

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 97

BY REPRESENTATIVES BRYANT AND CHASSION

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 of
9 seven 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, or lease property as may
7 be necessary or desirable for carrying out the objectives and purposes of the board.

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

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

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

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

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

1 (3) For purposes of this Section, a tax increment shall consist of that portion
2 of any tax levied within the district by a local governmental subdivision or other tax
3 recipient body determined and pledged in the manner provided for in Part II of
4 Chapter 27 of this Title. However, if the proceeds of the tax have been expressly
5 dedicated to another purpose set forth in a proposition approved by the electorate of
6 the local governmental subdivision or other tax recipient body, then the tax proceeds
7 may not be used as a tax increment until a proposition which authorizes the use is
8 submitted to and approved by the electorate.

9 H. The district shall dissolve and cease to exist one year after the date that
10 all bonds, notes, and other evidences of indebtedness of the district, including
11 refunding bonds, are paid in full as to both principal and interest.

12 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
13 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
14 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
15 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
16 effective on the day following such approval.

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 97 Reengrossed

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.