

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 213

BY REPRESENTATIVE TERRY LANDRY

DISTRICTS/TAXING: Provides relative to the Downtown Development District of the city of Baton Rouge

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 33:2740.8(D)(1) and (2)(a), (b), and (d), (E)(2) and (5), and (F)
3 through (M) and to repeal R.S. 33:2740.8(N), relative to the Downtown
4 Development District of the city of Baton Rouge; to provide relative to the governing
5 board of the district; to provide relative to the membership of the board; to provide
6 relative to the appointment of board members; to provide relative to the terms and
7 compensation of the members; to provide relative to the powers and duties of the
8 district; to provide relative to the powers and duties of the city of Baton Rouge,
9 parish of East Baton Rouge with respect to the district; and to provide for related
10 matters.

11 Notice of intention to introduce this Act has been published
12 as provided by Article III, Section 13 of the Constitution of
13 Louisiana.

14 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

15 Section 1. R.S. 33:2740.8(D)(1) and (2)(a), (b), and (d), (E)(2) and (5), and (F)
16 through (M) are hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

17 §2740.8. The downtown development district of the city of Baton Rouge; creation,
18 composition and powers; preparation of plans, levy of special ad valorem
19 taxes, and issuance of bonds and other instruments of indebtedness

20 * * *

1 D.(1) The board shall be composed of seven members, all of whom shall be
2 qualified voters of the parish of East Baton Rouge, ~~and~~. Except as provided in
3 Subparagraph (e) of this Paragraph, all members shall have their principal place of
4 business or profession in, or own property in, the ~~Downtown Development District~~
5 district. The seven members shall be appointed as follows:

6 (a) One member ~~of the board~~ shall be appointed at-large by the
7 mayor-president, with the approval of the metro council.

8 (b) One member ~~of the board~~ shall be appointed by the mayor-president,
9 with the approval of the metro council, from a list of four nominees submitted by the
10 ~~Greater Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce~~ governing board of the Greater
11 Baton Rouge Economic Partnership.

12 (c) ~~One member of the board shall be appointed by the mayor-president, with~~
13 ~~the approval of the metro council, from a list of four nominees submitted by the~~
14 ~~Riverside Association.~~

15 (d) ~~Two members of the board shall be appointed by the mayor-president,~~
16 ~~with the approval of the metro council, from a list of six nominees submitted by~~
17 ~~property owners and lessees of property located within the jurisdictional boundaries~~
18 ~~of the district.~~

19 (e) (c) One member shall be appointed by the mayor-president, with the
20 approval of the metro council, and who shall be a resident of Spanish Town.

21 (f) (d) One member shall be appointed by the mayor-president, with the
22 approval of the metro council, and who shall be a resident of Beauregard Town.

23 (e) Three members shall be appointed by the mayor-president, with the
24 approval of the metro council, who shall be property owners or lessees of property
25 located within the boundaries of the district. At least one member shall be a property
26 owner and at least one member shall be a lessee.

27 (2)(a) ~~The members of the board initially appointed shall have terms of~~
28 ~~office as follows:~~

29 (i) ~~Two members for one year each;~~

1 district or of other offices and departments of the city-parish shall be furnished in
2 accordance with ~~Subsection I~~ Subsection H of this Section.

3 * * *

4 (5) The members of the board shall serve without compensation; however,
5 they ~~shall receive a travel allowance as reimbursement for expenses incurred while~~
6 ~~attending to the business of the board or the district~~ may receive a travel allowance
7 as reimbursement for expenses incurred while attending a conference, educational
8 event, or meeting on behalf of the district if the conference, event, or meeting is held
9 outside the boundaries of East Baton Rouge Parish and is approved in advance by the
10 board and the executive director of the district.

11 F.(1) The metro council shall appoint an executive director for the district
12 who has been recommended by the board.

13 (2) The executive director shall appoint an assistant executive director and
14 shall hire or contract other professional, clerical, and support staff as deemed
15 necessary by the board.

