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 help us choose indicators in health care, public safety and other categories. The Foundation has issued this report each year since 2009.

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.
Below is a snapshot of indicators we track each year. Generally, the quality of life in Baton Rouge is slowly improving. The biggest drag on the parish is our high poverty rate. Lower the rate by putting more people to work and many other indicators would move in a positive direction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>BAD</th>
<th>NO CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION**
- Attendance at cultural facilities
- Attendance at community events
- Miles of public trails
- Acres of parks
- Library use

**ECONOMY**
- Total employment
- Unemployment rate
- Net migration
- Median household income
- Residential building permits
- Income inequality

**EDUCATION**
- High school diplomas
- Residents with college degrees
- High school graduation rate
- School standardized tests
- Pre-K enrollment

**ENVIRONMENT**
- Littering as a problem

**GOVERNMENT/CIVIC PARTICIPATION**
- Pace of progress
- Influence over elected officials
- Satisfaction with neighborhood

**HEALTH**
- Infant mortality rate
- Newborns with healthy birthweight
- Adult obesity
- New cases of HIV
- New cases of STDs
- Deaths from cancer
- Deaths from heart disease
- Deaths from diabetes

**INFRASTRUCTURE**
- CATS ridership
- BTR airport travel
- Upkeep of roads and byways
- Keeping public roads clean
- Keeping public grass cut

**PUBLIC SAFETY**
- Murders
- Other crimes
- Perception of crime

**SOCIAL WELL-BEING**
- Visits with neighbors
- Teen birth rate
- Poverty
- Animal euthanasia
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 East Baton Rouge Parish.

For this report, each year the Foundation hires the Baton Rouge Area Chamber to gather the public data, and LSU’s Public Policy Research Lab to conduct the companion poll.

The poll 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 latest survey was taken from May 30-June 26, 2018. Interviewers polled 498 people who live in East Baton Rouge Parish, 31% via landlines and 69% via cell phones. The sample has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.3%. 

The residents are more restless than ever. Over 70% of those surveyed say that the pace of progress is too slow in the Baton Rouge area. That’s the highest level of dissatisfaction in a decade of CityStats reports on the quality of life in our parish.

Leaders with a sanguine outlook could interpret this information as pointing to an opportune moment, a time to act. Those folks who are disenchanted with the way things are—more than two-thirds of us—can be regarded as residents who earnestly want their parish to be better. They want their civic leaders and public servants to listen to them and then carry out the changes they want to see. That’s how it’s supposed to work.

But that’s not what’s happening: A record number of people in our survey say that they have little or no influence over elected officials. We should all find this troubling.

We’ve been producing this annual review of the quality of life in our community for ten years. It tells us where we are as a parish, how far we’ve come, and where we need to go.

Every year, we learn something new. In the past, for instance, we watched our parish go from disapproval to approval of same-sex marriage. More recently, residents here have begun favoring the legalization of marijuana for personal use. And we’ve seen strong support for government regulation of greenhouse emissions—this, in a parish that leans to the right.

This year, we find that residents—a strong majority, in fact—favor thorough background checks on all gun sales, and they likewise support raising the minimum age for purchasing a firearm. A plurality of residents say they want semi-automatic rifles banned.

Without question, the biggest problem for our parish is poverty, particularly among African American children. Locally, about three of every 10 African American boys and girls live in a poor household, with many in extreme poverty. One telling statistic shows that, overall, the number of poor households here hasn’t budged much over time—a reliable indication that, collectively, our parish isn’t doing much to address the issue.

A mountain of research correlates poverty with a wide range of social ills affecting everyone, including poor school outcomes, higher crime levels, and teenage pregnancy.

The teen pregnancy rate in our community appears to be a bright spot. It’s been declining for about 20 years around the country and here. But CityStats digs a little deeper, finding that 70% of teenage pregnancies in East Baton Rouge can be attributed to impoverished African American girls. Disadvantaged groups have higher teen pregnancy rates, with most poor teen mothers caught in a cycle of generational poverty.

We hope you’ll take time to learn the facts about your home that are revealed in this year’s CityStats report, and then we hope you’ll share it with others.

For the first time, we measured religious tolerance and found that people of the Jewish faith are the most tolerant in East Baton Rouge, followed closely by Catholics. Look inside the report to see which religious groups are most tolerated.

