

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 97

BY REPRESENTATIVE BRYANT

DISTRICTS/ECONOMIC DEVEL: Creates an economic development district in the city of Jeanerette

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 33:2740.70.9, relative to the city of Jeanerette; to provide for the creation of  
3 an economic development district within the city; to provide for the purpose,  
4 boundaries, governance, and powers and duties of the district; to provide for district  
5 funding; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

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

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 33:2740.70.9 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

11 §2740.70.9. Railroad Avenue Historic Cultural Economic District

12 A. There is hereby created within the city of Jeanerette, as more specifically  
13 provided in Subsection B of this Section, a body politic and corporate which shall  
14 be known as the Railroad Avenue Historic Cultural Economic District, referred to  
15 in this Section as the "district". The district shall be a political subdivision of the  
16 state as defined in the Constitution of Louisiana.

17 B. The boundaries of the district shall encompass the area included within  
18 the Railroad Avenue Historic Cultural District.

19 C. The district is created to provide for cooperative economic and  
20 community development among the district, the city, the state, and the owners of

1 property in the district; to enhance the development of and improvement to the  
2 property within the area of the district; to provide for cultural enrichment and  
3 preservation; to develop stable and more extensive employment opportunities, to  
4 improve infrastructure; and to promote the overall welfare of the citizens of the  
5 district.

6 D.(1) In order to provide for the orderly development of the district and  
7 effect the purposes of the district, the district shall be administered and governed by  
8 a board of commissioners, referred to in this Section as the "board", composed seven  
9 voting members and one nonvoting member as follows:

10 (a) The governing board of the Jeanerette Chamber of Commerce shall  
11 appoint one member who is a member of the chamber and a resident of Iberia Parish.

12 (b) The governing authority of the city of Jeanerette shall appoint one  
13 member from the governing authority who represents Ward 1 or Ward 2.

14 (c) The member of the Louisiana House of Representatives whose district  
15 encompasses all or the greater portion of the area of the district shall appoint one  
16 member.

17 (d) The member of the Louisiana Senate whose district encompasses all or  
18 the greater portion of the area of the district shall appoint one member.

19 (e) The member of the governing authority of the parish of Iberia who  
20 represents District No. 12 shall appoint one member.

21 (f) The mayor of the city of Jeanerette shall appoint one member who is a  
22 resident of the Railroad Avenue Historic Cultural District.

23 (g) The governing board of the Small Town Arts and Festival Foundation  
24 shall appoint one member.

25 (h) The mayor shall be a nonvoting member of the board.

26 (2) Appointed board members shall serve three-year terms after initial terms  
27 as provided in this Paragraph. Three members shall serve an initial term of three  
28 years; two shall serve an initial term of two years; and two shall serve an initial term  
29 of one year, as determined by lot at the first meeting of the board.

1           (3) Any vacancy which occurs prior to the expiration of the term for which  
2           a member of the board has been appointed shall be filled for the remainder of the  
3           unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment.

4           (4) The board shall elect from its members a president, a vice president, a  
5           secretary, a treasurer, and such other officers as it may deem necessary. The duties  
6           of the officers shall be fixed by the bylaws adopted by the board.

7           (5) The minute books and archives of the district shall be maintained by the  
8           secretary of the board. The monies, funds, and accounts of the district shall be in the  
9           official custody of the board.

10           (6) The board shall adopt such rules and regulations as it deems necessary  
11           or advisable for conducting its business affairs. It shall hold regular meetings as  
12           shall be provided for in the bylaws and may hold special meetings at such times and  
13           places within the district as may be prescribed in the bylaws.

14           (7) A majority of the voting members of the board shall constitute a quorum  
15           for the transaction of business. The board shall keep minutes of all meetings and  
16           shall make them available through the secretary of the board to residents of the  
17           district.

18           (8) The members of the board shall serve without compensation; however,  
19           they may be reimbursed for expenses incurred while attending to the business of the  
20           board or the district.

21           E. The district, acting by and through its board, shall have and exercise all  
22           powers of a political subdivision necessary or convenient for carrying out its objects  
23           and purposes, including but not limited to the following:

24           (1) To sue and to be sued.

25           (2) To adopt, use, and alter at will a corporate seal.

26           (3) To adopt bylaws and rules and regulations.

27           (4) To receive by gift, grant, or donation any sum of money, property, aid,  
28           or assistance from the United States, the state of Louisiana, or any political  
29           subdivision thereof, or any person, firm, or corporation.

1           (5) To enter into contracts, agreements, or cooperative endeavors with the  
2           state and its political subdivisions or political corporations and with any public or  
3           private association, corporation, business entity, or individual.

4           (6) To appoint officers, agents, and employees; prescribe their duties; and  
5           fix their compensation.

6           (7) To acquire by purchase, gift, grant, donation, lease, or otherwise property  
7           as may be necessary or desirable for carrying out the objectives and purposes of the  
8           board.

9           (8) To fund and host festivals, parades, and other arts and cultural activities.

10          (9) To perform any other necessary and ancillary acts to effectuate its  
11          functions, to perform its duties, or to give effect to its powers in accordance with this  
12          Section.

