

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

BRAND GUIDE

Key elements for our communication materials and promotions

AUGUST 2022



PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

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About this Guide

This document provides basic guidelines to help craft communications and promotional materials for the Planning and Development Department (PD) at the City of Houston.

These basic rules will ensure that we all speak with the same voice and maintain a consistent look and feel for our communications.

Key components include:

- Department philosophy
- Review process
- Language & tone
- Logo use
- Fonts & colors
- Image use

Philosophy & Objectives

OUR MISSION

Growing and preserving Houston's diverse communities to create a resilient city.

OUR VALUES

- Innovation
- Collaboration
- Integrity
- Empowerment

WHAT WE DELIVER

- Service-oriented expertise
- Developer guidance
- Mobility planning
- Geographic resources
- Community engagement
- Preservation consulting

BRAND PRICIPLES

There are three main principles of branding: clarity, consistency and continuity.

- Clarity – Be direct and easy to understand
- Consistency – Reinforce our mission, values, messages and visual brand
- Continuity – Maintain a flexible and cohesive brand direction over time

Reviews & Approvals

REQUESTS, GUIDANCE & REVIEWS

A primary responsibility of the Communications team is to ensure that all external communications, are reviewed for clarity and consistency, and to ensure they fit into our overall brand and messaging strategy. This includes anything seen by the general public, City Council Members, the Mayor and other City officials, and anyone outside of PD. Please provide the Communications team with sufficient time to review and respond to your materials. When planning your projects, please include review time into your timeline. Estimated time requirements are outlined for each communication service in the [PD Communications Service Request Form](#).

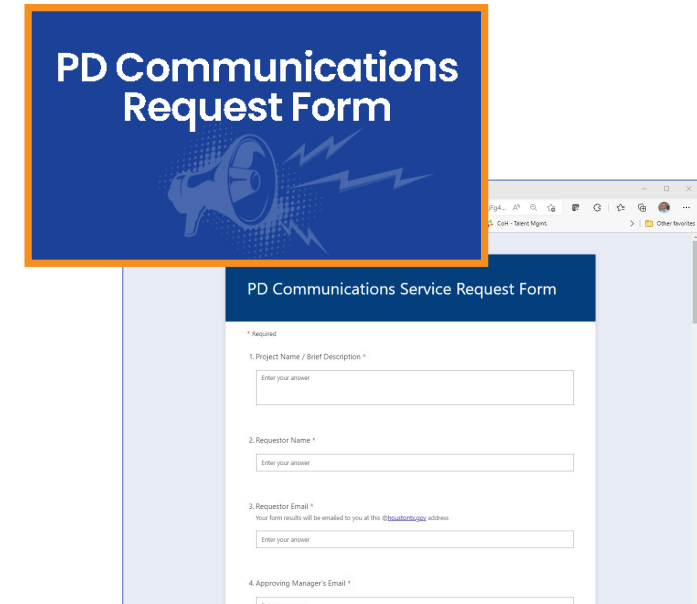


The Comms team will need to review content for:

- Initiatives/Campaigns/Publications/Event Promotions
- Articles/Stories/Interviews/PR/Photos of officials
- Online content/PD website/LetsTalkHouston/Social Media
- Presentations/Public meetings/Videos/Scripts
- Signs/Posters/Flyers/Handouts/Postcards/Door hangers
- Shirts/Hats/Pens/Note pads/other promotional items
- Any communications that we “own” including collaborations
- Any other external communications using the PD logo

The Comms team doesn't need to review:

- Internal-only communications
- Boilerplate/Simple Forms
- Legal documents
- Non-PD related content



If you have a communications request, please fill out the [PD Communications Service Request Form](#) located on the [PD SharePoint site](#).

If you have questions, please contact us. We're happy to assist you with sharing your information and promoting your events with the public.

Language & Tone

SETTING THE TONE

It's important that we speak to our audience(s) with the right personality and tone. If we're addressing the general public it's best to keep the language clear, direct, and jargon-free. The way we write and the technical language we use should be modified and clarified for the general public. Regardless of audience, the writing and speaking style should be friendly, approachable and as clear as possible.