As usual, there is good news as well as bad news in this report. And sometimes it’s just complicated. The total number of people working within the parish boundaries is down, for example. But then so is the unemployment rate. What does this mean? It could be that people are living in the city but commuting to surrounding areas to work. This fits with one of the most positive indicators in the report: thousands of people have moved into EBR over the past
About the Foundation

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation's purpose is to improve the quality of life for all people in South Louisiana. The Foundation does so in three ways. One, we serve philanthropists, connecting them with causes they care about most. The Foundation manages charitable accounts for our fund donors and makes grants on their behalf to nonprofits. The Foundation has granted more than $450 million since its inception in 1964.

Two, the Foundation takes on projects for civic good. These include downtown redevelopment, building a Water Campus for scientists who are taking on coastal water issues, improving mobility in East Baton Rouge Parish, partnering to improve mental health treatment and championing inter-city rail between Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

Three, the Foundation offers strategic consulting services to nonprofits. The services include building capacity through fundraising and strategy.

We are among more than 700 community foundations in the country and among the largest in the Southeast.

Our asset base was more than $650 million at year-end 2017. We serve most of South Louisiana through affiliates—the Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana in Lake Charles and the Northshore Community Foundation in Covington.

Three years, reversing a worrisome trend of outmigration.

At the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, we use CityStats to guide our work and order our priorities. Over the years, other important organizations have come to rely on this report, along with additional resources we produce to help direct their efforts on behalf of the community.

We hope you’ll take time to learn the facts about your home that are revealed in this year’s CityStats report, and then we hope you’ll share it with others. The data here assists our fund donors in choosing their philanthropic priorities and in making decisions about the grants they give.

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.

William Balhoff, Chair
Baton Rouge Area Foundation
Declines in attendance for the Baton Rouge Zoo and Louisiana Art and Science Museum lowered overall attendance at cultural facilities. But residents are attending more cultural events, and miles of trails available to them for outdoor fun and exercise has increased. The library continues to be one of the bright spots for Baton Rouge, reporting gains in circulation year after year.

**ATTENDANCE AT CULTURAL EVENTS**

**BATON ROUGE ZOO ATTENDANCE** BREC
Zoo attendance sunk to the smallest number in at least 13 years, dropping 8% from 2016 to 2017. BREC Superintendent Carolyn McKnight offered a bold plan for a new zoo in Southeast Baton Rouge, but BREC commissioners said no. BREC spent $3.3 million to keep the zoo open last year, which equals a subsidy of $16 per visitor. Next step for BREC is a redevelopment of the zoo at its North Baton Rouge location.

**LOUISIANA ART AND SCIENCE MUSEUM** LASM
The Louisiana Art and Science Museum’s attendance dipped 10% in 2017, the lowest since at least 2005. Worth keeping an eye on: Is Knock Knock Children’s Museum taking business activity from LASM? Located in City Park, Knock Knock opened in August 2017 and averages more than 3,000 in general admission weekly.

**OTHER CULTURAL FACILITIES** Individual facilities

- **USS KIDD 57,725** a 27% drop from 2016
- **MANSFIELD THEATRE 43,147** 38% more than 2016 and the highest attendance since 2008
- **LSU MUSEUM OF ART 24,000** flat from the year before but up from 17,713 in 2015
- **TOTAL ATTENDANCE AT CULTURAL FACILITIES 484,774** down 8%
ATTENDANCE AT COMMUNITY EVENTS CityStats survey

The “very liberals” attended community events far more than any other group in 2017 (number of times per year).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Affiliation</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VERY LIBERAL</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIBERAL</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODERATE</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSERVATIVE</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERY CONSERVATIVE</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...and the households with more money attended more community events (number of times per year).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNDER $25,000</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 - $49,999</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 - $99,999</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 +</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OUTDOOR RECREATION BREC

PUBLIC TRAILS: 59 MILES
Five miles of trails were added since last year and more are to come, as BREC is expanding its network, and the parish bike and pedestrian plan should spark more trails and paths.

PARK LAND: 6,625 ACRES
BREC is holding steady in the amount of park land, spending money to improve what it already owns.

LIBRARY USE EBR Library System

TOTAL LIBRARY CIRCULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Circulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2,828,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2,924,461</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DIGITAL DOWNLOADS

664,825 Digital downloads through the EBRP Library System have risen exponentially in the last decade, increasing from 4,112 downloads in 2007 to 664,825 downloads in 2017.

