

# Construction Project Planning and Approval Guidelines

(Updated August 2, 2021)

## Purpose

The University of Florida hereby establishes these guidelines with policies and procedures for the purpose of vetting and approving construction project and real estate transactions that require authorization by University leadership. These guidelines supplement the University of Florida Governance Standards adopted by the University Board of Trustees.

An approval process for construction and real estate projects is necessary to ensure that the University optimizes its use of land, physical facilities and other assets. Doing so enables the University to achieve and maintain functional efficiency, economic effectiveness, aesthetic appeal, and flexibility of its campus (to include, broadly speaking, all the properties UF owns or controls) for future change and growth. These projects require careful consideration since they could significantly change the University's built environment with added building footprints, visible infrastructure, and altered landscapes.

## Policy

University academic and operating units and their employees are encouraged to explore ways in which to advance the University's mission by developing new uses of the University's land and facilities. This might include, for example, (1) the development of land for future use, (2) the construction of new facilities, and/or (3) the renovation or replacement of existing facilities. Before proceeding with plans to undertake a project of this nature or magnitude, however, it is important that appropriate oversight, input, and approval be provided. This will better enable University leadership to determine that a proposed project:

- is consistent with the University's mission and goals;
- comports with the campus master plan and strategic plans;
- is of sufficiently high priority;
- assumes an appropriate footprint on or off campus;
- is architecturally appropriate;
- has available funding; and
- provides a return on investment.

Consistent with this philosophy and regardless of project location, projects that meet one or more of the following criteria must be reviewed and approved according to the approval process outlined herein before being allowed to proceed:

- Exceeds \$2m in total project cost
- Generates new GSF including temporary space (either as a new stand-alone building or as an addition)
- Renovates or re-configures over 3,000 NSF or exceeds \$1m in construction cost

- Alters landscape and/or open space with a total project cost  $\geq$ \$250,000 or deviates from the Landscape Master Plan
- Alters circulation or parking
- Includes property acquisition or conveyance
- Includes private partnership implications with or without building/land leasing
- Includes demolition of existing building(s)
- Includes non-standard exterior signage/branding
- Includes art, plaques, or memorials (installation or removal) not provided through the Art in State Buildings program

This policy and associated guidelines apply to all University of Florida colleges, schools, departments, centers, institutes, auxiliary units, and other units that are within the University entity. These guidelines also apply to all direct support organizations, health services support organizations, practice plans, and all other entities affiliated with the University.

**Procedure** (See Figure 1: CPPEC Process Diagram)

In order to determine if a given project can proceed, senior administrators affiliated with any entity to which these guidelines apply are required to notify the Planning, Design, and Construction Division (PDC) of their plans to engage in any project that meets the above policy criteria. With the exception of certain UFHealth affiliates, the [PDC online project request portal](#) is used to request project management services and is the mechanism to submit and screen projects for compliance with these guidelines.

Projects will advance through a series of steps in the approval process. PDC is responsible for implementing these guidelines and forwarding information to the Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for dissemination and review. A Construction Project Planning and Approval Executive Committee (CPPEC) is established for the purpose of reviewing all applicable projects. Collectively, this approval process may be referred to as the “CPPEC Process.”

Depending upon project complexity, PDC will assign the project approval to one of three review levels. At the highest threshold of complexity (Level 1), project approval is required and provided by the CPPEC. A mid-level threshold of complexity (Level 2) requires approval by the Vice President for Business Affairs and Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer with notification to the CPPEC. At the lowest threshold of complexity (Level 3), project approval is provided by the Assistant Vice President for Planning, Design and Construction.

At the **Project Intake** stage, PDC will work with the project requestor to gather or develop certain information required to initiate the review process. PDC will provide a CPPEC Project Intake Form to facilitate this process. Depending upon the nature and scope of the project, the form may require signature by the senior vice president of the requestor’s unit. At this point, the project information will be more cursory and exploratory in nature to include:

- project description, scale, drawings (if any);
- purpose/project justification;
- proposed location and land ownership issues (if any);

- estimated cost and proposed funding source, including ROI statement and operational considerations (i.e., maintenance and operation expense commitment);
- consistency with campus master plan, including environmental, historic, parking and circulation, and urban design considerations;
- procurement method; and
- concept approval and authorization to submit the project from the appropriate unit leadership (VP or Senior VP for Level 1 projects; Dean/Director for Level 2 projects).

All projects will proceed to an **Initial Review** presenting this concept-level information to the appropriate CPPEC level reviewer. Approval criteria at this stage include consistency with academic priorities, other planning documents, funding potential, and Board of Trustees/Board of Governors guidance. Projects approved at the Initial Review will be authorized to proceed to preliminary programming and financial planning, which shall include a Private Gift Feasibility Study by UF Advancement for fundraising potential if applicable. The Initial Review approval may include site selection, or this may be confirmed at the next stage. If start-up funding is available, the Initial Review approval may also include authorization to hire architect/engineering consultants to assist with programming and prepare concept images that may be used for fundraising. Level 2 and 3 projects may only be required to achieve approval at the Initial Review stage if information is fully developed at submittal.