- **Direct**
- **Friendly**
- **Accessible**

FORMATTING

We follow AP Style. Here are some formatting and use examples:

- **Dates, days and times** – Abbreviate the time at even hours. Also abbreviate the month and don't use the year unless it's necessary for clarification: "at 6 p.m. Friday Sept. 30."
- **Addresses** – Abbreviate avenue, street, boulevard, etc. when a number is being used: "the venue is located at 1512 N. Mission St."
- **Periods** – Use one space between sentences (not two).
- **Quotation marks** – The period and the comma always go within the quotation marks.
- **Oxford comma** – AP style does not use the Oxford comma, or it omits the final comma in a series. "The shirt was red, green and blue," rather than "red, green, and blue."

For more information, please refer to this concise [summary of AP Style rules](#).







Partner Branding

WHEN TO USE OUR NAME OR LOGO

The purpose of our name or logo is one of assigning ownership. It's important to accurately identify what entity is providing a message. Usually this is straight forward, but when other organizations are involved it helps to have clarity. Here are some examples to guide when to use our logo, when not to, and how to treat it when we're partnering with others.

As the Department takes on new projects, staff frequently request a new logo. In the past, these requests were accommodated or created by consultants. These brand standards outline when and why that practice will be limited going forward. Adding new logos for a new project can complicate and confuse the communication. A new logo/name requires time and resources to define it, create awareness, support the brand and educate the public. The presence of multiple logos for different projects under the Planning umbrella can dilute the strength of our brand. The only time a new logo should be considered is when the City (or PD) is partnering with one or more major organizations on a new long-term, national-scale initiative. If there's a pre-existing national logo, it should be the first option in conjunction with the City logo. In short, creating a new logo should be a very rare circumstance.

Scenario	Logo to Use	Example
Initiative is for the City at-large, and is not exclusive to any single department	City of Houston logo	
Collaboration between Planning & Development and several other City departments	City of Houston logo	
Collaboration between PD and one other City department	City of Houston logo, or PD & other department logo	 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  HOUSTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Initiative is exclusive to PD with no other entities involved	PD logo only	 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Initiative is from outside PD and we are sharing the information for others	Use the logo from the organization sharing the information; not PD logo	
Collaboration between PD and one or more outside entities of similar scale or significance	Use logos from all significant partners including PD	 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT 
Initiative includes participation from PD and one or more small scale entities	PD logo; other logos should not be used unless requested by a Director	 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Initiative includes participation from PD and one or more outside entities of various sizes or significance	Use logos from all significant partners including PD; may exclude some smaller organizations	 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT   HOUSTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT

As a rule of thumb we don't include more than 4 logos on any given piece of communication. An 'Initiative' could be defined as a program, campaign, publication, event, etc. Significant entities may include large institutions, large non-profits, or corporations. Small scale entities include private clubs, small non-profits, neighborhood associations and similar types of organizations.

Placing the Logo

RESPECT THE LOGO MARK

Consistency is a cornerstone of good brand management. The PD logo was designed to be used as-is, so it shouldn't be modified in any way; no stretching, use of different colors, etc. The logo should be placed in such a way that it ensures a generous amount of clear space around it. The logo should usually be placed only on the background colors in the provided examples.



Maintain a generous amount of clear space around the logo

Correct use



PD logo on white



PD logo with white text on Accent Blue (100%)



PD logo with white text on City Blue (100%)

Incorrect use



Stretched logo



Low contrast



Low resolution

Font Options

A REFINED & FRIENDLY FACE

Consistent use of our preferred fonts helps to establish continuity for all communications. We have the option of using universal fonts – Century Gothic and Arial – that are available on all staff computers. An alternate set of fonts – Poppins and Roboto – can be freely downloaded and used. For maximum text readability on printed items, keep font sizes at 11 points or larger.

TITLE & HEADER FONTS

Century Gothic Bold

The font for titles, headlines and featured text. This font is available on all department computers.

Poppins SemiBold

Great for titles, headlines and featured text. Other weights of this same font can also be used depending on the context.

