METHODOLOGY

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation began CityStats in 2008 with a 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—if acted upon—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. The Foundation hires the Baton Rouge Area Chamber to gather the public data in this report. LSU’s Public Policy Research Lab conducts the poll that makes up the rest of the data.

The survey is representative of East Baton Rouge Parish. Results were weighted by age, race and gender to more closely resemble the demographic breakdowns of the most recently available census data on East Baton Rouge.

The survey was taken from April 13 to May 2, 2016. The total sample includes 530 randomly selected adult residents of the parish. Of the 530 surveyed, 271 were from landlines and 259 were from cellphones. The sample has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.3%.
Baton Rouge CityStats tracks the quality of life in East Baton Rouge, using more than 70 indicators to do so. The project is a roadmap for community improvement, telling residents 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 Baton Rouge Area 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 Foundation has issued this report each year since 2009. This year, we have added an online site to provide more updated information during the year and also to share ideas and other civic reports. The site is at BRCityStats.org.

The CityStats project is underwritten by the Newton B. Thomas Support Foundation, which is a nonprofit that works in concert with the Foundation. We contract with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber to gather public statistics and with the LSU Public Policy Research Lab to conduct the companion survey.

The Foundation and its fund donors use the indicators to assist in decision-making about grants and to help choose and guide projects. We hope other civic groups and policymakers use this report to work with us to make East Baton Rouge a better, more equitable place.
The Baton Rouge Area Foundation unites human and financial resources to enhance the quality of life in South Louisiana. To achieve our mission, we...

> Serve our fund donors to build the assets that drive initiatives and solutions,

> Engage community leaders to develop appropriate responses to emerging opportunities and challenges,

> Partner with entities from our service area, as well as with other community foundations, in order to leverage our collective resources and create the capacity to be a stimulus of positive regional change,

> Evaluate our work and share the results with stakeholders.
Things are changing in Baton Rouge, but not fast enough. That’s what residents tell our pollsters. Progress in the parish is too slow, and the people feel they have little or no influence over their elected leaders.

Citizens still support the death penalty, but a majority no longer opposes legalizing marijuana. A big portion of the population says their neighborhoods are improving, even though crime and litter remain a problem. They’re willing to vote for a one-time property tax if it will preserve and enhance the University/City Park Lakes.

Those are a few of the findings included in this year’s review of the quality of life in East Baton Rouge. The Foundation has produced this annual report for eight years, using more than 70 indicators to chart progress here.

CityStats reliably tells us where we are as a parish, how far we’ve come, and where we need to go.

It’s a way of checking our vital signs. CityStats collects hard evidence to measure the feelings, beliefs and attitudes driving the community so that everyone, from civic leaders to individual voters, can make informed decisions about how to make Baton Rouge a better place to live.

This year’s report contains its share of good news. The local economy is doing well, adding jobs and attracting more people to live in the parish. Incomes here continue to climb while unemployment declines. However, as in too many other places around the nation, the wage gap here remains a nagging problem, dividing us along racial lines. For every $1 earned by whites in EBR, Asians earn 65 cents, Hispanics earn 57 cents and African Americans earn 46 cents.

CityStats paints a complex portrait of who we are, and, every year, the numbers offer disappointments right alongside signs of hope. Transportation is a good example. People here count mostly on their cars to move around Baton Rouge, and that’s one reason our roads remain clogged. On the other hand, our poll indicates that residents are ready to consider other transportation choices. Nearly 4 out of 10 might ride their bikes to work—if it were safe to do so. Thirty percent would be interested in signing up for bike-share programs, with the greatest desire for bike hubs located downtown, around the lakes and in the City Park area. So the Foundation is exploring bike share for Baton Rouge, and the Downtown Development District is building a safe cycling route between downtown and City Park.

Other findings are more grimly stark. Already twice the national average, the infant mortality rate in EBR rose again last year. According to EBR Coroner Beau Clark’s staff, the increase in deaths is due to sleeping parents and other custodians accidentally suffocating their children. In some other cities, infant mortality rates have declined, thanks to campaigns to alert parents to the dangers of sleeping alongside their babies. Our community must follow their lead.

Still controversial in a few quarters, one of the world’s biggest questions has been settled among a majority of minds in East Baton Rouge. Sixty-five percent of residents believe the earth is warming, up from 62% last year. The only group that remains sharply divided on the issue is Republicans, where 39% side with the scientific community on global warming, while 47% insist it’s not so.