The next step of project approval is the **Scoping/Budget Review**. Submittals to the CPPEC at this stage include a preliminary program, financial plan, and executive summary. Approval criteria include an “assured” funding plan with committed funds for maintenance and operation of new facilities. Projects approved at the Scoping/Budget Review stage are authorized to proceed to funding development, final programming, consultant selection and design without returning to the CPPEC committee unless directed otherwise by the CPPEC chair. Some projects may return at this stage for multiple reviews and “conditional approvals” as project details are gathered. In particular, additional reviews are likely for projects with donor funding. Once final CPPEC approval is granted and BOT notified per its Governance Standards, official program documents will be prepared by PDC and signed by the VP for Business Affairs, who has final approval authority for facility design and construction on behalf of the University President. Conceptual project renderings may be developed at the Scoping/Budget Review stage or thereafter depending on availability of start-up funds from the project sponsor. Significant projects that advance through a design phase may return to the CPPEC committee for information or review at the request of the committee chair.

Projects with donor funding may be presented multiple times at the Scoping/Budget Review stage. The first Scoping/Budget Review submittal will include results of the Private Gift Feasibility Study and will likely result in approval to develop concept renderings for use in fundraising. Start-up funds from the project sponsor will be required to develop these renderings. The design concepts will then be presented for Scoping/Budget Review in advance of donor discussions. PDC will also work with UF Advancement and the project sponsor to develop more detailed financial plans for design and construction phasing to coincide with donor or other funding commitments. These detailed financial plans may also be presented to CPPEC for approval in a **Funding Review** phase if needed.

**Term:** Project approvals granted through this CPPEC process are understood to be **valid for a maximum of eighteen months from final approval**. Beyond that anniversary, projects must return for update and approval if they have not advanced to a signed final program and identified project funding.

**UFBOT: Projects that meet the University Board of Trustees Governance Standards criteria must be approved by the BOT via the Facilities and Capital Investments Committee and Board as required.**

(See Figure 2: Capital Project Model)

**Design:** Once a project has been approved through this approval process, it must still receive design phase review by the appropriate entity. PDC maintains design standards and guidelines, and empanels an Architectural Review Council (ARC) for this purpose. On the main campus, additional review is accomplished through University committees as established in the Faculty Senate Bylaws. These committees recommend approval to the Vice President for Business Affairs, who has final approval authority for facility design and construction on behalf of the University President. The following committees are charged with facility design reviews. The Land Use and Facilities Planning Committee receives recommendations from the other three committees.

- Land Use and Facilities Planning Committee
- Parking and Transportation Advisory Committee
- Lakes, Vegetation and Landscaping Committee
- Preservation of Historic Buildings and Sites Committee

If beyond the main campus, the Sr. Vice President for Health Affairs, or the Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources may have final approval authority for facility design and construction that does not meet certain criteria for management through PDC. These vice presidents are still responsible for bringing projects through the CPPEC process and providing status reports on current projects.

The University Architect, in the PDC office, oversees design consultant selections, ARC reviews, and design coordination including consistency with the University's Campus Design Guidelines and Landscape Master Plan. At direction of the CPPEC Chair, the University Architect may bring project design, schedule, or other project information to CPPEC for information only.

**Signage/Branding, Art, Memorials, Plaques:** Project requests that involve unique signage or branding elements, works of art, memorials or dedications (e.g., plaques) will be reviewed through the CPPEC process. This review will typically be at the Level-2 threshold with approval from the Senior Vice President and COO, and the Vice President for Business Affairs. A subprocess within the PDC office will ensure review by UF Advancement (and its Naming Council), Vice President for Strategic Communications and Marketing, ARC, and others as needed. At direction of the CPPEC Chair, PDC may bring these project proposals to CPPEC for approval.

## **Construction Project Planning and Approval Executive Committee (CPPEC)**

The Construction Project Planning and Approval Executive Committee (CPPEC) is responsible for reviewing and approving the most complex (Level 1) projects including all that require Board of Trustees approval.

Members of CPPEC include the highest level of University administrators responsible for setting policy at the University. UF's Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer will chair the committee. Seven members vote on project approval requests, and others are non-voting members that serve in an advisory role. When absence is unavoidable, CPPEC voting members may send an alternate attendee but this alternate will not vote in their absence.

### **CPPEC voting members are:**

1. University President
2. Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (committee chair)
3. Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
4. Senior Vice President for Health Affairs
5. Senior Vice President and Provost
6. Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources
7. Vice President for Business Affairs

