



November 5, 2013

Honorable Members of the Metropolitan Council
and the People of Baton Rouge:

I respectfully submit, for your review and consideration, balanced budgets for our General Fund and special funds for the Consolidated Government of the City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge for the 2014 calendar year.

The economic future looks bright for our region. Economic incentives and infrastructure improvements are bringing big businesses like International Business Machines (IBM) and Costco to Baton Rouge. The Greater Baton Rouge Industry Alliance has tabulated that there are currently \$23.7 billion in industrial projects that have either been announced or are underway in the nine-parish Baton Rouge Metropolitan Statistical Area. Local economists have projected that 21,700 new jobs will be added over the next two years. In August of this year, *Business Facilities* magazine named Baton Rouge the top ranked metro for economic growth potential, referring to us as the “Creative Capital of the South,” and citing our success in bringing together business and higher education in innovative public-private partnerships that spur initiatives in new high-growth sectors.

Our economic development partnership with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber and the efforts of the Baton Rouge Film Commission continue to produce significant results. The availability of educated talent from our local universities and community college, and our unique culture as a quality-of-life draw, make Baton Rouge a great place to live and do business.

Public safety remains a top priority for this Administration. Our first responders have been given the necessary resources to maintain the highest possible ratings according to national standards. A long-term goal of this Administration will be realized next year when the men and women of the Baton Rouge Police Department are able to move into the new Public Safety Complex, thanks to an extraordinary opportunity to purchase the former Woman’s Hospital campus at below market value. Meanwhile, crime-fighting partnerships like the Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination (BRAVE) program are finding success in reducing crime.

Additional infrastructure improvements to our roads and sewer system were advanced through the Green Light Plan and Sanitary Sewer Overflow Capital Improvement Program. Development progresses on our riverfront and downtown area, with many new private and public developments. We continue to improve our public facilities in order to provide better service to our citizens.

Work is still underway on FUTUREBR, an update of the land use and development plan for East Baton Rouge Parish. Our commitment to quality of life remains strong through support for cultural initiatives, including our various festivals and community concerts, and programs to improve the health of our citizens.

These highlights provide an overview of some of the many areas included in the 2014 budget, the details of which are outlined in the remainder of this message.

General Comments

UNDERSTANDING THE BUDGET

The budget for each department includes a description of its mission and a section on budget highlights. Larger departments include descriptions of their major services. Most departments include sections on performance measurement, which present goals/objectives and performance indicators. Line-item appropriation details are included in the “Budget Detail” section of the budget.



Any reader who wants to develop a thorough understanding of the budget should begin by reading the section in the budget document titled “Understanding the City-Parish Budget.” This section explains the organizational structure of the City-Parish, the budget process, budgetary structure, financial policies, reporting entity, and legal requirements. It also presents revenue and appropriation assumptions. The budget document contains budgets for our General Fund and the special funds that require the adoption of annual budgets.

BUDGET PROCESS

The budget process begins by assessing revenue collections and establishing estimates for funding needed to maintain the existing level of personal services, increases required in employee benefits programs, and other major budget items. In early June, budget packets that included the information needed to compile requests were mailed to departments and agencies. The requests were due to the Finance Department Budgeting Division beginning in late June through the end of August.

Departments and agencies funded through the General Fund were asked to submit standstill budget requests that provided for their existing operations. The instructions allowed for requests of a critical nature, beyond current funding levels, to be submitted as “supplemental requests.” Generally, special funds have their own dedicated funding sources, such as taxes, grants, etc.; therefore, the amount of their budget requests are limited by the level of funding generated by these sources.

All departments were instructed not to include pay plan amendments or new positions in their budget requests, and to give strong consideration to deleting allotments for positions that had been vacant for the last three years. Departments were allowed to make supplemental requests for changes associated with proposed reorganizations that produce overall savings or increased efficiencies, positions with recruiting and/or retention difficulties, and new or expanded services in self-supporting funds. Departments were also asked to carefully review the narrative portions of their budget requests, paying close attention to performance indicators with an emphasis on efficiency measurement.

Discussions were held between the administrative budget team and various departmental representatives during September to discuss their funding needs. Final decisions were made and the document was compiled during the month of October. The result of the process is the budget presented today. The Metropolitan Council will hold budget hearings during November, and a special meeting will be held on December 10, 2013, for the adoption of the *2014 Annual Operating Budget*.

All Fund Summary

The proposed budget for the year 2014 for all funds, exclusive of operating transfers between funds, totals \$804,753,253. This is an increase of \$23,636,684 or 3.03% over the 2013 budget.

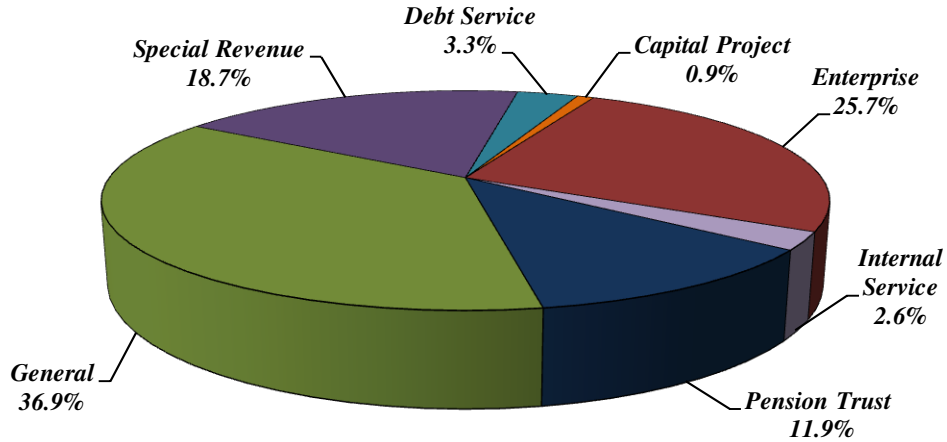
The increase in the General Fund can be mainly attributed to new appropriations for public safety equipment, prison-related expenses, and economic development initiatives. A chart detailing all changes is included under the “General Fund” portion of this message. Special Revenue Funds increased as the result of appropriations for the Medicaid Supplemental Payment Program in the Emergency Medical Services budget, appropriations to replace the Computer Aided Dispatch System in the East Baton Rouge Parish Communications District budget, and the budget for operation of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library System. The increase in Debt Service Funds is the result of debt incurred to purchase the Public Safety Complex. Capital Project Funds decreased when comparing 2014 to 2013 as a result of the appropriation of one-time funding in 2013 for capital improvements funded through traffic impact fees. The increase in Enterprise Funds is due to the depreciation of assets in the sewerage system. Pension benefit payments to retirees are increasing, necessitating an increase in the appropriations in the Pension Trust.



The graph in Figure 1 and the chart that follows depict the total annual operating budget by fund type for 2014. Following the chart is a discussion on items having a major budgetary impact.

FIGURE 1

TOTAL ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS BY FUND TYPE
 (Excluding Transfers Between Funds)
 \$804,753,253



APPROPRIATIONS – ALL FUNDS
 2014 COMPARED TO 2013

Fund Type	2013	2014	2014 Budget Over (Under) 2013 Budget	
	Budget Amount	Budget Amount	Amount	Percent
General	\$ 291,963,200	\$ 299,348,680	\$ 7,385,480	2.53%
Special Revenue	146,588,759	153,545,193	6,956,434	4.75%
Debt Service	30,734,210	31,394,310	660,100	2.15%
Capital Project	13,754,600	9,784,910	(3,969,690)	-28.86%
Enterprise	198,975,890	208,501,920	9,526,030	4.79%
Internal Service	20,619,420	20,623,490	4,070	0.02%
Pension Trust	92,762,820	95,870,530	3,107,710	3.35%
Subtotal	795,398,899	819,069,033	23,670,134	2.98%
Less: Transfers Between Funds	(14,282,330)	(14,315,780)	(33,450)	0.23%
Grand Total	\$ 781,116,569	\$ 804,753,253	\$ 23,636,684	3.03%



INDEPENDENT SALES TAX REVENUE ESTIMATE REVIEW

Following are comments from Dr. James A. Richardson, John Rhea Alumni Professor of Economics at Louisiana State University, and Dr. Loren C. Scott, Professor Emeritus of Economics at Louisiana State University, found in their letter of October 20, 2013, concerning their forecasts of sales and use tax revenue growth in East Baton Rouge Parish for 2014.

Dr. Loren C. Scott and I have reviewed the sales tax revenue estimates you have made for calendar year 2014 in preparing the 2014 Budget for the City-Parish.

The Baton Rouge economy is projected to experience positive growth in employment for the next two years by the Louisiana Economic Outlook, 2014-2015. We are projecting a growth of 6,300 jobs in 2013 or a 1.7 percent growth rate or almost twice as fast as we had anticipated just a year ago; a growth of 12,500 jobs in 2014 or a growth rate of 3.3 percent, and a growth of 9,200 jobs in 2015 or a rate of growth of 2.3 percent. This expected growth in the Baton Rouge economy will support the 1.5 percent growth projection for sales tax collections for the City-Parish in 2014.