16 ~~F.(1)~~ G. The ~~board~~ district shall prepare or cause to be prepared a plan or
17 plans specifying the public improvements, facilities, and services proposed to be
18 furnished, constructed, or acquired for the district and shall conduct such public
19 hearings, publish such notice with respect thereto, and disseminate such information
20 as it, in the exercise of its sound discretion, may deem to be appropriate or advisable
21 and in the public interest.

22 ~~(2) Any plan may specify and encompass any public services, capital~~
23 ~~improvements, and facilities which the city of Baton Rouge and the parish of East~~
24 ~~Baton Rouge are authorized to undertake, furnish, or provide under the constitution~~
25 ~~and laws of the state of Louisiana, and such specified public services, improvements,~~
26 ~~and facilities shall be special and in addition to all services, improvements, and~~
27 ~~facilities which the city of Baton Rouge is then furnishing or providing or may then~~
28 ~~or in the future be obligated to furnish or provide within the district.~~

29 ~~(3) Any plan shall include:~~

1 ~~(a) An estimate of the annual and total cost of acquiring, constructing, or~~
2 ~~providing the services, improvements, or facilities set forth therein.~~

3 ~~(b) The proportion of the tax to be levied on the taxable real property within~~
4 ~~the district which is to be set aside and dedicated to paying the cost of furnishing~~
5 ~~specified services and the proportion of such tax to be set aside and dedicated to~~
6 ~~paying the cost of capital improvements or paying the cost of debt service on any~~
7 ~~bonds to be issued to pay the cost of capital improvements, such proportions, in each~~
8 ~~case, to be expressed in numbers of mills.~~

9 ~~(c) An estimate of the total number of mills required to be levied each year~~
10 ~~on the taxable real property within the district in order to provide the funds required~~
11 ~~for the implementation of the plan for furnishing the specified services and for~~
12 ~~capital improvements, debt service, or both.~~

13 ~~(4) The board shall also submit the plan to the city-parish planning~~
14 ~~commission. The planning commission shall review the plan and determine whether~~
15 ~~or not it is consistent with the comprehensive plan for the city of Baton Rouge. The~~
16 ~~planning commission, within thirty days following receipt of the plan, shall submit~~
17 ~~to the metro council its written opinion as to whether or not the plan or any portion~~
18 ~~or detail thereof is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan for the city, together~~
19 ~~with its written comments and recommendations with respect thereto.~~

20 ~~(5)(a) After receipt of the plan together with the written comments and~~
21 ~~recommendations of the city-parish planning commission, the metro council shall~~
22 ~~review and consider the plan together with the written comments and~~
23 ~~recommendations. The metro council, by a majority vote of all its members, may~~
24 ~~adopt or reject the plan as originally submitted by the board or alter or modify the~~
25 ~~plan or any portion or detail thereof.~~

26 ~~(b) If the plan as originally submitted by the board is adopted by the majority~~
27 ~~vote of the metro council, it shall become final and conclusive and may thereafter be~~
28 ~~implemented. If the metro council alters or modifies the plan by a majority vote of~~

1 its members, the plan as altered or modified shall be resubmitted to the board for its
2 concurrence or rejection.

3 (c) ~~The board may concur in the modified plan by a majority vote of all of~~
4 ~~its members. If the board votes to concur in the plan as modified by the metro~~
5 ~~council, the plan shall become final and conclusive and may thereafter be~~
6 ~~implemented. If the board does not concur in the plan as modified by the metro~~
7 ~~council, it shall notify the metro council in writing of its decision.~~

8 (d) ~~Thereafter and as often as the board may deem to be necessary or~~
9 ~~advisable, it shall prepare or cause to be prepared a plan or plans and submit the~~
10 ~~same to the planning commission in accordance with the same procedure~~
11 ~~hereinabove prescribed with respect to the original plan. The planning commission~~
12 ~~shall submit such plan, together with their written comments and recommendations,~~
13 ~~to the metro council for its adoption, modification, or rejection in the manner and~~
14 ~~with the same effect as provided with respect to the original plan.~~