UP 15%
DOWN 9%

COMPUTER LOGINS

1.33 MILLION Computer use at the library has declined two consecutive years. Widespread adoption of smartphones could be a reason.
The economy is OK, not great. Total employment is down, but the unemployment rate is as well, so EBR residents have jobs though it seems they are outside the parish. A big deal: thousands of people have moved into the parish in the last three years, reversing net outmigration. Household income is slowly increasing, but the income equality gap is considerable, particularly between white and African American households.

### ECONOMY

#### NET MIGRATION (2016) U.S. Census Bureau

Nearly 9,000 people have moved into the parish over three years ending in 2016, reversing a negative trend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Net Migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>+3,233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME Source: U.S. Census Bureau

For every dollar earned by a white household in East Baton Rouge Parish...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$48,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$48,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$48,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$49,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$49,942</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### INCOME INEQUALITY (2016) U.S. Census Bureau

For every dollar earned by a white household in East Baton Rouge Parish...

- Asians earned 86¢
- Hispanics earned 76¢
- African Americans earned 53¢

#### TOTAL EMPLOYMENT Louisiana Workforce Commission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>265,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>273,913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>272,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>269,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>266,248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

December 2017, the lowest level in at least 15 years. Unemployment was 4.6% in 2016.

3.4%

#### RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS EBR government

Building permits for houses dipped to a 15-year low in 2017. Permits have been near or below 1,000 for four years after a decade of fast building spurred by unusually low interest rates.

807
Industrial Tax Exemption Program

Louisiana state government gives tax breaks to companies that create jobs. Here’s the wrinkle: the incentives are not state money; they are local property taxes that would otherwise pay for parish schools, parks and roads. In early summer, Gov. John Bel Edwards revised the incentive under the Industrial Tax Exemption Program (ITEP) to give more authority over levies to local government, while also cutting the level of the breaks. (Note: Poll results reflect support or opposition for the overall ITEP program, regardless of the changes implemented by the governor.)

**Strongest support by demographic**
- African Americans: 59%
- 18-29 Year Olds: 59%
- Non-HS Graduates: 57%
- Income < $25,000: 62%
- Very Conservative: 59%

**Greatest opposition by demographic**
- Whites: 37%
- 50-64 Year Olds: 43%
- College Graduates: 44%
- Income $50,000-99,999: 43%
- Very Liberal: 57%

**Do you support or oppose the Industrial Tax Exemption Program?**

- Support: 49%
- Oppose: 35%
- Don’t know/Didn’t answer: 16%
Slow and steady improvements in education. More people than ever have high school and college degrees. Zachary’s school system has the highest graduation rate, but Central is closing in. Standardized test scores dropped last year in EBR, which is something to keep an eye on. Total student enrollment is relatively flat, but the Baker School System’s number is declining.

**EBR RESIDENTS WITH HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA** in 2016, a record. Local school system and state standards seem to be making a difference.

90%

**EBR RESIDENTS WITH AT LEAST A FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREE** in 2016. The percentage has grown incrementally over 15 years. It was 30% in 2005.

34%

The **EBR HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE** jumped in 2016 by two points. It may be an anomaly.

9%

**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE BY SCHOOL SYSTEM (2016)** La. Dept. of Education

- **BAKER SCHOOLS** 62%
  Up slightly from 60.5% in 2015, but the lowest for all EBR school systems

- **EBR SCHOOLS** 67%
  Up from 59.5% in 2010, but stalled

- **CENTRAL SCHOOLS** 88%
  Another solid year for this system. For three years running, the rate is above 85%

- **ZACHARY SCHOOLS** 91%
  Holding steady at the best graduation rate in EBR. Lookout, though, Central is closing in.

