.	N/A

The format of the *Work Program Status Report* does not easily support ongoing monitoring by PC's management nor does it promote clear staff accountability. In other words, while each CP element has an implementation matrix; there is no forcing mechanism for reconciling actual progress against the Plan. According to the PC, the Work Program is not for monitoring the implementation of Comprehensive Plans but rather for monitoring all staff work and ensuring overall accountability.

The June, 1996 EAR prepared by the PC, entitled *The Future of Hillsborough Evaluation and Appraisal Report*, includes a narrative description of actions completed. It also contains a matrix format entitled *Comparison of Objectives to Actual Results* which lists objectives, measurable targets, baseline conditions (1989), current conditions (1995) and the extent to which the objective is achieved. As excerpts from the EAR Land Use Element below indicate, the report's format appears to assign accountability for unmet objectives.

Objective	Measurable Target	Baseline Condition	Current Conditions	Objective Achieved?
Objective A-5: Concept plan is overall basis for long-range CP, and all plan amendments must be consistent with, and further intent of concept plan.	Is the concept plan considered in the review process for land use amendments and rezonings?		Staff reports for all plan amendments and rezonings contain language that states how report furthers concept plan and the Future of Hillsborough Plan.	YES Consideration should be given to revising Objective to provide standard system of measurability.
Objective B-2: County comprises many diverse communities. While comprehensive plan is effective in providing overall growth management strategy for development, it does not have detailed planning strategies for individual communities. Such strategies could ensure the long-range viability of these communities and a neighborhood planning effort should be undertaken.	Have detailed planning strategies for individual communities been established?	No neighborhood strategies.	Special studies have been started or completed for North Dale Mabry Corridor, Fletcher Avenue, Gunn Highway, Citrus Park, State Road 60, Veteran's Expressway and Central Hillsborough communities.	Ongoing consideration should be given to revising Objective to provide standard system of measurability. Objective Criteria by which to prepare and implement these plans is needed.
Objective C-1: To prevent sprawl of low density residential development into rural areas, County shall continue to apply two-tiered land use category in areas where potential for sprawl exists.	Has two-tiered land use category prevented sprawl of low density residential development into rural areas?	Category was included as result of 1990 settlement agreement with DCA.	No projects have utilized second tier of categories. Only 1 du/5 ac development has occurred. Premature conversion to higher density has not occurred.	Ongoing.

Once the approved Comprehensive Plan is submitted to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for approval, the local monitoring process appears to lose some of its effectiveness. While the PGMD monitors the status of its efforts, and the PC monitors the compliance of development decisions with the Comprehensive Plan, the two agencies do not appear to meet regularly to discuss (and resolve) outstanding implementation issues.

In its August 27, 1996 letter to the BOCC, the DCA determined that the County's EAR did not meet the requirements of Chapter 163.3191(9). As a result, the County is precluded from amending its CP until the EAR is found sufficient. The issues to be addressed by the County include urban sprawl and land use, the transportation concurrency management system, coastal management hazard mitigation and post-disaster planning, and estuarine pollution conditions.

In our view, the PC's work monitoring process needs improvement. In our earlier performance audit of the PC, we concluded that there is insufficient ownership by the local jurisdictions of the work program. This is particularly true at the staff levels. In addition, there are few incentives for the PC and PGMD to minimize duplication (e.g., when both the PC and PGMD send staff to Regional Planning Advisory Committee meetings).

The link between the PC's work planning methodology and available resources remains unclear. For whatever reason, the County provides insufficient input into the PC's work program, particularly for special projects in the unincorporated area (e.g., the Brandon community study). The County is by far the PC's most important client, yet it has limited control over the PC's work program or Executive Director.

One of the most difficult challenges confronting the County is its allocation of planning staff resources. There is no mechanism for the PC and PGMD to determine the most appropriate allocation of planning resources between long-range planning and implementation activities. Intuitively (in view of the PGMD's inability to fully implement the Comprehensive Plan), it appears that there is an imbalance. While it is difficult to determine the appropriate mix of long-range and short-range planning staff for the foreseeable future, the County needs greater flexibility to adjust the mix as circumstances change.

We believe that the current funding scheme for the PC should be refined. While the countywide ad valorem tax may have merit as a revenue source for the PC's multi-jurisdictional, long-range planning activities, we believe that it is inappropriate for more localized special planning projects. The current funding method provides no disincentive for Tampa or the other cities to request PC studies--asking for additional work doesn't cost them anything. If such projects are important to these local jurisdictions, they should be willing (and required) to fund at least a portion of those projects.

#### 4. Recommendations

We offer the following recommendations to improve the planning and management of planning resources in the County:

- Modify the process and formats for monitoring the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to include more measurable performance targets and clearer responsibility assignments.
- Clearly assign the Comprehensive Plan monitoring role to the PC and require the PC to refine its reporting requirements.
- Require every PC amendment proposal to be accompanied by a PGMD recommendation on implementation (e.g., specific code provision).

- Institute a more collaborative approach with the local jurisdictions for developing the Areawide and local work programs (e.g., establish a process requiring all four entities to approve the areawide work program).
- Require the PC to submit the proposed work program to the County Administrator before submitting it to the BOCC.
- Require the PC and PGMD to jointly develop an annual operating budget which clearly allocates funds between planning and implementation.
- Execute an MOU between the PC and PGMD to share resources or commence a joint work program.
- Establish a team comprising local planning staff representatives and designate a team leader to conduct quarterly meetings, make quarterly performance reports and resolve outstanding planning and implementation issues.
- Revise current state law (Chapter 78-523, Laws of Florida) to provide a more flexible funding scheme for the PC which more closely links its work program to available funds.
- Require local jurisdictions to fund any nonessential projects they ask the PC to conduct (e.g., a city-requested economic development study).

We believe that the PC's principal customers should possess greater control (through their administrators) over the PC's operating budget and work program. If voluntary efforts to achieve this objective fail, we urge the BOCC to consider several actions. First, the BOCC should amend the County Code to subject certain contracts and expenditures to prior BOCC or County Administrator approval. Second, the County Administrator should be empowered to initiate and coordinate the appointment and dismissal of the PC's Executive Director, subject to PC Board and BOCC approval. Third, the BOCC should ask the PC Board to grant County Administrator contractual authority for PC/MPO and EPC services (i.e., the ability to contract out appropriate services to other entities).

## **2.10 Legal Support**

### **1. Cross-Organizational Issue**

<i>How should legal support services best be provided?</i>
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The PC and EPC employ different approaches to obtaining legal counsel. The PC principally uses the services of a private law firm for legal counsel while the EPC relies almost exclusively on in-house legal counsel. The County Attorney's Office represents

the MPO. Each approach has its relative advantages and disadvantages which will be discussed below.

The PC's outside counsel has represented the PC in litigation as well as other legal matters. The firm's primary role is to serve as the PC's general counsel and its fees are based on an hourly rate. The PC's budgeted and actual legal costs for each of the last five years are shown below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
FY92	\$55,000	\$77,544
FY93	70,000	81,561
FY94	77,000	66,686
FY95	150,000	127,920
FY96	\$75,000	\$97,852

The EPC's in-house Legal Department consists of the Chief Counsel, an assistant attorney, the agency enforcement coordinator, an executive aide, and a senior secretary. The EPC's Legal Department provides legal research and counsel, coordinates and supports enforcement processes, assists staff with negotiation issues involving alleged violators, and supervises civil litigation to enforce environmental regulations.

The County Attorney's Office is organized into five sections each led by a Chief Assistant Attorney. The sections are Countywide Services and Litigation, Land Use, Municipal Services, Support and Financial Services and Infrastructure Services. The Office also has a Legal Administrator and a timekeeping system to enable attorneys to track their time by client (e.g., Building Department) or matter (e.g., football stadium). There are over 60 client/matter codes, including individual codes for EPC, PC and PGM. The system also enables attorneys to track their time by function, such as public hearing, deposition, legal research and court hearing.

In late 1995, the BOCC asked the County Attorney to assess its ability to meet the legal needs of the constitutional officers, boards, councils and other County agencies. In a memorandum dated February 14, 1996, the County Attorney suggested that her office could address the needs of many of the identified County entities, including the PC and EPC, at an overall savings to the County. The savings attributable to EPC legal services were based in part on an assumption that a less senior attorney would be used.

## 2. Findings and Observations

The PC uses outside counsel as general counsel. The firm's principle role is to attend PC meetings and make legal recommendations to local governments. In recent years, the PC has been the subject of some litigation, including a civil rights suit involving a property's historic designation, a sex discrimination suit from a former employee (recently dismissed) and a major challenge to the Growth Management Act process involving a

proposed regional mall. The outside counsel has had some involvement with this litigation. The MPO is represented by the County Attorney's Office.

Initially, EPC's legal services were provided by the County Attorney. In 1982, the BOCC established a full-time counsel position for EPC. This was done to prevent conflicts of interest with the County and to improve the accessibility of legal counsel to EPC staff. Since then, EPC's Legal Department has expanded its services. According to EPC's 1995 Annual Report, its Legal Department interprets regulations and assists staff in developing prevention programs and negotiating solutions. It handles administrative appeals, general civil litigation, and wetlands, water/wastewater, solid waste, storage tank and air enforcement cases.

Hours spent by EPC legal staff on formal enforcement actions, enforcement consultation and general counsel activities for August, 1996 were as follows:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Formal Disputes</b>	<b>Enforce. Consult.</b>	<b>General Counsel</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Chief Counsel	10	30	108	148
Assistant Attorney	<u>102</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>150</u>
Totals	112	54	132	298

Formal dispute resolution activities include case status meetings and legal research. Enforcement consultation activities include staff strategy meetings, settlement meetings, attorney conferences and document review. General counsel activities include audit process meetings, Roundtable meetings, EPA and SWFWMD meetings, contract development and contract negotiations.

The County Attorney's Office provides some legal services to the EPC, including procurement matters, personal injury litigation and vehicle accident matters. In addition, there have been at least two environmental enforcement cases where the EPC Commissioners asked the County Attorney's Office for a second opinion. The County Attorney's Office serves as counsel to the MPO and assists the PC with some litigation.

Both the PC and EPC have raised the conflict issue as a barrier to shifting more of their legal workloads to the County Attorney's Office. Rule 1.7 of the American Bar Association (ABA)'s Model Rules of Professional Conduct stipulates that a lawyer shall not represent a client if the representation of that client will be "directly adverse to another client" or "materially limited by the lawyer's responsibilities to another client," unless the lawyer reasonably believes the representation will not adversely affect the relationship with other client and each client consents after consultation. According to DR 5-105(C), a lawyer may represent multiple clients if it is obvious that he can represent each client's interests and each consents after the lawyer fully discloses the possible effect of the multiple representation on his professional judgment.

