

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), (E)(2) and (5), (F) through (I), and (N), relative
3 to the Downtown Development District of the city of Baton Rouge; to provide
4 relative to the governing board of the district; to provide relative to the membership
5 of the board; to provide relative to the appointment of board members; to provide
6 relative to the terms and compensation of the members; to provide relative to the
7 powers and duties of the district; to provide relative to the powers and duties of the
8 city of Baton Rouge, parish of East Baton Rouge with respect to the district; and to
9 provide for related matters.

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

13 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

14 Section 1. R.S. 33:2740.8(D), (E)(2) and (5), (F) through (I), and (N) are hereby
15 amended and reenacted to read as follows:

16 §2740.8. The downtown development district of the city of Baton Rouge; creation,
17 composition and powers; preparation of plans, levy of special ad valorem
18 taxes, and issuance of bonds and other instruments of indebtedness

19 * * *

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 shall have their principal
3 place of business or profession in, or own property in, the ~~Downtown Development~~
4 ~~District~~ district. The seven members shall be appointed as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

29 ~~(ii) Two members for two years each; and~~

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

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

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

13 G. The district, acting through its board, shall have the following powers and
 14 duties:

- 15 (1) To sue and be sued.
- 16 (2) To adopt and use a seal and authorize the use of a facsimile thereof.
- 17 (3) To acquire by gift, grant, purchase, or lease movable or immovable
 18 property and to dispose of such property.
- 19 (4) To make and execute contracts and other instruments necessary to the
 20 business of the district or convenient to the exercise of its powers.
- 21 (5) To contract for the services of consultants to perform planning,
 22 engineering, financial, legal, or other appropriate services of a professional nature.
- 23 (6) To receive by gift, grant, loan, or donation any sum of money or
 24 property, aid, or assistance from the United States, the state of Louisiana, or any
 25 political subdivision thereof, or any person, firm, or corporation and to hold, use, and
 26 dispose of such monies or property for any district purposes in accordance with the
 27 terms of the agreement of the gift, grant, loan, or donation.

1 (7) To adopt bylaws prescribing the powers, duties, and functions of the
2 officers of the district, the conduct of the business of the district, and the
3 maintenance of records.

4 (8) To maintain an office at such place or places as it may designate within
5 the district.

6 (9) To lease as lessor or lessee to or from any person, firm, corporation,
7 association, or body, public or private any facilities or property of any nature for
8 district purposes.

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

11 (11) To levy such special assessments as may be authorized and to charge,
12 collect, and enforce fees and other user charges.

13 (12) To cooperate with, or contract with, other governmental agencies as
14 may be necessary, convenient, incidental, or proper in connection with any of the
15 powers, duties, or purposes authorized by this Section.

16 (13) To exercise all of the powers necessary and proper in connection with
17 any of the powers, duties, or purposes authorized by this Section.

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

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

1 facilities which the city of Baton Rouge is then furnishing or providing or may then
2 or in the future be obligated to furnish or provide within the district.

3 (3) Any plan shall include:

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

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

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

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

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

1 ~~(b) If the plan as originally submitted by the board is adopted by the majority~~
2 ~~vote of the metro council, it shall become final and conclusive and may thereafter be~~
3 ~~implemented. If the metro council alters or modifies the plan by a majority vote of~~
4 ~~its members, the plan as altered or modified shall be resubmitted to the board for its~~
5 ~~concurrence or rejection.~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 to avoid the duplication of administrative and management efforts and expense in the
2 implementation of any plan adopted for the benefit of the district.

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

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

10 * * *

11 N. The district ~~shall have the power to pay the city of Baton Rouge and the~~
12 ~~parish of East Baton Rouge funds for services rendered by the city-parish under a~~
13 ~~local services contract between the district and the city-parish~~ may contract with the
14 city-parish for services rendered on behalf of the district.

15 Section 2. The members of the board of commissioners of the Downtown
16 Development District of the city of Baton Rouge serving on the effective date of this Act
17 shall continue to serve until the expiration of their current terms. The successors of such
18 members shall serve three-year terms.

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 Reengrossed

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. 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. 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 terms. Provides that the members of the board serving on the effective date of proposed law 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.

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.

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

- (1) To sue and be sued.
- (2) To adopt and use a seal and authorize the use of a facsimile thereof.
- (3) To acquire by gift, grant, purchase, or lease movable or immovable property and to dispose of such property.
- (4) To make and execute contracts and other instruments necessary to the business of the district or convenient to the exercise of its powers.
- (5) To contract for the services of consultants to perform planning, engineering, financial, legal, or other appropriate services of a professional nature.
- (6) 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.
- (7) To borrow money and issue bonds, certificates, warrants, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness.

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.

Present law provides that the district may 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.

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), (E)(2) and (5), (F)-(I), and (N))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs to the original bill:

1. Make changes to the qualifications of board members.
2. Remove proposed law provisions that provide for initial terms for certain board members.
3. Remove proposed law provisions that provide for the termination of the terms of certain board members.
4. Add provisions that provide that current board members shall continue to serve until the expiration of their terms.
5. Add to the powers and duties of the district.
6. Remove proposed law provisions that authorize the district to make purchases of less than \$50,000 with the approval of the metro council.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Make technical changes.