**EBR PASSING RATE ON STANDARDIZED TESTS (2017)** Source: La Dept. of Education

- **4TH GRADE**
  - **ENGLISH** 65%
  - **MATH** 57%
  - **SCIENCE** 58%

- **8TH GRADE**
  - **ENGLISH** 60%
  - **MATH** 48%
  - **SCIENCE** 49%
Central and EBR schools have flat enrollments. Baker is in decline. Zachary is growing very slowly. Private school enrollment has softened and fallen since 2009 but 2017 enrollment was higher than in 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EBR Public Schools</td>
<td>40,949</td>
<td>40,696</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Schools</td>
<td>16,016</td>
<td>17,876</td>
<td>+11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachary</td>
<td>5,456</td>
<td>5,568</td>
<td>+2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Community</td>
<td>4,656</td>
<td>4,626</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery School District</td>
<td>2,649</td>
<td>2,454</td>
<td>-7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Baker</td>
<td>1,479</td>
<td>1,416</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All EBR Students</td>
<td>71,205</td>
<td>72,636</td>
<td>+1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PRE-K ENROLLMENT (2016) Source: U.S. Census Bureau
A big jump from 50% in 2015. Because the data is from a survey, the 2016 figure could be an outlier. Experts widely agree that pre-K enrollment provides extraordinary returns, from lower crime to higher graduation rates and incomes.
More than ever in our survey, residents see littering as a problem. They strongly believe the world is warming, that Louisiana is being harmed by the warming and that the government should do more to cut emissions that cause global warming.

A growing majority say that government should DO MORE to regulate emissions that scientists say are responsible for global warming.

On a five-point scale, where “5” is a serious problem and “1” is not a problem at all, Fifty-six percent said littering is a problem, a record for this poll. The trend is not litter’s friend, as last year was a record as well. Only 10% said litter is not a problem in East Baton Rouge Parish. Respondents from all parts of the parish said litter was a problem.
Not good. More than ever, residents believe East Baton Rouge Parish is progressing too slowly and a record number say they have almost no influence over their elected officials. A greater number said their neighborhood is getting worse. In an open-ended question, they say the best ways to improve their neighborhoods, in order, is by reducing crime, upgrading and maintaining infrastructure, particularly sidewalks; and keeping their neighborhoods clean.

**PACE OF PROGRESS IS TOO SLOW** CityStats survey

The residents are restless. In 2018, a record 72% said that the pace of progress is too slow in Baton Rouge, an indication that they want the parish to be better. Particularly unhappy were city dwellers (76%), African Americans (75%), 30-49 year-olds (81%), high school graduates (75%) and Democrats (77%), though no demographic polled below 65%.

**“LITTLE OR NO INFLUENCE” OVER ELECTED OFFICIALS** CityStats survey

Another record: 58% said they have LITTLE OR NO INFLUENCE over their local elected officials.

**SATISFACTION WITH CURRENT NEIGHBORHOOD** CityStats survey

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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>WORSE</th>
<th>BETTER</th>
<th>NEITHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Political leanings of residents were mostly unchanged from 2016. East Baton Rouge is right of center. Conservatives make up 39% of the population, moderates 33% and liberals 21%.
**Good and bad news:** The HIV rate has fallen, but our infant mortality rate remains almost twice the national average. The nation’s cancer rate has declined, but ours has not, likely because too many continue to smoke cigarettes. We have among the highest obesity rates in the nation.

**INFANT MORTALITY RATE** La. Department of Health and Hospitals

The infant mortality rate went down to 9.1 per 1,000 live births, but is nearly twice the national average. Most infants deaths are a result of co-sleeping, where the parent or caregiver falls asleep and accidentally suffocates the child.

**NEWBORNS WITH HEALTHY BIRTH WEIGHT (2017)** La. Department of Health and Hospitals

88.5%

No real change over a decade.

**DEATHS BY DISEASE PER 1,000 EBR RESIDENTS (2017)** La. Department of Health and Hospitals

**CANCERS** 1.68

Holding steady, the rate’s been about the same for at least 15 years, though it’s been declining steadily in the nation for two decades, mostly from a reduction in smoking-related cancer.

**HEART DISEASE** 2.1

Down very slightly from 2016 but higher than in the last decade. At its lowest, the rate was 1.5 in 2011.

**DIABETES** .06

The rate of people with diabetes has been rising but mortality rates are lower because of medication and improved technology.

**ADULT OBESITY** La. Department of Health and Hospitals

33%

Louisiana is a fat state, but that’s not unusual in the United States. One of every three Louisiana residents are considered overweight by the federal government, making our state the fifth fattest. But 39 of 50 states have obesity rates that are higher than 27%. Louisiana’s obesity rate has bulged. It was 28% in 2010.
Rates for other sexually transmitted diseases are generally rising in the parish, matching a nationwide trend. Health officials say diseases are more resistant to antibiotics, and funding cuts are reducing treatment.

