

BATON ROUGE
CITYSTATS

Indicators for tracking our quality of life

UNDERWRITTEN BY THE
NEWTON B. THOMAS SUPPORT FOUNDATION
OF THE

*Baton Rouge
Area Foundation*

BRCITYSTATS.ORG
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ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation, your community foundation, makes the world better in two ways. We connect fund donors—philanthropists—to worthwhile projects and nonprofits. With them, we have granted more than \$275 million over 48 years to give people a chance to prosper. We also take on projects that change the direction of the Baton Rouge region, such as spearheading the Arts Block that includes the Shaw Center for the Arts, supporting innovations in public schools and creating The Water Institute of the Gulf, a nonprofit that will gather top scientists to take on the double challenge on our deltas of rising seas and vanishing land.

OUR MISSION:

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation unites human and financial resources to enhance the quality of life in southern Louisiana.

HOW WE WORK:

The Foundation is funded by generous fund donors and members. Through their charitable accounts at the Foundation, fund donors make grants to nonprofits; members champion our causes and provide the funding to underwrite civic leadership projects, such as revitalizing cities and reforming schools.

Our asset base at year-end 2011 was \$608 million, enough to rank among the 20 largest community foundations in the country. Nonprofits have used Foundation grants to feed the hungry, create an orchestra program for public and private schoolchildren, save precious lands and much more. Donors and the Foundation made 3,288 grants in 2011 worth \$28 million.

With our donors, members and civic leaders, we are in this for good.

For more, visit BRAAF.ORG

ABOUT CITYSTATS

Baton Rouge CityStats tracks the quality of life for East Baton Rouge, using more than 70 indicators to do so. The project is a roadmap for community improvement, telling us where we are, how far we've come and where we need to go as a parish.

CityStats began in 2008, when hundreds of people joined the Foundation to write collective visions for Baton Rouge in health care, public safety and other categories. The indicators are intended to drive East Baton Rouge toward those visions of a better community.

The first CityStats report was issued in early 2009. Since then, the Foundation has issued an annual scorecard. Last year, we also produced a separate survey of the community with the title "The EBR We Want."

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation underwrites and produces CityStats. The Foundation contracts with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber to gather public statistics for the project and with LSU's Public Policy Research Lab to conduct the annual survey.

The survey is representative of East Baton Rouge Parish. The sample for this year's survey is 430 land lines and 107 cell phones for a total of 537. The margin of error is plus or minus 4.2%. The poll was conducted in February 2012.

When indicators become available that better measure the quality of life, they either replace or support existing indicators. But, to permit comparison, most indicators remain as part of the report year after year.

The Foundation and its fund donors use the indicators to assist in decision making about grants and to choose civic leadership initiatives. We hope other civic groups and policymakers use the indicators in this report to deliver solutions that make East Baton Rouge a better place to live.

FROM THE CHAIR



After producing this report for four years, we have accumulated enough data to discern some trends, both good and bad.

It seems that the residents of our parish are impatient. They tell our pollsters that progress in Baton Rouge is too slow, indicating that they want their political and civic leaders to do better for the people. For now, what they

want from their local governments are better ways to get around town and, most of all, they want less crime in their community.

Baton Rouge is a violent place. We know this. Our study shows that the number of total crimes, as reported by public safety officials, has declined recently. But it is not enough: Baton Rouge averages 68 crimes a day, and our city is recognized for having one of the highest murder rates in the country. Our neighbors are scared, our poll shows, and they worry that crime will only get worse. Thirty-seven percent told us this year that they are much more concerned that either they or their family members will become victims of a crime. That's a sharp increase from 28% when we conducted the poll four years ago.

It appears that local leaders are worried as well. There has been a lot of talk among them recently about taking action against crime. But while they are doing all the talking, are our leaders also listening to their constituents when it comes to this issue? Residents don't think so, with 55% telling our pollsters that they have little or no influence over their elected leaders. That's up from 49% in the previous two years.

We cannot proceed this way. When people are skeptical of those who are supposed to represent them, they become estranged from their own government. Leaders will find that they do not have the people's support and cooperation in their efforts to better the community, and little will get done.

Many of the quality-of-life indicators in this report are sour, even alarming. Nevertheless, there is also reason to feel encouraged.

For instance, after trending downward for some time, Baton Rouge airport has seen an upswing in the number of boardings, thanks in part to the entry by U.S. Airways. The high school dropout rate is half of what it was, and teen pregnancies have continued to decline, just as they have for most of the last decade. What's more, residents gave high marks again to the library system and to BREC, both of which have used tax funds to improve their institutions.

Other findings in our report point to subtle, but important, trends. More and more people are attending Live After Five in downtown Baton Rouge, for example. Now the significance of something like this might not be immediately apparent. But the effects achieved by community gatherings like Live After Five can be profound and long-lasting. When people of all kinds come together to celebrate with music, the differences between us begin to seem smaller. Neighbors come to know each other better, and community cohesion grows.

You can download the entire report at BRAf.org or facebook.com/BRCityStats.

I want to thank Newton Thomas, a Foundation donor, and his Newton B. Thomas Support Foundation for underwriting CityStats. The Foundation also thanks the Baton Rouge Area Chamber and LSU's Public Policy Research Lab for their work on this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew G. McKay". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

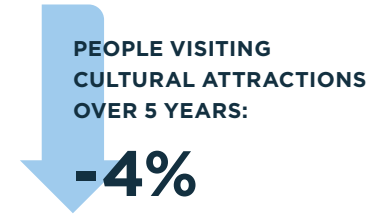
Matthew G. McKay

Chair, Baton Rouge Area Foundation

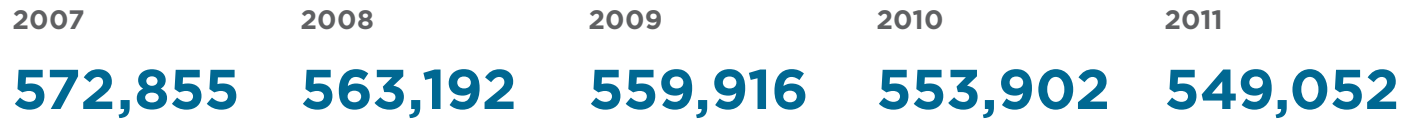
CULTURAL VISITS

Attendance at cultural facilities

People visiting cultural attractions—Louisiana Art and Science Museum, USS KIDD, LSU Museum of Art, Baton Rouge Zoo and Manship Theatre—has declined 4% over five years.



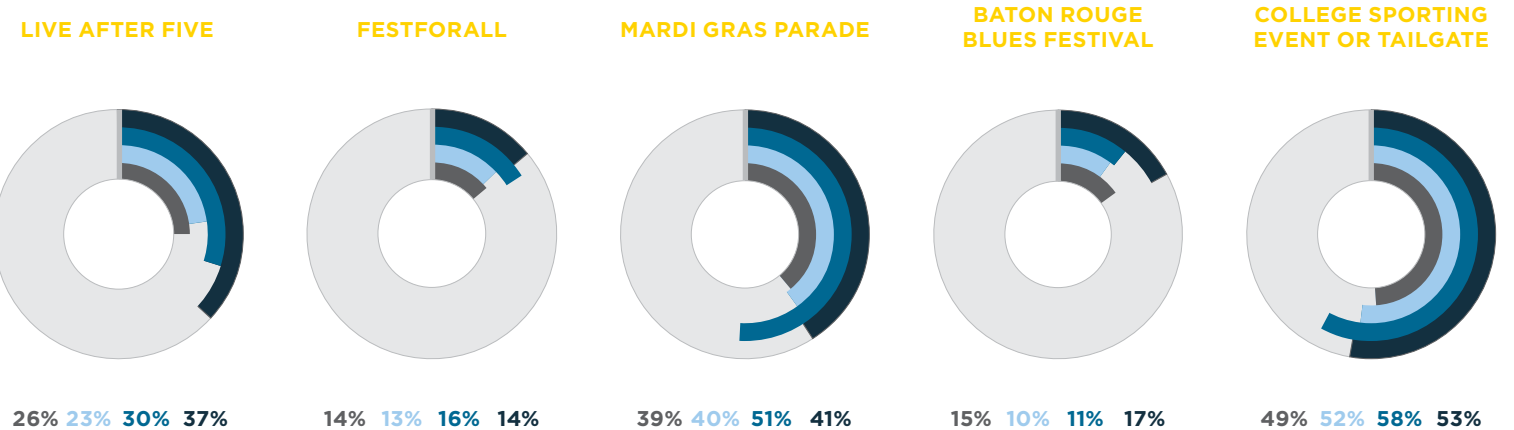
People visiting cultural attractions in Baton Rouge