We hope you’ll take the time to learn the facts about your community that CityStats reveals, and then we hope you’ll share it with others. The data here assists our donors in choosing their priorities and in making decisions about the grants they give. It also helps us pick which projects to pursue and how best to tackle them.

Let me close by thanking Newton B. Thomas. His nonprofit, a supporting organization of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, underwrites CityStats’ data collection and related research projects.

S. Dennis Blunt, Chair
Baton Rouge Area Foundation
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 Culture and Recreation: East Baton Rouge appreciates its heritage with all of its character, charm and cultural traditions, and celebrates the joy 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 recreational activities, from youth sports to hunting to fishing.

How EBR is doing: The amount of park space and trails didn’t rise last year, but residents of East Baton Rouge would support a property tax to preserve and enhance the LSU/University lakes. Residents flocked in greater numbers to the libraries, but attendance at cultural events was flat, and increased only slightly at museums and other cultural facilities.

2015 Attendance at Cultural FACILITIES

Identified facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BR ZOO</td>
<td>223,957</td>
<td>Down 9%, lowest since at least 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISIANA ART &amp; SCIENCE MUSEUM</td>
<td>175,195</td>
<td>Up 6%, highest since 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USS KIDD</td>
<td>86,293</td>
<td>Up 86% because of more programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANSHIP THEATRE</td>
<td>35,549</td>
<td>Down 16%, reverses 2 annual increases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSU MUSEUM OF ART</td>
<td>17,713</td>
<td>Down 10%, reverses 2 annual increases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL ATTENDANCE 538,707

Up 3%, but visits dropped at 3 of 5 facilities
2015 Attendance at Cultural EVENTS
Percentage who attended last year.
CityStats survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>2015 Attendance</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Sport or Tailgate</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>DOWN 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mardi Gras Parades</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>UNCHANGED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live After Five Concerts</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>UNCHANGED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BR Blues Festival</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>UP 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fest for All</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>UP 15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Biggest group attending:

- **College Sport or Tailgate**: $100,000+ income
- **Mardi Gras Parade**: 18-29 year olds
- **Live After Five Concerts**: $50K-$99K income
- **BR Blues Festival**: Democrats
- **Fest for All**: College graduates
CULTURE/RECREATION
UNIVERSITY/CITY PARK LAKES

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation led a master plan to save the University/City Park Lakes.

In the survey, 51% had heard about the master plan. The lakes need to be dredged so they won’t return to swampland. The plan recommends using dredged materials to build paths, promenades and parks. (BatonRougeLakes.org).

53%
Would vote for one-time property tax to improve the lakes. 38% were opposed. About 10% didn’t know.

Of those who said they would vote for the tax, this is how much they would pay each year for a decade.
Not shown: “ Didn’t answer”

6,624
Acres of public parks BREC
The number doesn’t change much, as BREC is not buying land for parks. Instead, the agency wants to sell or donate some smaller parks while improving others. By comparison, Baton Rouge has less parkland than most places its size.

39.5
Miles of public trails BREC
A small decline of 2.5 miles to an already small amount of trails. On a bright note, several trails and paths are under construction and more are planned.
Most support for a lakes property tax:
South and southeast EBR (59%), and among people earning $50,000 to $99,000 (60%).

Most opposition: North and northeast EBR (53% against). Conservatives were split over the tax (46% for, 47% against); liberals support it (60% yes, 26% no).
CULTURE/RECREATION
LIBRARY USE

Baton Rouge, you love your libraries. Residents use their libraries more and more each year, and they rate the library system as the top public agency. See the Government section of this report for agency ratings.

**Total circulation**  *EBR Library*

Circulation grew 8% in 2015 to the highest level in history.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2,340,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2,338,802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2,434,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2,563,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2,761,471</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Children’s circulation** 12%

**Tweens & Teens together** 5%

**Teens alone** 7%

**Boomer circulation** < 7%

**Adult (19-54)** Same

**Digital downloads**  *EBR Library*

Downloads of audio, books, magazines and video files soared 24% in 2015, but growth was slower than before, when downloads were more than doubling each year. Research shows that people—even the digital generation—continue to prefer reading fiction on paper.

**Computer logins**

1.73 million

Up 21%
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 Economy:
East Baton Rouge has a broad, diversified economy providing jobs at high wages for its residents. The region supports and retains an 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.