**SYPHILIS 72/-26%**

**GONORRHEA 1,389/+8%**

**CHLAMYDIA 4,058/+24%**

**NEW CASES OF HIV** Louisiana Office of Public Health

Baton Rouge can cheer a little. The number of new cases of HIV fell 15% in 2017. What’s more, the rate improved by 30% in the last decade, when cases were stubbornly stuck around 250 each year and Baton Rouge had the second-highest rate in the nation. Ad campaigns and better testing and pills to prevent HIV are why new HIV cases are falling.
Mass transit is in neutral and ride-hailing services might be hurting the bus system. Though more are not riding Uber and Lyft locally, existing riders are using the services more often. More people flew from Baton Rouge Airport last year, but competition from a new terminal in New Orleans could be trouble for BTR. Residents want a chance to vote for a local gas tax, and they are mixed about the upkeep of roads by local government.

**MASS TRANSIT**

In 2012, voters approved $16 million in tax funding for Capital Area Transit System (CATS.) After a sputtering start, the system implemented new routes, added transfer hubs, upgraded its fleet, built new shelters. Wait times have gone down and its GPS system is finally working properly. Yet, more people are not riding buses. One possible reason—ridesharing firms, like Uber, are taking passengers from mass transit.

**CATS AVERAGE WEEKLY RIDERSHIP** Capital Area Transit System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ridership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>73,652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>73,883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>73,936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>72,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>71,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BTR AIRPORT TRAVEL** Baton Rouge Airport

The airport reversed two down years and is seeking higher skies. Bigger planes are drawing more passengers and a new airline is offering direct flights. But competition looms from New Orleans, which is opening a new, more efficient terminal next year and is expected to announce additional direct flights to European destinations before the end of 2018. Will BTR soar, be on autopilot or dip again? A new director’s strategies and abilities will partly answer that question.
Residents believe the Baton Rouge Department of Public Works is doing better...and worse. In the CityStats poll, a greater percentage believe the maintenance of roads has improved, but they are less satisfied with the upkeep of landscaping and of cleaning up trash on local roads.

**UPKEEP OF ROADS AND BYWAYS**

*CityStats survey*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE JOB YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS DOING TO...</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maintain and repair local roads, such as fixing pot holes and broken curbs?</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cut the grass and keep up landscaping along local roads and public right of ways?</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clean up trash and litter from local roads?</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SATISFIED | NEITHER | DISSATISFIED | SATISFIED | NEITHER | DISSATISFIED | SATISFIED | NEITHER | DISSATISFIED
The CityStats poll was already in the field when Mayor Sharon Weston Broome offered a one-half cent sales tax for roads and other infrastructure. The tax proposal is on the ballot in December. Meanwhile, our poll sought the level of support for allowing a local gas tax, which would require the state to amend the constitution, as parish or city gas taxes are not allowed in Louisiana.

76% agreed that residents of East Baton Rouge Parish should have a right to vote on a local gas tax that would directly fund roads and more infrastructure. Because of survey limitations, we didn’t have room for a question on the amount residents would be willing to pay in gas taxes.

Support was strong across all demographics. The only demographic below 70% was people aged 65 and older (66%).

Percent riding Uber or Lyft is same, but existing passengers are riding more often. Almost 10% ride daily or weekly, and 35% ride at least a few times a month.

Who rides least:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People aged 65+</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who rides most:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People aged 18-29</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households earning $25,000-$49,999</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often do you use a ride-hailing service (asked only of people who use the services)?

- Daily: 2017 - 1%, 2018 - 2%
- Few times a week: 2017 - 4%, 2018 - 8%
- Few times a month: 2017 - 15%, 2018 - 10%
- Once a month: 2017 - 15%, 2018 - 10%
- Few times a year: 2017 - 1%, 2018 - 2%

Residents most likely to give up their cars for ridesharing:

- North Baton Rouge: 10%
- Less than a high school degree: 15%
- People aged 30-49: 8%
- People earning $25,000-$49,999: 8%
Bad news. Murders and violent and nonviolent crimes increased last year. The CityStats survey shows residents are worried about crime more than ever. They are also heavily armed, but they want stricter gun laws, including universal background checks and raising the age for gun purchases.

