
DIGEST

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HB 97 Engrossed

2025 Regular Session

Bryant

Abstract: Creates the Railroad Avenue Historic Cultural Economic District in the city of Jeanerette.

Proposed law creates the Railroad Avenue Historic Cultural Economic District as a political subdivision in the city of Jeanerette to provide for cooperative economic and community development among the district, the city, the state, and the owners of property in the district. Provides for district boundaries.

Proposed law provides that the district is governed by a board of commissioners composed of seven voting members and one nonvoting member as follows:

- (1) One member appointed by the governing board of the Jeanerette Chamber of Commerce who is a member of the chamber and a resident of Iberia Parish.
- (2) One member appointed by the governing authority of the city of Jeanerette who is a member of the governing authority and represents Ward 1 or Ward 2.
- (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)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Limit the means by which the Railroad Avenue Historic Cultural Economic District can acquire property to purchases, gifts, grants, donations, or leases.