13          F.(1) In addition to the authority provided to the district by this Section, the  
14          district may levy and collect a sales and use tax within the boundaries of the district  
15          not to exceed one percent.

16          (2) The tax shall be imposed by resolution of the board and shall be levied  
17          upon the sale at retail, the use, the lease or rental, the consumption, the distribution,  
18          and the storage for use or consumption of tangible personal property or digital  
19          products and upon the sales of services within the boundaries of the district, all as  
20          defined in R.S. 47:301 et seq. However, the resolution imposing the tax shall be  
21          adopted only after the proposition authorizing the levy of the tax is approved by a  
22          majority of the qualified electors of the district voting on the proposition at an  
23          election held for that purpose and conducted in accordance with the Louisiana  
24          Election Code. The purpose and rate of the tax shall be as provided in the resolution.

25          (3) Except where inapplicable, the procedure established by R.S. 47:301 et  
26          seq. shall be followed in the imposition, collection, and enforcement of the tax, and  
27          procedural details necessary to supplement those Sections and to make them  
28          applicable to the tax authorized in this Subsection shall be fixed in the resolution  
29          imposing the tax.

1           (4) The tax shall be imposed and collected uniformly throughout the  
2           jurisdiction of the district.

3           (5) The tax levied pursuant to this Subsection shall be in addition to all other  
4           taxes other political subdivisions within the jurisdiction of the district are authorized  
5           to levy and collect.

6           (6) Any monies received by the district shall be used exclusively for the  
7           benefit of the district.

8           G.(1)(a) In addition to any authority provided to the district by this Section,  
9           the district shall have the authority provided to an economic development district by  
10           Part II of Chapter 27 of this Title to implement tax increment financing and may  
11           issue revenue bonds payable from an irrevocable pledge and dedication of up to the  
12           full amount of tax increments available to an economic development district as  
13           provided in this Section and in such Part to be derived from any project or projects  
14           of the district as provided for in this Section, or parts of the projects, in an amount  
15           to be determined as provided for in this Section, in order to finance or refinance any  
16           project or projects, or parts thereof, which are consistent with the purposes of the  
17           district.

18           (b) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, any portion of the  
19           tax of any local governmental subdivision or other tax recipient body may only be  
20           used as a tax increment for tax increment finance purposes with the consent of the  
21           local governmental subdivision or other tax recipient body expressed by ordinance  
22           or resolution and upon approval of a majority of the qualified electors voting at an  
23           election held for that purpose and conducted in accordance with the Louisiana  
24           Election Code.

25           (2) For purposes of the tax increment financing authority derived from Part  
26           II of Chapter 27 of this Title which is conferred upon the district by this Section, and  
27           only for purposes of this Section, "local governmental subdivision" as defined in  
28           such Part shall include the parish of Iberia and all political subdivisions within the  
29           parish.



- (3) One member appointed by the member of the La. House of Representatives whose district encompasses all or the greater portion of the area of the district.
- (4) One member appointed by the member of the La. Senate whose district encompasses all or the greater portion of the area of the district.
- (5) One member appointed by the member of the governing authority of the parish of Iberia who represents District No. 12.
- (6) One member appointed by the mayor of the city of Jeanerette who is a resident of the Railroad Avenue Historic Cultural District.
- (7) One member appointed by the governing board of the Small Town Arts and Festival Foundation.
- (8) The mayor shall be a nonvoting member of the board.

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

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

- (1) To sue and to be sued.
- (2) To adopt, use, and alter at will a corporate seal.
- (3) To receive by gift, grant, or donation any sum of money, property, aid, or assistance from the U.S., the state, or any political subdivision thereof, or any person, firm, or corporation.
- (4) To enter into contracts, agreements, or cooperative endeavors with the state and its political subdivisions or political corporations and with any public or private association, corporation, business entity, or individual.
- (5) To appoint officers, agents, and employees; prescribe their duties; and fix their compensation.
- (6) To fund and host festivals, parades, and other arts and cultural activities.

Proposed law authorizes the district to levy and collect a sales and use tax, subject to voter approval, not to exceed 1%.

Proposed law specifically empowers the district to issue revenue bonds payable from an irrevocable pledge and dedication of up to the full amount of "tax increments" available to an economic development district as provided in proposed law and present law (Part II of Chapter 27 of Title 33) which is derived from any project or projects of the district. Prohibits the use of tax increments without the consent of the particular local governmental subdivision or tax recipient body and without the approval of a majority of the qualified electors voting in an election conducted in accordance with the general election laws.

Proposed law specifies that a "tax increment" consists of that portion of any tax levied within the district by a local governmental subdivision or other tax recipient body determined and pledged in the manner provided for in present law (Part II of Chapter 27 of Title 33). Provides that if the proceeds of any tax have been expressly dedicated to another purpose set forth in a proposition approved by the electorate of the local governmental subdivision or other tax recipient body, then the tax proceeds shall not be used as a tax increment until a proposition which authorizes such use is submitted to and approved by the electorate.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 33:2740.70.9)