This font is available as a free download and can be installed on your department computer without the need for an IT administrator.

MAIN TEXT FONTS

Arial

This font is suitable for paragraphs of text. This font is available on all department computers.

Roboto Regular

This font is suitable for paragraphs of text. The bold version of this font works great for sub-heads.

This font is available as a free download and can be installed on your department computer without the need for an IT administrator.

Color Options

STANDARD COLORS

CITY BLUE

HEX	#1B4298
RGB	27/66/152
CMYK	100/87/0/2
SPOT	Pantone 2738 c

CITY YELLOW

HEX	#FFD200
RGB	255/210/0
CMYK	0/16/100/0
SPOT	Pantone 116 c

USING OUR BRAND COLORS

Color is a key element of our visual brand. The City of Houston has an established color palette of basic colors that we have adopted and expanded upon. There may be color exceptions for certain projects, but please default to these approved brand colors first before selecting a new color scheme.

Text color will typically be either black, dark gray or City Blue on white backgrounds, and white on City Blue backgrounds. Using colors as outlined will provide sufficient [contrast](#) and ensure [ADA compliance](#).

ACCENT COLORS

LIGHT BLUE

HEX	#5585E2
RGB	85/133/226
CMYK	67/46/0/0

ORANGE

HEX	#1B4298
RGB	27/144/30
CMYK	0/52/100/0

DARK GRAY

HEX	#4F4F4F
RGB	79/79/79
CMYK	0/0/0/85

ADDITIONAL COLORS FOR CHARTS ONLY

GREEN

HEX	#7EC234
RGB	126/194/52
CMYK	56/0/100/0

RED

HEX	#B30000
RGB	179/0/0
CMYK	20/100/100/13

LIGHT GRAY

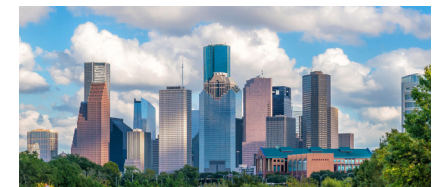
HEX	#848484
RGB	132/132/132
CMYK	0/0/0/60

Photography

CAPTURING PEOPLE, PLACES & EVENTS

Much like the language we use, our photographs are an extension of our brand voice. We prefer to use bright, friendly, informative photos that reinforce an idea or provide a clear visual example. High quality professional photographs, or stock photos are the first choice when available. Specificity is required for some images, so there may be times when snapshots from a phone or digital camera are appropriate. For example, we might need to capture a particular intersection, event activities, a specific building, etc. Any images that are high-profile, including headshots of city officials should be reviewed by the Communications team before use.

The Communications team has access to a stock photo account with a limited number of monthly downloads available. Currently we use [Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com), so feel free to search for the images you would like to use, record the photo number or download a labeled preview image, and we can assist you with getting the high-resolution photo file.



Charts & Graphs

90% of those
polled were in
support



CONVEYING THE NUMBERS

Our graphic information should be clear and consistent. Data can be made more understandable by creating a graph, chart, symbol set or other visualization. The simplest representation method usually works best. Graphics should use the brand colors and fonts so that they integrate well with other elements of the communication. When in doubt, contact the Communications team for guidance.

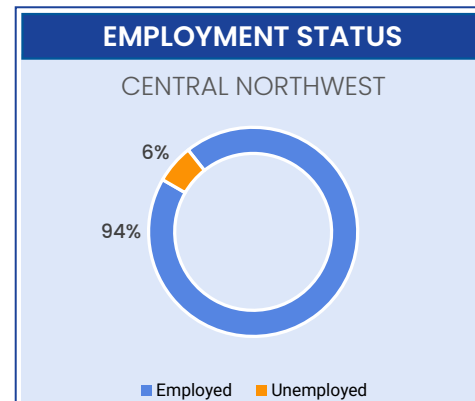


City of Houston Profile

POPULATION DATA	2010	2020
Total Population	2,099,451	2,304,580
Persons per Sq. Mile	3,167	3,431
RACE/ETHNICITY		
White (Non Hispanic)	537,901	545,989
Black (Non Hispanic)	485,956	509,479
Hispanic	919,668	1,013,423
Asian (Non Hispanic)	124,859	165,189
Other	31,067	70,500
HOUSING UNITS		
Total Housing Units	892,646	998,195
Occupied	782,643	896,482
Vacant	110,003	101,713