The ABA's commentary in the Model Rules of Professional Conduct suggests that there are instances when a lawyer may act as "advocate against a client." While a lawyer is generally not supposed to act as advocate against a client the lawyer represents in some other matter, "government lawyers in some circumstances may represent government employees in proceedings in which a government agency is the opposing party." Relevant factors in determining whether there is potential for adverse effect include duration and intimacy of the lawyer's relationship with client, the functions being performed and likely prejudice to the client.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvement

We believe that both the PC and EPC could achieve some cost savings from greater utilization of the County Attorney's Office, but the potential cost savings could be outweighed by conflict of interest and quality of service considerations. Nevertheless, we have identified an approach which we believe should minimize these conflict and quality of service risks.

The most serious potential conflict issue stems from the PC's representation of four jurisdictions. The interests of the County could vary from those of any one of the three cities in the County. Assigning a County attorney full-time to the PC could result in otherwise avoidable conflicts between city and County attorneys and, in unusual cases, force the County Attorney to screen the assigned attorney from other attorneys in the office.

The fact that potential conflicts of interest exist, as we believe it does with the PC's legal representation, does not mean that the problem is insurmountable. If the County Attorney's Office assigned an attorney to represent the PC at its regular meetings, it could (and would be expected to) identify potential conflicts of interest as they arose--and act accordingly. Once the County Attorney determined that a potential conflict existed, it could assign the matter to outside counsel. This approach would enable the PC to use inside counsel for attending meetings and outside counsel for matters requiring special expertise or independent representation.

Since the County Attorney's Office supervises much of the PC's litigation, we believe that it would be beneficial for one of its attorneys to attend regular PC meetings. In fact, the County Attorney's Office used to attend about 50 percent of the PC's regular meetings. In our view, it is more effective for them to be more involved with PC legal issues as they arise; it enhances their ability to prevent disputes from becoming litigation.

Potential conflict also exists regarding EPC's legal representation. EPC management has cited the Dibbs case as its rationale for avoiding conflict, but there are other matters when the EPC and the County may have different interests. These matters typically involve EPC enforcement actions against County wastewater treatment facilities. These enforcement actions involve consent orders, formal warning notices and informal

noncompliance letters. Since 1994, as illustrated in the table below, the EPC has taken 55 such enforcement actions against the County.

Action	1994	1995	1996	Totals
Consent order	3	0	0	3
Warning notice	4	6	0	10
Noncompliance letter	<u>24</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>42</u>
Totals	31	20	4	55

According to records obtained from the EPC, the number of complaints and enforcement actions brought by the EPC against the County could be higher. In 1993, EPC investigated 43 complaints against the County and issued 9 warning notices. In 1994, EPC investigated 30 complaints against the County, issued 9 warning notices, issued one noncompliance letter and executed 2 settlement agreements. In 1995, through August, EPC investigated 16 complaints, issued 11 warning notices and executed one settlement agreement.

Complaints reviewed by the EPC involve such concerns as odor, discharges, dust nuisance, noise nuisance and smoke nuisance. Warning notices typically involve WWTP disposal or permit violations. The current data base makes it difficult to identify the responsible party.

The County Water Department has entered into several consent orders and decrees since 1984. As illustrated by the table below, most of these orders and decrees involve settlement and fine payments totaling \$10,000 or less. Moreover, consent orders have decreased dramatically since 1988.

Facility	Level	Start Date	Closed Date	Payment Amount
Prog Village	State	8-84	11-88	\$3,800
Brandon East	State	5-85	6-86	5,000
Bloomingtondale	State	5-86	6-87	10,000
Prog Village	State	6-86	11-88	6,400
Apollo Beach	State	3-87	3-89	10,000
Dale Mabry	State	3-87	6-93	51,100
River Oaks	State	5-87	3-89	38,000
Bloomingtondale	State	6-87	5-90	43,500
River Oaks	Federal	10-87	4-90	193,500
Dale Mabry	Federal	10-88	5-91	204,500

Facility	Level	Start Date	Closed Date	Payment Amount
Copperfield	Local	6-89	7-89	7,500
Prov. Lakes	Local	1-90	11-90	8,900
Bellamy	Local	1-92	2-92	7,900
Charleston Lndg	Local	5-92	11-92	1,400
Van Dyke	Local	2-93	4-94	500
Dale Mabry	State	6-93	N/A	700
Gardenville Tower	Local	6-93	1-94	100
South County	Local	9-93	N/A	23,200
Magnolia Ave. Ext.	Local	2-94	2-94	300
Tampa Shores	Local	3-94	6-95	10,700
River Oaks	Local	6-94	N/A	5,000
Cristina	Local	11-94	12-94	5,200
South County	Federal	5-96	N/A	<u>72,500</u>
Totals				\$709,700

The County Attorney's position is that the potential for conflict of interest is minimal, especially given the recent EPC/DEP Domestic Wastewater Program agreement limiting the DEP's delegation of authority to the EPC for permitting, and enforcement activities for all County-owned wastewater treatment plants. Furthermore, in contrast to the potential PC conflict issue, which involves distinct jurisdictions, the EPC and the County share coterminous jurisdictions (service boundaries), as well as the same board.

In any event, we believe that any potential for conflict concerning EPC legal representation can be overcome by providing outside counsel to represent the EPC on an as-needed basis.

#### 4. Recommendations

We recommend that the PC and EPC consider making greater use of the County Attorney's Office. The PC, for example, should consider assigning an attorney from the County Attorney's Office to handle an appropriate portion of the matters now handled by its outside counsel. Because the PC represents other jurisdictions, we believe that its implementation of this recommendation should be voluntary. As an independent city-county entity, the PC should have the right to choose its legal counsel.

We do not recommend any changes regarding the EPC's Chief Counsel. According to our recent performance audit of EPC, up to 50 percent of the Chief Counsel's time is devoted to administrative matters. Based on our interviews, we have concluded that the EPC's Chief Counsel is a vital member of EPC's management team. We also believe that EPC's Chief Counsel can play an important role in managing legal services provided by other attorneys. Her position should be retained by EPC.

We recommend assigning the EPC's Assistant Attorney to the County Attorney's Office. We believe that this measure will benefit that attorney's development by providing greater cross-fertilization of legal skills (e.g., litigation, environmental, land use, civil and personnel) and exposing the attorney to a larger pool of attorneys for support and guidance. We also recommend that the Assistant Attorney continue to be located at EPC one to two days per week as deemed appropriate.

The County Attorney's Office should establish procedures to assist its attorneys in identifying and avoiding potential conflict. As suggested by the ABA's Commentary, "The lawyer should adopt reasonable procedures, appropriate for the size and type of firm and practice, to determine... whether there are actual or potential conflicts of interest." Both the PC and the EPC should retain the right to make their own determination regarding the adequacy of these procedures as well as the quality of services provided.

The fiscal impact of the above recommendations is difficult to project. Shifting some of the PC's legal work to the County Attorney's Office could result in some cost savings (i.e., the difference between inside and outside counsel costs). If we assume that the County Attorney's Office could handle PC matters now handled by a private firm with no additional staff, the annual cost savings would be at least \$30,000. There would be little, if any, fiscal impact associated with reassigning the EPC's Assistant Attorney.

## **2.11 Information Technology**

### **1. Cross-Organizational Issue**

*How should information technology strategies be modified to enhance customer services?*

The reliance of the PC, EPC and PGMD on technology, particularly such applications as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), AutoCAD, imaging and management reporting systems, is growing and will continue to grow for the foreseeable future. As the costs of technology have declined, and the power of desktop applications has increased, the County's technology resources, particularly those dedicated to planning functions, have proliferated in a decentralized manner. This trend is not unique to Hillsborough County.

The cross-organizational issue is whether the County's current technology strategies for planning applications are appropriate and, if not, how should they be changed? In order to address this issue, we obtained an understanding of relevant technology platforms and strategies (e.g., LINKS), key data available to PC, EPC, PGMD and their customers, and current GIS capabilities, systems and platforms (e.g., ARC/INFO, Genemap). We then determined how information technology strategies should be changed to improve the access and utility of service information.

## 2. Findings and Observations

The County's use of GIS is widespread and decentralized. Within the broadly-defined County government, there are five primary GIS sites. These sites, each of which has a different level of involvement with the collection and utilization of GIS information, include the PC, PGMD, Engineering Services, Property Appraiser and the Real Estate Department's Survey and Mapping Group. The City of Tampa, City of Plant City and City of Temple Terrace also use GIS.

The County has multiple GIS platforms. The Appraiser uses ARC/INFO, a multi-user system by the Environmental Systems Research Institute. ARC/INFO operates on Prime, DEC VAX/VMS and UNIX, IBM/VM CMS and Windows NT and its features include map automation, map overlay, spatial analysis, surface modeling, and address geocoding. The PC, PGMD and Real Estate use Genamap, a multi-user system by Genasys. Genamap is compatible with UNIX, HP-UX, IBM-AIX, DEC-OSF-1, SCO and SGI, provides for interfaces with Oracle, Ingres, Informix, Sybase and Interbase and has similar functionality to that of ARC/INFO. County departments use other GIS packages such as MapInfo.

The current systems were first built using the Assessor's data base and the Genamap software. Recently, the County Assessor decided to convert to ARC/INFO software and the City of Tampa is also considering this switch.

Hillsborough County GIS needs are highly specialized. Each of the primary sites above either collects or manipulates the GIS and the associated data because of different perspectives and for different purposes. For example:

- The Real Estate Department's Survey and Mapping Group collects data on street center lines, land use, wildlife habitats and primary water resources and serves as the County's primary mapper.
- The PGMD serves internal clients; they have mapped the water, wastewater and reclaimed water systems throughout the County and used this data to develop models projecting needs for these various systems.
- The PC is primarily a user of data, but, because of its unique cross-jurisdictional planning perspective, it is at the center of the issue of ensuring open access to data throughout the County.
- The Property Appraiser maintains the parcel layer of the County GIS maps and is developing a greater GIS capability to respond to growing needs and appreciation for this information.

Another important characteristic of the County's GIS is its growing reliance on the open sharing of information. While there are many users, there are also many collectors of data. The open and facilitated sharing of data is a key for the continued efficient success of this function -- this is being addressed by the LINKS process, which will be discussed further below.