How EBR is doing: The economy is doing well, but not everyone is participating in the prosperity. There were more jobs, and more people moved into the parish than left it in 2015. The unemployment rate declined, but incomes were flat and income equality is a very big problem, more so in EBR than in most places in the country.

Net job growth U.S. Census Bureau
More jobs in 2015 continued a string of three years. There was a slight dip in 2011 and a larger one back in 2009 during the recession; otherwise, Baton Rouge’s employment rises steadily.

At year-end 2015, 226,426 people worked in the parish.

Unemployment rate (2015) U.S. Census Bureau
Decrease from 5.8% the year before and a high of 7.6% in both 2010 and 2011 during this decade. EBR has a more diverse economy than the state as a whole and is the center of a growing metropolitan region; the parish benefits from it.

5.4%

Net migration (2014) U.S. Census Bureau
Net migration was a big concern for EBR. But the number of people moving into the parish versus migrating out has been positive for four of five years. Migration in 2014 was the second-highest since 2007. Strong employment numbers partly cause net migration to rise.

4,328
## ECONOMY
### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2014)

**U.S. Census Bureau**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change since 2013</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>-2%/$88,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARISH</td>
<td>0/$63,558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIAN</td>
<td>-12%/$57,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISPANIC</td>
<td>0/$51,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICAN AMERICAN</td>
<td>0/$41,029</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INCOME INEQUALITY

For every dollar earned by a white household in 2014, amounts earned by other households:
- Asian: 65 cents
- Hispanic: 57 cents
- African American: 46 cents

### Residential building permits

**EBR government**

The parish issued 25% more building permits for houses in 2015 than in 2014.
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 Education: East Baton Rouge celebrates its wealth of educational assets. Its schools provide high-quality education and prepare students for a lifetime of success and social responsibility. Children arrive at school ready to learn, perform well in school and continue on to higher education or other community opportunities to learn. Parents value their children’s education, and the community values and supports local educators.

Education and training institutions provide Baton Rouge’s adults with opportunities for continued education, including literacy training, developing workforce skills or enjoying lifelong learning.

How EBR is doing: More residents have high school degrees than ever before, but too many schoolchildren are not starting with an advantage: nearly half are not enrolled in pre-K. Residents are somewhat fuzzy about the performance of charter schools. More charters are on the way, making the EBR school system nervous about its finances because funding follows students.

**CHARTER SCHOOLS**

CityStats survey

In the first time we asked this question, a plurality doesn’t know how to rate charter schools, an indication they don’t have information, even though the state provides letter grades. But those with an opinion about charters were divided, equally believing charter schools are “poor” or “excellent.”

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means the quality of services provides is poor and 5 means excellent, please rate the overall quality of charter schools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>EXCELLENT/10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>/3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>/18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>/12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>POOR/9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DON’T KNOW/39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education attainment (2014)**

La. Dept. of Education

The good news: percentage of students earning a high school diploma—whether they did it in four years or returned for a GED—has risen from 57% in 2009 to 66% in 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Dropped out of high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66%</td>
<td>Graduated high school in four years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89%</td>
<td>Have a high school diploma (all residents over 25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34%</td>
<td>Have a bachelor’s degree (all residents over 25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

La. Dept. of Education

2015 was the first year the state administered the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers test, which is based on Common Core standards, so comparisons to previous years are irrelevant. Below are the results for the PARCC only.

4TH GRADE (% passing test)

ENGLISH 69%
MATH 58%
SCIENCE 87%
SOCIAL STUDIES 84%

8TH GRADE (% passing test)

ENGLISH 65%
MATH 53%
SCIENCE 74%
SOCIAL STUDIES 76%

Pre-K enrollment (2014)

U.S. Census Bureau

Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds in EBR enrolled in pre-K, which is widely perceived to improve outcomes, particularly among poor children. The percentage for 2014 didn’t change from 2013, but has declined from 66% in 2005. State and local agencies don’t provide enough money for pre-K.

Student enrollment (K-12)

La. Dept. of Education

Enrollment in EBR public schools has been relatively flat for four years, but new charter schools could lure thousands of public school students in coming years, taking millions of dollars away from EBR public schools.
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 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 responsible behavior. The air, water and land resources of East Baton Rouge are clean and support the area’s unique ecosystems, and are open for local residents to experience and explore.