1,515
PEOPLE ENGAGED THROUGH SURVEYS, VIRTUAL MEETINGS, AND WEB ACTIVITY

COMMUNITY INPUT GATHERED FROM ROUGHLY 2,400 STAKEHOLDERS



Residents in areas with sidewalks
65% MORE LIKELY TO WALK

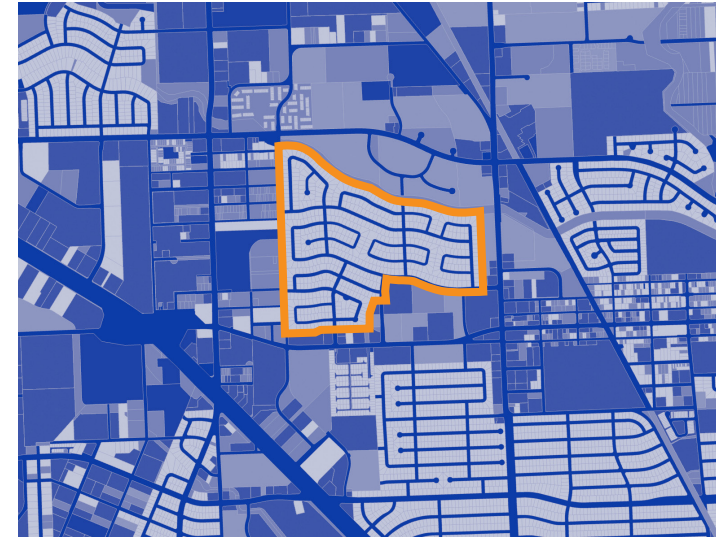
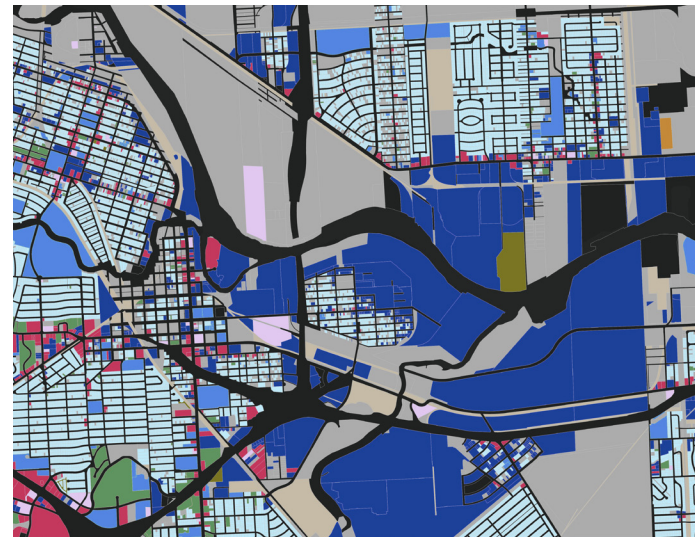
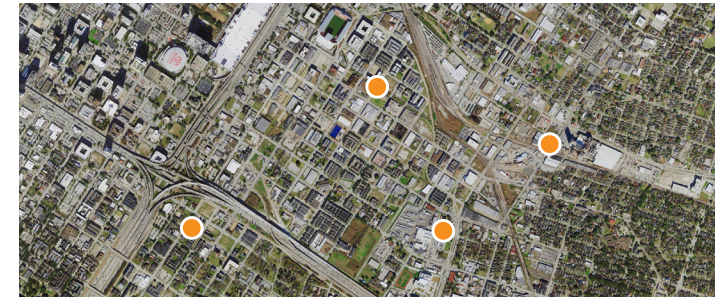
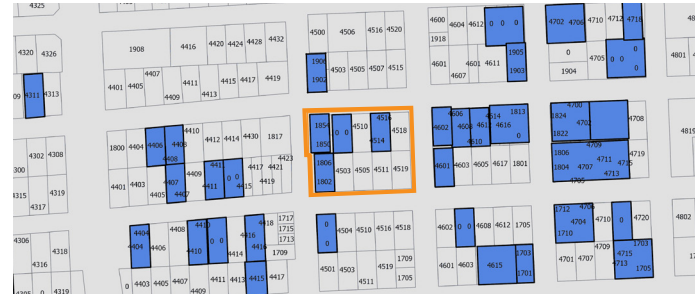
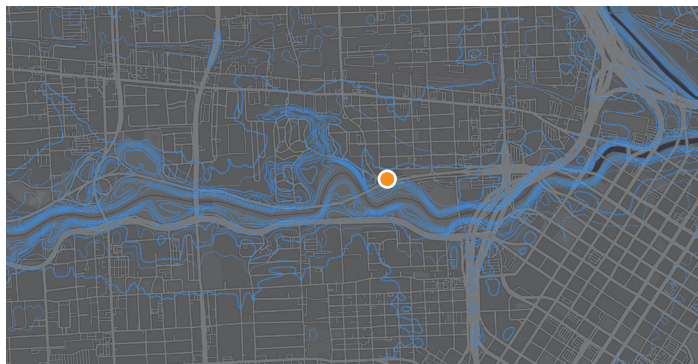
2020
VISION ZERO LAUNCHED & ACTION PLAN ENACTED