Obviously, as in any forecast, there are uncertainties. The global and national economies still have some question marks, but the trend has been positive. The national forecasting models are suggesting a positive growth for the U.S. economy over the next two years. Energy prices, especially oil, are holding in the \$90 plus range depending on what crude oil price index is being examined. Federal policies with respect to energy, health care reform, and financial regulation all create uncertainties that have to be eventually settled before major investment dollars will start to flow in the national economy. It is our judgment, at this moment, the impact of these changes will be to moderate the rate of growth of the national economy as opposed to stopping the recovery in its tracks.

The City-Parish is fully aware of developments that may affect its tax base: (1) state budgetary issues can affect the Baton Rouge economy given the major presence of state government, two major universities, and a very vibrant community college in the region; (2) major federal initiatives in health care reform, financial reform, environmental reform, and oil and gas drilling changes that will affect business development over the next several years; and, (3) other communities are developing retail bases for their citizens to shop and this will potentially affect the tax collections typically collected in East Baton Rouge.

The last point is not an item that is of immediate concern, but it is certainly a long-term concern the City-Parish should recognize. We also note there are major developments in the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Area that will be unique to the Baton Rouge economy such as the IBM building in the downtown area, the major chemical expansions throughout the metropolitan area, and the general growth of the region.

The City-Parish Department of Finance has been very cautious in its revenue estimates. It was cautious last year and actual sales tax revenues in 2013 are expected to exceed the projected sales tax collections. It is certainly possible for the City-Parish to witness a growth in sales tax collections in 2014 of more than 1.5 percent; however, we believe the 1.5 percent projection is very prudent and very reasonable in light of what has been occurring in the Baton Rouge economy over the last year and based on what we expect to happen in the Baton Rouge economy during the next two years.

When compared to the first eight months of last year, collections for the 2% sales and use tax increased by 0.37% during the same time period in 2013. Although this increase appears to be minimal, it is important to note that the comparison is being made against the first half of 2012 when Baton Rouge hosted the United States Bowling Congress Open Championships attracting over 70,000 visitors to our area. The prior period also had strong growth in the manufacturing sector due to use tax payments on new equipment.



While recognizing there has been a rebound in the economy, positive job growth is projected, and there will be a positive economic impact from planned business expansions, it was important to use an attainable sales tax estimate when developing the 2014 budget. Based upon historical data and the advice of these experts, the proposed budget assumes a 1.5% growth rate for sales and use tax revenues in 2014. This growth rate was applied to projected collections for 2013.

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) POSITIONS

In the 2014 budget, the number of proposed FTE positions for all funds increased by 10.75 positions. A “Summary of Allotted and Full-Time Equivalent Positions” detailing changes by department is included in the budget document.

FTE positions in the General Fund decreased by a net of six positions. Three employees assigned to the Geographical Information Services function are being transferred from the Department of Public Works (DPW) to the Information Services Department, and one employee is being transferred from the Information Services Department to the Mayor’s Office of Homeland Security. Since the positions from these three departments are all currently allotted in the General Fund, these transfers have no impact on the total number of personnel allotted. The change in the personnel allotment is the result of the transfer of one position currently being funded by the Small Business Investment Incentive Grant to the Office of the Mayor-President, and the net deletion of seven vacant positions from the DPW General Fund personnel allotment in conjunction with the first phase of the DPW reorganization.

Special Funds increased by 16.75 FTE positions. The professional services contract for the Special Events and Marketing Coordinator in the Downtown Development District is being eliminated, and a permanent position is being added to hire a full-time employee to perform this function. One additional position is being added to the Communications District to assist with computerized applications, and one additional security position is being added to the Greater Baton Rouge Airport District. One managerial position is being added to the personnel allotment for Sewerage-Operation and Maintenance. A net change of 12.75 positions are being added to the Library Board of Control allotment for facility maintenance, reference, and technical services, and to provide a variety of services at the new main Library. Although there are some changes in the personnel allotments for individual grant programs, there is no net change in the total number of FTE positions.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

Approximately \$3.6 million is included in this budget for 3% merit and longevity raises for eligible employees. Due to funding limitations, no changes to the current pay or benefit structure are being proposed in the 2014 Budget. Individual requests for amendments to the pay plan and personnel allotment were given consideration only if there were changes in the organizational structure of a budgetary unit, or in the case of recruiting and/or retention difficulties.

The results of the City-Parish Total Compensation Study, released in late October, will be used as the basis for any changes to compensation moving forward. In order for the City-Parish to be able to attract and retain the caliber of talent necessary to continue to foster its commitment to growth and a strong quality of life, it must move towards an employee compensation system that is both financially pragmatic as well as competitive with other public and private sector employers.

The study analyzed the existing pay plan for non-municipal police and fire employees, benchmarked City-Parish positions against various ranges of pay for comparable positions in other areas, and examined the benefits structure against those of peer cities. Each element of compensation was examined including base pay, longevity pay, overtime, leave, health care benefits, retirement benefits, and other post-employment benefits. The study concluded that base pay is lower for many classifications in the early years of employment, but becomes more competitive with the addition of merit and longevity pay. Benefit costs such as leave, health care, and retirement are higher than the benchmark data from other peer cities.



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Health Insurance

The City-Parish health insurance program is self-insured, meaning that sufficient revenues must be generated and maintained in order to pay actual claims and the costs to administer the program. These benefits are available to active employees and to retirees who make up approximately one-third of the participants. The City-Parish has a contract with a private company to administer a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), a Point of Service plan (POS), and a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP). In addition, active employees who are on the HMO and POS plans have the option to have Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA), which allow them to use pre-tax wages to pay for qualifying health and dependent care expenses. Active employees selecting the HDHP, which has considerably lower premiums and higher deductibles, have the option to participate in a Health Savings Account (HSA). The HSA allows them to use pre-tax wages to pay for qualifying health care expenses. HDHP participants may also have a FSA for qualifying dependent care expenses.

The term of the contract with the current health plan administrator would have ended on December 31, 2013, but with Metropolitan Council approval was extended for one year. The extension was accompanied by a decrease in the monthly per member fee from \$38.02 to \$37.50, and other contract enhancements. The Human Resources Department is currently conducting a competitive proposal process seeking a consultant to provide expertise to the City-Parish on insurance related matters. Once this consultant has been selected, they will assist the City-Parish through a competitive process seeking a new health claims administration contract for 2015.

There will be no increase in employer or employee premiums in 2014. In addition to the premiums, the City-Parish will also use approximately \$360,000 in reserves generated from funding received through the Early Retiree Reinsurance Program in 2011. New expenses associated with the Affordable Care Act estimated at \$733,000 have been budgeted. No plan design changes are being implemented in 2014, other than those mandated by the Affordable Care Act and the managed care network provider. The projected sources and uses for the 2014 health insurance program of \$60 million are shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3 below.

FIGURE 2

2014 HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM SOURCES OF FUNDS \$60,000,000

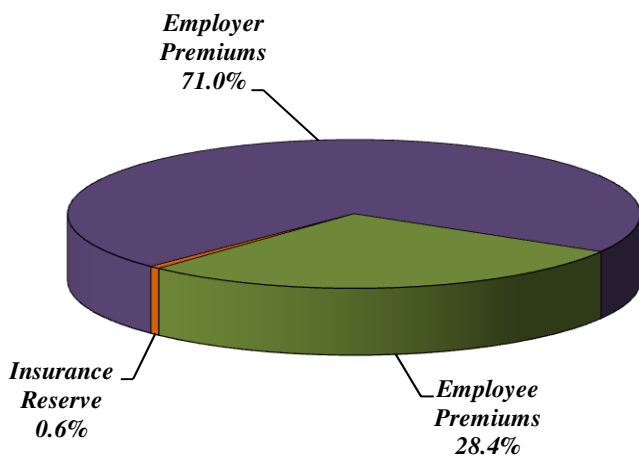
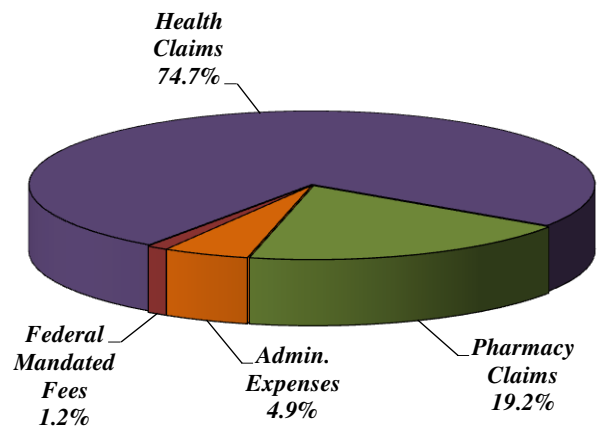


FIGURE 3

2014 HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM USES OF FUNDS \$60,000,000





Employee Wellness and Education Programs

The *Healthy Lives* wellness program will once again be available to City-Parish employees and health plan participants in 2014. This comprehensive health and wellness solution will improve health outcomes and the value of health care delivery by providing health management tools, developing comprehensive programs to meet the needs of a given population, engaging targeted individuals in the management of their own health and wellness, and optimizing care collaboration and coordination with health care providers.