How EBR is doing: A greater percentage of EBR residents want the government to do more to regulate emissions that cause global warming. They continue to believe that EBR has a high litter rate, but they don’t recycle any more than they used to. Total pollution spewed into the air is down, but higher than in most years of the first decade of the century.

GLOBAL WARMING
CityStats survey
It seems settled for now. A majority of EBR residents—and across almost every demographic—believe in global warming. Only Republicans—39% yes, 47% no—are divided on the issue.

Do you believe we are currently in a period of global warming? Percent who said yes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Should the government do more or less to regulate emissions that some people believe are responsible for global warming? For more government regulation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Toxic air pollutants (in pounds)
La. Dept. of Environmental Quality
Total pollutants in the air declined but were higher than in 2011 and most of the first decade of the century.

4,552,942
-4%

In an unrelated but telling national poll by Gallup in spring 2016, 55% said the effects of global warming are already happening.
3.2

ENVIRONMENT
LITTERING AS A PROBLEM
CityStats survey

On a five-point scale where 5 is a “serious problem” and 1 is “not a problem” at all.

41% of the polled responded with a “4” or “5.” The results were about level with last year’s. A big group of people believe this parish is littered with garbage and is not improving.

By area (those who rated litter at 5 only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South/Southeast</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North/Northeast</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Residential curbside recycling (in tons) EBR Department of Public Works

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>15,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>15,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>15,447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>15,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>15,211</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 Government and Civic Participation: East Baton Rouge’s strength is in its people, and its diverse and spirited residents are actively engaged in the governance of their community. Governing bodies throughout the region work together for the common good and are responsive to local needs. Baton Rouge retains the connectedness of a small-town feel while planning together for a smart-growing region. Local government is open, inclusive and ethical and provides high-quality services for all residents.

How EBR is doing: The library, once again, is doing very well. Residents rate it the best public agency. Residents remain impatient with the pace of progress in Baton Rouge and a majority said their elected officials are unresponsive. On a positive note, more believe their neighborhood is becoming a better place to live.

PACE OF PROGRESS
CityStats survey
Feel that the pace of progress and change in Baton Rouge is...

Progress too slow by political affiliation...

Political Ideology
CityStats survey
We asked people to identify themselves on the political spectrum. The results are mostly unchanged from 2015.

LARGEST GROUP THAT ANSWERED “VERY CONSERVATIVE”:
People with less than a high school education—24%

LARGEST GROUP THAT ANSWERED “VERY LIBERAL”:
People who live in the city—8%

LARGEST GROUP THAT ANSWERED “MODERATE”:
College educated—38%

4% VERY LIBERAL
32% MODERATE
29% CONSERVATIVE
14% VERY CONSERVATIVE
43% INDEPENDENTS
73% DEMOCRATS
51% REPUBLICANS
GOVERNMENT/CIVIC PARTICIPATION

INFLUENCE OVER ELECTED OFFICIALS

CityStats survey

As residents of East Baton Rouge, what level of influence do you feel ordinary citizens have on leaders in your city-parish government?

51% of surveyed residents said they have little or no influence over their elected leaders, about the same as 2015.

Satisfaction with current neighborhood

CityStats survey

Little difference among the demographics on this question: 46% of whites and 49% of African Americans said their neighborhoods were getting better. The result is also comparable to last year, but higher than in 2014, when 42% of the respondents said their neighborhoods had improved.

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?

48% BETTER
26% WORSE
26% NEITHER
Rate that Agency
CityStats survey
Residents rated the overall quality of services provided by public agencies. The ratings are mostly unchanged from 2015.

BREAKDOWN: Agencies rated “excellent,” or 5, on a five-point scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Department</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BREC</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police &amp; EBR Sheriff</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPW</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBRPSS</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who rates BEST
- Library: < High school degree
- Fire Department: < High school degree
- BREC: < High school degree
- Police & EBR Sheriff: < High school degree
- DPW: Under $25,000 income
- EBRPSS: Under $25,000 income

Who rates WORST
- Library: Not really anybody
- Fire Department: Not really anybody
- BREC: Not really anybody
- Police & EBR Sheriff: Under $25,000 income
- DPW: People over 65
- EBRPSS: < High school degree
GOVERNMENT/CIVIC PARTICIPATION
LEGALIZING AND DECRIMINALIZING MARIJUANA

CityStats survey

Four states and the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana for recreational use. Louisiana lawmakers amended the state’s existing medical marijuana law, expanding the list of eligible conditions for cannabis treatment.