The PC, EPC and PGMD use other information systems and technology. All three entities have access to their budget information through the County's FAMIS system. Other systems and technology available these entities are outlined below.

The PC provides monthly management reports which track the progress of the PC's annual work plan (i.e., a time-tracker system). The current time tracker system relies on each individual to track their time each day against each project to which he or she has been assigned. Status reports can be generated directly from the new ACCESS-based system as described below. Using the new time tracker system released last fall, data for pre-determined categories is entered into an MS ACCESS database. The database itself sits on the LAN; thus, as each person makes their entries, the data for all PC staff are recorded electronically. From this database, various reports (e.g., time sheets and monthly progress reports) are automatically generated. In addition, users have the option to generate custom reports and management can review progress on an on-line, real-time basis.

The EPC collects data from each section manager to develop a monthly report for the EPC Board. This data includes performance statistics, such as the number of permits issued. There is limited focus within EPC's current administration on formal activity reporting. The current administration relies on verbal reporting during weekly management team meetings to ascertain current activity levels within each section.

The PGMD's systems primarily collect workload data (e.g., the number of permits issued and reviews conducted). Performance measures (e.g., the average processing time for a certain type of permit) usually must be obtained and calculated manually. Permits issued by the former Building Department are tracked via a system called *PERMITS*. This system tracks all permit information for a given folio number (parcel). PGMD also uses AutoCAD graphics software (e.g., for stormwater planning) and has about 150 PCs.

### 3. Opportunities for Improvement

The County's decentralized and specialized approach to GIS operations, while having many advantages, poses certain challenges which should be addressed.

The paramount issue facing the County is the need to formally commit to open sharing of information. The PC's Automation Group Manager is chairing an effort called LINKS (Local Inter-organizational Networked Knowledge Systems), which will facilitate the exchange of data among GIS users in the Tampa Bay region. The goal of LINKS is not to provide for a central depository, but to improve an already established system.

LINKS, which is based on a MOU, will describe ways in which data is to be requested and then transmitted between interested parties. LINKS will be available to all public and quasi-public GIS users in the region on a voluntary basis. It will offer a structured process for improving information sharing and streamlining external interfaces between LINKS participants. It will commit members to sharing information about GIS maps, databases, technology and data formats. Initially, its focus will be on "Metadata" sharing information about data (e.g., GIS card catalog). Initial participants include PC/MPO, EPC, Appraiser, USF, 911, cities, Port Authority, HARTLine, County, school board, SWFWMD, FDOT and TBRPC.

Another important issue is the lack of effective coordination and a single point of contact for County departments for GIS issues. While LINKS could improve the coordination of GIS issues, County departments (let alone other local governments in Hillsborough County) have not developed a unified approach to GIS. For example, County Engineering plans to construct a more accurate base map than the Property Appraiser's, the new map would only cover the unincorporated area. The County lacks a area-wide library function to record and track the various layers of information being created in the various GIS systems, but we understand that LINKS will provide this capability.

A third opportunity for improvement relates to the County's multiple GIS platforms. Multiple GIS software packages create some problems for the sharing of data. It is hoped that LINKS will address many of these issues, and that any others can be addressed and overcome. While most GIS packages can use an array of common database packages (e.g. Oracle, Sybase and ACCESS), the transfer of GIS among different systems is rarely seamless.

Both Genamap and ARC/INFO are solid functional programs, and each has its advantages and disadvantages. Genamap uses continuous mapping. By some accounts, Genamap is more costly per application and regarded as more difficult to use on PC's than ARC/INFO. Genamap and ARC/INFO data can be transferred from one application to another, but not always without problems. Genamap cannot easily read the ARC/INFO base map, a particular problem for Hillsborough County since the Property Appraiser is using ARC/INFO and maintains one of the key base maps.

Managing multiple vendors can be more costly as well. Genamap's customer support resources appear to be more limited and, while Genasys is a large international organization, it has far fewer U.S. installations than does ARC/INFO. Obtaining timely and responsive support from vendors with inadequate customer service capabilities can be a difficult (and ultimately costly) undertaking. A fragmented approach to managing multiple vendors can exacerbate these problems.

The PC, PGMD and EPC continue to improve the access and utility of information for management and customers. Yet, some opportunities for further improvement remain, including the following:

- All three agencies need more management and customer service information on a "real time" basis (the PC has numerous real time databases).
- The EPC and PGMD lack the capabilities to track performance measures in an automated manner (PGMD is engaged in a project which will provide for this information in an automated fashion).
- The EPC needs to institute more formal management reporting, particularly for its board and constituents.

Of the three agencies reviewed in this study, EPC appears to have the greatest unmet technology needs. For example, it desires greater information linkages with DEP, SWFWMD and the County. Clearly, such technology issues have profound staffing implications which County agencies need to address.

#### 4. Recommendations

Stronger leadership is needed at the board or executive level. Establishing a GIS and Technology Planning Forum under the leadership of the County Administrator's Office (e.g., the Information and Technology Department) could provide the County with a more effective mechanism for coordinating GIS data collection, vendor service contracts and initiatives among BOCC departments.

Standardizing the County's GIS platform and its GIS vendor management approach could improve services and reduce costs, but the cost of changing platforms can be enormous. Genamap users have invested a lot of time and effort into developing their models, and will likely resist change. ARC/INFO is a more prevalent platform (at least outside of Hillsborough County). The County should explore cost-effective opportunities to migrate to a single GIS platform.

We also urge the County to continue its efforts to use available document imaging technology. Imaging represents a cost-effective way to store and retrieve many documents and maps used in planning and engineering functions. Imaging technology enables the entry of all data directly to the LIMS and GIS. Data Management sees document imaging as impacting many departments and as a "global" county project. However, given funding priorities, it appears doubtful that it will be funded in FY 97.

There are some financial issues to consider, both with the status quo, and with any recommendations offered herein. The status quo has some cost implications. For example, the translation of data, even though protocols have been put in place, requires time. The translation of data from Arch/Info to Genamap can reportedly introduce data errors, which take time to correct. There are inherent costs in maintaining staff or contractors who are "experts" in both systems. Changing the status quo also has financial implications. Rewriting programs and models, for example, would have some costs.

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## **OTHER AUDIT ISSUES**

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## **3.0 Other Audit Issues**

### **3.1 Overview**

As stated above, our project approach resulted in the analysis of eleven relatively specific performance audit issues. The limitation of our project scope to these issues, and three County entities (i.e., the PC, EPC and PGMD), effectively precluded a thorough examination of broader strategic and organizational issues and opportunities.

During the course of our fact-finding, however, we encountered certain strategic and organizational issues which we believe require further analysis. Those issues, which are summarized below, should be addressed not through a performance audit, but rather a prospective, consensus-driven strategic planning and organizational redesign process.

- Does the Tampa Bay region need a different structure for addressing cross-jurisdictional planning or environmental management issues?
- Will the County continue to need an independent city-county PC? Will its current mission and services continue to be essential? How should the PC be structured? How should it be staffed?
- Will the County need a quasi-independent EPC? Will its current mission and services continue to be essential? How should the EPC be structured? How should it be staffed?

Such issues are not unique to the PC and EPC. Every public entity should periodically justify its programs and existence. However, these issues are particularly relevant to the PC and EPC because of their special organizational status within the County structure and the nature of their current relationships with County government.

Hillsborough County established the PC and EPC as independent or quasi-independent entities in part to minimize opportunities for abuse by public officials. Autonomous governmental entities with such chiseled responsibilities can provide an intricate system of checks and balances. However, they also can increase overall operating costs, reduce organizational flexibility, reduce cross-training opportunities, impair organizational cooperation and communications, and exacerbate organizational conflict.

We found substantial evidence of significant inter-agency conflict among the PGMD, PC and EPC, especially at the director level. Inter-agency conflict is difficult to quantify and, when it is issue-driven, can be a positive organizational dynamic. However, conflict that is personal or negative could tarnish the County's image, and undermine its effectiveness on growth management issues. While agency staff cooperate at various levels, we believe that even this cooperation is vulnerable to continuing dissension at the director level.

Most governmental performance audits tend to focus on improving internal operational efficiency and effectiveness, rather than regionalizing services or improving governance. Similarly, our performance audits of the PGMD, PC and EPC have identified some internal and cross-organizational productivity improvement opportunities. While there is some duplication of effort among the three agencies, unwarranted duplication of effort--at least in the context of each agency's respective legal role and autonomy--appears to be minimal.

However, based on our fact-finding, we do not believe that duplication of effort is the paramount issue facing the County's planning and environmental management agencies. Nor do we believe that the issue is whether more budget reductions can be justified. Rather, the most critical issue is whether the PC and EPC can justify their structural autonomy in the context of broader regional needs. Will the area, for example, continue to need the TBRPC, as well as the PC and other LPA's? Does the current patchwork of independent agencies (e.g., the EPC and SWFMWD) provide the optimum structure for addressing regional environmental issues?

While we lacked sufficient time and resources (especially within our limited project scope) to address broader regional issues, and we understand that these issues may have statewide implications, we believe that they merit the BOCC's attention. To that end, we have summarized our preliminary observations concerning these issues below.

### **3.2 Regional Planning and Environmental Management Issues**

The Tampa Bay region has emerged as one of the most important urban areas, not only in Florida, but in the entire Southeast. It encompasses 2,817 square miles, nearly 700 miles of shoreline and four counties (Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco and Pinellas). Its 43 local governments include the third and fourth largest cities in Florida--Tampa and St. Petersburg. The region's 1994 estimated population was 2,277,000.

Most urban areas of the Tampa Bay region's size have at least one regional public entity to address multi-jurisdictional issues. In the Tampa Bay area, there is one such entity that, at least in name, addresses regional planning issues. The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC), which was initially established to perform non-planning functions (e.g., Older Americans Act programs), has about 50 employees, including 21 in the Area Agency on Aging and 11 in its Planning Division.

The TBRPC has a regional planning role. Pursuant to Chapter 186, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 27E-5, Florida Administrative Code, the TBRPC prepares a "Strategic Regional Policy Plan for the Tampa Bay Region." This document is intended to serve as a long-range guide for setting regional physical, economic, and social development policies. However, TBRPC's effectiveness as a regional planning entity remains unclear.

In May, 1996, the Institute of Community and Area Development (ICAD) conducted an independent evaluation of the TBRPC. This study characterized the TBRPC as an agency

whose fundamental mission and organizational role are ambiguous. Further, it concluded that the TBRPC lacks a long-range vision, receives limited cooperation from local governments, and suffers poor visibility as a regional player. Most important, the ICAD found that the TBRPC does not provide an effective regional forum for multi-jurisdictional issues (e.g., water, transportation, economic development and environmental).