### **CPPEC non-voting members are:**

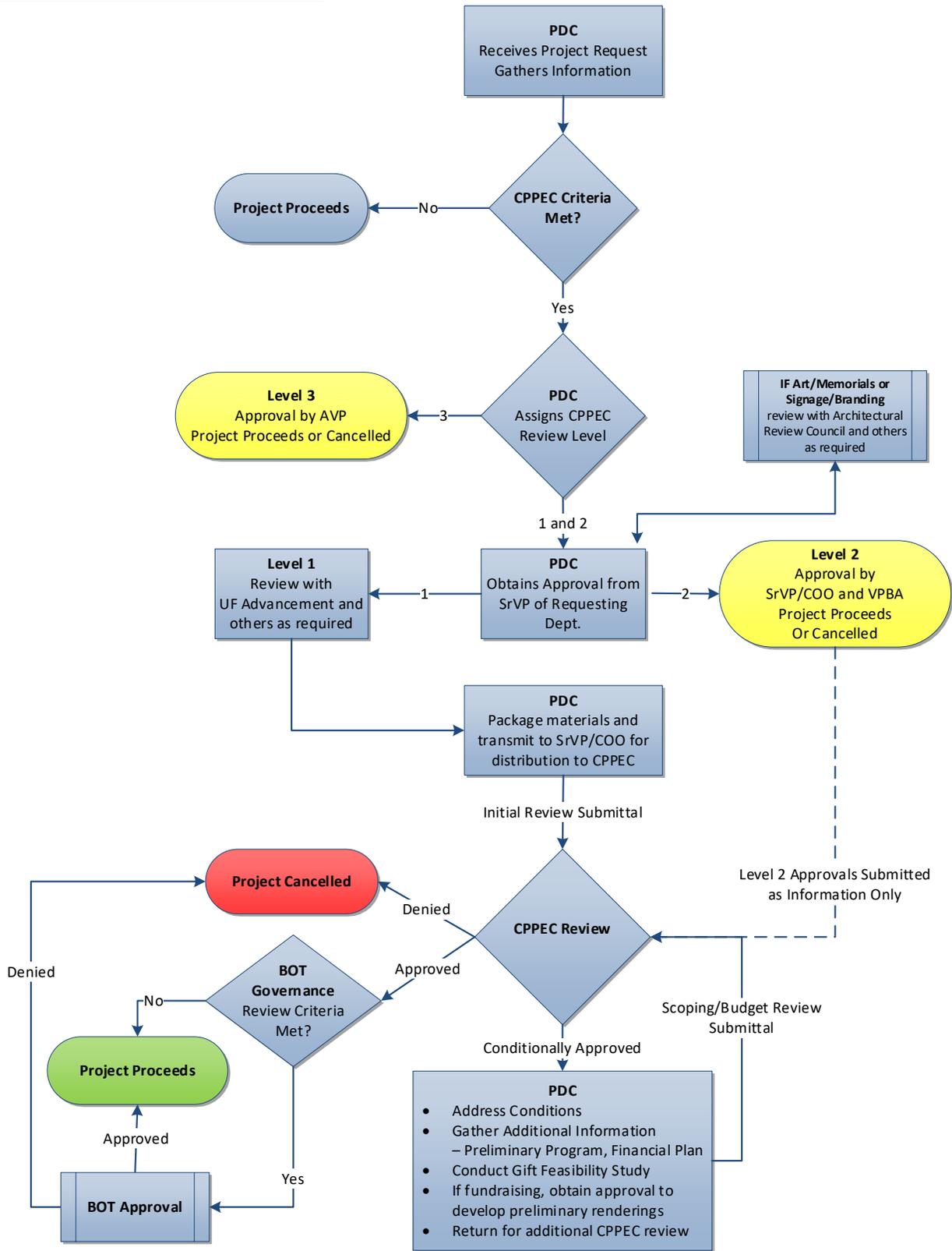
1. Executive Chief of Staff
2. Vice President for Advancement
3. Vice President for Facilities, UF Health Shands Hospitals
4. Vice President and General Counsel or designee
5. Vice President for Government and Community Relations
6. Vice President for Strategic Communications and Marketing
7. Assistant Vice President for Planning, Design, and Construction (and PDC leadership team)
8. University Athletic Association Director or designee

CPPEC shall also facilitate the University's project prioritization process to review and recommend University construction project priorities for submittal as state funding requests (annually), for inclusion in the University capital campaign, and for inclusion in the Campus Master Plan (at least every five years). The committee may meet additionally to consider modifications to these priority project lists as needed. CPPEC project priorities shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees as required.

**CPPEC Meetings:** Standing meetings and deadlines will be established on an annual calendar to facilitate project review. Level 3 projects will be approved by the Assistant Vice President for Planning, Design and Construction as they are received. Level 2 projects will be distributed to the Senior Vice President/COO and Vice President for Business Affairs monthly for signature approval. The full CPPEC members will convene monthly to approve Level 1 projects. CPPEC meetings may be cancelled if no projects are submitted and ready for approval by the established deadline. In that circumstance, projects will be considered at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

CPPEC meetings will include a detailed agenda that clearly states the review stage and recommended action. The Assistant Vice President for Planning, Design, and Construction or a member of the PDC leadership team will present the projects for approval. Project sponsors may be invited to attend CPPEC meetings; however, they may only be present for the discussion of their project request. In the interest of time, presentations will be kept to a minimum with the most relevant information to be provided via the meeting packet. Presentations should focus and expound on data included in the CPPEC Intake form.

**Figure 1: CPPEC Process Diagram**



**Figure 2: Capital Project Model**

## Capital Planning Model