Maps & Geographic Data

CONVEYING STATS & LOCATIONS

A map is a powerful tool. It can convey a wide variety of information, pinpoint specific sites, highlight demographics and reveal other useful content.

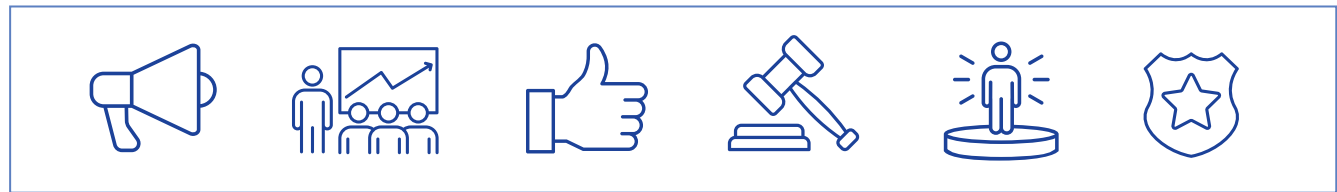
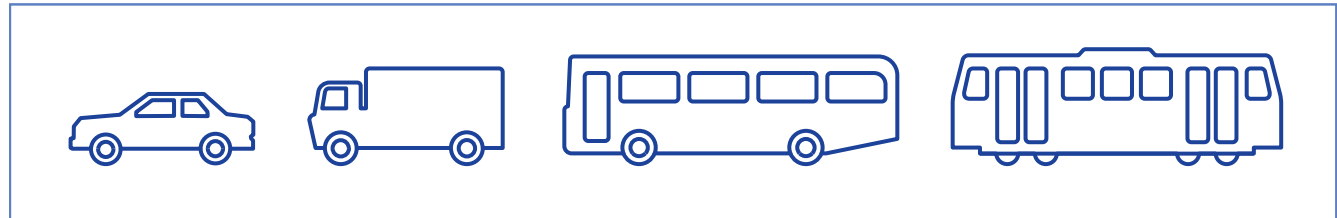
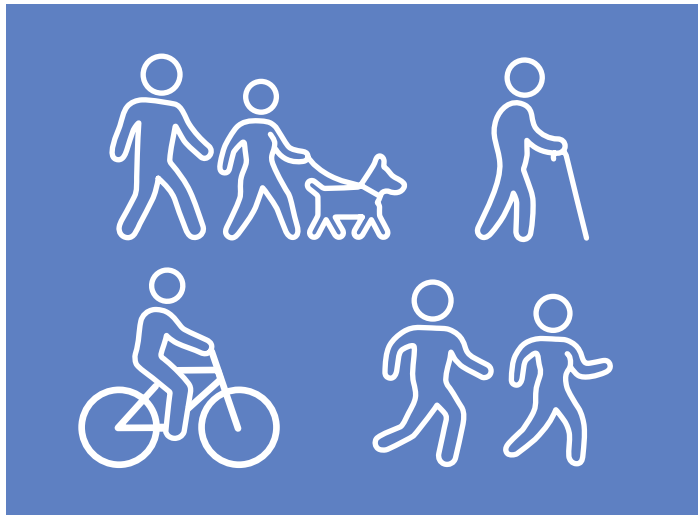
Whenever possible, our maps should use the same brand colors and fonts outlined in this guide. When in doubt, contact the Communications team for brand guidance, and the Geographic Information Systems team (GIS) for assistance with mapping, addressing and demographics.