In our view, TBRPC's viability as a regional planning forum is a key strategic issue, not only for Hillsborough County, but surrounding counties as well. For several reasons (see below), we believe that it will loom as an increasingly important issue in the years ahead.

- ✓ Of the numerous regional or inter-jurisdictional planning entities in the country, most strive to provide a coordinating forum for regional issues.
- ✓ Since comprehensive plans in Florida have such legal significance, there should be a regional forum to review their regional implications.
- ✓ Communities with an effective regional planning entity could be better positioned to respond to the challenges and opportunities of devolution.
- ✓ Most MPO's in the nation serve regional or multi-jurisdictional interests.
- ✓ In areas where cross-jurisdictional environmental issues are more acute (e.g., areas with large bodies of water), some traditional local land use controls have been shifted to regional entities (e.g., the California Coastal Commission, Tahoe Regional Planning Commission, Bay Conservation and Development Commission and Chesapeake Bay Commission).

The ISTEA legislation contemplated that MPO's would serve multiple jurisdictions. Unlike some metropolitan areas, the Tampa Bay area has three MPO's (i.e., the Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas County MPO's). Of the 339 MPOs in the nation, nearly half are regional entities (see below).

<b>Structural Alternative</b>	<b>No. of MPO's</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Regional Council or Commission	161	48%
City	38	11%
County	34	10%
Joint City-County	24	7%
Independent	74	22%
State	8	2%
Totals	339	100%

Source: US ACIR "MPO Capacity: Improving the Capacity of Metropolitan Planning Organizations to Help Implement National Transportation Policies," Washington D.C. May 1995. Unpublished ACIR research 1993. Edited by Roger K. Hedrich, NEOPLANS, 1995.

Perhaps due in part to the substantial federal and state funding of transportation, inter-jurisdictional MPOs have been much less controversial than inter-jurisdictional land use planning entities.

For a variety of reasons, this is a propitious time for local leaders in the Tampa Bay metropolitan area to rethink the area's current approach to regional planning and environmental issues. The State's new ecosystem management policy calls for greater regional cooperation (and innovation) on environmental issues. Several regional issues (e.g., water quality, transportation and economic development) appear to require greater attention and coordination. As the TBRPC reexamines its mission, the PC offers resources which could be of great assistance to a regional planning forum. The EPC is facing a likely leadership change in the not-too-distant future.

There are a wide variety of structural models for addressing regional issues. The US Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) has identified five schools of thought regarding the most appropriate way to structure regional services. These five alternatives are below:

- Centrists - favor political consolidation as the most effective means of delivering services and managing growth.
- Federationists - support a two-tier system in which urban-related powers are divided between local units and an areawide body (e.g., county or multi-functional metropolitan district).
- Local Optionists - maintain that no single approach can be prescribed because of the dramatic differences among urban areas.
- Pragmatists - support any structure (i.e., consolidation, federation or metropolitan council) that provides an effective policy-making mechanism.
- Polycentrists - believe that multiple local governments maximize grassroots control and assure bureaucratic responsiveness.

The Centrists, positioned at one end of the spectrum, believe in the greatest degree of consolidation while the Polycentrists believe in the least.

Another approach to regionalization is to view structural options on a change continuum--from minor to dramatic. Minor changes, which include inter-local agreements and functional transfers, are normally ratified by governmental decision-makers (e.g., county commissions and state legislatures). More sweeping structural changes, such as metropolitan special districts and city-county consolidations, usually require voter ratification. While experience suggests that voter approval, particularly for consolidation

proposals, is difficult to obtain, some changes (e.g., merging selected functions of the TBRPC with the PC and/or EPC) may be achievable through legislative action.

### **3.3 PC Structural Issues**

The PC is one of the nation's last truly independent planning commissions. In our performance audit of the PC, we found that the PC differs from other planning commissions in several ways:

- It has its own enabling legislation specifying its duties and powers.
- It provides services to multiple jurisdictions (i.e., the County, City of Tampa, City of Plant City and City of Temple Terrace).
- Its governing board comprises appointees from multiple jurisdictions.
- It appoints and directs its own executive director and planning staff.
- PC's Executive Director has considerable autonomy concerning his agency's work program and use of public funds.
- Its planning staff also serve as staff to the MPO.

In comparing Hillsborough County's planning model to models employed by other communities with joint city-county planning structures (see table below), we found that Hillsborough County's structure has certain distinguishing characteristics, e.g.:

- Independence - Few planning commissions are as independent as the Hillsborough PC; many directors are jointly appointed by the central city and county (in Louisville a county judge appoints the director).
- Funding - Unlike Hillsborough's PC, many planning commissions are jointly funded by the participating jurisdictions (through operating transfers).
- Staffing - Unlike Hillsborough, most communities have one planning department or joint staffing arrangement; each is lodged for administrative purposes in either the City or County.
- Uniform plan - Unlike Hillsborough, most communities with joint planning commissions have adopted a uniform plan rather than a plan for each jurisdiction (Louisville's new plan is in process).

- Small Cities - In Hillsborough, the PC does planning and zoning for small cities while in Memphis and Charlotte, small cities do their own planning and zoning.
- Unincorporated Area - Compared to many similar urban counties, Hillsborough has an unusually large unincorporated area population (63 percent of the County's total population).
- Central City Dominance - Hillsborough County's central city represents a relatively small share of its total population (the central cities contain a high percent of the population for Charlotte, Durham and Memphis).
- Formation - Hillsborough was created by state legislation while most of the other joint planning entities were created by inter-local agreements.

Item	Tampa FL	Louisville KY	Charlotte NC	Memphis TN	Durham NC
Population (000s)	892	665	511	826	182
% Central City	32%	41%	77%	74%	75%
% Unincorporated	63%	47%	15%	15%	25%
No. of Counties	1	1	1	1	1
No. of Cities	3	11	7	7	1
Op. Budget (000s)	\$3,810	\$8,700	\$2,500	\$1,650	
No. of Staff	59	188	40	56	39
Joint PC?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Joint Staff?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Joint PC-MPO?	Yes	No	No	No	No
CEO App'ted By	PC	County	Joint	Joint	Joint
PC Functions:					
• Local Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Zoning		✓	✓	✓	✓
• MPO	✓			✓	
• Air Quality	✓	✓		✓	

In Charlotte/Mecklinburg County, the city and county jointly fund planning and the PC Director serves as secretary to the Transportation Department's MPO. In Memphis/Shelby County, the PC director is appointed by city and county mayors, the planning and MPO staff are part of an integrated \$13 million city-county division, environmental management functions are performed by a joint city-county health department and the City's Community Development Department does neighborhood planning. In Louisville/Jefferson County, there is a joint city-county PC, the PC director is appointed under intergovernmental compact by a county judge, and the PC's functions include air pollution control and some environmental health functions. In Durham, the PC

Director reports to City and County managers, City planning staff serves as PC staff and the Transportation Department serves as MPO.

The PC's role in Hillsborough County has evolved over the last four decades. Created in 1959 by a Special Act of the Florida Legislature, the PC's primary legislative mandate, as set forth in Chapter 78-523, Laws of Florida (as amended in 1961 and 1982), is to develop and implement comprehensive plans, ensure citizen participation and provide other planning services as requested by the County's four local jurisdictions. Under Chapter 75-390, Laws of Florida, the PC also serves as the official Local Planning Agency (LPA) for each of Hillsborough County's political subdivisions.

Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, the Growth Management Act, reinforced the PC's status as the primary planning entity in the County. It requires all political subdivisions to establish or designate LPAs to execute the comprehensive planning program. In turn, the Hillsborough County Charter recognizes and provides for a separate county-wide planning commission. An interlocal agreement designates the PC as the staff arm for the MPO.

In recent years, the PC's funding, expenditures and autonomy (at least indirectly) have come under increasing scrutiny. The County has reduced PC's budget from \$3.8 million to \$2.9 million since 1992. In our performance audit of the PC, we found that there is some concern about the PC's spending (71 percent of the survey responses from the unincorporated area indicated that they did not view the PC as a cost-effective planning entity). It is not clear, however, to what extent the survey respondents distinguished PC costs from overall planning costs for Hillsborough County.

The Florida ACIR, in its 1994 study, "Fiscal Impact of Comprehensive Planning Requirements on Florida's Counties and Municipalities," found the County's aggregate comprehensive planning costs to be relatively high. According to the ACIR, average per capita comprehensive planning costs in FY92 were \$9.55 for cities and \$5.87 for counties. In contrast, as the table below illustrates, Hillsborough County's per capita costs were \$12.69 and its aggregate costs (including the PC, County and all three cities) were \$14.39.

<b>County</b>	<b>Population 1992 Estimates</b>	<b>FY92 County Only Costs</b>	<b>FY92 Per Capita Costs</b>	<b>FY92 Local Gov't Costs</b>	<b>FY92 Per Capita Costs</b>
Hillsborough	853,990	\$10,835	\$12.69	\$12,290	\$14.39
Brevard County	417,740	2,619	6.27	3,895	9.32
Broward County	1,294,090	7,301	5.64	12,396	9.58
Duval County	693,550	4,048	5.84	4,979	7.18

County	Population 1992 Estimates	FY92 County Only Costs	FY92 Per Capita Costs	FY92 Local Gov't Costs	FY92 Per Capita Costs
Orange County	712,640	2,528	3.55	6,498	9.12
Palm Beach County	896,970	8,392	9.36	12,762	14.23
Pinellas County	860,740	2,508	2.91	6,614	7.68
Polk County	<u>420,890</u>	<u>1,764</u>	<u>4.19</u>	<u>3,006</u>	<u>7.14</u>
Totals	6,150,610	\$39,995		\$62,440	\$10.15

Notes: The ACIR's data was based on annual financial reports submitted Florida cities and counties to the Florida Department of Banking and Finance (Comptroller). Comprehensive planning costs (i.e., master planning, development and zoning costs) were reported for the period 1985 - 1992.

Even compared to other large urban counties, Hillsborough County's FY92 aggregate per capita comprehensive planning costs appeared high. Only Palm Beach County's aggregate per capita planning costs were comparable. The other large counties had FY92 cost structures which were 33 to 50 percent lower than that of Hillsborough County's.

