



# Planning News

City of Baton Rouge-Parish of East Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Winter 2012

## BIKEBR TO BE RECOGNIZED AT NATIONAL PLANNING CONFERENCE



The Planning Commission GIS Division created the Bike BR - Community Bikeability Tool to help determine the areas of Baton Rouge that are easily

developed using the Google Maps application programming interface (API). Additional features include up to date bike-friendly businesses, a bicycle route planning tool, and survey designed to record user comments. The assessed quality of the neighborhood biking environment may also be used to prioritize facility improvement planning efforts.

accessible and suitable for bicyclists. Bikeability is a measure of how safe, easy, and desirable it is to ride a bike on Baton Rouge public streets rather than drive. The bikeability tool is a component of Healthy BR and the CPPC Bicycle and Pedestrian Initiative.

The application was designed with the intent to be user friendly and the Google Maps interface was carefully selected because it is very familiar and widely used. Google Maps includes other valuable functionality such as geo-coding, routing, aerial imagery, and street view. Additionally, the user has many options in the layer and routing menus that may be selected to produce personalized maps.

A survey was created and distributed to local area bicyclists to determine the most important factors to biking. The resulting three main factors from the survey analysis include availability of bike facilities, street connectivity, and residential density. The selected datasets are not meant to represent all bicycling considerations for determining routes, but serve as an attempt to quantify a score from what is presently available. Using GIS analytical tools, these factors were then weighted and scored to represent the bikeability of each Census Block Group. The index is associated with block group boundaries because of their relative scale to neighborhoods.

Bike BR displays the areas of Baton Rouge that are bike friendly and areas that need more attention. Bicyclists are encouraged to use the tool for its wealth of bike-specific information. The tool identifies barriers and corridors that connect diverse sections of the city and considers safety implications. The Planning Commission has created the community bikeability tool with the intent of involving citizens in the planning process. This solution is another way to engage the public to identify needed improvements in neighborhoods and to encourage taking ownership of those that are implemented.

To publish this information, all relevant data are accessed utilizing an online interactive mapping application. The Website was

*(continued on page 3)*



## **THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**By Tara Wicker**

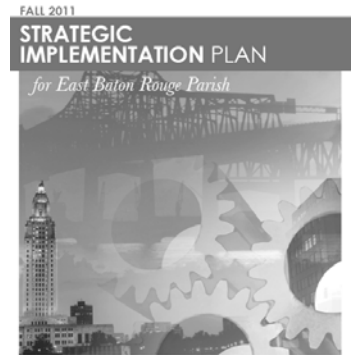
### **2012 PLANNING COMMISSION WORK PROGRAM**

At the end of each year, the Planning Commission staff has the opportunity to review our annual work program for accomplishments and opportunities. Last year, our goals were related to the comprehensive plan update process, our Geographic Information System, and economic and environmental planning. In pursuit of these goals, both the Planning Commission and Metropolitan Council unanimously approved the adoption of FUTUREBR, the new 20 year comprehensive plan. The Office of the Planning Commission received Transportation Enhancement Project grant funding from the Louisiana Department of Transportation. The \$1.42 million award will be used to extend the levee park path almost another seven miles, from Farr Park to Ben Hur Road. The Planning Commission is continuing to implement a \$400,000 grant for Brownfields site assessments. We have also developed an interactive mapping application named BikeBR – A Community Bikeability Tool, and made enhancements to the Application Tracking System. Additionally, an Enterprise Address Management Assessment Report was completed and an Enterprise Geographic Information Systems data model project was kicked-off. The Planning Commission also made improvements to the online Neighborhood Survey and Planning District Economic



Profiles. The projects detailed in the 2011 work program have received local, state, and national recognition, and allowed us to promote the Planning Commission at several conferences.

The 2012 Planning Commission work program intends to build off the successes of the previous year as well as explore opportunities for growth and improvement. Major projects include the initial implementation of FUTUREBR outlined in the Strategic Implementation Plan, and securing funding for the overall implementation of the new comprehensive plan. The Strategic Implementation Plan includes early priorities related to transportation, housing, the creation of Urban Renewal Districts, and updating the Unified Development Code. In addition to these endeavors, other 2012 projects include enhancing our Growth Centers, Smart Growth planning, infill development through the efforts of the Brownfields program, and improving our Parishwide GIS program.



*Strategic Implementation Plan*

For more information on the Planning Commission, FUTUREBR, or our projects, please visit the CPPC website at <http://www.brgov.com/dept/planning> or call our offices (225) 389-3144 or email at [planning@brgov.com](mailto:planning@brgov.com).