Iconography

DISTILLING AN ACTION, THING OR IDEA

Icons, like our other visual elements, clarify communications and add emphasis. Icons are typically used to call out information at a glance. The Communications team has a collection of icons that we use with our messaging. Reach out if you have questions or need assistance.



Design Examples

APPLYING THE VISUAL BRAND

Here are some examples of how we combine all the elements to produce our finished communications materials.

CITY OF HOUSTON PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Information & Reference Guide

Public Hearing – Replat with Notification

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

LEARN MORE ABOUT

Sidewalk Requirements

MTFP

Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan **2021**

ACRES HOME

Mobility Study Meeting

We've heard your concerns and received your feedback about walkability and safety. It's time to move the plans forward, and we need your help to finalize solutions. Join us at the next meeting.

Tuesday, August 18, 8-9 p.m.
Acres Home Multi-Service Center
6750 W. Montgomery Road,
Houston, Texas 77091

You're in the study area, so we need your input to plan better streets, bike lanes, sidewalks, and bus stops.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Schedule your Recodation Appointment

LEARN MORE

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
					1
4	5	6	7	8	
11	12	13	14	15	
18	19	20	21	22	
25	26	27	28	29	

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

LIVABLE PLACES

Livable Places is a community-led initiative to create opportunities within our land-development standards that encourage housing variety and affordability. This is a continuation of the Planning and Development Department's effort to update portions of the city's development code to enhance walkability, affordability and equity.

The Livable Places Action Committee focuses on encouraging the development and preservation of affordable, quality housing for all Houstonians.

The committee aims to create opportunities to:

- build housing on vacant lots within existing neighborhoods
- increase housing options with access to alternative transportation, such as bicycling and mass transit

- improve safety
- preserve great neighborhoods

This effort draws from community preferences identified through several process planning initiatives, including Plan Houston, Resident Houston, Citizen Action Plan, and others and will involve robust community engagement using our new interactive platform: <https://bit.ly/livableplaces>.

Learn more about the Livable Places initiative at <https://www.houston.gov/2838392>.

Planning and Development Department | 2020 Annual Report

Growth & Development

Managing our growing population and economy

Developing Our Growing City

PLANNING COMMISSION
SECTION 2.403
SUBCOMMITTEE

832
RECORDED

The city's growth and redevelopment are supported by the approval of subdivision plans and permits. 80 staff review development submittals inside the 668 square miles of the city and the 1,171 square miles extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) for compliance. Chapter 42 is the City's land-development ordinance by which staff regulates development by applying other ordinances such as all-draft zoning (Chapter 26) and trees and shrubs (Chapter 33). Development regulations with unique considerations such as historic districts, hazardous material enterprises, Certificates of Compliance, and call-lot towers are a part of the Department's responsibilities. The Department makes recommendations on many of these applications to the Planning Commission and Tower Commission.

Site Plan Reviews

The Development Services team administers the platting and related land-preparation processes. In 2020, platting activity inside the corporate limits of Houston equated to that in the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). The Plat Tracker system used for submitting plat applications, received significant upgrades including a new payment portal, reworked recodation appointment scheduling and other technical options.