15 ~~G.(1)(a) The provisions of Subsection F of this Section to the contrary~~
16 ~~notwithstanding, the board may prepare and submit directly to the metro council a~~
17 ~~plan or plans setting forth its intention to employ professional consultants, experts,~~
18 ~~and such other advisors and personnel as it shall deem to be necessary or convenient~~
19 ~~to assist in the preparation of a plan or plans for the orderly and efficient~~
20 ~~development of services and improvements within the district.~~

21 (b) ~~The plan shall specify the services proposed to be rendered by such~~
22 ~~employees, an estimate of the aggregate of the proposed salaries of such employees,~~
23 ~~and an estimate of the other expenses of the board required for the preparation of~~
24 ~~such plan or plans, together with a request that a tax in an amount sufficient to cover~~
25 ~~the costs of such salaries and expenses be levied on the real property within the~~
26 ~~district.~~

27 (c) ~~The plan shall include a proposed budget of income and expenditure~~
28 ~~specified source of funding for each of the years the tax is to run.~~

1 ~~(2)(a) The metro council shall review and consider such plan within thirty~~
2 ~~days following submission to it by the board and shall adopt or reject such plan by~~
3 ~~a majority vote of its members.~~

4 ~~(b) If the metro council adopts such plan, it shall become final and~~
5 ~~conclusive, and the tax requested by the board upon approval by special referendum~~
6 ~~of the electorate of the parish of East Baton Rouge, as required by Subsection J of~~
7 ~~this Section, shall be levied and collected.~~

8 ~~(c) If the metro council rejects the plan, it shall notify the board of its action,~~
9 ~~and the board may again and from time to time prepare and submit to the metro~~
10 ~~council a plan in accordance with the procedures provided for this in this Subsection.~~

11 ~~H. If no plan is finally and conclusively adopted in accordance with the~~
12 ~~procedures prescribed in this Section within four years after the effective date of this~~
13 ~~Section, all power and authority conferred hereby shall lapse, the district shall be~~
14 ~~dissolved, and all power and authority incident thereto shall become null and void~~
15 ~~as a matter of law; however, in such event, all obligations contractual or otherwise,~~
16 ~~incurred by the district during its existence, shall survive and shall be fully~~
17 ~~enforceable in accordance with their terms.~~

18 ~~F. H.(1) All services to be furnished within the district pursuant to any plan~~
19 ~~finally and conclusively adopted hereunder shall pursuant to this Section may be~~
20 ~~furnished, supplied, and administered by the district or may be furnished, supplied,~~
21 ~~and administered by the city-parish through its regularly constituted departments,~~
22 ~~agencies, boards, commissions, and instrumentalities. All capital improvements and~~
23 ~~facilities to be acquired, constructed, or provided within the district, whether from~~
24 ~~the proceeds of bonds or otherwise, shall may likewise be so acquired, constructed,~~
25 ~~or provided by the city-parish through its regularly constituted departments,~~
26 ~~agencies, boards, commissions, and instrumentalities, it being the intention hereof~~
27 ~~to avoid the duplication of administrative and management efforts and expense in the~~
28 ~~implementation of any plan adopted for the benefit of the district.~~

1 (2) In order to provide such services ~~and/or~~ or provide, construct, or acquire
2 such capital improvements or facilities, the ~~board~~ district may enter into
3 inter-governmental local service contracts with the city-parish.

4 (3) The cost of any such services, capital improvements, or facilities shall
5 be paid for by the district from the proceeds of the special tax levied upon real
6 property within the district as ~~herein~~ provided in this Section ~~or~~, from the proceeds
7 of bonds, or from the city-parish.

8 (4) The district may make purchases of less than fifty thousand dollars, with
9 the approval of the metro council.

10 ~~¶ I.~~(1) The metro council, in addition to all other taxes which it is now or
11 hereafter may be authorized to levy and collect, is hereby authorized to levy and
12 collect a special ad valorem tax not to exceed ten mills on the dollar of assessed
13 valuation upon all taxable real property situated within the boundaries of the district.
14 The tax shall be levied for a term not to exceed fifty years and shall be collected in
15 the same manner and at the same time as all other ad valorem taxes on property
16 subject to taxation by the city are collected. No such tax shall be levied until a plan
17 requesting the levy of a tax is finally and conclusively adopted in accordance with
18 the procedures prescribed herein.