A total of 378 employees completed health-risk screening during the annual health fair in August. Each individual received a confidential individualized report outlining their screening results and their health-risk profile. Individuals identified at high or moderate risk for a specific disease, such as diabetes, stroke, coronary heart disease, or heart failure were identified through both the health-risk screening and the claims analysis process. The analysis of historical medical claims identified 940 high-risk employees currently diagnosed with a chronic disease and an additional 1,338 employees at moderate risk for developing a chronic disease, which is a 12% decrease from 2012. With early intervention, there is a great opportunity to prevent the onset of chronic disease and impact the health of the population. *Healthy Lives* coaches are contacting the individuals identified at moderate to high risk, bringing a person-centered, holistic coaching and care management service to employees and plan participants. The next steps in program implementation will include bi-monthly health screenings on the mobile unit, worksite assessments, and various monthly educational offerings.

The cost of the base contract for *Healthy Lives* is \$286,000 per year. There are additional fees for each individual receiving screening and coaching services. Also included in the 2014 Risk Management budget is \$335,000 to continue a special wellness program for Fire Department personnel.

Dental Insurance

There will be no increase in premiums in 2014 for the City-Parish dental program, which is fully insured. Earlier this year the Metropolitan Council approved a three-year contract extension with the current provider at the current rates. The City-Parish will contribute 52%, or approximately \$1.8 million, towards the cost of providing dental insurance, with the active employees and retirees paying the remaining 48%.

Life Insurance and Voluntary Benefits

The City-Parish pays 100% of the cost of life insurance premiums that provide a \$50,000 benefit for elected officials, a \$25,000 benefit for active employees, and a \$5,000 benefit for retirees. The annual cost of the coverage for active employees and retirees is approximately \$480,000.

Optional voluntary benefits available to employees include term life, universal life, vision, cancer, accident, short-term disability, and critical illness policies. Employees are responsible for 100% of the premiums for all of these optional benefits.

Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB)

The rate for other post-employment benefits in 2014 will remain at 12% of active payroll. OPEB for the City-Parish consists of health, dental, and life insurance benefits for retirees. Historically, the City-Parish has funded these benefits on a pay-as-you-go basis. While there is no current requirement that a government fund these benefits on an actuarial basis over an employee's service career, the liability must be reported in the financial statements as required by a governmental accounting standard that took effect in 2007. If the City-Parish were to fund the annual required contribution in this manner, a rate of 42% of active payroll would be necessary to cover both normal costs and to amortize the unfunded actuarial liability.



Since the City-Parish does not have the resources to fund this liability on an actuarial basis, significant progress must be made in the near future to reduce this liability for current and future retiree benefits. Options to be reviewed include establishing a trust for post-employment health benefits, closing the current retiree health plan to future hires and implementing a new retiree plan that is more in line with market practices, offering fully-insured Medicare supplement policies with prescription drug coverage once retirees become eligible, and offering a fully-insured Medicare Advantage plan with supplemental prescription drug coverage.

Retirement Contributions

City-Parish Employees' Retirement System (CPERS)

The 2014 employer contribution rate was certified at 27.23% by the CPERS Board of Trustees, which is the rate recommended by the system's actuary. The 2014 budget provides funding at this rate, which is a 0.34% increase over the 2013 employer contribution rate, and an annual cost to the City-Parish of approximately \$440,000. The employee contribution rate will remain at 9.5% in 2014.

The Board of Trustees has an investment policy that outlines the goals, objectives, responsibilities, and restrictions for system investments. Through a well diversified and prudently managed portfolio, long-term investment returns are expected to meet or exceed the required returns needed to fund the system.

The gross rate of return on investments for calendar year 2012 was 13.86%, which was greater than the assumed actuarially rate of return assumption of 7.5%. The target allocation for system assets is 55% investment in equities, 30% in fixed income, and 15% in alternative investments. Gains and losses are smoothed over a five-year period in order to control rate volatility.

Municipal Police Employees' Retirement System (MPERS)

The transfer of law enforcement personnel and mandatory enrollment of new hires in 2000 shifted responsibility for payment of their pensions to the MPERS system. As a participating employer, the City of Baton Rouge is required to make contributions to the system. The Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee approved no increase in the current rate of 31% for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013. The employee contribution rate will remain at 10% in 2014.

General Fund

REVENUES

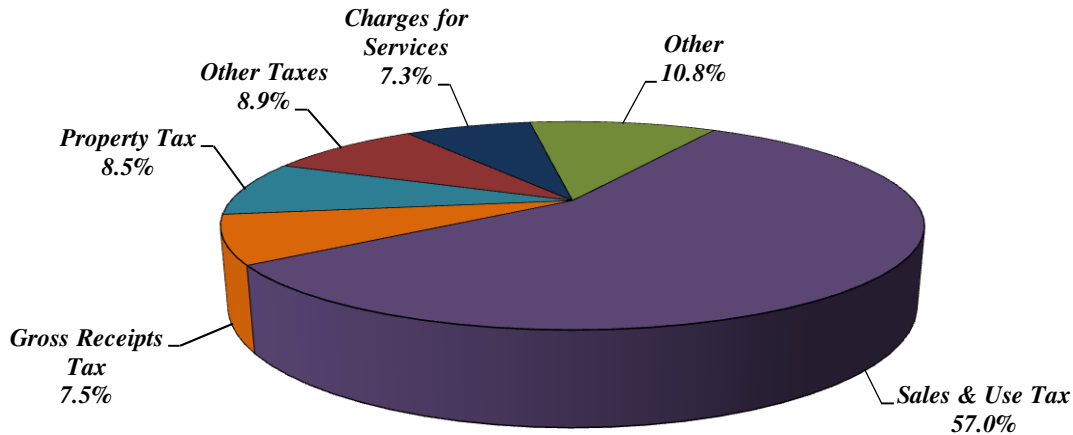
As shown in Figure 1, the General Fund, excluding operating transfers in, makes up approximately 36.9% of the total City-Parish budget for the year 2014. The General Fund provides for the general operations of the government and includes all revenues that are not legally dedicated for a specific purpose.

The primary revenue sources, as shown in Figure 4, include the sales and use tax, gross receipts tax, and property tax. Revenues generated from these three sources support 73% of the appropriations in the General Fund.

In October of 2013, the Metropolitan Council approved an item authorizing the Administration to negotiate a new contract with the company currently administering the Red Light Photo Enforcement Program. Estimated revenues for the program are included as part of charges for services as shown in Figure 4.



FIGURE 4
GENERAL FUND FUNDING SOURCES
\$299,348,680



Significant changes in General Fund funding sources include the following:

	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>
<u>REVENUE GROWTH:</u>	
General Sales and Use Taxes	\$4,801,700
Gaming Revenues	1,500,000
General Property Taxes	888,860
On-Behalf Payments for Salaries and Benefits from the State of Louisiana	243,880
Traffic Safety Fees	200,000
False Alarm Fees	198,000
Coroner Fees	145,410
Sales Tax Debt Related to Public Safety Complex	(789,840)
Police Miscellaneous Revenues (AFIS)	(330,000)
Other Revenues	198,860
TOTAL REVENUE GROWTH	<u>\$7,056,870</u>
<u>CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE:</u>	
Fund Balance - Unassigned	828,610
Fund Balance - Assigned for Police Department	<u>(500,000)</u>
TOTAL REVENUE GROWTH AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE	<u>\$7,385,480</u>

Major Revenue Assumptions

As previously stated, a 1.5% growth rate over 2013 anticipated collections was used as the basis for the sales and use tax revenue estimate for 2014. The anticipated collections for 2013 sales and use taxes are based on actual collections through August, and a modest growth rate of 1.5% for September through December. Gross sales and use tax collections have been reduced by \$789,840 to provide funding for the first year of debt service payments associated with the new Public Safety Complex.



Based on current revenue trends, an increase of \$1.5 million has been budgeted for tax collections from riverboat gaming establishments. A 3.4% growth rate in the assessed valuation of property over the last two-year period was used as the basis for forecasting property tax collections for 2014. Projected revenues for 2014 have been reduced to reflect the loss of the State reimbursement for personnel working on the Automated Fingerprint Identification System. Total revenue growth budgeted in the General Fund for 2014 is \$7,056,870.

Use of Fund Balance

Fund balance in the amount of \$7,571,140 has been used in the 2014 proposed budget. This includes \$7,071,140 from unassigned fund balance, and \$500,000 of fund balance from the Insurance Reserve Fund committed for the payment of compromised judgments. Funding used in the budget from unassigned fund balance accounts for approximately 2% of the budget. The projected level of unassigned fund balance remains at a prudent level.

