

§ 15.2-4208. General duties of planning district commissions.

Planning district commissions shall have the following duties and authority:

1. To conduct studies on issues and problems of regional significance;
2. To identify and study potential opportunities for state and local cost savings and staffing efficiencies through coordinated governmental efforts;
3. To identify mechanisms for the coordination of state and local interests on a regional basis;
4. To implement services upon request of member localities;
5. To provide technical assistance to state government and member localities;
6. To serve as a liaison between localities and state agencies as requested;
7. To review local government aid applications as required by §15.2-4213 and other state or federal law or regulation;
8. To conduct strategic planning for the region as required by §§15.2-4209 through 15.2-4212;
9. To develop regional functional area plans as deemed necessary by the commission or as requested by member localities;
10. To assist state agencies, as requested, in the development of substate plans;
11. To participate in a statewide geographic information system, the Virginia Geographic Information Network, as directed by the Department of Planning and Budget; and
12. To collect and maintain demographic, economic and other data concerning the region and member localities, and act as a state data center affiliate in cooperation with the Virginia Employment Commission.

(1995, cc. 732, 796, § 15.1-1405.1; 1997, c. 587; 1998, cc. 668, 686.)

§ 15.2-4209. Preparation and adoption of regional strategic plan.

A. Except in planning districts in which regional planning is conducted by multi-state councils of government, each planning district commission shall prepare a regional strategic plan for the guidance of the district. The plan shall concern those elements which are of importance in more than one of the localities within the district, as distinguished from matters of only local importance. The plan shall include regional goals and objectives, strategies to meet those goals and objectives and mechanisms for measuring progress toward the goals and objectives. The strategic plan shall include those subjects necessary to promote the orderly and efficient development of the physical, social and economic elements of the district such as transportation, housing, economic development and environmental management. The plan may be divided into parts or sections as the planning district commission deems desirable. In developing the regional strategic plan, the planning district commission shall seek input from a wide range of organizations in the region, including local governing bodies, the business community and citizen organizations.

B. Before the strategic plan is adopted, it shall be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development and to the governing body of each locality within the district for a period of not less than thirty days prior to a hearing to be held by the planning district commission thereon, after notice as provided in §15.2-2204. Each such local governing body shall make recommendations to the planning district commission on or before the date of the hearing with respect to the effect of the plan within its locality. The Department of Housing and Community Development shall notify the planning district commission prior to the hearing as to whether the proposed strategic plan conflicts with plans of adjacent planning districts.

C. Upon approval of the strategic plan by a planning district commission after a public hearing, it shall be submitted to the governing body of each locality (excluding towns of less than 3,500 population unless members of the commission) within the district for review and possible adoption. The plan shall become effective with respect to all action of a planning district commission upon approval by the planning district commission. The plan shall not become effective with respect to the action of the governing body of any locality within the district until adopted by the governing body of such locality.

D. The adopted strategic plan shall be submitted within thirty days of adoption to the Department of Housing and Community Development for information and coordination purposes.

(1968, c. 224, § 15.1-1406; 1976, c. 760; 1981, c. 315; 1995, cc. 732, 796; 1997, c. 587; 1998, cc. 668, 686.)

§ 15.2-4210. Commission to act only in conformity with regional strategic plan.

When the strategic plan becomes effective as the district plan, the planning district commission shall not, except as provided in the plan, establish any policies or take any action which, in its opinion, is not in conformity with the plan.

(1968, c. 224, § 15.1-1407; 1995, cc. 732, 796; 1997, c. 587; 1998, cc. 668, 686.)

§ 15.2-4211. Amendment of regional strategic plan.

The strategic plan may be amended in the same manner as provided for the original approval and adoption of the plan. However, if the planning district commission determines that a proposed amendment has less than districtwide significance, such amendment may be submitted only to the governing bodies of those localities which the planning district commission determines to be affected. The amended strategic plan shall be submitted within thirty days of amendment to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

(1968, c. 224, § 15.1-1408; 1995, cc. 732, 796; 1997, c. 587.)

§ 15.2-4212. Review of regional strategic plan by commission.

At least once every five years the regional strategic plan shall be revised and formally approved by the planning district commission. The revised plan shall not become effective with respect to the action of the governing body of any locality within the district until adopted by the governing body of such locality.

(1968, c. 224, § 15.1-1409; 1995, cc. 732, 796; 1997, c. 587.)