Do you support or oppose legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use?

For the first time, more people in the survey are for legalizing marijuana than against it. The number of people who don’t take a side has grown from less than 10% to 28%.

72%
Say that people convicted of possessing small amounts of marijuana should not serve jail time. People agreed on this position across all demographics, including self-identified conservatives (63%) and Republicans (66%).
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 Health: East Baton Rouge residents live healthy, active and productive lives, and understand what they need to do to take care of their bodies and their wellness across their full lifespan. All residents have access to first-class health care, including mental health assistance and a Level One trauma center; preventive health care and good behavioral choices result in lower rates of preventable disease and mortality.

How EBR is doing: EBR is sick. The parish’s infant mortality rate is twice the national average, mostly a consequence of babies being killed when their parents accidentally suffocate them while sleeping. The rate of transmission for sexually transmitted diseases spiked in 2015 and the obesity rate is 33%, among the highest in the nation.

**INFANT MORTALITY RATE**

*La. Dept. of Health and Hospitals*

Baton Rouge’s infant mortality rate was already about twice the national average in 2014. The news got worse in 2015, when 13 of every 1,000 infants died before their first birthday. The number was the highest recorded in a decade. Coroner Beau Clark’s office says the top reason for infant mortality is children being accidentally suffocated by their sleeping parents or guardians.

**Newborns with healthy birth weight, compared to national average of 92%**

**87%**

**New cases of sexually transmitted diseases (2015)**

*Louisiana Office of Public Health*

Cases of sexually transmitted diseases spiked in 2015 after being lower three consecutive years. Though higher, newly diagnosed HIV cases are lower than earlier in the decade, when there were nearly 260 cases per year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Cases 2015</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>226/6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syphilis</td>
<td>108/50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonorrhea</td>
<td>1,260/81%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlamydia</td>
<td>3,346/29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HEALTH
HEALTH

DEATHS BY DISEASE
FOR EVERY 1,000 PARISH RESIDENTS (2015)

La. Dept. of Public Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEART DISEASE</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANCERS</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>NO CHANGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIABETES</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>NO CHANGE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent who are considered obese in EBR, up from 28% in 2010. LOUISIANA’S RATE OF 35% IS THE FOURTH-HIGHEST IN THE NATION. U.S Census County Rankings; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

OBESITY

33%
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 Infrastructure:
The region enjoys a superior multimodal transportation system, with excellent infrastructure that meets the needs of local residents, businesses, travelers and visitors. Public transit and green transportation are preferred options for all residents, and the community is pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly. The physical infrastructure of the community is able to meet resident needs. Stormwater and related systems are in place to prevent public health emergencies and flooding.

How EBR is doing: Moving people around Baton Rouge has not improved. CATS is struggling and the airport is losing passengers; it also takes a bit longer each year to drive to work. Baton Rouge doesn’t have many transportation choices, but the people who live here want them. A good percentage would use bike share and consider riding a bike to work if it was safe to do so, and even more would consider buying an electric car if their office had charging stations. But a strong majority don’t trust a computer to take the wheel of their car.
INFRASTRUCTURE
DRIVING TO WORK
U.S. Census Bureau

23.8 minutes
Commute time to work within the parish in 2014 was a few seconds more than in 2013.

BICYCLING
CityStats survey

Riding bike to work
39%
Would consider biking to work if Baton Rouge had bike paths and dedicated lanes on work routes, up from 37% in the 2015 CityStats survey.

Baton Rouge Airport total passengers
Baton Rouge Metro Airport
Down fourth year in a row and a total of 9% in that time. Planes with more seats means fewer flights and options for travelers, who are darting to fly from nearby airports, particularly New Orleans for nonstop routes and sometimes lower fares.

753,443
Bike Sharing
CityStats survey

Bike share systems let people use bikes for an annual fee of $55 to $90 and an hourly fee of $1 to $4. The first hour of each ride is usually free. Members pick up and deposit bikes at hubs. The Baton Rouge Area Foundation and local leaders are attempting to introduce bike share in EBR. Ahead of that, we asked a few questions in the CityStats survey.

Would use a bike share system

30%

How would you use bike share?

- **Recreation and exercise**: 97%
- **Run errands**: 55%
- **Ride to work**: 55%

Where do you want bike share hubs?