There may be several explanations for this variance (and the gap may have closed in recent years). Growth rates may vary dramatically. MPO costs may be included for some counties, but excluded for others. Still, we believe that the cost differences merit further study. To illustrate its potential significance, if Hillsborough County's FY92 per capita planning costs would have been \$10.15 (the average for the eight counties in the table), the County's aggregate planning costs would have been \$3.6 million lower.

As the PC has withstood greater fiscal scrutiny, its supporters have argued that the PC's independence must be preserved. They contend that an independent PC is a vital defense against political abuse and corruption. However, we do not believe that the current PC provides the optimum structure to prevent the abuses which its independence is supposed to prevent. After all, it is the zoning process which is most vulnerable to political influence, and the BOCC--not the PC--has the greatest involvement with zoning decisions.

In any event, the need for an independent PC (as a means to minimize political abuse) may have been weakened by events. The way the County makes planning and zoning decisions is dramatically different than it was thirty years ago. The process is more open and legally-based. Since the PC was first established, there have been several legal and policy changes which call into question the need for PC's autonomy, e.g.:

- The Snyder decision redefined many rezoning actions (e.g., decisions which change a tract's land use designation regardless of its size and the number of landowners) as quasi-judicial, replacing deferential legislative standards for stricter judicial standards (e.g., competent and substantial evidence).

- Under *Jennings v. Dade County*, public officials have the burden of proof to show that any ex parte communications regarding land use applications did not taint their decision and cause injustice to the applicant.
- The zoning hearing master officer process (adopted after the 1983 zoning convictions) subjects all applications for rezonings and special use permits to independent reviews and public hearings (§6.18.4 of the Code).
- Ex parte communications concerning any matters before a Zoning Hearing Master are prohibited (§6.18.6 of the Code), Zoning Hearing Masters are barred from conflicts (as defined in the code) for one year from their termination (§6.18.6 of the Code) and Zoning Hearing Masters must comply with state financial disclosure rules for local officers (§6.18.10 of the Code).
- All zoning decisions must be consistent with the Code and fully documented and may be appealed to the Board of Adjustment (§6.15.2 of the Code).
- Administrative decisions regarding any sign ordinance or regulation may be appealed to the Sign Appeals Board whose decisions may, in turn, be appealed to the BOCC (§6.16.1-.3 of the Code).
- The County's lobbying ordinance adopted in 1988 imposes stricter procedural and disclosure requirements on external parties seeking to influence County actions.
- A stronger County commitment to public hearings (e.g., televising all hearings) and the state sunshine law promote greater disclosure.
- The Neighborhood Bill of Rights requires the County to maintain a registry of neighborhood organizations, requires developers to notify registered organizations of certain proposed developments within one mile and specifies procedures designed to encourage neighborhoods to provide input to the County (§2.7.2.3 of the Code)

Together, these legal and policy developments have created a dramatically more open and regimented decision-making environment. While no rule changes can prevent all abuses, the need for an independent PC to prevent such abuses may no longer be as critical as it once was believed to be.

In our performance audit of the PC, we concluded that the PC's undue emphasis on independence has had some disadvantages as follows:

- A local jurisdiction's lack of "ownership" in their own planning documents can impair plan implementation.
- Local jurisdictions are more reluctant to seek PC assistance given the PC's independence and associated operating style.
- The PC's use of formal communications at senior staff levels may jeopardize financial support for much-needed planning programs.
- The PC's "siege" mentality may inhibit some staff from freely offering their opinions in the planning process.
- Resources spent on defending the PC and the PC's independence could more appropriately be spent on needed planning activities.

Consequently, our performance audit of the PC recommended a greater emphasis on "partnering" than "independence."

The independence of the PC has been debated for several years. Prior studies such as MMA's 1990 study have supported the PC's autonomy, finding, for example, that transferring PC staff to County control would impair long-term planning efforts. The PC has argued that moving the MPO under County control would violate an existing interlocal agreement and "create serious transportation planning imbalance among four local governments." The PC also believes that its independence has enabled it to attract experienced and innovative professionals (in some cases, from the PGMD).

To its credit, the PC's leadership continues to respond to change and seek additional planning-related roles (e.g., community planning and advocacy and economic development). However, as the PC redefines its roles, its conflicts with PGMD could escalate. We believe that there are several alternatives for restructuring the PC (some of which are summarized in the table on the following page) which should be considered.

<b>Structural Alternatives</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
1. Inter-Agency Contract <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt shared funding mechanism</li> <li>• Strengthen County Administration control over PC-staffing</li> <li>• Implement a unified comprehensive plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Requires PC to justify itself to each jurisdiction</li> <li>✓ Strengthens ties to City and County management</li> <li>✓ Better integrates City and County issues</li> <li>✓ Relatively easy to implement changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Diminished PC autonomy (reduced review of city-county land use actions)</li> <li>✓ Jurisdictions might decide to decrease PC funding</li> </ul>
2. One PC-Merged Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain joint PC</li> <li>• Merge PC/PGMD staff</li> <li>• Adopt shared funding mechanism</li> <li>• Appoint Director via mutual consent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reduced inter-agency conflict</li> <li>✓ Better integration of City and County issues</li> <li>✓ Improved staff utilization and greater cost control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reduced accountability for appointed board</li> <li>✓ Weaker ties to operating departments</li> <li>✓ Reduced City and County control over staffs</li> </ul>
3. One PC-Separate Staffs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain joint PC with small admin. staff</li> <li>• Assign technical staff to local jurisdictions</li> <li>• Assign MPO to County</li> <li>• Adopt shared funding mechanism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reduced inter-agency conflict</li> <li>✓ Improved control over local staff utilization and operating costs</li> <li>✓ Maintains inter-jurisdictional perspective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reduced control over overall staff utilization and operating costs</li> <li>✓ Potential city resistance to County MPO staffing</li> <li>✓ Reduced service to PC</li> </ul>
4. Separate Planning Staffs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain PC and planning staff for each local jurisdiction</li> <li>• Assign MPO to County or independent entity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Clear alignment of funding to services</li> <li>✓ Strong local control</li> <li>✓ Reduced inter-agency conflict</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Requires legal change</li> <li>✓ Reduced city-county integration of issues</li> <li>✓ Potential city resistance to County MPO staffing</li> <li>✓ Reduced service to BOCC</li> </ul>

The list of alternative models is not exhaustive and there are several variations for each model. Moreover, each alternative has many advantages and disadvantages. For example, an inter-agency contract (Alternative No. 1) among the PC, County and three cities could clarify roles and improve accountability without requiring legislative changes. Transferring the County's planning staff to an independent PC (Alternative No. 2) would further reduce the influence of the County's elected officials over planning. Transferring the PC 's staff to the County (Alternative No. 3) would make the PC Director more accountable to the County Administrator, but perhaps at the expense of the municipal relationships. Alternative No. 3 also could enable the BOCC to shift its zoning review duties to the PC. Eliminating the PC (Alternative No. 4) would increase local control over planning, but could undermine efforts to coordinate inter-jurisdictional planning issues.

If County leaders determine a need to review such structural alternatives, we urge them to implement a community-based, participatory process to examine alternative structural models for its planning functions. We further suggest that the emphasis of this process be on future opportunities rather than past deficiencies.

### **3.4 EPC Structural Issues**

Created in 1967 by a Special Act of the Florida Legislature, the EPC has emerged as the leading environmental advocate in Hillsborough County. Pursuant to Chapter 84-446, Laws of Florida (as amended by Chapter 87-495), and the Hillsborough County Charter, the EPC has assumed several important regulatory functions, including the following:

- Delegation of the DEP's air permitting program.
- Delegation of the DEP's domestic wastewater and sludge programs.
- Partial delegation of the DEP's industrial waste program.
- The Underground Storage Tank Program and State Underground Petroleum Environmental Response Act (SUPER Act).
- The Small Quantity Generator Program

Under Chapter 84-446, Laws of Florida, the EPC also reviews permit applications submitted to the Tampa Port Authority and, pursuant to County regulations, reviews land use applications. In short, the EPC's role in protecting air quality and regulating waste programs is firmly established.

The EPC has received recognition for its role in improving the Tampa Bay Area's environment. For example, it helped earn the USEPA's redesignation from an ozone non-attainment to an ozone maintenance area. It was the first locality in the state to earn the DEP's air permitting program delegation. It continues to monitor key environmental issues (e.g., underground storage tank programs and auto emissions and testing policies), seek state and federal delegation authority, and assist related efforts (e.g., the Hillsborough River Basin Ecosystem Pilot Project).

As the EPC's Board of Commissioners, the BOCC adopts environmental regulations and monitors their implementation. The EPC's Executive Director implements these regulations through four operating divisions (Air, Waste, Water, and Wetlands). The EPC's FY95 operating budget was \$10.3 million, including \$2.4 million for air quality, \$3.5 million for waste management, \$0.8 million for wetlands management, \$2.3 million for water management and \$1.3 million for administration and legal. About 34 percent of EPC's funding is from the County general fund and the rest from grants and fees.

Despite its success in protecting the County's environment, the EPC is a crossroads. The DEP's Ecosystem Management Implementation Strategy requires a more proactive approach to environmental management. The DEP's promotion of greater regional coordination (e.g., through a Greater Tampa Bay EMA team) raises questions about the EPC's jurisdictional boundaries. Blurred roles between the EPC and SWFWMD (e.g., in wetlands permitting) raises broader questions about their respective missions and roles. Finally, as the EPC's long-time Executive Director approaches retirement, issues about organizational transition and strategic direction will arise with greater frequency.

We believe that there are numerous structural alternatives for the County to consider if it decides to reexamine the EPC's future role, e.g.:

- Authorize the County Administrator to initiate the appointment or dismissal of the EPC Executive Director subject to BOCC approval.
- Assign the Executive Director to the County Administrator delegating the BOCC's supervisory duties via MOU.
- Eliminate the EPC and delegate environmental regulatory duties to the County, DEP and/or SWFMD (e.g., Pinellas County).
- Establish a joint city-county Environmental Services Department (e.g., Charlotte/Mecklenberg County).
- Establish a joint city-county Health Department which handles some environmental issues (e.g., Memphis/Shelby County).
- Establish a joint city-county Planning & Environmental Management Department and merge the PC and EPC (e.g., Louisville/Jefferson County).
- Establish an independent Metropolitan Sewer District for wetlands, wastewater and stormwater issues (e.g., Louisville/Jefferson County).
- Establish a new regional environmental planning and control entity (e.g., the Tahoe Regional Planning Commission, Bay Conservation and Development Commission and Chesapeake Bay Commission).