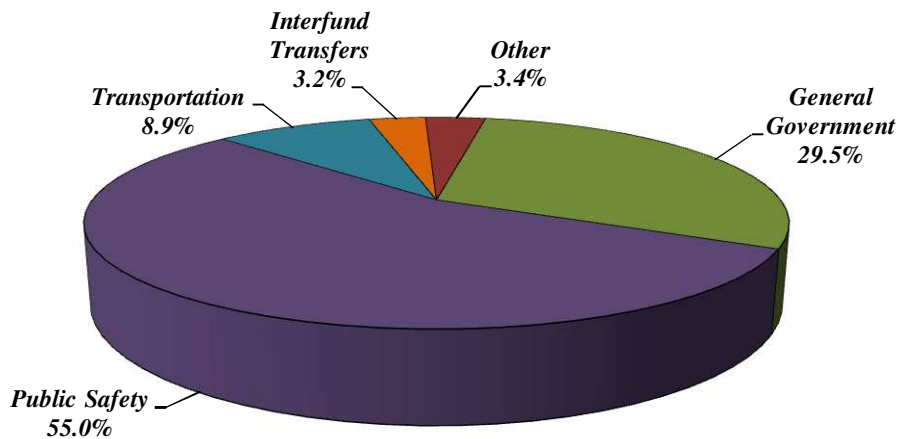
The City-Parish has for some time maintained a portion of the General Fund – Fund Balance in an account titled “Committed for Budget Stabilization.” The financial policy included in the budget document states that a prudent level of financial resources to protect against reducing service levels or raising taxes and fees because of temporary revenue shortfalls or unpredicted one-time expenditures will be maintained. In order to adhere to the policy requiring 5% of the budget for the following year to be maintained in this account, the balance in the account will be increased from the current amount of \$14.6 million to \$14,976,000 at year-end.

APPROPRIATIONS

Total appropriations for the General Fund budget increased by \$7,385,480, or 2.53%, when compared to the 2013 budget. Our commitment to public safety continues as shown in Figure 5 with 55%, or approximately \$164.6 million, of the 2014 budget proposed for that function.

FIGURE 5

**GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS
BY MAJOR FUNCTION
\$299,348,680**





Significant changes in General Fund appropriations (2013 to 2014) are shown below:

	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>APPROPRIATION CHANGES:</u>		
<u>Public Safety:</u>		
Police Vehicles	\$1,000,000	
Public Safety Complex - Maintenance	<u>400,000</u>	\$1,400,000
<u>Prison-Related Expenses:</u>		
Housing Inmates	400,000	
Medical Costs	<u>379,520</u>	779,520
<u>Constitutional Offices:</u>		
Coroner's Office	145,410	
Family Court - Automated Docking System	<u>105,000</u>	250,410
<u>Economic Development Initiatives:</u>		
International Business Machines Corporation	1,500,000	
Consulting Services - Government Representation	310,000	
Redevelopment Authority - Ardendale Development	184,500	
2017 USBC Women's Championship	100,000	
Louisiana Municipal Association Conference	50,000	
Ameritas Technologies Corporation	<u>30,000</u>	2,174,500
<u>Employee Salaries and Benefits:</u>		
Retirement Contributions	507,360	
On-Behalf Payments for Salaries and Benefits from the State of Louisiana	<u>243,880</u>	751,240
<u>Other Programs and Activities:</u>		
Building Improvements and Maintenance	878,150	
Insurance-Fire and Extended Coverage	269,330	
Summer Youth Employment Program	200,000	
Equipment Use Charge and Fuel	158,860	
Banking Service Fees	150,000	
Communications	146,020	
Juror and Witness Fees	65,000	
Children's Advocacy Center	25,000	
Electricity and Gas	<u>(162,030)</u>	1,730,330
Net Changes in All Other Appropriations:		<u>299,480</u>
TOTAL INCREASE IN 2014 BUDGET OVER 2013 BUDGET		<u><u>\$7,385,480</u></u>

Budget Highlights

PUBLIC SAFETY

The public safety of our citizens and visitors has always been, and will continue to be, a top priority of this Administration. This has been accomplished through enhancing manpower, creating partnerships, creating efficiency through technological advancements, improving facilities and equipment, and maintaining professional standards.



Police Department

Manpower

There is an ongoing effort to increase efficiency within the department through better utilization of existing manpower. Operational audits are ongoing, and numerous changes have been made to streamline operations, eliminate redundancies, and reduce costs. The 2014 budget includes funding for an academy that will train 25 new officers and is expected to begin in late June. Enhanced manpower resulting from this academy will allow the department to expand proactive community-based strategies to reduce crime and enhance operational capacity. The budget will also provide for an additional Crime Statistician for the Criminal Investigation Bureau. This analyst will perform complex and specialized work in the collection, assembly and evaluation of numerical data research; the preparation of narrative statements summarizing and or interpreting statistical data; and developing and gathering statistical data for analysis and summation of efforts at preventing and reducing crime.

In 2014, changes will be considered that will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the department's command and control. Three individuals in the classification of Deputy Chief, a classification previously approved by the Council, will work with the Chief of Police in a cooperative effort to facilitate the stated goals and objectives of reducing and preventing crime, while operating a fiscally responsible budget within the department. This could be accomplished with Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Board approval by deleting the classification and the personnel allotments for the two Police Major positions, and one of the Police Captain positions at the time they become vacant in 2014.

Accreditation

The Baton Rouge Police Department has maintained national accreditation since 1996, and is recognized as a "Flagship Agency." The department will continue to monitor standards and pursue any policy changes that will ensure compliance in the future. In 2013, the department did seek its accreditation renewal to remain operating under the highest ethical and professional standards within the law enforcement arena. In the closing months of 2013, the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement (CALEA) will complete its audit and review of the department. Preliminary results are very positive for the department's re-accreditation.

Crime Prevention

The Police Department will continue its goal of making an immediate impact on the rate of violent crime in order to create a safer environment for our community. The goals and objectives include a continuation of street operations and investigations targeting violent street gangs and drug distribution organizations in order to disrupt the violence associated with these illicit activities. This will be a collaborative team approach within all divisions of the department and our local, state, and federal partners. This effort will be guided by real time intelligence and statistical data to determine where those efforts are most needed. The Uniform Patrol Bureau, Criminal Investigation Bureau, and Operational Services Bureau continue to work to implement programs to prevent and reduce crime. Operational plans that focus initiatives in the highest crime areas will remain a priority in regards to enforcement and community engagement.

The Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination (BRAVE) initiative uses a public health and intervention model to stop senseless shootings and killings. Police officers, social workers, clergy, and persons providing other mental health-related services combine science and street outreach to track where violence is heating up. They work together to cool the situation down through intervention of offenders prone to escalating violent behavior. BRAVE targets known violent and drug-trade offenders in criminal hotspots. The success of the program has led its administrators to expand into the 70802 zip code. Additional manpower and resources have been assigned to BRAVE in order to achieve and maintain the same type of success accomplished in the 70805 area.

The Violent Crime Unit's (VCU) strategies to reduce violent crime will continue through 2014. Cooperative partnerships are ongoing with the State Police, EBRP Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, probation and parole, and a number



of federal law enforcement agencies to work throughout the city and region to locate and apprehend those individuals committing violent crimes. By having multiple law enforcement agencies working under one roof, the VCU has successfully created an environment of readily available resources. The open lines of communication, and multiple agencies working with a common goal, have enhanced tracking and resulted in an increase in arrests of violent offenders.

Technology

The tracking of violent offenders and improved intelligence-sharing models will increase the number of arrests and identification of known violent offenders throughout the metro area. These models encourage information sharing and cooperation among our law enforcement partners in an effort to reduce violent crime and ensure the safety of our citizens and security of our community. Real time analytics are being explored as a component to advance the ability of commanders to effectively identify hot spots within the district they command. The goal is to put the best data and intelligence in the hands of commanders who can direct the appropriate resources to reduce crime. The 2014 budget funds the maintenance and management of deployed technology such as surveillance cameras, ShotSpotter coverage, in-car cameras, and wireless streaming video. The department fosters a proactive approach to technology as it applies to the department's mission to reduce crime and fear of crime in the community.

Facilities and Equipment

In 2013, the former Woman's Hospital facility was obtained as the site for the new Public Safety Complex that will house the Baton Rouge Police Department Headquarters. The facility will provide a much needed upgrade for the department. Along with administration, planners will be able to consolidate the Third District Precinct, Traffic Division, Training, the Training Academy, and the Criminal Investigation Bureau at the location. The facility will be able to accommodate the space needs of the department several years into the future. The space for Training and the Training Academy will be ready for occupancy in late 2013. Documents for the design of the tower renovations will be complete in January of 2014 with construction to begin shortly thereafter. The facility should be ready for full occupancy by the end of the first quarter in 2014. The 2014 budget includes funding for the operation of the facility.

Also included in the proposed budget is \$1 million for replacement vehicles. The vehicles being replaced are 2005 and 2006 models with over 100,000 miles.

Baton Rouge Fire Department

PIAL Class One Rating

The current Class One rating by the Property Insurance Association of Louisiana (PIAL) shows our commitment to providing citizens with the best possible fire protection and the lowest possible insurance rates. Fire departments are rated every five years. The Baton Rouge Fire Department was rated in August of 2010 and retained the Class One rating. The next rating will be conducted in 2015.

Manpower

A new training academy began in July of 2013. This academy anticipates graduating 32 recruits in December of 2013. Funding is also included in the 2014 budget for a training academy for 30 firefighters scheduled to begin in early June. The Fire Department will continue to seek federal funding to enhance staffing, response, and operational standards.

Equipment

During 2013, construction was completed on fire stations on Choctaw Drive at Acadian Thruway and on Wooddale Boulevard at the same location as State Police Headquarters. The 2014 budget includes \$500,000 for firefighting gear and other equipment needs.



Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Communications

Accreditation

EMS has been fully recognized as being accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) since 2004. Accredited providers must go through a re-accreditation process every three years in order to maintain this distinction of excellence. Accreditation signifies that an ambulance service has met the “gold standard” determined by the ambulance industry to be essential as a modern emergency medical services provider. EMS has once again achieved accreditation in 2013 with an overall excellent rating in its review by the CAAS review board.

Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) Paramedic Program

EMS is currently teaching the first Basic EMT and Paramedic course at its headquarters facility on Harding Blvd. These students are the first of many that will come to EMS for medical training done by EMS personnel in conjunction with our BRCC partners. EMS and BRCC agreed to establish the curriculum of Associate of Applied Science in Emergency Medical Technology-Paramedic and began enrolling students into the approved curriculum.

Community Paramedicine

EMS has been working with local hospitals to develop a new Community Paramedicine program that will be operational in 2014. Paramedics will be making home visits to patients that frequently access 911 and are transported to local area hospitals. They will work with these patients on compliancy with doctors’ orders, medications, and general monitoring of their basic health. The goal is to keep these patients healthy and out of the emergency rooms when proper post-hospital care is what they need. This will help reduce the congestion in both the 911 system and in hospital emergency rooms. The program will be funded partially by billing for these services, and also by direct reimbursements from the hospitals.

Technology

BR Med-Connect (Mobile Telemedicine) is now operational in all area hospitals. Paramedics are able to send high quality audio and video data directly to the emergency rooms from the field, thus reducing the time a patient has to wait for time-sensitive procedures to be set up in the receiving hospital. This allows for faster recoveries and potentially shorter hospital stays for the patients.

EMS has seen reductions in the number of employee injuries, bad driving habits, and vehicle damage since installing a digital video system in all vehicles. EMS is able to coach employees on issues such as improper distance between vehicles, seatbelt usage, and distracted driving.

Funding of \$5.1 million is included in the budget for the East Baton Rouge Parish Communications District for replacement of the Computer Aided Dispatch System. This replacement will play an integral role in advancing all public safety agencies to be more efficient, effective, and interoperable.

Facilities

The new EMS Headquarters Building located on Harding Boulevard has been completed, and EMS is operating completely out of its new facility. This 32,000-square-foot state-of-the-art facility houses all administrative personnel, a supply warehouse, and a new training center that can accommodate paramedic students and continuing education training for existing staff. EMS is also operating an ambulance station out of this complex that will cover a large portion of north Baton Rouge.



Mayor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (MOHSEP)

Re-Accreditation

In 2012, MOHSEP was granted full re-accreditation under the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP). East Baton Rouge Parish is one of only ten local jurisdictions in the United States to be accredited. MOHSEP was able to receive its re-accreditation on the initial site visit by the EMAP assessors, and was found to be 100% compliant with each of the 64 standards and 104 sub-standards. To date, MOHSEP is the only emergency management program to reach this tremendous achievement. The accreditation process for the field of emergency management ensures that citizens are served by a department that can handle all phases of disasters.

Exercises and Training

MOHSEP participates in various disaster exercises and drills every year to ensure readiness for any and all emergencies or incidents that may occur within East Baton Rouge Parish. In 2013, MOHSEP worked with officials at the River Bend Nuclear Station to ensure that first responders were trained to comply with the new regulations established by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. These new regulations include conducting a hostile action-based exercise to test response should terrorists attack the nuclear station. MOHSEP is also working with first responders to make certain that they are ready to respond to terrorist events by organizing training to help responders recognize threats as they evolve. Training for other City-Parish agencies is facilitated through MOHSEP employees by providing the necessary rooms and equipment for classes.

Public Awareness

Educating and preparing the public will remain one of MOHSEP's top priorities for 2014. Through presentations both in and out of the office, as well as attending public events, MOHSEP delivers its message of personal preparedness through literature distributed to the public and making themselves available to address questions that they may have. MOHSEP reached out to businesses, government organizations, faith-based groups, volunteer groups, schools, and many more, providing them with information needed to help during an emergency. Thousands of children were once again trained in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) through the Junior Community Emergency Response Team program with the help of partners both public and private. The children come through the EOC and are able to see where first responders work to protect them and their families. MOHSEP has developed a nationally recognized public outreach effort and promotes a locally branded program called "Red Stick Ready" to prepare our community for all types of emergency events.

Community Preparedness Partnership

MOHSEP announced its partnership with ExxonMobil to enhance community preparedness initiatives. This partnership with ExxonMobil will allow MOHSEP to upgrade its Red Stick Ready mobile application and also to support outreach efforts across the parish.

Animal Control and Rescue

Companion Animal Alliance (CAA) is a non-profit animal welfare organization whose vision is to find a good home for every healthy and behaviorally sound companion animal in East Baton Rouge Parish. The City-Parish signed a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with CAA in August of 2011 to operate the animal shelter. The agreement expires on December 31, 2013. The Administration recommends the continuation of this partnership. At the request of the Metropolitan Council, CAA increased its efforts in 2013 to conduct outreach and education programs about responsible pet ownership. Funding from the City-Parish and a grant from the Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Entergy provided needed resources for these efforts.



Louisiana State University (LSU) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CAA to provide land for a state-of-the-art veterinary clinic and shelter adoption center. This building will be located close to the nationally recognized LSU School of Veterinary Medicine and will provide high-quality veterinary services for shelter animals, grants for research, space for community education, and areas for animal evacuation during hurricanes or disasters.

In the summer of 2013, the Target Zero Institute (TZI), whose goal is to help communities stop the killing of companion animals in shelters and to reduce their euthanasia rate to 10%, conducted an assessment of the East Baton Rouge Parish shelter and its operations. Based on the results of that assessment and the spirit of cooperation among the animal welfare groups in Baton Rouge, TZI has invited the community to be a Target Zero Fellow. East Baton Rouge Parish will be the third area in the nation to be named a Target Zero Community and will receive consulting and technical assistance services worth approximately \$400,000.

CAA also received its first competitive grants from national animal welfare organizations in 2013. Grants included a \$23,000 “Return to Owner” grant from PETCO to cover the cost for citizens on government assistance to reclaim their animals from the shelter, a \$16,000 grant from the Petrie Foundation to offset transport costs to send adoptable dogs to homes in other communities, and a PetSmart grant for \$26,500 to provide low-cost spaying and neutering services for pet owners living in the 70814 zip code. A grant received from the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine, with services provided by Baton Rouge Spay/Neuter, helps to offset the costs of spaying and neutering animals adopted from the shelter. In total, CAA raised over \$300,000 in private donations and grants in 2013 to support its operations.

The cities of Baker, Zachary, and Central also fund a portion of these costs, as well as the cost of animal control services provided by City-Parish employees. Their pro rata share is based on the population counts from the 2010 census.

EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

Excellence in Budget Presentation and Financial Reporting

The Finance Department continues to demonstrate its commitment to providing high quality customer service through excellence in financial reporting. The department received the “Distinguished Budget Presentation Award” from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada for the 2013 Annual Operating Budget. This national award is the highest professional recognition in governmental budgeting. To receive this award, a governmental unit must publish a budget document that meets program criteria as a policy document, an operations guide, a financial plan, and a communications device. This is the 23rd consecutive year that the department has received this award.

The GFOA of the United States and Canada also awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the City-Parish for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2011. This prestigious national award recognizes conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government financial reports. In order to receive this award, a governmental unit must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized comprehensive annual financial report with contents conforming to program standards. The reports must also satisfy both accounting standards and applicable legal requirements. The department has produced a financial report meeting these standards and received this award 36 times since 1971.

Debt Management

Our government has invested considerable effort into maintaining a working relationship with bond rating agencies. This allows us to keep them informed concerning issues that affect our bond ratings. Rating agencies have cited strong financial management and the willingness to take prompt corrective budgetary action when necessary as positive attributes of our government. As a result, the City-Parish enjoys favorable bond ratings such as the underlying rate on the City 2% General Sales Tax Revenue Bonds from Moody’s Investors Service (Aa2), Standard and Poor’s (AA+), and Fitch Investors (AA+). These ratings result in very reasonable interest rates on debt.



In March of this year, the East Baton Rouge Sewerage Commission issued \$45 million in bonds through a loan and pledge agreement with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality to provide funding for sewerage projects. The loan carries a 0.95% interest rate and 20-year repayment term. This low-cost loan is the result of continuing efforts to find inexpensive financing to rehabilitate the sewerage system.

In May, the Sewerage Commission issued \$218,760,000 of subordinate lien revenue bonds to finance 25 additional projects for the Sanitary Sewer Overflow Capital Improvements Program. The bonds are secured by the sewer user fee and the one-half of one percent sewer sales and use tax.

In June, the Parish issued \$11 million of Series 2013A Parish Public Improvement Sales Tax Revenue Bonds to purchase land and buildings for use as a Public Safety Complex. The bonds will be paid back over a 15-year period and carry a 2.09% interest rate. The 2014 budget includes \$789,840 for the first year of debt service payments associated with the bonds.

The City-Parish financial management team continually monitors debt to determine if refinancing prior debt issues would result in savings. In May of this year, we successfully refinanced the Series ST-2005A Parish One-Half Percent Sales Tax bonds resulting in a savings of approximately \$5.2 million in interest expense over the remaining life of the bonds. The City-Parish will continue our strong financial practices and work with the rating agencies to prove our creditworthiness and secure the highest ratings possible in anticipation of issuing bonds for capital improvement programs in 2014.

