RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 789 (HB 213) **2026 Regular Session** **Terry Landry**

Existing 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.

Existing law provides that the district is governed by a board of commissioners. Provides that all appointments must be approved by the metro council. Provides that members 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 the membership includes the following:

(1) One member appointed at-large by the mayor-president.

(2) One member appointed by the mayor-president who shall be a resident of Spanish Town.

(3) One member appointed by the mayor-president who shall be a resident of Beauregard Town.

Prior law provided that the membership of the board also included the following:

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

(2) One member appointed by the mayor-president from a list of four nominees submitted by the Riverside Association.

(3) 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.

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

Existing law provides that members serve three-year terms. New law provides that the members of the board serving on Aug. 1, 2026, shall continue to serve until the expiration of their current terms. Additionally provides that members shall not serve more than two consecutive terms; provided however, if a member is appointed to fill an unexpired term, his term shall not be considered in calculating the limitation on consecutive terms.

Existing law provides that members shall serve without compensation.

Prior law provided that members received a travel allowance as reimbursement for expenses incurred while attending to the business of the board or the district.

New law removes prior 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.

New 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.

New law provides for the powers and duties of the district, including but not limited to the following:

(1) To acquire by gift, grant, purchase, or lease movable or immovable property and to dispose of such property.

(2) To make and execute contracts and other instruments necessary to the business of the district or convenient to the exercise of its powers.

(3) To contract for the services of consultants to perform planning, engineering, financial, legal, or other appropriate services of a professional nature.

(4) To receive by gift, grant, loan, or donation any sum of money or property, aid, or assistance from the U.S., the state of La., or any political subdivision thereof, or any person, firm, or corporation and to hold, use, and dispose of such monies or property for any district purposes in accordance with the terms of the agreement of the gift, grant, loan, or donation.

(5) To borrow money and issue bonds, certificates, warrants, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness.

Prior law required 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. New law instead requires the district to prepare or cause to be prepared a plan(s).

Prior law provided that a plan could specify and encompass any public services, capital improvements, and facilities which the city of Baton Rouge and the parish of East Baton Rouge were authorized to undertake, furnish, or provide under the constitution and laws of the state. Required 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 was 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.

New law removes prior law.

Prior law required the board to submit the plan to the city-parish planning commission who was required to review the plan and determine whether or not it was consistent with the comprehensive plan for the city of Baton Rouge. Required 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 was inconsistent with the comprehensive plan for the city, together with its written comments and recommendations with respect thereto.

Prior law provided that after receipt of the plan together with the written comments and recommendations of the city-parish planning commission, the metro council was required to review and consider the plan together with the written comments and recommendations. Authorized 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.

New law removes prior law.

Prior law additionally authorized 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 deemed to be necessary or convenient to assist in the preparation of a plan(s). Required 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 required that the plan include a proposed budget of income and expenditure specified source of funding for each of the years the tax was to run.

Prior law required 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.

New law removes prior law.

Prior law provided that if no plan was finally and conclusively adopted within four years after the effective date of prior law, all power and authority would lapse, the district would be dissolved, and all power and authority incident thereto would become null and void as a matter of law.

New law removes prior law.

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

New 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.

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

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

Prior law authorized 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.

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

Existing 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.

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

Prior law authorized the district to pay the city of Baton Rouge and the parish of East Baton Rouge funds for services rendered by the city-parish under a local services contract between the district and the city-parish.

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

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Amends R.S. 33:2740.8(D), (E)(2) and (5), (F)-(I), and (N))