**ACTUAL CRIME** Individual police departments

**MURDERS**
BRAVE, an effort to reduce violent crime, ran out of money and was shut down. In 2017, murders in EBR spiked to the highest level since 2006. Law enforcement departments and District Attorney Hillar Moore have started TRUCE, a follow-up to BRAVE.

**CRIMES**
Note: Data does not include LSU, Southern and Zachary police departments, which are slow or resist releasing figures to us.

Crimes, both violent and nonviolent, had been declining in East Baton Rouge and the nation. But there's been an uptick in crimes in our parish the last three years.

**Total crime**
- Nonviolent crime: 22,078
- Violent crime: 25,073

**PERCEPTION OF CRIME** CityStats survey

43% don't feel safe walking at night in their own neighborhoods, up from 37% in 2017 and 32% in 2016. This year’s figure is the highest since the project’s first report in 2009.

62% ...are more concerned that they or a family member will be a victim of crime than they were a year ago. It was 57% last year. The current percentage is nearly a record.

**CRIME** Source: CityStats survey

25% said they were victims of crime last year, up from 23% in the previous year. (Where crime is defined as money and property stolen, property vandalized, home broken into, car stolen or personal assault or attack.)
Americans have a deep history and complex relationship with guns. East Baton Rouge reflects the nation. People in Baton Rouge are armed, but they also want stronger gun control laws, which is true across the nation as well.

**GUN OWNERSHIP**  
CityStats survey

Percentage of East Baton Rouge residents who said they have guns in their homes, compared to 42% nationwide. Fifty percent of EBR households are not armed with a gun, and the rest won’t tell us either way.

**HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE MOST HEAVILY ARMED:**
- North/Northeast City (60%)
- White (61%)
- At least college degree (53%)
- Earn more than $100,000 (70%)
- Republicans (65%)

**HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE LEAST ARMED:**
- People who live in the city (39%)
- African American (32%)
- Less than high school degree (25%)
- Earn less than $25,000 (25%)
- Democrats (40%)

**GUN CONTROL**

Residents want security officials and responders to be better trained for active shooting incidents, are for more security at schools but don’t want teachers or other school employees armed. They are for universal background checks, raising the age for gun purchasing and a plurality favor banning semi-automatic weapons.

- **88%** are for background checks for all gun sales. More gun owners (92%) than non-owners (86%) favor checks.
- **81%** favor increasing police and first responder training to take on active shooters.
- **78%** favor more security checkpoints and systems at schools. 80% of gun owners and 76% of non-owners are for more school security.
- **68%** are for raising the legal age for purchasing guns from 18 to 21. 60% of gun owners are for raising the age, compared to 77% of non-owners.
- **56%** are against arming teachers or other school employees. Forty-seven percent of gun owners are for arming, while 65% of non-owners are against.
- **49%** are for banning sales of semi-automatic weapons such as the AR-15, while 35% oppose. The rest don’t know or didn’t answer. Here, gun owners and non-owners are divided, with 39% of owners for a ban and 59% of non-owners in favor of it.
People are visiting with their neighbors less often, but the teen birth rate is heading in the right direction again. The local poverty rate among minorities is the one social ill that is holding back our parish from a much better quality of life. Meanwhile, we are taking better care of animals, with adoptions rising and the number euthanized in decline.

### SOCIAL WELL-BEING

**ABOUT HOW OFTEN DO YOU TALK TO OR VISIT WITH YOUR IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS, THE 10 TO 20 HOUSEHOLDS NEAREST TO YOUR OWN? CityStats survey**

Percentage of households who spoke daily or several times a week to their neighbors increased 2%, within the margin of error. (we’ve asked this question two years. Next year, we may have a pattern to determine whether EBR residents are becoming more or less isolated).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times a week</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times a month</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE  CityStats survey

**HOW EAST BATON ROUGE RESIDENTS FEEL ABOUT OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS**

In our poll, residents were asked to rate religious groups on a “feeling thermometer,” ranging from 1 to 100, where 1 is cold and 100 is warm. So the Catholics, with a 67, were viewed more warmly than atheists, 39.

**WARM**
- Catholics — 67
- Mainline Protestants — 62
- Jews — 61
- Evangelical Christians — 61
- Muslims — 53
- Mormons — 51
- Buddhists — 48
- Hindus — 48
- Atheists — 39

**COLD**
- 0

**MOST TOLERANT TO LEAST TOLERANT RELIGIOUS GROUPS**

We asked people to identify what religion they practice to understand which religious groups are most tolerant. From most to least tolerant, they are ranked at right.