19 (2) The proceeds of the tax shall be used exclusively for the purposes and
20 benefit of the district.

21 (3) The tax shall be submitted to a referendum of the electorate of the district
22 conducted in accordance with the Louisiana Election Code.

23 (4) The avails of the tax shall be paid over by the sheriff and ex officio tax
24 collector to the city-parish finance department, day by day, as the same are collected
25 for the account of the district.

26 (5) It is expressly declared that the special tax hereby authorized is limited
27 to immovable property, and nothing contained in this Section shall be construed to
28 levy or authorize the levying of a tax upon movable property of any kind or
29 description whatsoever, whether corporeal or incorporeal.

1 ~~K. J.~~J.(1) The metro council when requested by resolution adopted by a
2 majority of the members of the board may fund the avails of the tax into bonds or
3 other instruments of indebtedness for the exclusive benefit of the district. The
4 principal of, the premium if any, and interest on the bonds or other instruments of
5 indebtedness shall be payable solely from the proceeds of the special tax authorized,
6 levied, and collected pursuant to the provisions of this Section. The bonds shall not
7 constitute general obligations of the city or parish, nor shall any property situated
8 within the city or parish other than property situated within the boundaries of the
9 district be subject to taxation for the payment of the principal of, the premium, if
10 any, and interest on such bonds. Any indebtedness incurred by the metro council for
11 and on behalf of the district pursuant to the provisions of this Section, evidenced by
12 bonds, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness, or otherwise, shall be excluded in
13 determining the power of the metro council to incur indebtedness and to issue its
14 general obligation bonds. The principal amount of such bonds which may be
15 outstanding at any one time shall never exceed the sum of twenty million dollars and
16 shall not exceed the total principal amount which may be serviced in principal and
17 interest from not to exceed seventy-five percent of the avails estimated to be
18 available in the first and each succeeding year that any of the bonds are to be
19 outstanding. The proceeds derived from the sale of such bonds shall be paid over to
20 the appropriate officials of the metro council for deposit to the account of the district.
21 The bond shall bear such rate or rates of interest and, except as herein otherwise
22 specifically provided, shall be in such form, terms, and denominations, be
23 redeemable at such times and places, within a period of not exceeding fifty years
24 from the date thereof as may be provided for in the resolution of the metro council
25 providing for their issuance.

26 (2) The bonds shall be signed by the mayor-president of the metro council
27 and the council administrator of the metro council; provided that in the discretion of
28 the metro council one of the signatures may be in facsimile. In case any officer
29 whose signature appears upon a bond or coupon ceases to be an officer before

1 delivery of the bonds or coupons to the purchaser, his signature or countersignature
2 shall nevertheless be valid for all purposes.

3 (3)(a) The resolution of the metro council authorizing the issuance and sale
4 of such bonds and fixing the form and details thereof may contain such other
5 provisions as the metro council may deem to be necessary or advisable to enhance
6 the marketability and acceptability thereof by purchasers and investors, including,
7 but not limited to, covenants with bondholders setting forth:

8 (i) Conditions and limitations on the issuance of additional bonds
9 constituting a lien and charge on the avails of the special tax levied on real property
10 within the district, pari passu with bonds theretofore issued and outstanding; and

11 (ii) The creation of reserves for the payment of the principal of and interest
12 on such bonds.

13 (b) These bonds and the interest thereon shall be exempt from all taxation
14 levied for state, parish, municipal, or other local purposes.

15 (c) Savings banks, tutors of minors, curators of interdicts, trustees and other
16 fiduciaries are authorized to invest the funds in their hands in said bonds.

17 ~~E. K.~~(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section to the contrary,
18 no tax authorized herein shall be levied and no bonds shall be issued unless and until
19 the maximum amount of the tax in mills, the years the tax is to run and to be issued
20 under the plan, and the maximum amount of bonds to be issued has been approved
21 by a majority of the electors in the district voting thereon in an election called for
22 that purpose in accordance with the Louisiana Election Code.

23 (2) No bonds issued hereunder shall be general obligations of the state of
24 Louisiana, the parish of East Baton Rouge, the city of Baton Rouge, or the district.