If the County determines that an independent EPC is needed for the future, it should strongly consider establishing a separate board to oversee the entity. While the EPC perceives itself as an independent agency, its independence is de facto, achieved through the current Executive Director's operating style. The EPC is essentially a County entity, and its board is the BOCC. Under a new Executive Director, the EPC could easily find its independence to be largely illusory. We suggest that the County consider reconstituting

the EPC board as an appointed body with members appointed by both County and municipal representatives.

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## APPENDICES

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**A. SUMMARY OF PRIOR AUDIT  
REPORT**

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION (EPC) - Overall</b>		
General EPC management and organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay structure</li> <li>• Internal communication.</li> <li>• Career development.</li> <li>• Training.</li> <li>• Management development.</li> <li>• Location.</li> <li>• Security.</li> <li>• Building comfort.</li> </ul>	The EPC should strive either to study or work to improve these areas. Areas which were recommended for further review include: pay structure, and the possibility of combining operations into a single facility.
Legal	CAO believes they can provide more cost effective legal services than the current EPC Legal Division.	Consider the issue in the cross organizational study.
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION (EPC) - Air Management Division (AMD)</b>		
Mobile Source Operations and Technical Operations	Overlapping functions -- these two groups operate as a single section.	Consider merging the two sections in the cross organizational study.
Air permit processing	Procedures can be streamlined to reduce review time.	Consider possible time savings in the following areas: initial handling of applications; reducing Assistant Director's role in permit reviews (to concentrate on more complex reviews); schedule in advance the completion of draft reviews for management review. Further, the staff should track time data in the permit process to better understand the areas where delays can occur.
Inspections by several areas of AMD	Field inspections often involve more than one inspector.	Use a single inspector in most cases to more efficiently utilize the County's resources.
Air quality monitoring	Procedures for air quality monitoring place too much emphasis on maximizing data completeness -- at significant cost.	Continue evaluation of electronic automated data collection tools. Review procedures used for the maintenance of equipment to minimize idle time by maintenance staff.

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Staffing		Eliminate Environmental Specialist I and Electronic Technician I positions. Transfer Environmental Enforcement Specialist I to Waste Management and review staffing needs in early 1997.
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION (EPC) - Division of Water Management</b>		
Funding	Is the Division receiving adequate compensation from DEP for the delegated program?	Review distribution of federal grants. Investigate opportunities to make programs self supporting. Conduct a cost accounting study for permit fees, and consider imposing compliance inspection fees.
Management team	Is there enough opportunity for communication among the management and staff of the Division?	There should be frequent and regular staff meetings to discuss important issues.
Interagency Communications	<b>Is there appropriate coordination between the Division and PDMD?</b>	<b>Efforts should be made to ensure open lines of communication.</b>
Delegation of DEP programs	The Division currently has the majority of the DEP delegated programs.	The Division should explore full delegation of DEP programs.
Permit compliance	There appear to be repeat permit compliance offenders in the domestic waste water program.	The Division should investigate the use of punitive measures including fines, civil action and license suspension / revocation.
Purchasing	<b>There are frequent problems with the Division obtaining necessary equipment.</b>	<b>The EPC should investigate the utilization of an internal purchasing function.</b>
Benthic Program	The County currently sorts benthic samples for other neighboring counties, in exchange for some in-kind services.	The County should examine this arrangement and ascertain whether it is equitable for the County.
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION (EPC) - Wetlands Management Division</b>		

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
All Programs	Is there unnecessary overlap between the County's programs and those of other agencies?	There is a great deal of overlap between this Division's programs and other agencies. The Division should focus its efforts on projects which "fall through the cracks" because of their size - i.e. they escape review by other governmental agencies.
Policies and Procedures	Is there a well organized and useful policies and procedures manual?	The Division should continue with its efforts at re-writing its policies and procedures manual.
Interagency Efforts	Are the agreements between agencies adequate in that they describe accurately the roles and responsibilities of the different parties (including this Division)?	The agreements between agencies should be executed in such a way as to formally lay out the various responsibilities of the contracting parties.
Organization Structure	Is the Division organized in such a way that it operates efficiently and effectively?	There should be a review of the organization structure of the Division. Special attention should be focused on the roles and relationships of those staff members reporting to the Director.
Distribution of Work Between Professionals and Support Staff	Are staff resources being utilized in an appropriate manner?	Changes should be made in the administrative process to free professionals from excessive typing, filing, etc. The filing system should be revised, especially with regards to establishing a standard format for future files.
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION (EPC) - Waste Management Division</b>		
Staffing	Vacant clerical position.	The Division should fill the vacant clerical position as soon as possible.
Enforcement	There are solid waste sites which are not currently in compliance with the County's rules and regulations.	Make every effort to bring these sites into compliance as soon as possible.

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Management Team	There are several positions below the level of assistant director which are supervisory in nature.	The organizational structure should be revised in such a way as to reduce this to no positions below the level of Assistant Director with management responsibility.
<b>BUILDING DEPARTMENT - Departmental Administration</b>		
Records Management		Relocate record retention function from the Construction Inspection Division to the Administrative Division.
Policies and Procedures	Does the Department have an appropriate set of policies and procedures?	The Department should review and update existing standards and procedures for operation of the Department. The Department should also develop new policies and procedures, where needed.
Geographic Information Systems	Is the Department active in the use of the County's GIS resources?	The Department needs to become more active in a multi-departmental committee to expand the uses and the information which is available through the County GIS.
Facilities - Location	Is the Department located in facilities which are conducive to access by the public, as well as to the daily operation of the Department?	The Department should make several changes in its facilities, including: relocation of the main building to the I-75 / I-4 corridor; close the current Plant City office; and establish a new satellite office in the NW portion of the County.
Fees and Fines	Is the Department engaged in full cost recovery for its operations from the fees and fines that it charges?	The Department should undertake a service cost evaluation to insure that fees charged for services recover the full cost of these services and that they are established equitably among projects.
Public Interaction	Does the Department engage in enough outreach to the business community?	The Director and key managers should form an alliance with the construction industry which is more proactive.

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Telephone Systems	Do these systems provide enough resources so that the Department can work effectively and efficiently?	The Department should upgrade the current phone system to allow for additional incoming lines and better interaction with the Departmental data base.
Community Rating System (CRS) for Floodplain Management	Is the Building Department the appropriate location for this function?	<b>This function should be transferred to the Planning Department.</b>

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
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<b>BUILDING DEPARTMENT - Construction Inspection Division</b>		
Inspections	Are inspectors accessible to the public, yet working in a way which is both efficient and effective?	The Department should engage in the following recommendations: standardize office hours for all inspectors; reduce the time an inspector is in the office; expand the use of multi-disciplinary inspectors (encourage inspectors to obtain additional certifications); reorganize inspectors into area teams, headed by an Inspector III; Dispatch Chief Inspectors to the field to conduct scheduled inspections and to assist area teams; authorize the addition of two inspectors to the Department's complement.
Inspections	Do the inspectors have the equipment which is necessary so that they can perform their jobs both efficiently and effectively?	The vehicle fleet available to inspectors should be converted to high ground clearance vehicles such as pick up trucks; <b>the inspectors should be equipped with radio telephones which operate on the County's 800-900 MHz system.</b>
Plan Review	Is there appropriate staffing for this function?	The Department should add one plans examiner for the Division.

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Plan Review	Are the plans review in an efficient and effective manner?	<p>The Department should establish a triage approach to plans review, allowing simplistic applications to be reviewed immediately.</p> <p>The Department should also expand the use of pre-submitted plan review conferences for more extensive projects. Contractors should be able to receive early start authorization, and should also be able to receive conditional permits which where there are only minor changes to be made to submitted plans. The Department should also acquire additional software and hardware to assist the plans examiners in their plan review.</p> <p>The Department should also restrict the time that plans examiners are available to discuss questions with the public.</p>
Code Compliance	Is there appropriate staffing for this function?	<p>The Department should obtain authorization for two additional code compliance investigators, and become more pro-active in the enforcement of unlicensed contractors and unpermitted work.</p>
Code Compliance	Is the Department otherwise well organized to handle its responsibilities for code compliance?	<p>The Department should automate the administrative functions of the bureau. The Department should also merge the Contractor Licensing function with the Code Compliance Bureau.</p>
<b>BUILDING DEPARTMENT - Permitting Division</b>		
Customer Services	Is the Division meeting all customer service needs in the best way possible?	<p><b>The Division should: update informational materials for public use; install a computer terminal in the customer waiting area for use by walk in customers.</b></p>

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Engineering	Is the Division staffed in an appropriate manner to handle these responsibilities?	The Division should eliminate two positions in the Engineering Section.
Operations	Is the Division organized in a manner which facilitates completion of their mission in an efficient and effective manner?	The Department should also establish permit processing teams that would monitor applications from submittal to completion. The Department should make the following changes in the Division: improve security around the cashier area; establish procedures to purge the system for expired permits.
<b>PLANNING COMMISSION</b>		
Staffing Issues	Is the Commission providing staff with rewarding professional experiences?	The Commission should provide employees with opportunities to develop their skills sets and careers. These opportunities could take the form of: internal staff rotation; rotation with external agencies; the pay for performance programs should be re-evaluated; a formalized training program should be developed; a training program specific to supervisors and managers should also be developed.
Public Relations	Is the Commission and its staff providing good public interaction?	The Commission should develop a program to improve relations with the Builders Association members and the unincorporated neighborhood associations.

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Inter-Jurisdictional Relations	Is the Commission and its staff working to engage in a productive working relationship with the staff of the jurisdictions for which they serve as Planning Commission?	Planning Commission staff should work to improve its working relationship with local jurisdictional staff. A particular focus for this effort should be increased consultation regarding the Commission work program, i.e. what are long-term local jurisdiction substantive needs that the Commission can help meet? This should include a formal, annual review, with formal notifications that the review is to take place. The Commission should also focus its attention on broader, regional issues that lend themselves to inter jurisdictional analysis.
Independence / Cooperation	Is there the right balance between independence and cooperation?	The Commission and its staff need to focus on improving "partnering" opportunities with jurisdictional staff.
Geographic Information Systems	Is the information and the systems which support it standardized across agencies?	There is a need for standardization among agencies with regards to the Geographic Information Systems. The County Administrator should provide personal attention to this matter: this may require the reconstitution of the GIS Committee, and a new charge for the Committee to direct (with oversight from the CAO) the evolution of a truly regional, coordinated GIS system.
Zoning Review	Is the Commission reviewing appropriate zoning variance requests, etc.?	The Commission should establish thresholds for the review of zoning variances, etc. to reduce the number of request that are reviewed by the Commission.