Information Services Initiatives

The current financial, human resources, and procurement systems that were purchased in 1994 need to be replaced due to support issues, their inability to integrate with external data bases, and their inability to accommodate a mobile e-government. The City-Parish is in need of a new Enterprise Resource Planning system to bring together information from many different departments to improve efficiencies and effectiveness through the optimal use of resources, better planning, faster decision-making, and the elimination of redundancies.

In 2013, a team composed of representatives from the Information Services, Finance, Human Resources, and Purchasing Departments drafted a "Request for Qualifications" seeking a consultant to aid in the selection of a new system. Services to be performed by the consultant include needs assessment, development of specifications to be used in the procurement process, evaluation and selection of a vendor, contract negotiation, and project management oversight throughout the installation and implementation of the new system. Nine proposals were received. After review, the top three candidates gave oral presentations on their proposals. The team plans to have a consultant recommendation to the Metropolitan Council early next year.

Human Resources Initiatives

The City-Parish continues to expand the Training Development Institute, the Video Training Initiative, and the Leadership Development Institute by increasing the number of classes available for frontline supervisors, mid-managers, and upper-level leadership. Workforce and Succession Planning will continue in 2014 to assist departments with identifying key positions, the skills needed for those positions, and how to select the most qualified applicants to continue service without interruption. The Workforce and Succession Planning model also assists employees with resources for career development.

Purchasing Initiatives

In 2012, the City-Parish implemented a "best practice" in inventory management by contracting with an online government auction site that provides for greater exposure of surplus items to a broader audience. At no cost to the City-Parish, the auction runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with no geographical limitations. It is easy to use and more accessible to the public in that bidders can inspect items and bid at their leisure. Auctions are conducted faster and with



fewer auction-related expenses without the need for additional transportation and preparation costs. Better results are obtained due to the convenient format, larger number of participants, and other efficiencies resulting in higher revenues as well as a cost savings to the City-Parish and taxpayers. Through September of this year, over \$1.1 million in surplus items have been sold online.

In 2013, the Purchasing Department doubled the number of annual multiple award contracts in an effort to streamline the procurement process for departments. In particular, contracts were established for operational needs and services such as catering, replacement parts, repairs, and office supplies. Additionally, emergency contracts for mold remediation and generator rentals for disaster and other emergency needs have been established to aid in recovery efforts. These contracts allow departments to acquire an indefinite quantity, within stated limits, of supplies or services during a fixed period. Deliveries or services can be scheduled by placing orders with the contractor timelier while maintaining a fair and competitive process. Additionally, this allows the Purchasing Department to focus on expediting long lead time purchases to assist departments in meeting their mission, goals, and objectives.

Department of Public Works (DPW) Initiatives

A consulting firm was commissioned to perform an organizational study of DPW by reviewing the current organizational structure and recommending changes to create a more efficient and effective DPW that is accountable to both the residents and businesses.

A DPW Reorganization Steering Committee was organized to advise and shape a process designed to provide recommendations for the reorganization. Members of the committee included a wide cross-section of internal and external public works stakeholders composed of representatives of the Office of the Mayor-President, the Metropolitan Council, DPW employees, union representatives, industry and trade association representatives, and community stakeholders.

The committee reviewed the consultant's recommendations that the existing Department of Public Works be decentralized and divided into six new departments with self-contained budget units, clear functional responsibilities, performance metrics, and one director for each new department tasked with overseeing the critical departmental functions and services for which each is responsible.

The recommendations include the following new departments:

- The Department of Environmental Services
- The Department of Transportation
- The Department of Maintenance
- The Department of Development
- The Department of Buildings and Grounds
- The Department of Fleet Management

Once a transition plan has been finalized, a draft of the proposed changes needed in our local charter will be presented to the Metropolitan Council for approval. If the Council is in agreement, the changes will then be placed on the ballot for consideration by the citizens in accordance with the process for instituting changes to the *Plan of Government*.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS/GROWTH MANAGEMENT

We continue to make progress with our capital improvement programs with some very significant projects beginning in 2014. Details on these programs can be found in the section of the budget titled "Capital Improvement Programs." Following are selected highlights, including details of the activity that has occurred or can be expected in 2013 and 2014.



Sanitary Sewer Overflow Capital Improvement Program

The Sanitary Sewer Overflow Capital Improvement Program (SSOCIP) has made significant progress since the program began in 2006. As mandated by a United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) Consent Decree, all sewer overflows in the City-Parish must be reduced to meet design storm parameters by December 31, 2018. This new deadline reflects a four-year extension which was approved by the Department of Justice (DOJ), EPA, and LDEQ on June 16, 2013, in the “Revised Second Agreement and Order Regarding the Modification of the Consent Decree.”

The revised agreement extends the overall completion date in exchange for including and accelerating over \$150 million in Master Plan projects, including North Wastewater Treatment Plant (NWWTP) Master Plan projects, the NWWTP Public Project, emergency generators at over 400 pumping stations throughout the parish, and the installation of a state-of-the-art Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA) real time control system to allow the City-Parish to manage wet weather flows to maximize in-system storage and treatment to reduce overflows.

The current program manager’s first task was to develop a comprehensive Program Delivery Plan (PDP). The plan was written as the master plan for design and construction of the wet-weather projects, which will implement corrective actions to reduce sanitary sewer overflows and meet the requirements of the Consent Decree. The plan is revised periodically to refine the design of several projects. The City-Parish will realize a significant cost savings by combining some of the projects, which will also provide a reduction in construction inconveniences to residents and business owners.

In 2013, work has progressed in the areas of design engineering, bidding services, and construction. There are 109 active projects, of which 49 have been completed, with a total construction value of nearly \$500 million. An additional 23 projects valued at approximately \$340 million are under construction, and 37 projects valued at approximately \$340 million are in the design phase.

The current estimated cost for completing the revised program is \$1.6 billion (\$1.47 billion for construction and \$135 million for SSO program administration). The PDP is currently under analysis and review, with a focus on reducing and containing costs. The financial model for the program is constantly being monitored by a financial team to ensure that the operations, as well as the capital needs, of the sewer system can be met.

Throughout 2014, most of the design of the PDP projects will be completed and many projects will enter into the construction phase, while some projects currently under construction will be completed and closed out. Projecting through the end of 2014, 63 projects will be completed, 24 projects will be under construction, and the design of the remainder of the projects will be completed and awaiting construction. Complete information on the program can be found on the City-Parish’s website, www.brgov.com, under Baton Rouge Sewer Program.

Green Light Plan

In October of 2005, the citizens of East Baton Rouge Parish approved an extension of the current one-half percent (1/2%) sales and use tax for street and road improvements. With this vote, the tax that was previously referred to as the “pothole tax” was extended until the year 2030. The tax proposition called for 70% of the proceeds to be used for transportation improvements, including all costs associated with the construction of new roads, widening of existing roads, and intersection and signalization improvements. The projects funded through this portion of the tax are part of the Green Light Plan (GLP). Twenty-seven percent of the proceeds of the tax are being used to continue the road rehabilitation program, and the remaining three percent will be used for beautification and street enhancement projects. The City-Parish has taken advantage of available federal dollars to provide a portion of the funding for projects, including the Central Thruway project. All collections in Baker, Zachary, and Central dedicated for street improvements are remitted directly to and administered by those municipalities.



The capital budget includes the appropriation of \$7,384,910 in anticipated revenue collections in 2014 for transportation improvement projects. The uses for the pay-as-you-go funding include: program administration and inspection services, \$3,371,000; Highland Road/Burbank Drive Connector right-of-way acquisitions, \$1,145,000; and Glen Oaks Drive (Plank Road to McClelland Drive) right-of-way acquisitions, \$2,868,910.

A detailed chart is included in the section of the budget titled “Capital Improvement Programs” outlining the current status of the projects in the program. Also, complete information on this program can be found on the City-Parish’s website, www.brgov.com, under the Green Light Plan.

Riverfront Development

The riverfront and skyline of downtown Baton Rouge continue to be transformed as more public and private investments are initiated and completed. Several of the master plans for downtown Baton Rouge focus on the importance of riverfront development to reconnect the downtown area to the Mississippi River, the region’s economic, environmental, and cultural anchor.

An expansion of the River Center was completed in 2012, enabling Baton Rouge to host the 2012 United States Bowling Congress. The addition of the 20,000-square-foot enclosure between the Arena and the Exhibition Hall provides a covered and climate-controlled gathering space, making the River Center one of the largest meeting spaces in Baton Rouge.

The first phase of the North Boulevard Town Square was completed in the spring of 2012. The square functions as the hub for social, recreational, and cultural events and is complemented by a number of public and private sector initiatives. The second phase is currently under design and includes a tree-lined promenade along the widened walkway in front of the Old State Capitol connecting Town Square to River Road, the Shaw Center, the Louisiana Art and Science Museum (LASM), and a pedestrian corridor under the mature live oak trees leading east to Fifth Street.