25 ~~M. L.~~ The district shall have the power to acquire, to lease, to insure, and to
26 sell real property within its boundaries in accordance with its plans.

27 ~~N. M.~~ The district shall have the power to pay the city of Baton Rouge and
28 the parish of East Baton Rouge funds for services rendered by the city-parish under

1 ~~a local services contract between the district and the city-parish~~ may contract with
2 the city-parish for services rendered on behalf of the district.

3 Section 2. R.S. 33:2740.8(N) is hereby repealed in its entirety.

4 Section 3. The terms of the one member of the board of commissioners of the
5 Downtown Development District of the city of Baton Rouge appointed by the
6 mayor-president from a list of four nominees submitted by the Riverside Association and the
7 two members of the board of commissioners of the Downtown Development District of the
8 city of Baton Rouge appointed by the mayor-president from a list of six nominees submitted
9 by property owners and lessees of property located within the boundaries of the district shall
10 terminate on the effective date of this Act; however, such members shall remain in office
11 until the three board members are appointed as provided in this Act and take office. The
12 three members of the board of commissioners of the Downtown Development District of the
13 city of Baton Rouge shall be appointed and shall take office as provided in this Act and shall
14 serve terms of office as provided in this Act.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 213 Original

2026 Regular Session

Terry Landry

Abstract: Provides relative to the governing board and the powers and duties of the Downtown Development District of the city of Baton Rouge.

Present law authorizes the metropolitan council (metro council) of the city of Baton Rouge and the parish of East Baton Rouge, with the approval of the mayor-president, to create the Downtown Development District of the city of Baton Rouge as a special taxing district within the city. Provides for district boundaries.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that the district is governed by a seven-member board of commissioners, all of whom are required to be qualified voters of East Baton Rouge Parish and have their principal place of business or profession in, or own property in, the district. Provides that members are appointed as follows:

- (1) One member appointed at-large by the mayor-president.
- (2) One member appointed by the mayor-president from a list of four nominees submitted by the Greater Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce.

- (3) One member appointed by the mayor-president from a list of four nominees submitted by the Riverside Association.
- (4) Two members appointed by the mayor-president from a list of six nominees submitted by property owners and lessees of property located within the boundaries of the district.
- (5) One member appointed by the mayor-president who shall be a resident of Spanish Town.
- (6) One member appointed by the mayor-president who shall be a resident of Beauregard Town.

Present law provides that all appointments must be approved by the metro council

Proposed law retains a seven-member board but removes the one appointment by the mayor-president from a list of four nominees submitted by the Riverside Association and the two appointments by the mayor-president from a list of six nominees submitted by property owners and lessees of property located within the boundaries of the district. Proposed law adds three appointments by the mayor-president who shall be property owners or lessees of property located within the boundaries of the district. At least one member shall be a property owner and at least one member shall be a lessee. Provides that the three appointments must be approved by the metro council. Proposed law changes the name of the Greater Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce to the Greater Baton Rouge Economic Partnership.

Present law provides that members serve three-year staggered terms.

Proposed law provides that the three new members shall serve three-year staggered terms. Provides that the terms of the removed members terminate on the effective date of proposed law. Provides that the remaining members of the board shall continue to serve their current terms. Proposed law prohibits members from serving more than two consecutive terms. Provides however, if a member is appointed to fill an unexpired term, his term shall not be considered in calculating the limitation on consecutive terms of office.

Present law provides that members shall serve without compensation.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that members shall receive a travel allowance as reimbursement for expenses incurred while attending to the business of the board or the district.

Proposed law removes present law and instead provides that members may receive a travel allowance as reimbursement for expenses incurred while attending a conference, educational event, or meeting on behalf of the district if the conference, event, or meeting is held outside the boundaries of East Baton Rouge Parish and is approved in advance by the board and the executive director of the district.

Proposed law requires the metro council to appoint an executive director for the district who has been recommended by the board. Requires the executive director to appoint an assistant executive director and to hire or contract other professional, clerical, and support staff as deemed necessary by the board.