Source: LASM, USS KIDD, LSU Museum of Art, Manship Theatre, Baton Rouge Zoo

Attendance at cultural events

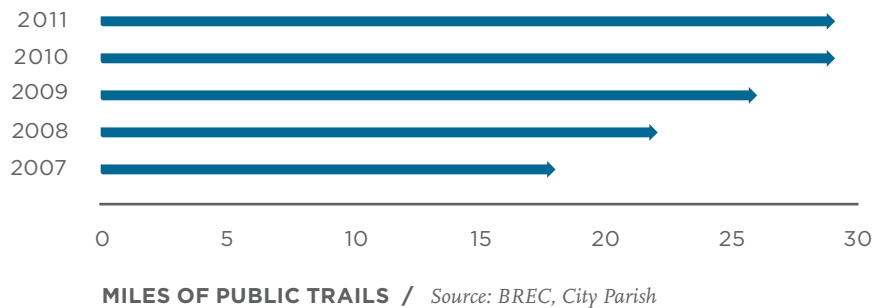
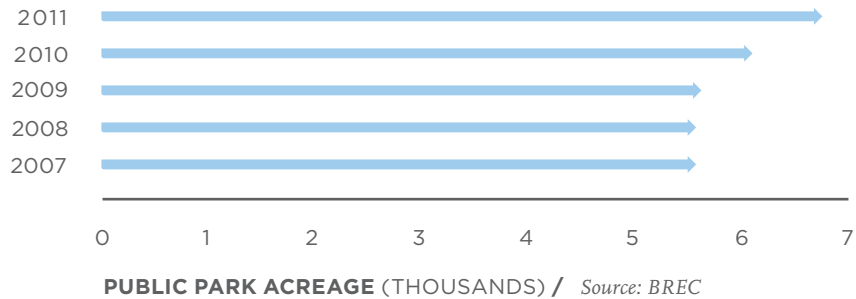
Live After Five attracts more people each year. With the new Town Square and stage now open, the Friday afternoon concerts could draw even more music lovers this year. Meanwhile, college sporting events were more popular among higher earners (80% earning more than \$100,000 attended versus 28% earning less than \$25,000), as were Mardi Gras parades (60% making more than \$100,000 attended versus 32% earning less than \$25,000).



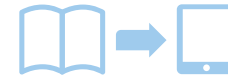
PARKS AND TRAILS

More land, no more trails

BREC, the parks system, has spent more than \$100 million to build community parks with many uses. To do so, the system has purchased and preserved land. But Baton Rouge has a scant amount of bike and other trails, only 29.3 miles compared to more than 1,400 in Austin, Texas. Baton Rouge cyclists are in danger; another was killed this year on Perkins Road, which doesn't even have sidewalks in some sections. Local governments have planned more bike trails, but there is no driving force behind the projects and no dedicated source of revenue to build them.



EBR LIBRARY



The digital shift

Library circulation echoes a revolution in the world. Total circulation, including printed books, has been flat or declining for years. But digital download of books, video and audio has doubled each year for a half decade, even though content is limited.



TOTAL CIRCULATION



DIGITAL CIRCULATION



COMPUTER LOGINS

Source: EBR Library

WHAT EBR WANTS TO BE: CityStats indicators measure how well the parish is doing compared to the vision of the future established in public meetings when this endeavor began in 2008. Here is the vision for Culture and Recreation: East Baton Rouge appreciates its heritage with all of its character, charm and cultural traditions, and celebrates the joys of its friends, families, football and food. The community values and preserves its historical assets, museums and theaters; at the same time, the community embraces new cultural and recreational opportunities with an openness for excellent and diverse opportunities for arts, recreation and entertainment available to all residents. Baton Rouge supports a wide variety of family-friendly and inclusive recreation activities, from youth sports to hunting and fishing.

PEOPLE STARTED MOVING BACK into EBR, but the recession created a wobbly economy. African American income rose, but the income gap between blacks and whites remained wide. People are optimistic, with more than half expecting their standard of living to improve.

RESIDENTS EXPECT A BRIGHTER FUTURE (%)

Do you expect your standard of living to improve, stay the same or decline in the next year?

Source: CityStats Survey



IMPROVE



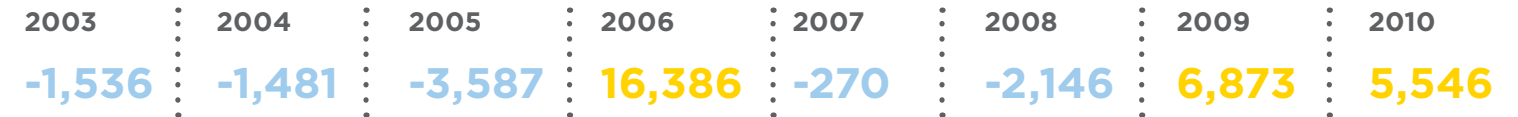
DECLINE



STAY THE SAME

AND THE PARISH IS DRAWING MORE PEOPLE

Net migration



Source: U.S Census Bureau

BUT THE RECESSION HAS TRIPPED UP THE ECONOMY

Net job growth



Source: U.S Census Bureau

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE HAS INCREASED SINCE 2007 (%)



Source: U.S Census Bureau

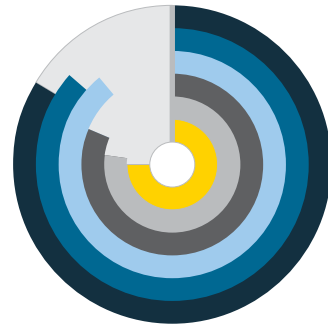
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME

2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010

TOTAL POPULATION



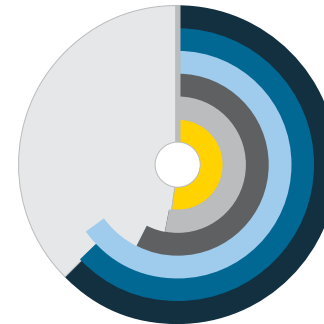
WHITE ALONE



AFRICAN AMERICAN



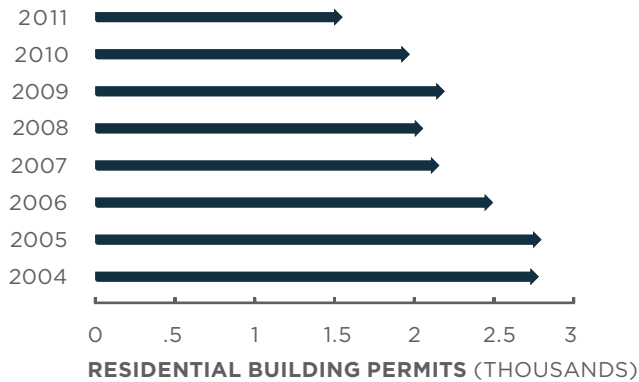
ASIAN



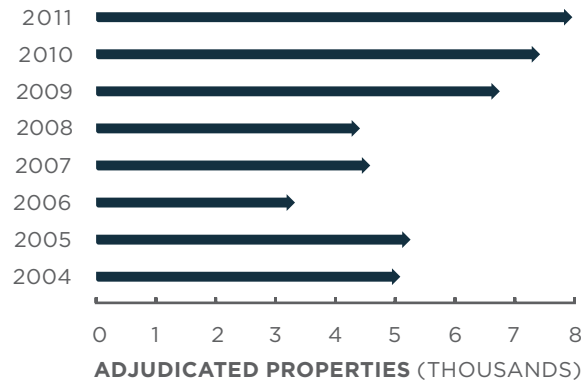
HISPANIC OR LATINO (OF ANY RACE)



BUILDING SLOWS, AND MORE PROPERTIES ARE LEFT BEHIND



Source: EBR Government



Source: EBR Government

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Number of patents issued to people or businesses in the parish in 2011, a measure of the new economy. The number has been relatively flat over the last decade.

