

Van Buren County Planning Commission

Revised Bylaws effective this 10th day of April, 2025,
as approved by the Van Buren County Commission

Article I – Name

The name of this Commission shall be the Van Buren County Planning Commission, hereby referred to as the Commission. This Commission was created by resolution of the Van Buren County Board of Supervisors passed on August 12, 1968, in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, MCL 125.3801 et seq.

Article II – Object

Section 1: The general purpose of the Commission is to plan for integrated county conservation and development to serve the needs and general welfare of the residents of this county in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008. The Commission also provides guidance and leadership on issues brought before it to enhance the community and county services.

Section 2: The Commission shall have all the powers, authority, obligations, and duties conferred or imposed upon it by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, as amended.

Article III – Members

Section 1: The Commission shall consist of up to 11 members, with one member being a representative of the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners. Members will represent all geographical areas of the county and possess qualifications that benefit the Committee.

Section 2: Members shall be appointed by the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners, with the Planning Commission providing recommendations prior to appointments being made.

Section 3: The regular term of office shall be three years. Initial appointments shall be staggered to ensure continuity. In the event of a vacancy, the County Board of Commissioners will appoint a new member to complete the unexpired term. Members may be removed by the County Board of Commissioners for nonperformance of duty or misconduct, following due process.

Section 4: Members may be re-appointed to the Commission.

Section 5: Members of the Commission shall receive compensation and mileage as specified by the County Board of Commissioners. All members of the Commission shall be reimbursed for actual, reasonable, and necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties.

Section 6: Members of the Commission shall not simultaneously serve in any other public position that would constitute a conflict of interest or be considered incompatible under state law, including the Michigan Incompatible Public Offices Act (MCL 15.181 et seq.).

Section 7: If any member fails to attend three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings of the Commission, without approval of the chairperson, a vacancy shall exist and an appointment shall be made by the Board of Commissioners as soon as possible.

Article IV – Officers

Section 1: The officers of the Planning Commission shall be elected by the members of the Commission at their regular annual meeting. If the election of officers is not held at such meeting, the election shall be held as soon thereafter as conveniently possible.

Section 2: The Commission shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from its appointed members and shall appoint a Secretary and create and fill such other offices as it may determine necessary.

Section 3: The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings, appoint committees as needed subject to the approval of the Planning Commission, and perform such duties as may be delegated by the Planning Commission.

Section 4: The Chairperson shall be the official spokesperson for the Commission on policy matters.

Section 5: The Vice-Chairperson shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson.

Section 6: The Secretary of the Planning Commission shall be a designated Van Buren County staff person and may not be a voting member of the Commission.

Section 7: The Chairperson shall appoint a nominating committee for the selection of officers at the December meeting. The recommendation of officers from that committee will be voted on at the regular annual meeting.

Article V – Duties of Planning Staff

Section 1: The Director shall be responsible for all technical studies, investigations, surveys, reports, and recommendations authorized or prepared on behalf of the Commission.

Section 2: The Director shall report monthly on the status of planning issues handled by the office.

Section 3: The Director shall maintain the records of the Commission's actions, minutes, receipts, and disbursements. All official records shall be kept on file in the Community Services Office.

Section 4: The Director shall prepare the annual budget for the Commission's consideration and administer and maintain the budget as reviewed by the Planning Commission Chairperson and approved by the Commission.

Section 5: The Director shall be responsible for the day-to-day conduct and administration of the Commission's business and staff, including work assignments and other necessary administrative duties.

Section 6: If the Commission makes disbursements from funds under its control, all checks, drafts, and orders for payment of money shall be handled by the Director or other designee, with prior review and approval by the Commission.

Article VI – Meetings

Section 1: Regular meetings shall be held on the 4th Wednesday of each month, commencing at a regular time set at the annual meeting. November and December meetings shall be held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month and shall be convened at a time set at the annual meeting or as set by the Chairperson.

Section 2: The regular annual meeting shall take place in January or as set by the Chairperson.

Section 3: Special meetings may be called by the Chair or Vice-Chairperson, or by three or more members of the Commission, at such time and place as deemed necessary after proper notice. Notices of special meetings, together with an agenda and purpose, shall be given to members not later than 24 hours preceding such meeting.

Section 4: All meetings for the taking of official action shall be open to the public. The Commission may meet in executive session upon affirmative vote of a majority of a quorum.

Section 5: A majority of the members in office constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority vote of the members present at a meeting shall constitute the action of the Commission, unless a larger majority is required by statute or elsewhere in these bylaws.

Article VII – Executive Committee Roles and Authority

Section 1: The Executive Committee of the Planning Commission shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. The Executive Committee shall not take action on matters requiring a public hearing or formal vote of the full Planning Commission unless such authority has been expressly delegated. The Executive Committee is authorized to act on behalf of the full Planning Commission between regular meetings in matters that are:

- Administrative in nature;
- Time-sensitive and necessary to continue the orderly conduct of Planning Commission business;
- Previously authorized by resolution of the full Planning Commission.

Section 2: The Executive Committee shall not make final decisions or enter into any contract, agreement, or conveyance that binds the County, unless such authority has been expressly delegated by the County Board of Commissioners.

Section 3: Any actions taken by the Executive Committee shall be reported to the full Planning Commission at the next regular meeting and included in the official minutes.

Article VIII – Committees

Standing and special committees shall be authorized by the Commission and appointed by the Chairperson as necessary, subject to the approval of the Commission.

Article IX – Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern this Commission in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order that the Commission may adopt.

Article X – Amendments

Section 1: Recommendations for changes to these bylaws can be made at any regular meeting by a majority vote of the members of the Planning Commission, provided the proposed changes have been read at a preceding meeting.

Section 2: The County Board of Commissioners must approve all amendments to these bylaws.