The redesign and construction of Galvez Plaza was completed in 2012 as part of Phase I of the North Boulevard Town Square. Downtown concerts and events, such as the popular “Live After Five” concert series, are held in the plaza. A permanent canopy stage called “The Crest” was completed in August of 2013 and features a performance truss system that can be hoisted to accommodate lighting and speaker systems.

Construction of Repentance Park also concluded in early 2013. Designed to provide a venue for large events, as well as passive recreation and a unique water feature, Repentance Park serves as a component of the southern anchor of the Arts and Entertainment District. The park connects the LASM, River Road, Old State Capitol, River Center, City Hall, Galvez Plaza, and the Town Square.

A new levee/riverfront access point will be constructed in early 2014, providing ADA compliant accessibility and bicycle access to the riverfront at Florida Street and River Road. A multi-use path along River Road will connect the LASM and the Town Square to the new access point, better linking downtown to LSU via the levee bike path. Crosswalk improvements along River Road are also planned for the intersections of North Boulevard, Convention Street, and Florida Boulevard. To complement this project, streetscape improvements are planned for Lafayette and Florida Streets.

The design of the LASM Plaza, a new urban plaza in downtown, is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2014. This outdoor area north of the museum is envisioned to provide a comfortable space for small to large gatherings of students and/or visitors with available seating and other site amenities.

Planning and engineering will also begin in early 2014 for the Downtown Greenway project, which will provide a functional pedestrian and bicycling corridor that utilizes the existing interstate infrastructure to link inner city residential neighborhoods and LSU to parks, businesses, and cultural attractions. It will also connect area attractions, museums, and existing trailhead links such as the South Boulevard trailhead at the levee. The greenway will feature lighting,



landscaping, signage, recreational links and facilities, and public art as well. The project was selected by the EPA to participate in its “Greening America’s Capitals” program.

Three projects from the Riverfront Development Plan are expected to be in the planning stages in 2014. These include the City Hall Plaza project, which is an extension of Galvez Plaza, a northern extension of the levee bike path, and a River Road improvement in front of the LASM and Repentance Park. A pedestrian promenade along St. Phillip Street, which is an expansion of Repentance Park, will also be constructed as part of Phase II of the North Boulevard Town Square.

Investment in our riverfront continues to strengthen the economy of downtown and our great parish. In 2012 and 2013, downtown welcomed 30 new businesses. Thousands visit downtown each year to sample the great food, nightlife, and local flair offered by our area’s restaurants, while corporations recognize Downtown Baton Rouge as the center of commerce in the parish. Over 500 residential units are also currently in planning or construction.

Library Capital Improvements

Construction of the new Main Library is anticipated to be complete in the fall of 2013, with a grand opening scheduled for the spring of 2014. Based on its design, this new 129,000-square-foot facility will qualify for the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver Certification. The annual operational impact of the new larger facility is estimated to be an additional \$910,000.

Design discussions for the new River Center Branch Library began in the summer of 2012, and included many opportunities for input from members of the public. The design phase is expected to be completed by the fall of 2013. Construction should begin in 2014 and is estimated to take two years to complete.

Funding in the amount of \$1.4 million is included in the 2014 budget for a remodeling project at the Bluebonnet Regional Branch. With the migration of genealogy to the new Main Library, it will be necessary to repurpose that space. A new expanded teen section, collaborative study areas, as well as a larger circulation workroom to accommodate radio frequency identification technology are prominent features of the proposed redesign.

Planning continues on the South Baton Rouge Branch Library.

Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport

The Airport’s terminal modification project is scheduled to be completed before the end of this year. The project includes the expansion of the existing rotunda by 14,500 square feet, allowing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoint to be moved to the new rotunda area for a more efficient operation that can accommodate an additional security line. Moving the TSA checkpoint to the expanded area of the rotunda will allow the current rotunda area to become a pre-checkpoint arrival court, where unticketed airport visitors can comfortably await arriving passengers or extend farewells to departing passengers. New restrooms and a vending area will be constructed in the arrival court after the checkpoint is relocated.

QUALITY OF LIFE/CULTURAL INITIATIVES

Baton Rouge continues to celebrate its heritage, use historic assets for community revitalization and development, and build an appreciation for the performing and visual arts as well as cultural events. Of equal importance is the development of partnerships to promote and provide volunteerism and educational opportunities for our citizens, our health, and the general appearance of our parish. The following ongoing cultural, health-improvement, youth development and employment, volunteering, and planning initiatives support our commitment in these areas:



Cultural Initiatives

The 2014 budget includes continued support for partnerships with non-profit agencies to provide funding for festivals and cultural events, including the Baton Rouge Blues Festival, FestForAll, Live After Five, Sunday in the Park, and Earth Day.

Also funded is continued support for facilities and programs to enrich and promote cultural life and preserve heritage that include the Baton Rouge Symphony, the USS KIDD Veterans Memorial, the Louisiana Art and Science Museum, and the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge.

Healthy Baton Rouge Initiatives

In response to America's growing obesity problem and its relationship to chronic diseases, the U.S. Conference of Mayors launched the "Mayors' Healthy Cities Initiative" to promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. The City-Parish has received national recognition for the work that has been accomplished, including being named one of 12 finalists for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Roadmaps to Health Prize.

The initiative was awarded a \$1 million "Fresh Beginnings Grant" from the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation. An additional \$1.2 million in matching funds was secured bringing the total project budget to \$2.2 million. The program, which began on September 1, 2013, funds the Red Stick Mobile Farmers Market, the Healthy Corner Store initiative, the Food Access Policy Commission, and improved physical fitness equipment and training for four Baton Rouge schools. Zip codes 70805, 70807, and 70802 are being targeted for participation.

Healthy BR, in collaboration with partners, developed a community-wide message about healthy eating and active lifestyles, **5-2-1-0+10**, and has assisted with the rollout of this message in all East Baton Rouge Parish elementary schools, BREC parks, YMCA facilities, clinics, and hospitals. The curriculum stresses the importance of a minimum of "5" servings of fruits and vegetables per day, limiting recreational screen time to "2" hours, "1" hour of physical activity, "0" sweetened drinks, and "10" hours of sleep.

The HealthyBR.com website includes all local health and wellness services, programs, and information in an easy-to-access format for the community. Also included is a "Healthy Calendar," which keeps the community up-to-date on health events.

Youth Development and Employment Initiatives

Mayor's Youth Advisory Council (MYAC)

The mission of the MYAC is to represent and advocate on behalf of youth throughout the parish. The students chosen must have solid communication skills and be able to work well with others in a collaborative manner. They must also be able to identify problems, and be willing to actively search for and work toward solutions.

In August 2012, the MYAC was awarded a \$71,500 grant from the State Farm Youth Advisory Board to develop a peer awareness campaign with the Mayor's Healthy City Initiative to promote healthy living among youth. For the past year, members of the Youth Advisory Council have been completing service-learning projects, conducting park clean-ups, designing and creating their own website, and writing and producing an original song and video to promote healthy living among young people.

Big Buddy LEVEL UP! Summer Internship Program

The Office of the Mayor-President and the Big Buddy Program partnered to provide high-school-aged youth with summer internships at businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to help develop and support their future



employment endeavors. This partnership provided an opportunity to work with the community's most under-supported youth to build resiliency against the three major threats to the economic development of our community – poverty, crime, and academic failure. The eight-week internship placed approximately 100 students within organizations and assigned each participant to a mentor at his or her workplace host site. Additionally, the summer interns attended Tool Time Workshops once a week to learn life tools such as business acumen, punctuality, proper attire, and financial management. Each intern had an opportunity to earn a stipend up to \$1,500. The program was designed using a Junior Achievement curriculum that helps to prepare young people for success in the global economy by providing them with real-world experience and hands-on business activities. The 2014 budget includes \$200,000 in funding for this partnership.

Love Our Community Summer Youth Employment Program

The adolescent years are critical times for engaging young people in meaningful activities that help develop valuable skills and knowledge that will benefit them for the rest of their lives. The Love Our Community Summer Youth Employment Program gives youth ages 14 to 16 the opportunity to earn income while completing work that benefits themselves, the environment, and the community. This experience will not only give them an opportunity to engage in real world work experiences, but also provide them with multiple educational and professional development opportunities that set the foundation for future employment and academic success.

The program, which began in 2013 after being funded through a mid-year supplemental appropriation, engages youth in hands-on environmental stewardship projects and introduces them to the environmental issues that impact their quality of life. In addition, participants are provided the opportunity to become change agents by developing and leading projects that will make a difference in their communities, while creating a sense of pride and ownership because the youth play an active role in making their community a better place to live, work and play. The 2014 budget includes \$200,000 in funding for this program.

During the summer of 2013, the four-week program employed approximately 87 youth from across the parish in five teams and gave them the opportunity to gain environmental and neighborhood revitalization work experience. Teams worked on community projects such as:

- Fighting blight by transforming overgrown and vacant lots into community gardens and painting murals on blighted buildings.
- Participating in various environmental stewardship projects, including collecting recyclable materials for use in the community gardens.
- Promoting sustainability by installing irrigation systems and building compost bins.

