Baton Rouge to New Orleans
Passenger Rail
Voter Support Poll
The Southern Rail Commission is the leading voice for passenger rail in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

The SRC engages and informs public and private rail interests to support and influence Southeast rail initiatives.
Hurricane Katrina destroyed rail infrastructure along the corridor east of New Orleans Baton Rouge to New Orleans Passenger Rail Stations

The East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority (RDA) led the development of this master plan to conduct planning and design activities for the placement of two state-of-the-art, multimodal passenger rail stations in Baton Rouge, LA for the proposed Baton Rouge to New Orleans intercity passenger rail corridor. The Downtown Station will serve as a terminus rail station, connecting users to downtown destinations and providing the area with numerous economic benefits. The Suburban Station will enhance the Health District's appeal as a destination and serve a variety of users as part of a well connected, vibrant healthcare center. Both stations are intended to enhance current revitalization efforts and offer well designed, quality facilities with amenities that will create a seamless, efficient and pleasant experience for all train riders.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The downtown and suburban Baton Rouge station plans are part of an ongoing effort to re-establish passenger rail service between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. The implementation of this corridor is a top priority for parish and business leaders and is critical to the continued economic growth of the southeast Louisiana Super Region which includes more than 2.2 million people and nearly 1 million jobs. Connecting the two largest and most populous metros with passenger rail will mitigate growing traffic congestion and aging infrastructure issues while providing a reliable, efficient transportation option for regional and intercity travel.

The proposed intercity rail service will utilize the 80-mile corridor between the two cities that is owned and operated by Kansas City Southern (KCS) and Canadian National Railway (CN) for freight operations. The proposed seven passenger station locations, as shown in Figure 1.01, include: downtown Baton Rouge, suburban Baton Rouge, Gonzales, LaPlace, Kenner, Jefferson Parish and New Orleans. The service is expected to be an attractive alternative for commuters going to work and for business and pleasure travelers to conveniently travel between Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

The proposed Baton Rouge-New Orleans service is expected to advance national transportation goals. This route will link with the Gulf Coast Corridor, as shown in Figure 1.02, one of the nation's eleven federally-designated high-speed rail corridors. The development of service between Baton Rouge and New Orleans will provide a critical link in the regional network of passenger rail service stretching from Houston through New Orleans to Mobile and Atlanta.
Hurricane Katrina destroyed rail infrastructure along the corridor east of New Orleans.

Downtown Baton Rouge Station
Hurricane Katrina destroyed rail infrastructure along the corridor east of New Orleans

Suburban Baton Rouge Station

Suburban Station Transit Oriented Development Concept
Gonzales Station

Figure 33: Future Site Redevelopment Scenario Rendered Plan
Hurricane Katrina destroyed rail infrastructure along the corridor east of New Orleans.
BATON ROUGE TO NEW ORLEANS PASSENGER RAIL

A Survey of Registered Voters in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Orleans, St. James, and St. John Parishes

Conducted by LJRCustom Strategies

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Poll Methods

• Poll of 1,050 registered voters in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Orleans, St. James, and St. John Parishes in Louisiana
• Conducted from February 28-March 10, 2019
• 175 interviews were conducted in each parish to insure equal statistical reliability of the parish-level data. All data are weighted back to their actual proportion of the full registered voter population across the six parish region
• Findings applying to the 1,050 sample are subject to sampling error of plus or minus 2.9%; subgroups of the sample are subject to error of up to +/- 10%
Q.1 HEARD ABOUT PROPOSED PASSENGER RAIL

- Nothing: 37%
- Not much: 24%
- A lot: 8%
- Some: 31%
Q.2 REACTION TO DESCRIPTION OF PASSENGER RAIL

Poll Results

- Very positive: 36%
- Somewhat positive: 39%
- Neutral: 16%
- Somewhat negative: 3%
- Very negative: 2%
- DK/Ref.: 4%
Q.3 LIKLIHOOD OF USING PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Poll Results

Very likely 30%

Somewhat likely 33%

Not too likely 16%

Not likely at all 14%

DK/Ref. 7%
Q.4 IMPORTANCE OF HAVING PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

- Very important: 40%
- Important: 45%
- Not very important: 7%
- Not important at all: 5%
- DK/Ref.: 3%
Q.5 STATE FUNDING, WITH FEDERAL MATCH, FOR PASSENGER RAIL LINE

Poll Results

Support-strongly 47%
Support-not strongly 32%
DK/Ref. 10%
Oppose-strongly 5%
Oppose-not strongly 5%
Q.6-13 IMPACT OF INFORMATION ABOUT RAIL SERVICE

- Avoid traffic/easier to plants: 85%
- Ticket less than parking: 83%
- Federal match for half: 80%
- Another evacuation route: 78%
- WIFI/Work during commute: 76%
- Funds from rental car tax: 68%
- Funds from hotel tax: 65%
- TX, FL, NC have trains: 59%

*Percentage who say each statement makes them “much more likely” or “more likely” to support using state funding for passenger rail service.
Q.14-23 STATEMENTS ABOUT PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

- State funding should support rail too: 83%
- Train will help eliminate I-10 traffic: 82%
- Train brings economic development: 80%
- I would use train with employer shuttle: 78%
- If employer paid, I would use train: 77%
- I would train to MSY: 73%
- I would train to NO for sports: 73%
- I would train to NO/BR to shop/dine/etc.: 70%
- I would train to BR for LSU sports: 64%
- Want to know candidate position on train: 61%

*Percentage who "strongly agree" or "agree" with each statement.
Q.5, Q.24 CHANGE IN SUPPORT FOR STATE FUNDING, WITH FEDERAL MATCH, FOR PASSENGER RAIL LINE

Poll Results

Q.5 Initial Support

- Support-strongly: 47%
- Support-not strongly: 32%
- Oppose-not strongly: 5%
- Oppose-strongly: 5%
- DK/Ref: 10%

Q.24 Final Support

- Support-strongly: 58%
- Support-not strongly: 25%
- Oppose-not strongly: 6%
- Oppose-strongly: 4%
- DK/Ref: 7%
Poll Results

Q.3, Q.25 CHANGE IN LIKELIHOOD OF USING PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Q.3 Initial Likelihood
- Very likely: 30%
- Somewhat likely: 33%
- Not too likely: 16%
- Not likely at all: 14%
- DK/Ref.: 7%

Q.25 Final Likelihood
- Very likely: 42%
- Somewhat likely: 42%
- Not too likely: 16%
- Not likely at all: 11%
- DK/Ref.: 4%
Poll Results

Q.26-27 IMPACT OF TICKET COST

$15 each way
- 77%
- 15%
- 8%

$10 each way
- 87%
- 8%
- 5%
Thank you!