Successful planning requires timely citizen notification. Louisiana Revised Statute 42:19 states that all public bodies shall give public notice of their regular meetings. Also, Title 7 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge requires notification prior to public hearings regarding all items. Lastly, the Office of the Planning Commission notifies members of the public of Land Development Applications that do not require public hearings.

Public Notification is necessary so that citizens potentially impacted will have the necessary time to prepare for upcoming meetings. An additional goal of public notification is to promote mutual responsibility and joint problem solving for each proposed item. Making the public aware of upcoming items can transform them into citizen planners if they choose to participate in the planning process.

In order to satisfy public notification requirements, it is incumbent upon the Planning Commission to properly notify and inform the citizens about future public meetings, events and planning issues. However, the Planning Commission office voluntarily takes additional steps to notify the public. There are several methods employed by the Planning Commission to achieve the goal of public participation.

**Official Journal**
The primary notification for any type of public hearing meeting or action associated with the Planning Commission office is achieved through newspaper advertising. No less than 10 days prior to a public meeting of the Planning Commission or Historic Preservation Commission addressing planning and/or zoning issues, an advertisement is placed in *The Advocate* newspaper, which is considered the “official journal” of the City-Parish. Most meeting issues and agenda items appear in “legal ads,” which run in small print in the “Public Notices” within the newspaper’s “Classified” section. Examples of Land Development Applications that require this type of public notification are listed on the next page.

Large Scale Comprehensive Land Use Plan Amendments (more than five acres), heard by the Planning Commission, must appear in “display ads,” which are larger, separate ads enclosed in a border and usually include a graphic image or map. These ads are required to be no less than one-quarter page and cannot be placed where legal notice of classified advertisements appear. Residents with interest in planning issues or particular planning and zoning cases should regularly review the newspaper to identify upcoming proposed planning issues.

**Posting Property**
The Planning Commission staff is also required to post a yellow sign on or adjacent to the property no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the Planning Commission meeting. The sign states the meeting date, time and address; the application case number; and the Planning Commission Office phone number and website address. For zoning cases the signs must list the present zoning classification of the property and the proposed zoning classification sought by the applicant.

**Supplemental Notice of Public Hearings**
An additional notice of the time and place is required prior to any required public hearing with respect to Land Development Applications. This supplemental notice informs the recipient of the time and place of any required public hearing. This notice shall be mailed via regular mail from the Office of the Planning Commission not less than fifteen (15) days in advance of the hearing to all owners of real property within one hundred fifty (150) feet of the boundaries of the land upon which a Land Development Application is requested. For the purpose of notice requirements to abutting property owners, the names and addresses of such owners shall be deemed to be those on the current Geographic Information System in the Planning Commission office.

The additional notice for Wireless Tower applications must be mailed to all residential landowners within five hundred (500) feet of the proposed facility and the Federation of Civic Associations at least ten (10) days prior to the required public hearing. The additional distance is necessary because the majority of Wireless Tower application are in areas outside of the City Limits. These areas typically have large rural tracts of land typically exceeding one hundred fifty (150) feet in width. The additional distance guarantees that adjacent property owners are sufficiently notified. In addition, sending the notice to the Federation of Civic Associations provides another notification failsafe and guarantees proper notification to surrounding neighborhoods.
Online Public Notification
The Planning Commission strives to notify the public of its procedures and proceedings. Consequently, the Planning Commission has an interest in developing tools using technology which promote increased public notification. The items below identify the additional methods the Planning Commission notifies the public.

In an effort to provide better customer service, the Planning Commission website has a significant amount of information available regarding upcoming meetings, workshops, draft ordinances, planning procedures, and other publications. For more information regarding the CPPC website please visit online at: http://brgov.com/dept/planning/

PC Meeting Information The public has the ability to view online all information regarding upcoming Planning Commission meetings. Meetings schedules, agendas, meeting minutes, monthly case lists, homework items, and the previously recorded meeting is available on the website. For more information regarding PC Meeting Information please visit online at: http://brgov.com/dept/planning/meetingsagendas.htm

Land Development Application Search Tool (LDAST)
The Land Development Application Search Tool (LDAST), developed by the Planning Commission Geographic Information System (GIS) Division, now makes finding information on a specific planning case much simpler and easier. This application only requires access to a computer with an Internet connection. For more information regarding LDAST please visit online at: http://www.brgov.com/dept/planning/ldast/ or see Information Bulletin 71 at: http://brgov.com/dept/planning/pdf/bulletins/bull71.pdf

Application Tracking System Public Interface
With this application the public has the ability to view the status of all land development applications via the Internet. When an applicant submits an application for review at the Resource Center, a receipt with a case number is generated for the staff and for the applicant. The case is immediately added to an online list that is visible to the public. From the website the public can view the last twenty (20) cases or search back to view others. The user may search for a particular case number or choose a project from the list populated on the interface to check the status of the application. Cases are categorized Pending, In-Process or Completed. For more information regarding the Application Tracking System Public Interface please visit online at: http://brgov.com/dept/planning/ATS/casetracker.asp

Comprehensive Plan Public Awareness Program
Besides all of the legally required public hearings and notifications and the voluntary notifications, the Planning Commission staff actively promotes public education on planning issues through the Comprehensive Plan Public Awareness Program. The program includes a series of “Information Bulletins,” the “Planning News” quarterly newsletter. "Planning, What Is It?" and press releases about public meetings and Planning Commission activities. Empowering citizen planners starts with a robust public notification process. The City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge provides information through multiple channels so that its citizens can be informed about proposed changes that may affect their lives.

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