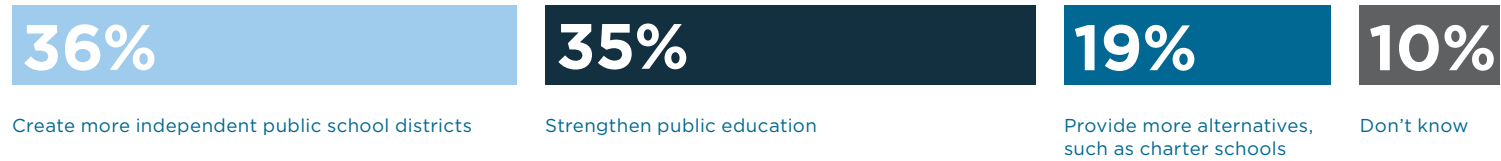
Source: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

WHAT EBR WANTS TO BE: CityStats indicators measure how well the parish is doing compared to the vision of the future established in public meetings when this endeavor began in 2008. Here is the vision for the economy: East Baton Rouge has a broad, diversified economy providing good jobs at high wages for its residents. The region supports and retains educated and flexible workforce and employment opportunities that match local skills. Economic growth is managed responsibly to ensure the sustainability and the economic vibrancy of all parts of the region. Residents can enjoy a range of housing opportunities and choices to meet all needs, and all neighborhoods thrive.

RESIDENTS PREFER PUBLIC EDUCATION, though they want more of it through breakaway school districts. Enrollment is climbing for EBR public schools and declining in private schools. Zachary shows the strongest growth, while Central’s enrollment rate has slowed. The percentage of high school graduates hasn’t changed much, but there are more college graduates in the parish. The percentage graduating high school in four years has increased, but remains too low.

METHOD FOR IMPROVING SCHOOLS

In your opinion, which of the following methods do you believe would be the most effective in improving education in East Baton Rouge?



Source: CityStats Survey

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Source: La. Department of Education

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH	46,046	44,168	42,643	43,156	43,303
ZACHARY	4,266	4,648	4,958	5,014	5,268
CITY OF BAKER	1,998	1,842	1,967	1,900	1,794
CENTRAL	3,126	3,655	3,828	4,034	4,084
PRIVATE/PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS	19,761	18,511	18,099	17,726	17,186
RECOVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT	—	1,288	4,371	2,527	2,598

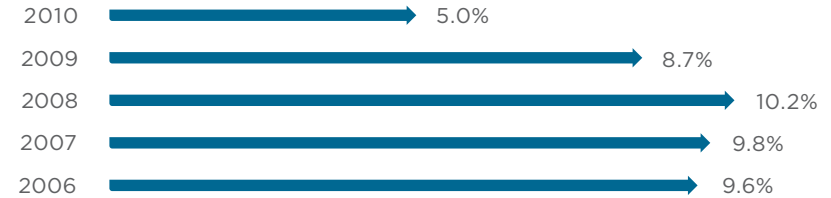
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Population over 25



Source: U.S Census Bureau

HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS



Source: La. Department of Education

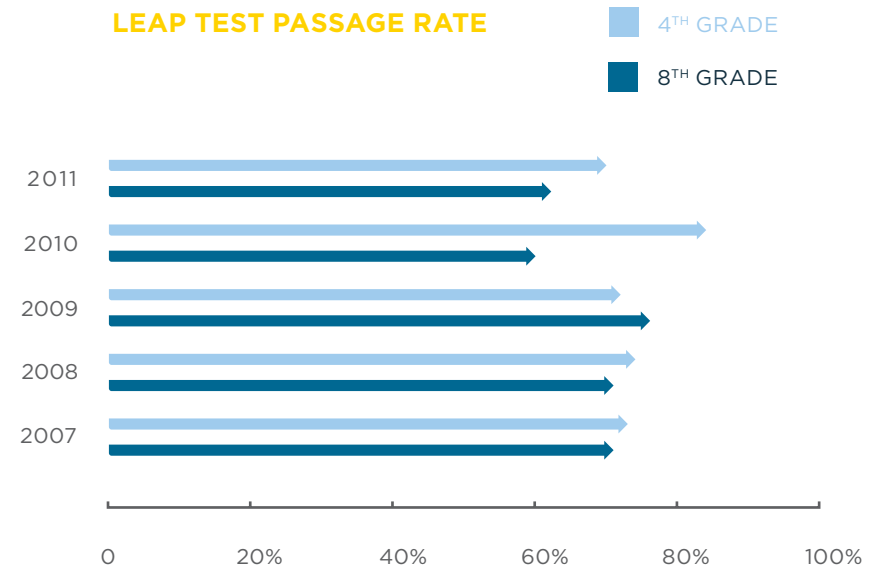
COLLEGE GRADUATES

Population over 25



Source: U.S Census Bureau

LEAP TEST PASSAGE RATE



Source: La. Department of Education

GRADUATION RATE

Graduating high school in four years

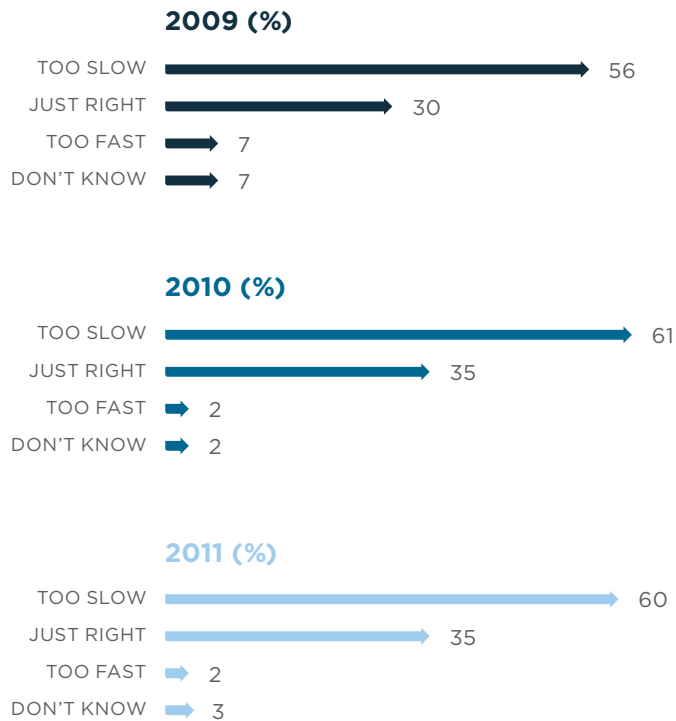


Source: La. Department of Education

EAST BATON ROUGE REMAINS impatient with the pace of progress. As well, residents in the poll lowered their rating of the police department and sheriff's office. Plus, the percentage saying they have little or no influence over elected officials rose to more than 50% for the first time. On the bright side, BREC was rated higher by residents, and the downtown library brouhaha didn't affect the high rating of the library system.