Permitting Center

The Houston Permitting Center combines the majority of the City of Houston's permitting and licensing into one convenient location.

Houston City Council voted to strengthen safety measures to protect Houston neighborhoods and improve enforcement of the city's hazardous enterprise ordinance. A hazardous enterprise permit is required when the following criteria are met in accordance with Sec. 28.022 of the City of Houston.

Planning and Development Department | 2020 Annual Report

RIVERSIDE TERRACE
PROPOSED

Historic District

Learn about the approval process and why a historic district matters

5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 12

Meeting Link:
<https://bit.ly/riverside-01-12-22>

For more on historic preservation, visit our webpage <https://www.houston.gov/planning/historicPres/> or call 832-393-6556

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

PRESERVE YOUR HISTORIC HOME

Potential tax exemptions by applying for landmark status.

Benefits include:

- Property tax exemptions
- Restoration cost exemptions
- Reduced building permit fees

Apply online bit.ly/Hist-Pres

Office of Historic Preservation
historicpreservation@houstontx.gov
call 832.393.6556

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Tools & Templates

OUR DESIGN RESOURCES

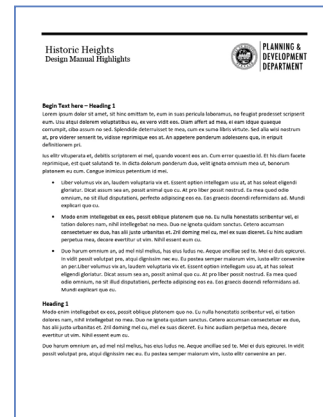
To help facilitate consistent communications, we've drafted a few templates to simplify the process. These resources live on the [Communications page](#) of the [PD Sharepoint site](#). If you have any questions about using the templates please get in touch with the Communications team.



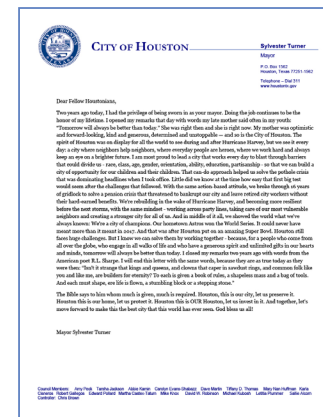
PD PowerPoint template

Available tools include:

- PD Powerpoint Template
- PD Word Doc Template
- PD Logos
- PD Brand Guide
- City of Houston Letterhead and envelope
- and many other resources



PD Standard Word document



City of Houston letterhead

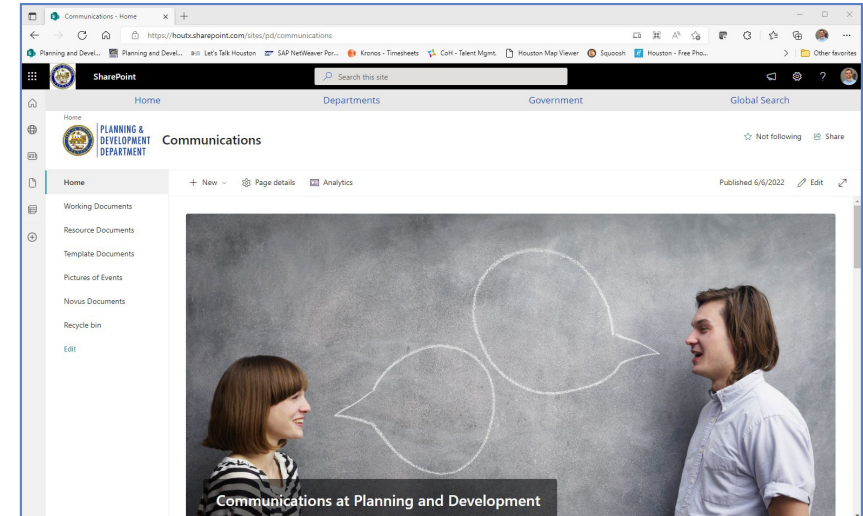


PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Our various PD logo color sets and formats



PD Communications page



**PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

THE CITY OF HOUSTON

Planning & Development Department

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