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City-Parish Planning Commission  
1755 Florida Street, Third Floor  
P.O. Box 1471  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
email: [planning@brgov.com](mailto:planning@brgov.com)  
website: [www.brgov.com/dept/planning/](http://www.brgov.com/dept/planning/)

**Newsletter Editor**  
Lenise Lyons

**Planning Commission**  
Tara Wicker, Chairman; W.T. Winfield, Vice Chairman, Darius Bonton, P.E., Dr. James Gilmore, Jr., Sarah Holliday-James, Audrey Nabors Jackson, Laurie Marien, John Price, and Martha Jane Tassin

#### **Planning Commission Staff**

**Administration:** Troy L. Bunch, Director; Ellen Miller, Assistant Director; Ryan Holcomb, Planning Project Coordinator; Annette Chambliss, Administrative Assistant; Jane Wooldridge, Senior Clerical Specialist

**Advance Planning and Research:** Lael Holton, Manager; Barrett Chaix, Lenise Lyons, Stephen Mayer, and Gilles Morin, Planners; Marie Hopkins, Clerical Staff

**Current Planning:** Glenn Hanna, Acting Manager; Vance Baldwin, Christopher Ferris, Tiffany Johnson-Wells, and Collin Magee, Planners; Jonique Marcelin; Clerical Staff

**Geographic Information System:** Warren Kron, Jr., GIS Coordinator; Indah Kusuma, Justin Priola, Karrie Sept, and Quang Tran, GIS Analysts; Jeremy Bunner, Sean Passler, and Matt Wyatt, Interns



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In 2011, GIS staff presented Bike BR at the Louisiana Remote Sensing and GIS Workshop in New Orleans, Louisiana and the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) GIS Pro conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. In April, the tool will be showcased at the American Planning Association National Conference in Los Angeles, California.

**PLANNING IN THE NEWS**

*“Holden announces implementation of FuturEBR plans”*  
*The Advocate*  
*October 25, 2011*

*“Holden appoints FutureBR committee”*  
*The Advocate*  
*October 26, 2011*

*“The details and the views on FuturEBR”*  
*225Baton Rouge*  
*November 1, 2011*

*“Planning Commission, Metro Council to take up Rouzan plan revision”*  
*Baton Rouge Business Report*  
*February 2, 2012*

*“Reginelli’s plans second BR site”*  
*The Advocate*  
*February 3, 2012*



*FuturEBR Implementation Team member Troy Bunch, left, director of the East Baton Rouge Parish Planning and Zoning Commission, talks with John Fregonese, planning consultant for FuturEBR, right, before an announcement of the team Tuesday at the Old State Capitol.*

**Notes from the Director**

**PLANNING DIRECTOR’S AWARD**



**By Troy L. Bunch,  
 Planning Director**

When we hear of employee recognition, we think of merit, acknowledgment, gratitude, appreciation, and some thanks for the job well-done by an employee. Employee recognition may be in the forms of awards, employee merits, pro-

motions and monetary incentives. The importance of recognizing personnel is as important as making them productive and achieving organizational goals. A failure to properly recognize our best assets (human resources), may result in a total organizational disaster. The goal of employee recognition is to show appreciation for an employee’s achievement and motivate employees to continue with good performance and loyalty to the organization.

The responsibility of employers and managers to recognize employees does not only include the ability to assess performance but also determine the worthiness of the acknowledgement or not. This involves reliable employee performance review and evaluation. Employees are humans. Hence, managers should take extra care on their morale and emotions.

Employee recognition in an organization reflects appreciation for great performance. When we hear of employee recognition, we think of merit, acknowledgment, gratitude, appreciation, and some thanks for the job well-done by an employee. Voltaire wrote, “Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well”.

It is for this reason I implemented an annual award to recognize excellence in our employees. In 1997, the Planning Director’s Award was created. The award is based upon internal evaluations, interactions with agencies/organizations both within City-Parish government and in the private sector and accomplishments achieved by the individual.

The Award is given to an employee “For outstanding performance, loyal and dedicated employee service, providing a major contribution to the Department, Community and Parish with skills that promote harmonious development and growth.” Barrett Chaix, Coordinator, Economic and Environmental Research, Advance Planning and Research Division received the Planning Director’s Award for his performance in 2011.

## PLANNING AHEAD

- March 19**     **Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting**  
5:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348
- March 21**     **Metropolitan Council Zoning Meeting**  
4:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348
- April 18**     **Metropolitan Council Zoning Meeting**  
4:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348
- April 23**     **Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting**  
5:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348
- May 16**     **Metropolitan Council Zoning Meeting**  
4:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348
- May 21**     **Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting**  
5:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348

Visit the Planning Commission  
on the internet at  
[www.brgov.com/dept/planning](http://www.brgov.com/dept/planning).

## Field Notes

The Office of the Planning Commission, Department of Public Works, and the Mayor's Office requested funding from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development's Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP). The requested funding will be used to construct an additional 6.5 miles of multi-use path from Farr Park to Ben Hur Road with access ramps to River Road.

## Staff Spotlight

Indah Kusuma, GIS Analyst, was "Employee of the Month" for December 2011.

Vance Baldwin, Land Development Planner, was "Employee of the Month" for January 2012.

Chris Ferris, Land Development Planner, was "Employee of the Month" for February 2012.

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**City-Parish Planning Commission**  
1755 Florida Street, 3rd Floor  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