PEOPLE WANT A BETTER PARISH

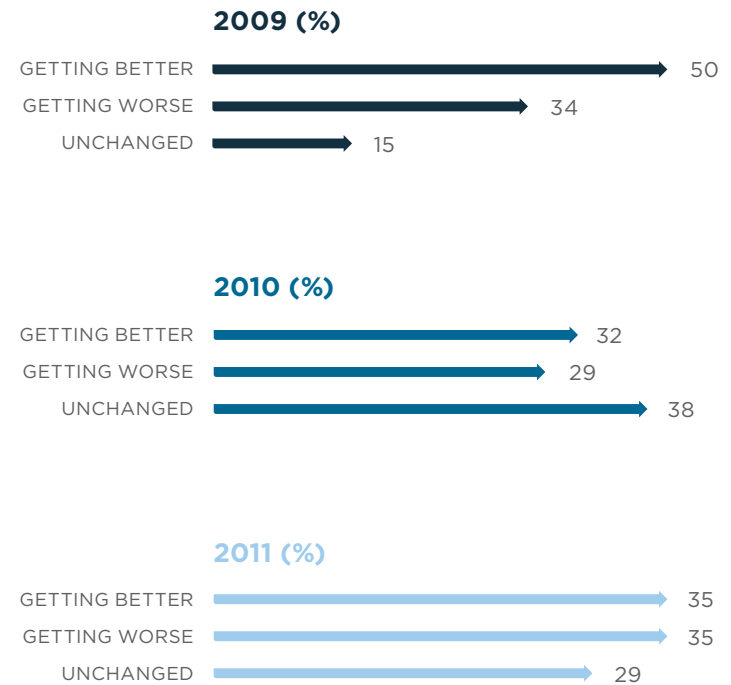
Do you feel that the **pace of progress and change** in Baton Rouge is...



Source: CityStats Survey

BUT SAY THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS ARE GETTING WORSE

From your own personal experience, would you say that the immediate area where you live is getting better or getting worse as a place to live?

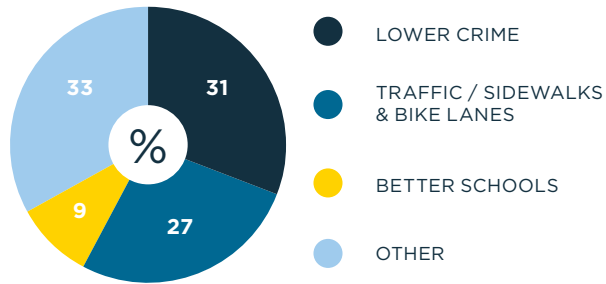


Source: CityStats Survey



WHAT THEY PRIMARILY WANT ARE SAFER PLACES AND BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE

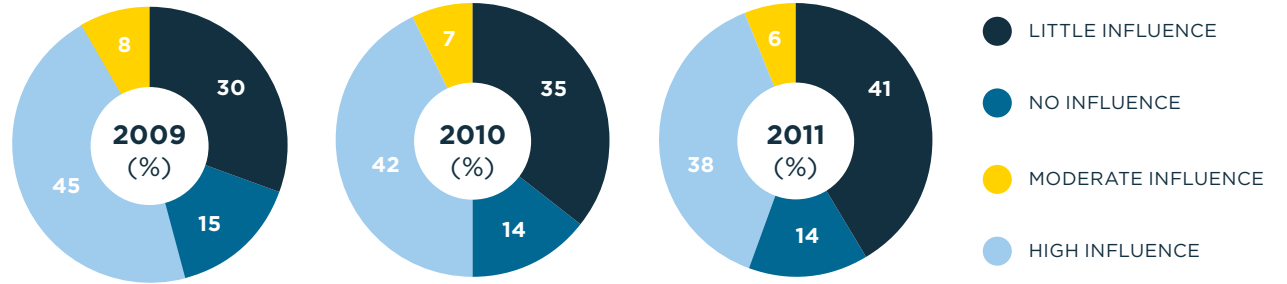
Overall, what is the single most important thing the city government of Baton Rouge could do to improve the quality of life in your neighborhood?



Source: CityStats Survey

BUT THEY FEEL ELECTED OFFICIALS AREN'T LISTENING TO THEIR CONCERNS

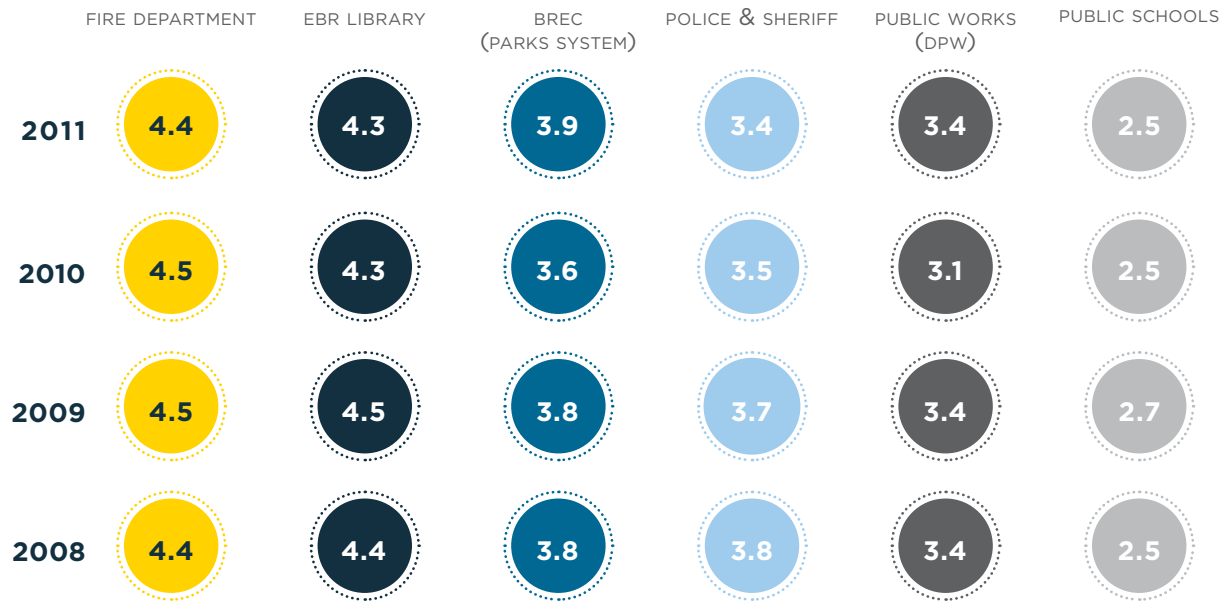
As a resident of Baton Rouge, what level of influence do you feel ordinary citizens have on leaders in your city-parish government? Would you say...



Source: CityStats Survey

AND THEY HAVE MIXED OPINIONS ABOUT GOVERNMENT SERVICES

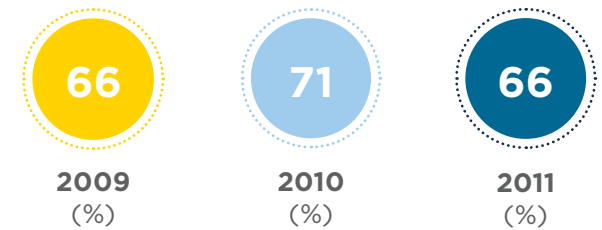
(5 = EXCELLENT / 3 = AVERAGE / 1 = POOR) Please rate the overall quality of...



Source: CityStats Survey

FEWER PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED LAST YEAR

In the past year, have you donated time to any charitable, civic, religious or other volunteer organization without receiving any money or tangible benefits?

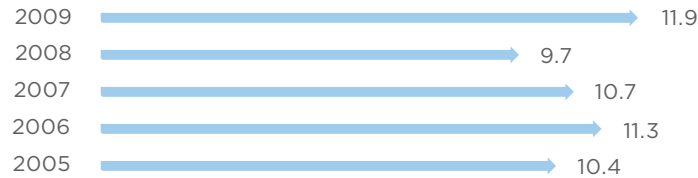


Source: CityStats Survey

THE INFANT MORTALITY RATE in the parish rose in 2009 to nearly double the national average. Meanwhile, the number of people dying from cancer declined again, and the parish continues to have a high rate of new HIV cases, which has resulted in the highest number of total AIDS cases in the nation.