- **Downtown**: 49%
- **LSU**: 43%
- **City Park**: 32%
- **University Lakes**: 30%
- **Mid City**: 25%
- **Southern University**: 18%
- **Around hospitals in Essen/Bluebonnet corridor**: 17%
**INFRASTRUCTURE ELECTRIC CARS**

*CityStats survey*

Tesla has roused interest in electric cars, promising that its proposed Model 3 will roll for 200 miles on a charge and start at a $35,000 base price. Tesla drew more than 300,000 preorders for the Model 3 in the first month. Delivery date is projected in late 2017.

**25%**

EBR residents are interested in buying an electric car within five years.

**39%**

Are interested in buying an electric car if their place of work offered charging stations.

**Self-driving cars** *CityStats survey*

Several major car manufacturers and technology companies, such as Google, are testing cars that use a computer to drive themselves. Would you ride in a car that was driven by a computer?

**NO** 66%

**YES** 28%

**DON'T KNOW** 6%

A strong majority of people don’t trust computers to do the motoring. One person in the CityStats sample said government operatives would manipulate the cars to some dark end.

**Transportation alternatives** *CityStats survey*

Bike paths and on-demand transit were favored by people who are 18-29. About 25% of them chose those two options. Zipcar is offering car share in town in limited areas and expects to expand. Other companies should follow. Uber is testing ride share—a version of carpooling—in some markets.

Which one of the following transportation improvements would benefit you the most in traveling around town?

(Roads were not included as a choice because we wanted to test other options. Respondents could only pick one.)

- **ON-DEMAND TRANSIT** 17%
- **BIKE PATHS** 13%
- **CAR SHARE** 12%
- **RIDE SHARE** 6%
- **WALKING PATHS** 3%
- **BIKE SHARE** 1%

**42%**

CHOSE NONE
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 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 with law enforcement 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 productive members of the community. The region is prepared for disasters and responds quickly and effectively to all emergency situations.

How EBR is doing: Our poll shows that residents of EBR believe too many are in prison and that people with mental illness should get treatment. Security officials report that nonviolent crime continues to decline and our poll shows that fewer people were victims of crime last year. Still, the poll shows that more people were worried about becoming crime victims.

INCARCERATION CityStats survey

Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate in the world. Yes, the world. The state leads the nation with 1,420 of every 100,000 adult males in jail. Maine is lowest at 350. The mood among Louisiana politicians, both on the left and right, is to reduce incarceration. They have the support of EBR residents, as indicated in the question below.

Do you think there are too many people in prison in Louisiana, not enough people in prison, or is the number of people in prison about right?

Said “too many” in jail, by race:

- 69% of whites
- 43% of African Americans

By political ideology:

- 80% of liberals
- 61% of moderates
- 45% of conservatives
PUBLIC SAFETY
TREATMENT VERSUS IMPRISONMENT

CityStats survey

Jails have become de facto asylums. Big cuts in mental health spending are the reason public security officers have no option but to jail people with mental illness who have committed minor crimes. The Foundation and public safety officials are collaborating to open a treatment center as an alternative. Residents are in favor of the idea.

63%
“strongly agree” to shifting money from incarceration to treatment of low-risk, nonviolent people with mental illness.

- 71% of Democrats strongly support shifting money to treatment
- 52% of Republicans strongly support shifting money to treatment
- 59% of independents strongly support shifting money to treatment

Death penalty
CityStats survey

The majority of U.S. states—27, to be exact—have either abolished the death penalty or simply have not carried out executions for a decade or more. Executions are rare in Louisiana. But EBR residents are for the death penalty.

Some states have abolished the death penalty. Should Louisiana get rid of the death penalty in favor of life imprisonment?

- 38% YES
- 51% NO
- 11% DON’T KNOW

Get rid of death penalty...