The number is an average warmth toward all other religious groups, with 100 being the warmest and 0 the coldest. Note the “other” category includes people who say they have no religion, which is a steadily rising group across the United States. At right, you see that people who are Jewish in East Baton Rouge are far more tolerant of other religions.

**WARM**
- Jews — 72
- Catholics — 62
- Mainline Protestants — 61
- Evangelical Christians — 57
- Other — 49

**COLD**
- 0

**Note:** Samples for Hindus, Muslims, Mormons, atheists, agnostics and Buddhists were too small and therefore not relevant and included.
A spike in the teen birth rate in 2015 now seems a one-off. Teen birth rate is one of the bright spots in our report; the rate has been declining for two decades, hitting a low in 2016 and rising a bit in 2017. Sex education, availability of contraception and slightly lower sexual activity among teens are reasons the rate has been declining for about 20 years.

Poverty is the source of most ills. And it remains stubbornly high in East Baton Rouge, especially among children and African American populations. Nearly 27% of children and African Americans are poor, a figure that has been about the same for a decade. The poverty rate among seniors is only 9% because of Social Security.

Companion Animal Alliance has dramatically cut the pet euthanasia rate since the nonprofit began operating the EBR animal shelter. The number of animals euthanized was five times higher when CAA took over from the city-parish in 2011. CAA is opening a $12 million shelter this fall that should help to lower the rate even more. (Disclosure: The Baton Rouge Area Foundation started and supports CAA.)
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 community events**
The number of times in the past 12 months survey respondents attended a celebration, parade, or a local sports or arts event?

**Miles of public trails**

**Acres of public parks**

**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.

EDUCATION

**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.

**Population with a bachelor’s degree**
The percentage of East Baton Rouge residents with at least a bachelor’s 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 by school system**

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

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

**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, with 5 = “serious problem.”

**Belief in global warming**
In our poll, “yes or “no” on whether the planet is in a period of global warming.

**Global warming harming Louisiana**
Percent who said global warming is already harming people in Louisiana.

**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.

GOVERNMENT/CIVIC PARTICIPATION

**Pace of Progress**
From the survey, respondents say whether the pace of progress is “too slow,” “about right” or “too fast.”

**Political influence**
From the survey, residents’ belief of their influence—or lack thereof—over elected officials.

**Satisfaction with current neighborhood**
How satisfied or dissatisfied residents are with the immediate area where they live. The rating is from the CityStats survey.
Political ideology
In the survey, respondents identify themselves on a political spectrum from “very conservative” to “very liberal.”

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.

EBR adult obesity
Percentage of adults who are overweight

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

INFRASTRUCTURE

Bus ridership
Weekly ridership on Capital Area Transit System buses.

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

Satisfaction with public infrastructure
In three questions of our survey, percentage who are satisfied with maintenance of roads, cleaning up of trash, upkeep of landscaping.

Local gas tax
Percentage who say state constitution should be changed to allow EBR voters to vote on a local gas tax.

Ride sharing
Percentage who use Uber or Lyft and how often they do.

Give up car?
Percentage who would consider giving up their cars for Uber or Lyft.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Murders
Total murders

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

Nonviolent crimes
Total non-violent offenses in East Baton Rouge, as reported by all police departments and Sheriffs Office except LSU, Southern and Zachary.

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.

Total crimes
The sum of violent and non-violent crimes.

Gun control
From our survey, questions about gun control: arming teachers, increasing training for police and first responders to take on active shooters, more school security checkpoints, background checks for all sales, raising legal gun age, ban on semi-automatic weapons.

SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Visits with immediate neighbors (social capital)
From our survey, how often people talked to or visited their immediate neighbors.

Religious tolerance
From our survey, how tolerant residents are of various religious groups and atheists and the most tolerant religious groups.

Teen birth rate
Live births to every 100 girls who are 15- to 19-yearolds.

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.

Animal euthanasia
Number of animals put down by the local animal shelter.
BATON ROUGE CITYSTATS
Indicators for tracking our quality of life

UNDERWRITTEN BY THE NEWTON B. THOMAS SUPPORT FOUNDATION OF THE

Baton Rouge Area Foundation

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