INFANT MORTALITY RATE

Deaths within 12 months per 1,000 live births.
U.S. rate was 6.26 in 2009



Source: La. Department of Health & Hospitals

NEWBORNS WITH HEALTHY BIRTH WEIGHT

At least 5 lbs, 8 ounces. U.S. rate in 2009 was 92%



Source: La. Department of Health & Hospitals

DEATH RATES

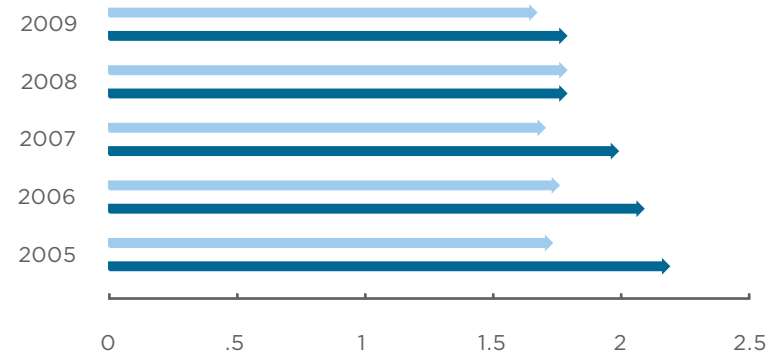
Deaths per thousand people / **DIABETES**



Source: La. Department of Health & Hospitals

DEATH RATES

Deaths per thousand people / **CANCER & HEART DISEASE**



Source: La. Department of Health & Hospitals

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009
NEW CASES OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES					
HIV	248	259	258	250	243
SYPHILIS	99	70	58	40	43
GONORRHEA	1,601	1,226	1,000	923	957
CHLAMYDIA	2,069	2,189	2,307	2,850	3,227

Source: La. Office of Public Health

ENVIRONMENT

RESIDENTS CONTINUE TO SAY Baton Rouge is filthy with litter, with 25% saying it's a serious problem. Recycling by residents with curbside bins began to rise again after a slow-down caused by reduced consumption during the recession.

LITTER IS A PROBLEM

Please rate the level of litter in Baton Rouge over the past year.

(5 = SERIOUS PROBLEM; 1 = NO PROBLEM)



Source: CityStats Survey

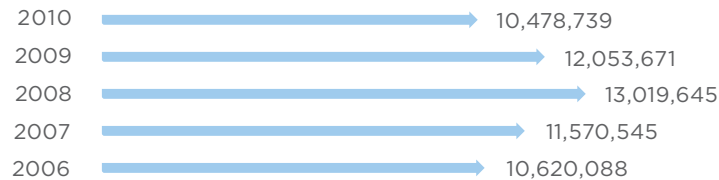
RESIDENTIAL CURBSIDE RECYCLING (IN TONS)



Source: EBR Public Works

ALL TOXIC RELEASES

Pollutants measured in pounds



Source: La. Department of Environmental Quality

COMMERCIAL RECYCLING (IN TONS)



Source: EBR Public Works

TOTAL RESIDENTIAL RECYCLING (IN TONS)



Source: EBR Public Works

TOXIC AIR POLLUTANTS

Air pollutants only measured in pounds



Source: La. Department of Environmental Quality

WHAT EBR WANTS TO BE: CityStats indicators measure how well East Baton Rouge is doing compared to the vision of the future established in public meetings when this project began in 2008. Here is the vision for the environment: East Baton Rouge is known as a green city, and preserves and enhances its natural beauty, wildlife, river, green spaces, farmland and environmentally critical areas. Residents, businesses and government actively participate in conservation and environmentally friendly behavior. The air, water and land resources of Baton Rouge are clean and support the area's unique ecosystems, and are open for local residents to experience and explore.

RESIDENTS DON'T WANT to pay more taxes or fees to improve infrastructure. But they do want to widen I-10 through Baton Rouge, and they say government should spend on alternative transportation. On a bright note, commuting time to work in the parish dropped six seconds.

■ YES ■ NO ■ DON'T KNOW

WIDEN I-10?

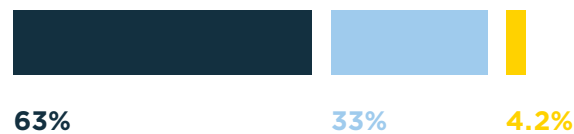
In your opinion, should the state widen Interstate 10 at the Perkins Road Overpass area?

Source: CityStats Survey



Keeping in mind that there are shops and restaurants that would need to be closed in order to widen Interstate 10 over Perkins Road, should the state widen Interstate 10 at the Perkins Road Overpass area?

Source: CityStats Survey



ALTERNATIVES TO ROADS

In your opinion, should state and local government spend more money on alternative transportation here in Baton Rouge, such as bike paths, buses and trains, and less on widening roads?

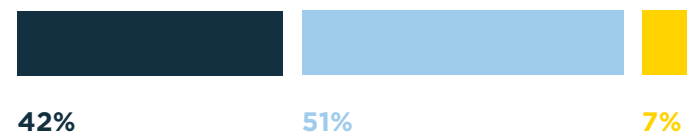
Source: CityStats Survey



REARRANGE GOVERNMENT STREET?

Some cities in the country have reduced their main roads from four lanes to three lanes with parking. In theory this is a way to calm traffic and potentially increase the amount of businesses and houses along the streets. With this in mind, would you favor (yes) or oppose (no) such an idea for Government Street in Baton Rouge?

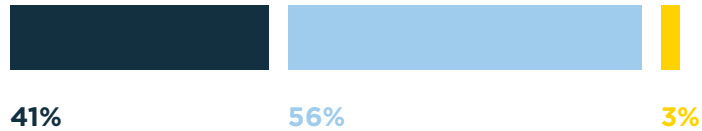
Source: CityStats Survey



TOLLS AT PARISH LINES

Some have suggested the addition of an interstate highway toll that would affect vehicles both entering and leaving the parish. Funds collected from these tolls would be used to pay for new roads, road upgrades, and other transportation improvements. Would you favor or oppose such tolls?

Source: CityStats Survey



MORE GASOLINE TAXES?

Would you favor or oppose an increase in gasoline taxes to pay for new roads, road upgrades and other transportation improvements?

Source: CityStats Survey



WORK COMMUTE IN MINUTES



Source: U.S Census Bureau

BR AIRPORT TOTAL PASSENGERS



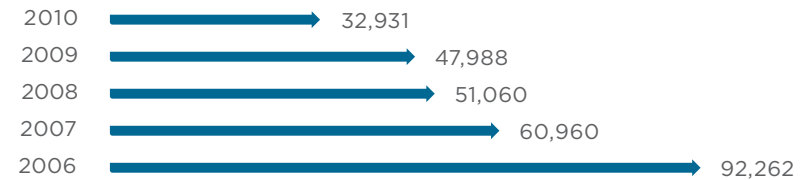
Source: Baton Rouge Metro Airport

RIDING CATS BUSES WEEKLY



Source: Capital Area Transit System

CATS WEEKLY MILES DRIVEN



Source: Capital Area Transit System

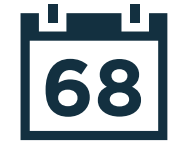
RIDING THE BUS

Over the past year, how often have you ridden a public bus in Baton Rouge?

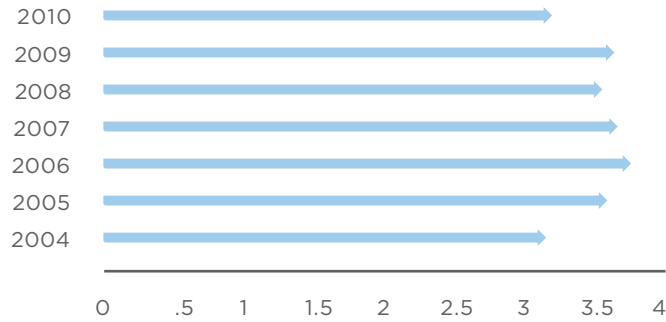


Source: CityStats Survey

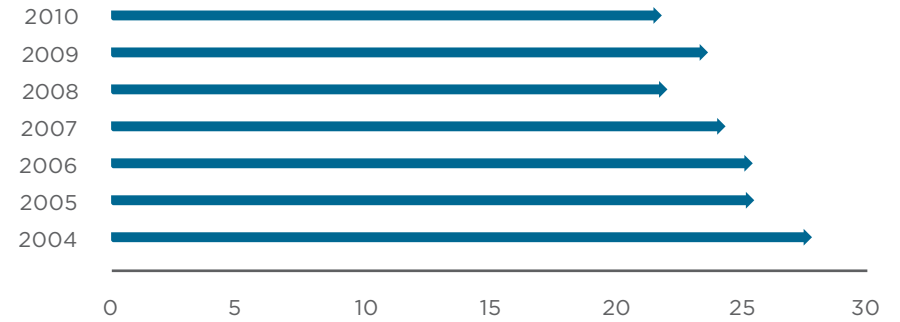
CRIMES IN BATON ROUGE have declined, but the parish remains among the most violent in the country. Residents are scared now, and worried that crime will only get worse.