// by race
- 53% WHITES
- 26% AFRICAN AMERICANS

// by ideology
- 62% LIBERALS
- 31% MODERATES
- 30% CONSERVATIVES

// by age
- 18-29 36%
- 30-49 41%
- 50-64 29%
- 65+ 48%
**CRIME FEARS**

**Worries about crime**
*CityStats survey*

Are you more or less concerned about a crime being committed against you or a family member than you were a year ago?  
(Percentages are a total of “much more concerned” and “somewhat more concerned.”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Most worried about becoming crime victims**  
(Percentages are a total of “much more concerned”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages 50-64</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; High School Degree</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; $25,000 Income</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Victimization**
*CityStats survey*

Last year, 22% told our pollster they had a crime committed against them in the previous 12 months. The percentage was the lowest since we began CityStats. The survey question defines crime as money or stolen property, vandalized property, home break-in, car theft, personal assault or attack.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Murders (2015)**
EBR security officials targeted gangs; the murder rate dropped from 81 in 2012 to 63 in 2014. The number of people slain in 2015 rose again, but not because of gang activity. This time, officials blame drug activity and a greater number of multiple homicides for the rise.
PUBLIC SAFETY

CRIME CityStats survey

GOOD NEWS: Total crime has been steadily declining for more than 10 years. Offenses did rise slightly in 2015 because of an uptick in nonviolent crimes reported by the EBR Sheriffs Office, which polices outside the city limits. But violent crimes declined to the lowest number since in this century. The same trend has been occurring across the nation.

Crime stats for Baker, LSU and Southern police departments are not included except for murder. The three departments did not report in time for publication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Violent Crime</th>
<th>Nonviolent Crime</th>
<th>Total Crime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3,172</td>
<td>2011/20,954</td>
<td>24,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2,996</td>
<td>2012/20,655</td>
<td>23,651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2,619</td>
<td>2013/19,010</td>
<td>21,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2,627</td>
<td>2014/17,735</td>
<td>20,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2,474</td>
<td>2015/18,130</td>
<td>20,604</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of EBR traffic accidents (2015)

The second-highest number in a decade, surpassed only by the 25,261 accidents in 2013. Cheaper gas and higher employment translated into more driving, which caused more accidents, says the National Safety Council. East Baton Rouge, though, bucked the national increase in traffic fatalities. EBR had 31 road deaths in 2015, down from 51 in 2014 and the lowest in more than a decade.
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 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.

How EBR is doing: The percentage of people who couldn’t afford food, health care and housing declined in 2016. Expansion of Medicaid this year should reduce the number of uninsured in next year’s survey. Incidents of child abuse rose for a second year in a row, while poverty—the source of most ills—remains too high in the parish, particularly among African Americans and children.

INCIDENTS OF CHILD ABUSE (2015)
La. Department of Social Services

Reported incidents of child abuse in the parish rose for the fourth consecutive year.

Money for necessities
La. Dept. of Social Services

Having enough money for food and health care is not a problem among only the poor. Of respondents earning $25,000 to $49,999, 31% couldn’t afford food sometime in the previous year, 34% couldn’t pay for health care and nearly 20% didn’t have money for housing. The health care number should decline considerably with the expected expansion of Medicaid this year. In the survey, we asked respondents whether they could afford to pay for necessities in the previous 12 months.
Poverty is the underlying cause of many troubles, including school performance, obesity, heart disease and crime. In EBR in 2015, 83,726 people lived below the federal poverty line. Year after year, the poverty rate in EBR doesn't fluctuate much at all. Seniors have a lower poverty rate because most receive government benefits, including Social Security.

SOCIAL WELL BEING

EBR TEEN BIRTH RATE
(live births per 100 teens)

Over decades, the teen birth rate has been dropping across the country, including in East Baton Rouge. With only a pause last year, it continues to do so. An increase in the use of birth control is among explanations for teens having fewer children. The CDC defines teens as 14- to 19-year-olds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rate per 100 teens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CULTURE AND RECREATION

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 CityStats poll that say they have attended, in the previous 12 months, Live After Five, FestForAll, Mardi Gras parade, Baton Rouge Blues Festival, college sporting event. The question is asked for each category.

Library Circulation
Number of library books and other materials checked out annually through the East Baton Rouge Library system. The statistic includes all digital downloads.

Library Digital Circulation
Number of digital downloads of books, music and videos from the East Baton Rouge Library system.

Library Computer Use
Number of logins across the public library system.

Awareness of LSU/City Park Lakes Master Plan
In the survey, percentage who were aware of the creation of a master plan for the lakes.

Property Tax for Lakes Improvement
In the survey, the percentage for and against a property tax to improve the LSU and University Lakes.

Amount of Property Tax for Lakes Improvement
In the survey, how much the people who supported a lakes improvement tax would pay in property taxes each year for 10 years for that purpose.

ECONOMY

EBR Net Job Growth
Total number of jobs in East Baton Rouge and increase in number of jobs year over year.