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Planing Needs	Are all of the planning needs of the jurisdictions being served being met?	There appears to be a need to expand attention for planning in the following areas: defining communities, urban form; environmental planning; unincorporated are transportation planning; bridging the four plans; timing and compatibility issues; neighborhood planning.
Neighborhood Planning	Is this being conducted in the most effective manner?	A partnership between the Commission and the jurisdictions is desirable for neighborhood planning with the local governments taking the lead.
Planning Commission Board	Is the Board run effectively and efficiently?	The Board is generally well run. The Chairman should address attendance issues, especially with regards to two members who have missed more than 50% of the meetings of the Board.
Purchasing	Is this process run efficiently and effectively?	The Commission should reduce (from five) the number of signatures required to approve a POR. This should be reduced by at least two signatures.
Classification and Compensation	Is the classification and compensation system in the Commission appropriate?	<b>The Commission should fund a study to be conducted by the County Civil Service Board for unclassified positions (including the Executive Director). There are significant classification and pay inequities between the Departments.</b>

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Funding of the Commission	Is the funding mechanism for the Commission both equitable and sufficient?	The current funding mechanism, which has the County paying for the operations of the Commission should be changed (through legislation) so that each of the four jurisdictions is picking up some portion of the cost (perhaps to be determined by population or some other metric). These localities should then be involved in making budgetary decisions regarding the Commission, including staffing levels, etc. As part of this, the study recommends that the Commission consider using a different approach to staffing, including greater use of consultants. The Commission should also consider fee for service work for the municipalities of Temple Terrace and Plant City.
Legal Services	Should the County Attorney be providing legal services to all County functions, including the Commission? Does the Commission control the plan amendment process appropriately?	This topic should be taken up in the cross organizational study.  The Commission should review this process and determine if more control over staff time and allocation are warranted for this process.
Population Estimation	Is the Commission serving its role in this area appropriately?	The Commission should serve as the facilitator and staff of a formal consensus population estimating body made up of voting members representative of the various "stakeholders." A standard process and schedule should be adopted. The methodology should be determined and approved by members prior to the round of each estimation process.

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Capital Planning	The Planning Commission is required to review the CIP of the three municipalities and the County, each year. Are they performing this function effectively?	The Commission and the jurisdictions should meet to arrive at a consensus of better dates for the CIP's to be submitted to the Commission, and for the Commission to respond. The Special Act should be amended to reflect the newly agreed upon dates. The jurisdictional staff should make the presentation to the Commission, freeing the Commission staff to analyze and make recommendations to the Board.
Environmental Planning	Is the Commission engaged in the correct role as it addresses its responsibilities in this area?	<b>The Commission seems to be meeting its legal requirements. However, the Commission should be taking on a more proactive role, rather than monitoring the activities of other agencies.</b>
Land Use and Transportation	Is the planning for this area being conducted appropriately?	The Commission's staff for land use and for transportation should meet to discuss ways to improve joint planning for these two areas. The jurisdictional staff should also be involved in this process. Staffing levels should be examined for these two areas. The Commission should provide a point of contact for the jurisdictions which it serves - a specific planner(s) should be assigned to each jurisdiction. This should impact positively the consideration of the impact of land use decisions on transportation, and vice versa.
<b>PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT</b>		
Departmental Organization	Is PDMD organized in an effective and efficient way to meet its mandates, and to provide appropriate service levels to the community?	The PDMD should eliminate the Infrastructure Planning Section, while transferring the personnel and resources to several other areas.

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

<b>FUNCTION</b>	<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
Employee Development	Does PDMD communicate well with employees? Are there good career development opportunities for staff?	<p>Management needs to devise better ways of communicating with employees. Of special note is the need to communicate regarding budget impacts -- as a way of lessening the negative impact of salary raises. Improved communication should be a goal for all areas of the working environment at PDMD.</p> <p>Further, the PDMD needs to work at developing a better method of communicating the career path options available for employees. This effort also needs to include improved internal and external training.</p> <p>Work to improve the work environment in other ways, such as through noise reduction, etc.</p>
Inter-Agency Relationships	Do the Planning agencies all work with one another effectively?	<p><b>The PDMD needs to strive to open lines of communication with the Director of Planning, the Exec. Dir. of Planning. Initially, these meetings should include the County Commissioners and the Planning Commission as well.</b></p>
Transportation Planning	Is this carried out effectively, especially in the unincorporated areas of the County?	<p>This area should be considered in the cross organizational study for further review.</p>

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Various Boards	Do these various boards serve an effective and efficient method for completing the Department's mandates?	The County should replace the Board of Adjustment, Variance Review Board for Landscaping, Sign Review Board, Historical District Review Board, and Code Enforcement Board with a Hearing Officer, and establish a consolidated Board of Appeals with individuals chosen to represent the range of interests represented by the current boards.
Funding	Is the funding level, and associates fees adequate for PDMD operations?	<b>The County should conduct a user fee study of all current planning and zoning service areas, and develop fee structures which increase revenues sufficiently on the average to recover at least 50% of the budgeted cost of current planning and zoning services.</b>
Data Management	Is the PDMD being served adequately by the Data Management Department, especially with regard to quick turn around needs?	The PDMD should convert one existing FTE into a dedicated information systems management position. This should serve as a way of meeting the PDMD's day to day immediate needs. This should not take the place of the role currently played by the Data Management Department.
Geographic Information Systems	Is PDMD utilizing this resource effectively? Can this resource be improved upon?	<b>The County Administrator should focus on the evolution of a regionally coordinated GIS.</b>  <b>The use of GIS should be expanded throughout the Plans and Policies sections.</b>

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Land and Infrastructure Management System (LIMS)	Is LIMS set up in the most effective and efficient manner for both Building and PDMD?	The automation of engineering review needs should be incorporated in the analysis of LIMS.
Purchasing	Are the needs of the PDMD in the area of purchasing being met?	<p>The coordination of citizen complaints and inquiries should be incorporated into the analysis of LIMS.</p> <p>The PDMD should notify the County Administrator of the problem which exists with regards to the length of time it takes to get non-field of blanket PO's. A task force comprised of representatives from various County departments to work with the Purchasing Department to identify opportunities to improve the timeliness of processing non-field or blanket purchase orders.</p>

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**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Information Systems	Is the PDMD utilizing its current resources in an effective manner? Are there potential improvements for the information systems for the PDMD?	<p>PDMD management should expand their use of the Time Tracker System.</p> <p>The Data Management Department, in conjunction with Building and PDMD should review the current permit system. The goal should be to include a large number of enhancements.</p> <p>The Data Management Department should move PDMD into the Windows environment as soon as possible.</p> <p>The County should budget computer replacement for PDMD for FY 97.</p> <p>The County should give higher priority to document imaging for FY 97.</p> <p>Data Management should work with PDMD to develop presentation software and systems.</p> <p>PDMD's staff work on developing a computerized hydraulic model in relation to reclaimed water should be continued and completed.</p>
<b>PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT - Code Administration Section</b>		
Administrative Review Team	Is the team staffed appropriately? Are the lines of responsibility clear?	The PDMD should transfer four FTE's from the Plans and Policies Section to the Administrative Review Team in Codes Administration to perform rezoning related staff functions.

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
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<b>PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT - Review and Inspection Section</b>		
Permit Processing Systems	Does the section have access to the information it needs in a timely manner?	The PDMD should install an automated tracking system for subdivision preliminary plats, construction plans, etc.
Permit Process	Is the section organized to maximize customer service?	<p>The section should establish a system whereby each major project is supervised by a project manager.</p> <p>The PDMD should reduce the amount of time taken for the intake/distribution of plans from the current 2 days.</p> <p>More emphasis should be placed on the use of written notifications.</p> <p>Consider eliminating the requirement for separate construction plan submission, reducing the submission process from a 2 step to a 1 step process (concurrently, reduce review time by 21 days to a new standard of 36 days, from the current total 57 days).</p>
Interagency Interaction	Does the section interact with other agencies effectively?	<p>The section should ensure that the EPC Wetlands Division is represented in all pre submission and DRC meetings where wetland considerations could be involved.</p> <p>Work with BOCC and the EPC Board to instruct the Fire Department and EPC to establish time review criteria and to provide a plan to reduce their times for land development submission reviews.</p>

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Customer Service	Is the section working to best serve customer service needs?	<p>Prepare a survey form to be completed by applicants following a pre-application meeting with the goal of reducing the dissatisfaction level to less than 5%.</p> <p>The Building function and the Permit Services Center should both be called the Permit Service Center (PSC).</p> <p>All PSC signs should be replaced with signs that better identify locations and functions.</p> <p>Both PSC receptionist functions should be clearly identified.</p> <p>A standard for maximum customer wait should be set for walk ins and phones).</p> <p>Public handouts should be prepared for key development activities and should be prominently displayed in a self-help area.</p> <p>There should be additional cross training completed with the Permit Services staff to reduce the numbers of reception and application routing errors.</p> <p>A position should be dedicated to responding to public calls relating to.</p>

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Field Inspectors	Do field inspectors have the appropriate equipment to perform their tasks?	<p>Staff should rotate through the Permit Services Team for this.</p> <p>Require customer service training.</p> <p><b>PDMD should acquire cellular telephones and notebook computers with fax/modem capabilities for field inspectors. The PDMD should provide appropriate training for using this equipment.</b></p>
<b>PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT - Plans and Policies Section</b>		
Zoning	Is this the appropriate section for zoning review?	<p>The PDMD should transfer the zoning function, with four FTE's to the Code Administration Section.</p> <p>All application for zoning review should be updated and modernized.</p> <p><b>A zoning master file index should be created (through GIS), and should incorporate historical data.</b></p>
Transportation and Infrastructure Planning	Is this the appropriate section for this work?	<p>The section should work to update the transportation data, and to purchase new software to complete this task.</p> <p>The section should transfer remaining infrastructure planners to the Plans and Policies section.</p> <p>Cross training should take place with the Planning Commission MPO and the Plans and Policies Transportation staff.</p> <p>Traffic data should also be updated.</p>

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Planning	Are there duplications with the Planning Commission?	This issue should be reviewed in the cross organizational study.

Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CROSS ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY**

FUNCTION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
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<b>PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT - Infrastructure Planning Section</b>		
Infrastructure Planning	Is the PDMD the appropriate place for a consolidated Infrastructure Planning Section?	<b>The County should transfer infrastructure planning functions and staff to the Utility Departments and also transfer residual elements to the Plans and Policies section.</b>

**Note: Bold text indicates an issue with cross organizational implications.**

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**B. APPROVED PROJECT WORK  
PROGRAM**

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**WORKPLAN TO CONDUCT CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL  
STUDY OF DPGM, PC AND EPC  
Hillsborough County, Florida**

Specific Issue	Tasks	Project Team
<p><b>1. Environmental Planning</b> - - To what extent, if any, should the PC, EPC or PGMD be more involved in environmental planning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview Planning and Growth Management Department (PGMD), Planning Commission (PC) and Environmental Protection Comm. (EPC) staff.</li> <li>• Review legal requirements and parameters.</li> <li>• Review current planning roles and duties.</li> <li>• Examine inter-agency planning linkages (e.g., between EPC and PC on air quality issues).</li> <li>• Define scope and extent of current environmental planning efforts (e.g., PC conservation/coastal elements, PGMD greenways planning).</li> <li>• Document issues associated with current planning efforts (e.g., short-, mid- or long-term issues).</li> <li>• Identify alternative measures for improving environmental planning efforts (e.g., reallocating resources or restructuring current roles and duties).</li> <li>• Evaluate potential impacts of alternative measures for improving environmental planning efforts.</li> <li>• Determine most appropriate implementation strategy (e.g., organizational model).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead; Legal Review)</p> <p><b>Brady</b> (Interviews; Process Analysis)</p> <p><b>Zucker</b> (Strategy Analysis)</p>
<p><b>2. Transportation Planning</b> - - To what extent, if any, should the PC or PGMD be more involved in mid-level transportation planning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview selected PGMD, PC and EPC staff and PC or MPO board members.</li> <li>• Review current planning roles and duties.</li> <li>• Examine inter-agency planning linkages (e.g., between PC and Expressway Authority).</li> <li>• Define scope and extent of current mid-range transportation planning efforts.</li> <li>• Review relevant transportation planning process linkages (e.g., highway and connector planning).</li> <li>• Document issues associated with current transportation planning efforts.</li> <li>• Identify alternative measures for improving transportation planning efforts (e.g., redeploying staff or restructuring current roles and duties).</li> <li>• Evaluate potential impacts of alternative measures for improving transportation planning efforts.</li> <li>• Determine most appropriate implementation strategy (e.g., organizational model).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead)</p> <p><b>House</b> (Resource)</p> <p><b>Brady</b> (Interviews; Process Analysis)</p> <p><b>Zucker</b> (Strategy Analysis)</p>

Specific Issue	Tasks	Project Team
<p><b>3. Neighborhood planning--What is the most cost-effective and appropriate organizational approach to neighborhood planning?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain understanding of current approaches to, and projected future needs for, neighborhood planning.</li> <li>• Interview selected PGMD and PC staff.</li> <li>• Examine inter-agency planning linkages (e.g., among PC and PGMD).</li> <li>• Review neighborhood planning roles and duties (e.g., County Comprehensive Plan).</li> <li>• Define scope and extent of planning efforts.</li> <li>• Document issues associated with current neighborhood planning efforts.</li> <li>• Identify alternative measures for improving neighborhood planning efforts (e.g., redeploying staff or restructuring current roles and duties).</li> <li>• Evaluate potential impacts of alternative (v. current) measures for improving neighborhood planning.</li> <li>• Determine most appropriate implementation strategy (e.g., organizational model).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead)</p> <p><b>House</b> (Resource)</p> <p><b>Brady</b> (Interviews; Process Analysis)</p> <p><b>Zucker</b> (Strategy Analysis)</p>
<p><b>4. Capital improvement plan reviews -- Can or should the CIP review process be streamlined?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review legal bases for current CIP review processes and allocation of responsibilities.</li> <li>• Interview appropriate staff concerning CIP.</li> <li>• Review County policies and procedures related to CIP submission, development, review and approval.</li> <li>• Estimate resources dedicated to CIP preparation and review process, and overall effectiveness of process.</li> <li>• Review linkage of CIP to operating budget.</li> <li>• Determine most appropriate implementation strategy (e.g., organizational model).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead; Legal Review)</p> <p><b>Brady</b> (Process Review)</p> <p><b>Zucker</b> (Resource)</p>

Specific Issue	Tasks	Project Team
<p>5. <b>Zoning reviews -</b>            -What is the most appropriate alignment of roles and duties for zoning reviews?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review state legislation (e.g., Growth Management Act) and Charter and identify relevant legal issues.</li> <li>• Conduct interviews or surveys of selected stakeholders (e.g., citizens, neighborhoods, developers) as needed to assess current process.</li> <li>• Determine zoning review workloads and related resource commitments in PGMD and PC.</li> <li>• Review zoning review processes and determine potential duplication of effort, if any.</li> <li>• Estimate resource costs and process delays related to duplicative zoning reviews, if any.</li> <li>• Review zoning review processes in terms of responsiveness and other customer-related issues.</li> <li>• If needed, identify alternative measures for improving zoning review process.</li> <li>• If needed, evaluate potential impacts of alternative measures for improving zoning review process.</li> <li>• Determine most appropriate implementation strategy (e.g., organizational model).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead; Statutory Review)</p> <p><b>Burnside</b> (Process Review)</p> <p><b>Zucker</b> (Resource)</p> <p><b>Brady</b> (QC)</p>
<p>6. <b>Wetlands-related permit processing --</b>            Can or should the permit approval process for wetlands-related developments be streamlined?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review applicable laws and identify any relevant legal issues associated with alternative approaches.</li> <li>• Conduct staff interviews as needed to assess process.</li> <li>• Determine permit processing workloads and related resource commitments in PGMD and EPC.</li> <li>• Review permit approval processes and flowcharts and determine potential duplication of effort.</li> <li>• Review coordination of roles with other agencies.</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of potential impacts of delegation of wetlands-related permit issues.</li> <li>• Assess resource costs and process delays related to duplicative permit approval processes.</li> <li>• Identify potential opportunities for improvement (e.g., progressive approval thresholds).</li> <li>• Evaluate potential impacts of alternative measures for improving permit approval process.</li> <li>• Determine most appropriate implementation strategy (e.g., organizational model).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead)</p> <p><b>Burnside</b> (Process Review)</p> <p><b>House</b> (Resource)</p> <p><b>Brady</b> (QC)</p>

<b>Specific Issue</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Project Team</b>
<p>7. <b>Wastewater facility permit processing --</b>            Can or should the permit approval process for wastewater facilities be streamlined?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review applicable laws and identify any relevant legal issues associated with alternative approaches.</li> <li>• Conduct staff interviews as needed to assess process.</li> <li>• Determine permit processing workloads and related resource commitments in PGMD and EPC.</li> <li>• Review permit approval processes and flowcharts and determine potential duplication of effort.</li> <li>• Examine specific permit processing issues regarding County wastewater facilities.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for improving permit process (e.g., alternative delegation models involving DEP, EPC, SWFWMD or DPGM).</li> <li>• Evaluate potential impacts of alternative measures for improving permit approval process.</li> <li>• Determine most appropriate implementation strategy (e.g., organizational model).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead; Legal Review)</p> <p><b>Burnside, House</b> (Process Review)</p> <p><b>Brady</b> (QC)</p>
<p>8. <b>Water facility permit processing --</b>            Can or should the permit approval process for water facilities be streamlined?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review applicable laws and identify any relevant legal issues associated with alternative approaches.</li> <li>• Interview EPC and County Health Department staff to their perspective of relevant process issues.</li> <li>• Determine permit processing workloads and related resource commitments in Health and EPC.</li> <li>• Review permit approval processes and flowcharts and determine potential duplication of effort.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for improving permit process.</li> <li>• Evaluate potential impacts of alternative measures for improving permit approval process.</li> <li>• Determine most appropriate implementation strategy (e.g., organizational model).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead; Legal Review)</p> <p><b>Burnside, House</b> (Process Review)</p> <p><b>Brady</b> (QC)</p>
<p>9. <b>Resource management --</b>            To what extent can planning resources be more effectively planned and managed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain understanding of manner in which planning resources are planned, scheduled and managed.</li> <li>• Review extent to which annual work programs and schedules are coordinated among PC and DPGM.</li> <li>• Review process for implementing and monitoring implementation of Comprehensive Plan.</li> <li>• Develop estimates of resource impacts of potential duplication in relevant processes.</li> <li>• Examine linkages between funding and work planning and scheduling approach.</li> <li>• Recommend approach for improving coordination of annual work program (e.g., consolidated approach).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead)</p> <p><b>Burnside</b> (Analysis)</p> <p><b>House, Zucker</b> (Resource)</p>

Specific Issue	Tasks	Project Team
<p>10. <b>Legal support--</b> how should these services best be provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review scope, nature and level of legal services provided to EPC; estimate resource commitments as deemed necessary.</li> <li>• Interview legal staff in EPC and County Attorney's Office as needed to obtain their perspectives.</li> <li>• Review potential professional ethics issues.</li> <li>• Identify alternative models for providing legal support services to EPC (e.g., outsource legal services or transfer legal services to County Attorney's Office).</li> <li>• Assess potential impact of alternative models; assess capacity, expertise and service issues.</li> <li>• Determine most appropriate implementation strategy (e.g., organizational model).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Melville</b> (Lead)</p> <p><b>House</b> (Resource)</p>
<p>11. <b>Information access and utility- -</b> How should information technology strategies be modified to enhance customer services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct interviews with selected offices (e.g., Assessor, IT, Engineer, PC) as needed to obtain understanding of relevant technology platforms, initiatives and strategies (e.g., LINKS).</li> <li>• Obtain understanding of current service-related data available to PC, EPC, DPGM and their customers and uses to which these data are put to manage services and support policy makers and customers.</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of current GIS capabilities, systems and platforms (e.g., ARC/INFO, Genemap).</li> <li>• Identify issues associated with current development and implementation approaches to GIS and any other relevant hardware and software issues (e.g., compatibility of hardware and software).</li> <li>• Identify potential opportunities for improving information technology strategies (e.g., standardize GIS data and platforms).</li> <li>• Assess relative costs and benefits of alternative information technology strategies. Determine how information technology strategies should be changed to improve access and utility of service information.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Brady</b> (Lead)</p> <p><b>Miller</b> (Analyst)</p> <p><b>Zucker</b> (Resource)</p> <p><b>Melville</b> (QC)</p>