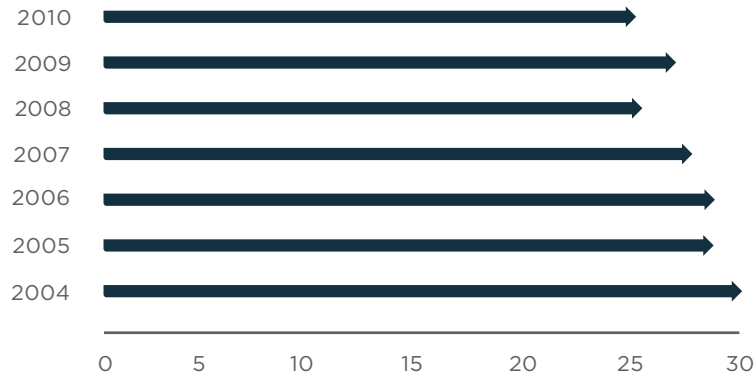
AVERAGE CRIMES PER DAY



VIOLENT CRIMES (THOUSANDS) / Source: FBI



NON-VIOLENT CRIMES (THOUSANDS) / Source: FBI



TOTAL CRIMES (THOUSANDS) / Source: FBI

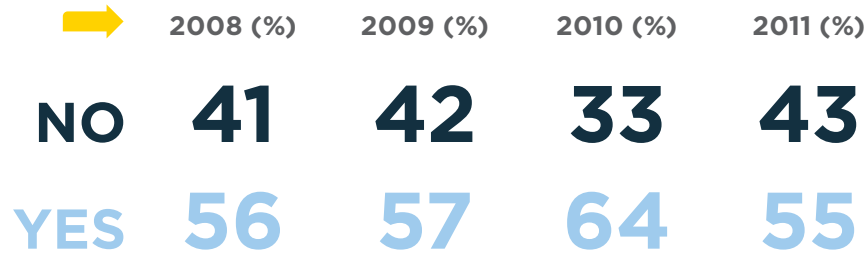
MANY SAY THEY ARE VICTIMS

Crime is not contained in EBR, but the less educated and poor were struck last year more often. Nearly four of 10 without a high school education were crime victims, compared to 23% of those with college degrees. At 29%, crime on people earning less than \$25,000 was about triple the rate of those earning \$100,000 or more. Did you have your money or property stolen, property vandalized, home broken into, car stolen? Or have you been the victim of a personal assault or attack in the past year? **>> YES**



MANY ARE SCARED NOW

Do you feel safe walking alone at night in your neighborhood?

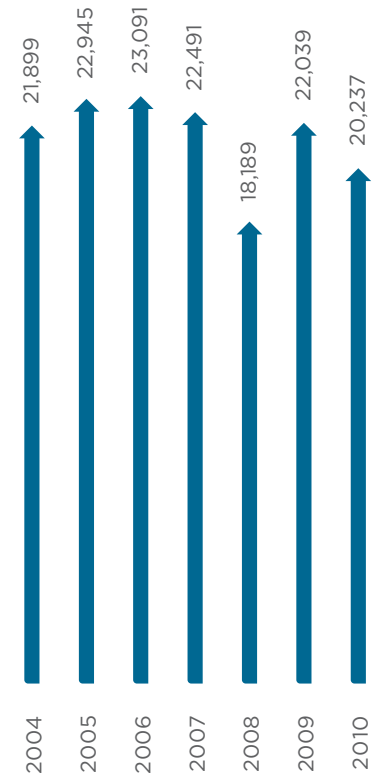


Source: CityStats Survey

Too many people are afraid to walk alone in their own neighborhoods at night. More African Americans (57%) and people without high school degrees (62%) are frightened, likely because there is more crime in their neighborhoods.

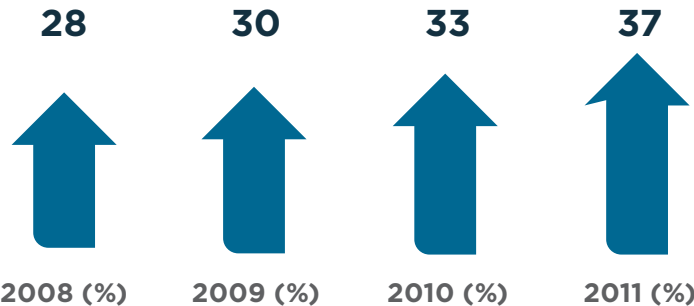
TOTAL TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

Source: LSU Highway Safety Research Group



AND ARE WORRIED CRIME WILL BECOME WORSE

Are you more or less concerned about crime committed against you or a family member in the next year? >> **MUCH MORE CONCERNED**



Source: CityStats Survey

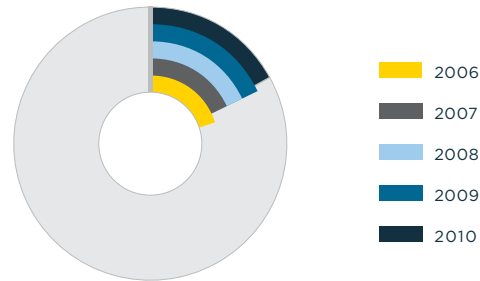
42

No matter the age group, everyone is more fearful that crime will get worse. The fear is the greatest among the young: 42% said they are much more concerned they or their family could be crime victims in the next year.

WHAT EBR WANTS TO BE: CityStats indicators measure how well East Baton Rouge is doing compared to the vision of the future established in public meetings when this endeavor began in 2008. Here is the vision for public safety: East Baton Rouge residents enjoy a safe, inviting environment throughout the community, at home, in the workplace and on the roads. Crime rates are low, and the community assists in prevention activities and rehabilitation of former offenders. Fire, rescue, police and other agencies work together cooperatively across the region. Area youth reach their potential and become members of the community. The region is prepared for disasters and responds quickly and effectively to all emergency situations.

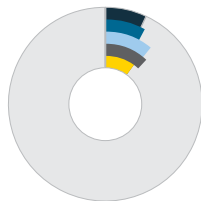
POVERTY IS THE ROOT CAUSE for other troubles. Baton Rouge has too many poor people, including many living in extreme poverty with little chance of improving their well-being. What's worse, more than one of every four children are poor. However, there are bright spots: The teen pregnancy rate continues to decline and Baton Rouge has improved conditions for lost companion animals.

OVERALL POVERTY



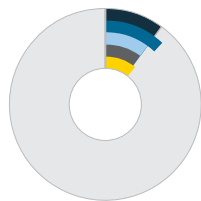
20% 18% 18% 18% 17%

SENIORS IN POVERTY



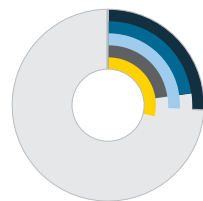
10% 12% 11% 8% 7%

WHITES IN POVERTY



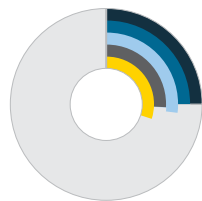
11% 10% 10% 12% 10%

CHILDREN IN POVERTY



29% 23% 26% 23% 26%

BLACKS IN POVERTY



30% 26% 27% 25% 25%

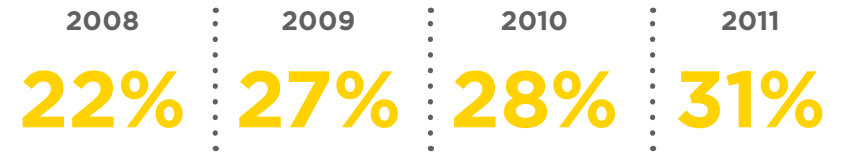
Source: U.S Census Bureau

FUNDAMENTAL DILEMMA

Poverty

The national poverty rate was 15% in 2010. In EBR, it was 17%. Here, though, there are more living in extreme poverty. Evidence of that is the rising percentage of people who couldn't afford to eat or afford a home in 2011.