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

EBR Unemployment Rate
Percent of people looking for work at year-end.

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

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.

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

EDUCATION

Pre-K Enrollment
Percentage of EBR 3- and 4-year-olds in school.

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

Cohort Graduation Rate
Percent who graduated high school in four years, the national standard.

High School Dropout Rate
Percentage of public school students in 9th through 12th grades who dropped out of school during the year.

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.

LEAP Test Passage Rate
Percentage passing the state standardized test in fourth and eighth grades leaving the parish.

Charter Schools
on a scale of 1 to 5, survey respondents rate quality of charter schools, with 5 as “excellent” and 1 as “poor.”
ENVIRONMENT
Belief in Global Warming
In our poll, "yes or "no" on whether the planet is in a period of global warming.

Government Regulation of Emissions
In our poll, we ask whether government should do more or less to regulate emissions that some people believe are responsible for global warming.

Litter as a Problem
From the survey, residents rate litter as a problem on a five-point scale, with 5 = “serious problem.”

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.

Toxic Air Pollutants
Amount of air pollutants released in EBR under a definition by the EPA.

Residential Curbside Recycling
Tonnage of recycled material picked up curbside from homes.

Commercial Recycling
In tons, the amount of all waste recycled by businesses.

Perception of Government Services
On a 5-point scale in the CityStats survey, East Baton Rouge residents graded the service provided by the following government agencies: fire department, EBR library system, BREC (parks system), Baton Rouge Police and EBR Sheriff together, Department of Public Works, East Baton Rouge Public School System.

Legalizing Marijuana
From our poll, the level of support or opposition to legalizing possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use?

Decriminalizing Marijuana
In our survey, should people be imprisoned for possessing small amounts of marijuana.

HEALTH
Infant Mortality Rate
Number of deaths per thousand of infants under 12 months of age.

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

HIV
New cases of HIV.

New Cases of Sexually Transmitted Diseases
Number of new cases of syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia.

Mortality Rates
Deaths per thousand parish residents from cancer, heart disease or diabetes.

INFRASTRUCTURE
Airport Use
Number of passengers to and from Baton Rouge Metro Airport.

Bus Ridership
Weekly ridership on Capital Area Transit System buses.

Bike Trails
Miles of bike trails.

Bike to Work
In our survey, the percentage who would consider riding to work if the parish had more bike paths and trails.
Bike Share
In the CityStats poll, we asked people if they would use bike share. For those who said yes, we asked how they would use bike share and whether they would rent bikes from these locations—City Park, LSU, downtown, Mid City, the lakes, Our Lady of the Lake Regional.

Electric cars
From the survey, percentage who said they are interested in buying an electric car in next five years. Also from the survey, percentage who said they were interested in buying an electric car in next five years if there was a charging station at their office.

Self-driving cars
Percentage who said would ride in a car that was driven by a computer.

Transportation improvement
From our survey, respondents say which transportation improvement would benefit them the most in traveling around town, other than road improvements.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Concern About Criminal Activity Versus a Year Ago
Whether survey respondents are more or less concerned about a crime committed against them or a family member versus a year earlier.

Perception of Personal Safety in Neighborhood
In survey, whether respondents feel safe walking alone at night in their neighborhoods.

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
The sum of violent and non-violent crimes.

Number of Traffic Accidents in EBR
Number of traffic accident deaths in EBR

Incarceration Rate
Respondents to the survey say whether the incarceration rate in Louisiana is too high, too low or just right.

Death Penalty
In the survey, support or opposition to Louisiana’s death penalty law.

SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Mental Health Treatment Center
In CityStats survey, the percentage who agree or disagree that money spent on locking up low-risk, nonviolent people with mental illness or substance abuse problems should be shifted to treatment.

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 Health Care or Medicine Within The 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 health care or medicine.

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.

Teen Birth Rate
Live births to every 100 girls who are 15- to 19-year-olds.

Racism as a Problem
In the CityStats survey, residents were asked to rate racism as a problem on a 5-point scale where 5 equals big problem and 0 is no problem.

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.

Incidents of Child Abuse
Child abuse incidents reported to authorities.
UNDERWRITTEN BY THE NEWTON B. THOMAS SUPPORT FOUNDATION OF THE

Baton Rouge
Area Foundation

100 NORTH STREET, SUITE 900 / BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70802 / 225-387-6126 / BRAF.ORG