Present law requires the board to prepare or cause to be prepared a plan(s) specifying the public improvements, facilities, and services proposed to be furnished, constructed, or acquired for the district. Proposed law instead requires the district to prepare or cause to be prepared a plan(s).

Present law provides that the any plan may specify and encompass any public services, capital improvements, and facilities which the city of Baton Rouge and the parish of East Baton Rouge are authorized to undertake, furnish, or provide under the constitution and laws of the state. Requires that any plan include:

- (1) An estimate of the annual and total cost of acquiring, constructing, or providing the services, improvements, or facilities set forth therein.
- (2) The proportion of the tax to be levied on the taxable real property within the district which is to be set aside for certain purposes.
- (3) An estimate of the total number of mills required to be levied each year on the taxable real property within the district in order to provide the funds required for the implementation of the plan.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law requires the board to submit the plan to the city-parish planning commission who shall review the plan and determine whether or not it is consistent with the comprehensive plan for the city of Baton Rouge. Requires the planning commission, within 30 days following receipt of the plan, to submit to the metro council its written opinion as to whether or not the plan or any portion or detail thereof is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan for the city, together with its written comments and recommendations with respect thereto.

Present law provides that after receipt of the plan together with the written comments and recommendations of the city-parish planning commission, the metro council shall review and consider the plan together with the written comments and recommendations. Authorizes the metro council, by a majority vote of all its members, to adopt or reject the plan as originally submitted by the board or to alter or modify the plan or any portion or detail thereof.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law additionally authorizes the board to prepare and submit directly to the metro council a plan(s) setting forth its intention to employ professional consultants, experts, and such other advisors and personnel as it shall deem to be necessary or convenient to assist in the preparation of a plan(s). Requires that the plan(s) specify the services proposed to be rendered by such employees, an estimate of the aggregate of the proposed salaries of such employees, and an estimate of the other expenses of the board required for the preparation of such plan(s), together with a request that a tax in an amount sufficient to cover the costs of such salaries and expenses be levied on the real property within the district. Further requires that the plan include a proposed budget of income and expenditure specified source of funding for each of the years the tax is to run.

Present law requires the metro council to review and consider such plan within 30 days following submission to it by the board and to adopt or reject such plan by a majority vote of its members.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law provides that if no plan is finally and conclusively adopted within four years after the effective date of present law, all power and authority shall lapse, the district shall be dissolved, and all power and authority incident thereto shall become null and void as a matter of law.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law provides that all services to be furnished within the district pursuant to any plan finally and conclusively adopted *shall* be furnished, supplied, and administered by the city-parish through its regularly constituted departments, agencies, boards, commissions, and instrumentalities.

Proposed law provides that such services *may* be furnished, supplied, and administered by the city-parish. Additionally provides that all services may also be furnished, supplied, and administered by the district.

Present law provides that all capital improvements and facilities to be acquired, constructed, or provided within the district *shall* be acquired, constructed or provided by the city-parish through its regularly constituted departments, agencies, boards, commissions, and instrumentalities.

Proposed law provides that such capital improvements and facilities *may* be acquired, constructed, or provided by the city-parish.

Present law authorizes the board to enter into inter-governmental local service contracts with the city-parish to provide services or to provide, construct, or acquire capital improvements or facilities.

Proposed law instead authorizes the district to enter into inter-governmental local service contracts for such purposes.

Present law provides that the cost of services, capital improvements, or facilities shall be paid for by the district from the proceeds of the special tax levied upon real property within the district or from the proceeds of bonds.

Proposed law retains present law and provides that the cost of services, capital improvements, or facilities shall also be paid for by the district from proceeds from the city-parish.

Proposed law authorizes the district to make purchases of less than \$50,000, with the approval of the metro council.

Present law provides that the district may pay the city of Baton Rouge and the parish of East Baton Rouge funds for district services rendered by the city-parish under a local services contract between the district and the city-parish.

Proposed law removes present law and instead authorizes the district to contract with the city-parish for services rendered on behalf of the district.

(Amends R.S. 33:2740.8(D)(1) and (2)(a), (b), and (d), (E)(2) and (5), and (F)-(M); Repeals R.S. 33:2740.8(N))