COULDN'T AFFORD FOOD



COULDN'T AFFORD A PLACE TO LIVE

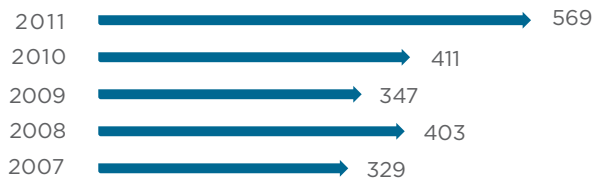


Source: CityStats Survey

POLICY CHANGES SPIKE CASES

Child abuse cases

Child abuse cases soared in 2011, but much of that can be explained by the Louisiana Department of Social Services' screening method for accepting cases. DSS accepted more low-risk cases to assist families with alternative responses, such as counseling.



Source: La. Department of Social Services

MORE RESPONSIBLE TEENS

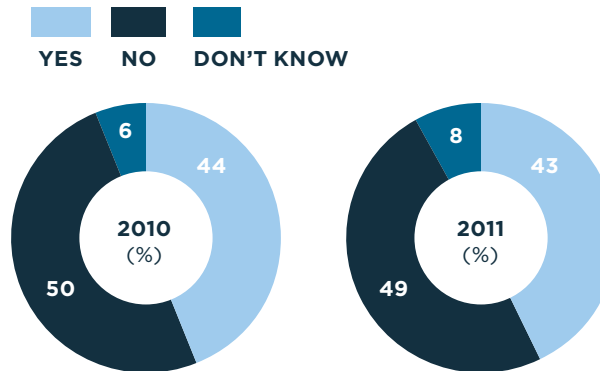
3.83 of every thousand 15-19 year old girls became pregnant in 2010

Because of wider use of contraception, fewer teens are getting pregnant in America and East Baton Rouge. The 3.83 rate in 2010 was an improvement over 4.2 in 2009. The rate was 6.1 in 2003.

Source: U.S. Center for Disease Control

DIVIDED OVER SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Should gays and lesbians have a constitutional right to get married and have their marriage recognized by law as valid?



Source: CityStats Survey

No statistically relevant change from last year, when we asked this question of EBR residents for the first time. Majority support for same-sex marriage exists among 18-34 year-olds, people earning less than \$25,000 and those earning \$75,000 to \$99,000. Older people and those earning more than \$100,000 are against the idea.

SPLIT BY SKIN COLOR

We remain a parish divided by race. Thirty-four percent of blacks said racism is a "serious problem," only 10% of whites did.

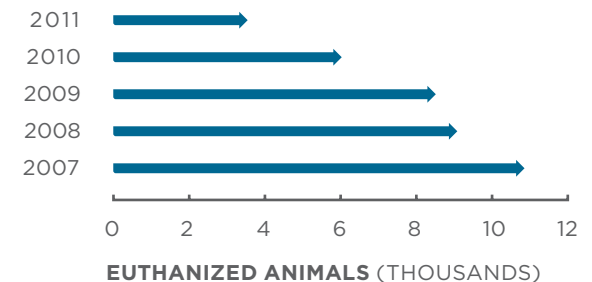
(5 = SERIOUS PROBLEM / 0 = NO PROBLEM)



TREATING OUR PETS MUCH BETTER

Animal euthanasia

The number of dogs and cats being euthanized in EBR has dropped, in large part because the Companion Animal Alliance, a nonprofit, has assumed control of the shelter.



Source: EBR Animal Control, Companion Animal Alliance

WHAT EBR WANTS TO BE: CityStats indicators measure how well East Baton Rouge is doing compared to the vision of the future established in public meetings when this endeavor began in 2008. This is the vision for social well-being: East Baton Rouge shares a sense of the greater community and a positive self-identity, enhanced by the spirit of volunteerism and philanthropic giving of its residents and businesses. Community-based organizations provide quality services to all in need. The most vulnerable populations in the community are respected, empowered and supported. Racial, ethnic and other differences no longer divide but enrich, and all people are accepted and integrated into every aspect of the community.

METHODOLOGY

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation began CityStats in 2008 with a wide call for public meetings to create an indicators project. Our goal was to measure East Baton Rouge's strengths and weaknesses, a means to guide our fund donors and the Foundation's efforts to create a better, more equitable EBR.

Three times in 2008, hundreds of residents joined us to learn about indicators, define visions for the community and pick indicators that could propel Baton Rouge to a higher quality of life. A veteran from the Jacksonville Community Council refined the indicators, making sure they matched the desired outcomes defined at the community meetings.

With indicators in hand, the Baton Rouge Area Foundation hired the Baton Rouge Area Chamber to gather data for the reports. The indicators are from government agencies and civic groups; a poll conducted by the LSU Public Policy Research Lab provides about half the indicators in the report.

KEY QUESTIONS

Why an indicators project?

In 2007, the Foundation began exploring indicators as a means to improve the quality of life in East Baton Rouge. We discovered a growing number of indicators projects across the country and world, and found some had changed their communities for the better. Our research led us to believe an indicators project could make East Baton Rouge a better, more equitable community.

Why only East Baton Rouge Parish?

The indicators only reflect East Baton Rouge because the region's parishes are not alike. Measuring regionally would also obscure what is happening in East Baton Rouge.

What factors are important to know?

- » The data provide only numerical indicators of the quality of life. Some important dimensions of the quality of life are not included because quantitative indicators are not available.
- » The indicators do not, by themselves, explain why trends move as they do or what should be done to make improvements. They provide the information needed to generate those conversations and encourage community involvement in improving trends.
- » For more information about the indicators, please contact the Baton Rouge Area Foundation at (225) 387-6126 or email mverma@braf.org.

What are quality of life indicators?

Indicators are quantitative measures of the quality of community life. Indicators that are meaningful and useful reflect a combination of idealism (what we would like to measure) and pragmatism (what we are able to measure). Taken as a set, CityStats indicators provide a road map for the community, showing where we have been, where we are now and what critical areas need attention if we are to arrive where we want to go.

For the purposes of this effort, "quality of life" refers to a feeling of well-being, fulfillment or satisfaction resulting from factors in the external environments. For many people, the quality of close interpersonal relationships, rather than the external environments, is the primary factor in determining happiness. Nevertheless, this project concentrates on the external environments, examining the quality of life from a community perspective.

CityStats indicators are in nine categories: Culture and Recreation, Economy, Education, Environment, Health, Infrastructure, Public Safety, Government/Civic Participation and Social Well-being. Much of the data are ob-

tained from the records and documents of various public and private organizations. We have provided the most updated data for each indicator as of April 2012, when this report was going to press.

An annual opinion survey provides the remaining data. This random telephone survey was conducted for the project by the LSU Public Policy Research Lab. The survey measures citizen opinions and reported behaviors on various quality of life questions. The survey is representative of East Baton Rouge Parish. The sample for this year's survey is 430 land lines and 107 cell phones for a total of 537. The margin of error is plus or minus 4.2%. The poll was conducted in February 2012.

What are criteria for choosing the indicators?

The quality-of-life indicators have been selected and are maintained based on the following criteria.

