



Melissa Hickman Bailey

As Director of Planning and Community Development for the City of Florence, Alabama, Melissa guides the city's physical growth through the creation of long-range development plans, policy implementation, and citizen engagement. She serves on the Shoals Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Coordinating Committee and the Tennessee RiverLine Local Leadership Team.

Melissa has 27 years of experience in public administration, working at the city, county, and regional levels of government. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Professional Geography from the University of North Alabama and a Master of Public Administration from Villanova University. Melissa also holds a graduate certificate in City Management. She is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Public Administration at Valdosta State University.

Melissa maintains professional certifications in Local Planning, Community Development, Economic Development, Geographic Information Systems, and Public Administration Leadership. She is a member of Phi Alpha Alpha, a global honor society for public affairs and administration, and Phi Sigma Pi, a national honor fraternity for leadership. Melissa was honored as the University of North Alabama Geography Alumnae of the Year in 2011 and Alumnae of the Year for Community Service in 2016. In 2020, she was the regional champion of the NASPAA-Batten Global Simulation competition. Melissa was honored to receive a nomination for Shoals Woman of the Year in 2020.

Florence's Brownfields Program, led by Melissa, has resulted in over 100 acres of purposeful, revitalized land use, including the Sweetwater Arts District and the former Eliza Coffee Memorial Hospital.