- » **PURPOSE:** The indicator is both meaningful (it provides information valuable for community members to understanding important aspects of their quality of life) and useful (it offers a sense of direction for additional research planning and action toward positive community changes and a means of assessing progress toward these desired changes).
- » **IMPORTANCE:** The indicator measures an aspect of the quality of life which a diverse group of people in the community would agree is important in relation to the priorities in the community's shared vision or goals.
- » **VALIDITY AND ACCURACY:** If the indicator trend line moves upward or downward, a diverse group of people in the community would agree on whether the quality of life is improving or declining.
- » **RELEVANCE:** The indicator measures an aspect of the community's quality of life that the community can improve through public decision making and action at the community level.
- » **RESPONSIVENESS:** The indicator trend line responds relatively quickly and noticeably to real changes in the quality of life.
- » **ANTICIPATION:** The indicator anticipates future trends rather than reacting to past trends. A "leading" indicator is generally more useful than a "lagging" indicator because it allows a proactive response.
- » **UNDERSTANDABILITY:** The indicator measures an aspect of the community's quality of life in a way that most citizens can easily understand and interpret in relation to their own lives.
- » **AVAILABILITY AND TIMELINESS:** Data for the indicator are readily available and affordably accessible on an annual basis from a credible public or private source.
- » **STABILITY AND RELIABILITY:** Data for the indicator are collected, compiled and calculated in the same way each year.
- » **ASSET ORIENTATION:** Where possible, the indicator measures a positive aspect of the community's quality of life (to focus on community assets) and a trend line increase clearly denotes an improvement in the quality of life.

INDICATORS INDEX

CULTURE AND RECREATION

Library circulation—Number of library books and other materials checked out annually through the East Baton Rouge Library system.

Library PC use—Number of logins per year at East Baton Rouge Library system.

Digital downloads—Number of digital downloads of books, audio and video from the East Baton Rouge Library system.

Total attendance at cultural facilities—Combined annual total attendance at the Louisiana Art and Science Museum, USS KIDD, LSU Museum of Art, Baton Rouge Zoo and Manship Theatre.

Attendance at cultural events—Percent in poll saying they attended Live After Five, FestForAll, Mardi Gras parade, Baton Rouge Blues Festival, college sporting event.

BREC trails—Miles of trails in the BREC parks system. The trails are mostly within the parks.

BREC park acreage—Number of acres owned by the parks system.

ECONOMY

East Baton Rouge unemployment rate—Average unemployment in Baton Rouge during each year.

Net job growth—Total number of jobs in East Baton Rouge and increase in number of jobs year over year.

Adjudicated properties—Number of properties controlled by city-parish government for not paying back taxes.

Net migration—The difference between the number of people entering and leaving the parish.

Patents issued—The total number of patents issued to residents of East Baton Rouge.

Median family income—Median is the amount that divides the income distribution into two equal groups, half with income above and half with income below. Family is a household related through blood, marriage or adoption.

Residential building permits—Total number of permits issued by East Baton Rouge government to build houses in each year.

Future expectation—In survey, percentage of respondents who either expect their standard of living to improve, stay the same or decline in the next year.

EDUCATION

Population with a bachelor's degree—The percentage of East Baton Rouge residents who are 25 and older with at least a bachelor's degree.

Population with a high school diploma—The percentage of East Baton Rouge residents who are 25 and older with at least a high school degree.

High school dropout rate—Percentage of public school students in 9th through 12th grades who dropped out of school during the year.

High school graduation rate—Percentage of 12th graders who graduated in four years.

School enrollment—Total enrollment in public school systems and all private schools.

Methods for improving education—In survey, the percentage saying which methods would be most effective in improving education—strengthen public education; create more independent school districts; provide more alternatives, such as charter schools.

LEAP test passage rate—Percentage passing the state standardized test in fourth and eighth grades.

ENVIRONMENT

Litter as a problem—From the survey, residents rate litter as a problem on a five-point scale.

Curbside residential recycling—Tonnage of recycled material picked up curbside from homes.

Total residential recycling—The amount of all waste recycled by homes. It includes yard, batteries, compost, paint and more.

Toxic air pollutants—Amount of air pollutants released in EBR under a definition by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Total toxic releases—Nearly 650 chemicals and chemical categories that over 23,000 industrial and other facilities manage through disposal or other releases, recycling, energy recovery or treatment. The data are collected by the EPA from industries, including manufacturing, metal and coal mining, electric utilities, commercial hazardous waste treatment and other industrial sectors.

GOVERNMENT/CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Pace of progress—Opinion in the CityStats survey of the pace of progress in EBR.

What residents want—In an open-ended question in the survey, residents say what they want from government in their own neighborhoods.

Satisfaction with current neighborhood—How satisfied or dissatisfied residents are with the immediate area where they live. The rating is from the CityStats survey.

Perception of library system—On a five-point scale in the CityStats survey, East Baton Rouge residents graded the service provided by the library system.

Perception of public schools—On a five-point scale in the CityStats survey, East Baton Rouge residents graded service provided by public schools.

Perception of BREC, the parks system—On a five-point scale in the CityStats survey, East Baton Rouge residents graded the service provided by the parks system.

Perception of public works department—On a five-point scale in the CityStats survey, East Baton Rouge residents graded the service provided by the public works department.

Perception of services of fire department—On a five-point scale in the CityStats survey, East Baton Rouge residents graded the service provided by the fire department.

Perception of services of police and sheriff's office—On a five-point scale in the CityStats survey, East Baton Rouge residents graded the service provided by the police and sheriff's offices.

Volunteering—In CityStats poll, the percentage who said they volunteered with a local organization without compensation.

Political influence—From the poll, residents' belief of their influence—or lack thereof—over elected officials.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Average commute times—Time it takes for East Baton Rouge residents to get to work.

Airport use—Number of passengers to and from Baton Rouge Metro Airport.

Average weekly ridership for bus system—Number of weekly riders using Capital Area Transit System.

Frequency of bus ridership—How often residents rode the bus. The result is from our CityStats survey.

Average weekly bus mileage—Number of miles driven by vehicles operated by the Capital Area Transit System.

Widen I-10—In survey, two questions about whether the state should widen I-10 near the Perkins Road overpass.

Tolls on interstate—In survey, whether people support or oppose tolls on interstates at entrance of parishes, with the money to be used for road improvements.

Gasoline taxes—In survey, whether the state should raise gasoline taxes to fund new roads, road upgrades and other transportation improvements.

HEALTH

Newborns with healthy birth weight—Percent of babies weighing more than 5 pounds, 8 ounces at birth, which is considered a healthy weight.

Mortality rates—Deaths per thousand parish residents from cancer, heart disease and diabetes.

Infant mortality rate—Number of deaths per thousand of infants under 12 months of age.

New cases of sexually transmitted diseases—Number of new cases of HIV, syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Victim of crime—In survey, the percentage who said they had money or property stolen, property vandalized, home broken into, car stolen, or had been the victim of a personal assault or attack in the past year.

Violent crimes—Total violent offenses in East Baton Rouge, as reported by LSU, Southern, Baker, Zachary and Baton Rouge police departments and the sheriff's office.

Nonviolent crimes—Total non-violent offenses in East Baton Rouge, as reported by LSU, Southern, Baker, Zachary and Baton Rouge police departments and the sheriff's office.

Total crimes—Total of violent and non-violent crimes.

Perception of personal safety in neighborhood—In survey, whether respondents feel safe walking alone at night in their neighborhoods.

Concern about criminal activity versus a year ago—Whether CityStats survey respondents are more or less concerned about a crime committed against them or a family member versus a year earlier.

Victim of crime in past year—From the CityStats survey, percentage of residents who said they had money or property stolen, property vandalized, home broken into, car stolen or had been the victim of a personal assault or attack in the past year.

Number of traffic accidents

SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Gay marriage—In survey, the percentage who support or oppose the law recognizing same-sex marriage as valid and constitutional.

Racism as a problem—In the CityStats survey, residents were asked to rate racism as a problem on a five-point scale.

Poverty rates—Percentage of people living in poverty under the federal definition. Federal thresholds for poverty include age of family members and size of family.

Couldn't pay for food within past 12 months—In CityStats survey, residents were asked whether there was a time in the previous 12 months when they didn't have enough money to pay for food.

Couldn't pay for housing within last 12 months—From CityStats survey, percentage who said they didn't have enough money to pay for housing.

Incidents of child abuse—Child abuse incidents reported to authorities.

Teen birth rate—The percentage of teen girls—15- to 19-year-olds—giving birth in the year.

Animal euthanization—Number of animals put down at EBR Animal Shelter in a given year.

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