Truancy Initiative

The initiative to reduce truancy is a collaborative community effort led by the Mayor's Office, Office of the District Attorney, East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office, and the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. The East Baton Rouge Parish Family and Youth Services Center (FYSC) opened in September of 2012. The mission of FYSC is to identify children who have exhibited truant tendencies, assess the causal problems for these tendencies, and provide access to services to the children and their families to eliminate the causal problems. Multiple organizations are located at this one-stop center in an effort to proactively address the challenges faced by truant students and their families. This approach allows for team-based collaborative problem-solving strategies and empowers families and community networks to target the issues related to truancy and juvenile crime, while addressing challenges to the family unit. FYSC provides services including grief counseling, services for school attendance and behavior, education assessments, GED assistance, job skills training, and case management.



Children's Advocacy Center

The budget includes \$25,000 in funding for core staffing support and facility maintenance at the Baton Rouge Children's Advocacy Center. The center provides support for child victims of sexual assault and physical abuse in an effort to reduce psychological and physical trauma of victims; supports the community through prevention and education efforts; coordinates criminal justice agency efforts to increase the reporting of child sexual assault and physical abuse; and promotes the investigation, prosecution, and conviction of child abuse perpetrators. Representatives from the City-Parish Police Department, the Office of the District Attorney, and the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office are integral partners with this agency.

Volunteerism Initiatives

Baton Rouge Proud (BR Proud)

In 2011, the City-Parish launched BR Proud, a high-impact service plan that provides residents with opportunities to contribute to their community through service. This initiative targets Baton Rouge's most pressing challenges while encouraging the growth of a volunteer force across a range of neighborhoods and agencies. The plan matches volunteers with service initiatives, such as revitalization of blighted neighborhoods and preparation of disadvantaged students in pre-K through third grade for success in school. The creation of this innovative plan was made possible through receipt of the Cities of Service Leadership Grant award funded jointly by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Bloomberg Philanthropies.

As part of the BR Proud service plan, the Police Department and the Office of Community Development partnered with employees of Entergy for a day of service on October 22, 2013, to make 18 homes near Istrouma High School more energy-efficient. The improvements will support sustainability for Louisiana's future, while helping low-income families reduce energy use and lower energy costs. The volunteer work included caulking around windows, installing weather stripping around external doors, repairing holes and cracks in floors and walls, replacing incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent ones, and installing water heater blankets.

Love Your Block

In accessing the city's challenges and identifying where volunteers could make a difference, many people pointed to the links between neighborhood blight, lack of community organizations, and higher crime rates. One way to combat these issues is to increase the stability of a neighborhood through the active participation of its residents. The "Love Your Block" initiative is a competitive grant award program that gives residents the opportunity to apply for grants to physically transform public spaces. Successes to date include the award of 22 grants to community organizations, the planting of more than 50 trees, the creation or enhancement of 38 community gardens, and the collection of more than 1,800 pounds of litter. This work was accomplished through various partnerships by approximately 1,467 volunteers who provided more than 8,600 volunteer hours to transform communities. Additional grant funds provided by the Cities of Service Coalition were awarded to organizations in October 2013.

Third Grade Reads

The Third Grade Reads program leverages the power of volunteers to help children attain reading level proficiency by the beginning of the fourth grade. Through a partnership involving the Office of the Mayor-President, the Big Buddy Program, and the school district, volunteers tutor high-need pre-kindergarten to third-grade students in reading in after-school programs. This volunteer-based literacy initiative intervention program is designed to provide struggling readers with more opportunities to read using research-based tutoring methods to help improve student reading levels and ultimately increase their chances of long-term educational success. To date, the Third Grade Reads initiatives have impacted literacy skills in approximately 75 students at three at-risk schools and distributed more than 150 books to students who do not have access to books at home.



In 2013, the Office of the Mayor-President received a \$50,000 program implementation grant for the Third Grade Reads literacy initiative and Love Your Block neighborhood revitalization competitive grant program.

FUTUREBR

FUTUREBR, the comprehensive master plan for land use and development in East Baton Rouge Parish, was unanimously adopted in 2011 by both the Planning Commission and the Metropolitan Council.

The Strategic Implementation Plan includes four primary strategies to be accomplished within the first two years after the plan was adopted. Responsibility for prioritizing implementation of the plan was given to the FUTUREBR Implementation Team (FIT).

In April 2013, the FIT identified several priority action projects that it supported in connection with the implementation of the FUTUREBR Strategic Implementation Plan. Most of those initiatives have now been undertaken and are currently being implemented. Some of the more significant initiatives acted on in 2013 or in line for further action in 2014, are listed below.

Develop a New Transportation System

- Crafting a “Complete Streets” policy to require multimodal transportation planning to be presented to the Metropolitan Council in early 2014.
- Establishing and funding a “Great Streets” program and continuing to implement congestion relief, connectivity, and increasing capacity through selected road and street projects.
- Considering an extension of the Green Light Plan tax for future road and street projects.
- Beginning construction in 2014 on the Downtown Greenway, which will increase biking and walking opportunities between City Park and Memorial Park, while providing levee and riverfront access to the Mississippi River Trail from Florida Boulevard and River Road.
- Participating in the Louisiana Intrastate Rail Compact to investigate and study the feasibility of a commuter rail connection between Baton Rouge and New Orleans.
- Supporting transportation initiatives that will provide for more local control and autonomy for development of a parish transportation system by participating in the road transfer program of the Louisiana Department of Transportation when beneficial to the City-Parish.

Create an Urban Renewal Program

- As a catalyst project for urban renewal, Ardentale, formerly known as Smiley Heights, received local funding for initiating wetland mitigation, land clearing design, and property maintenance of the first phase of the development. Other state and local school funding has been pledged for the programming and design of a community college center and charter high school for the site.
- Pursuant to the Plan Baton Rouge II Master Plan, the “Central Green” concept of downtown serves as an anchor for the City Hall Plaza, the North Boulevard Town Square, and other downtown amenities.
- Downtown energy brought economic development such as the announcement and groundbreaking of the new IBM building, the restoration of the old Capitol One Bank building, and the opening of a new Hampton Inn Suites hotel overlooking the river. Residential opportunities also expanded with over 500 units currently in planning or construction.
- The “Better Block BR” project along Government Street demonstrated the impact of transportation design concepts within the context of surrounding land use and assisted in creating a unified vision for urban revitalization in that area. Momentum from the project helped to create infill on vacant storefronts along Government Street and resulted in the opening and development of three new businesses in the target area.
- In 2014, the City Parish will initiate a more robust code enforcement strategy within the parish to combat blighted properties and their negative impact on the community.



- Key capital improvement projects, such as the Ardendale development and the redevelopment of the former Woman’s Hospital facility, will spur additional investment in the Mid City area.

Align the City-Parish’s Unified Development Code (UDC) with FUTUREBR

- In 2013, the Zoning Advisory Committee created a Design Guidelines subcommittee, which formed five separate work groups to devise design standards and guidelines for incorporation into city planning along with urban design levels. These design recommendations will be proposed as amendments to the UDC and presented for approval to the Planning Commission and Metropolitan Council in 2014.
- The City-Parish retained John Fregonese, primary author of the FUTUREBR Plan, to assist the Planning Commission staff in drafting the recommended UDC language to implement the design levels and guidelines. He will also coordinate the public informational meetings and provide examples of how the guidelines will be used across different areas of the City-Parish.

Create Balanced Housing and Thriving Neighborhoods

- Over 250 stakeholders participated in planning meetings to design the Ardendale Master Plan in the Smiley Heights area, which will include 850 single-family homes at affordable pricing. The project team will be seeking a Planned Unit Development designation in early 2014, with land clearing and site development beginning later in the year.

As of the end of 2012, a total of 303 action items had been identified as either “initiated, ongoing or institutional” indicating that approximately 52% of FUTUREBR was underway.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

2013 has been a truly exceptional year for economic development in the parish, resulting in some spectacular and game-changing projects that will create jobs, tax revenues, and new payroll opportunities for the citizens of the Baton Rouge area. These projects will further transform the downtown area and, perhaps most importantly, transform how others look at Baton Rouge on a national stage, resulting in yet more economic development opportunities.

This budget includes funding for 2014 business incentives previously approved by the Metropolitan Council, including a \$1.5 million annual payment for IBM, and a \$30,000 annual payment to Ameritas for employee parking reimbursement. Also included is funding for the Greater Baton Rouge Economic Partnership, the Baton Rouge Film Commission, the Ardendale Development, and commitments related to upcoming events.

Greater Baton Rouge Economic Partnership

The partnership with the Greater Baton Rouge Economic Partnership, a non-profit affiliate of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber (BRAC), has yielded some of the strongest results and performance since the partnership was implemented.

Since 2007, the City-Parish has engaged the BRAC to manage a professional business development program targeting high-quality job growth and increased economic opportunities for the Baton Rouge area. This partnership is performance-based, subject to continued achievement and reporting of results for the professional services provided. As a public-private partnership, BRAC uses the economic development agreement with the City-Parish to leverage external funding, with an overall budget that is funded 80% by private sources. The proposed *2014 Annual Operating Budget* includes an appropriation of \$450,000 for a professional services agreement for business development efforts between BRAC and the City-Parish.

In 2013, BRAC’s efforts have yielded one of the best years in the history of the organization. To date, BRAC has helped to secure seven economic development projects that will generate \$87.1 million in new annual payroll through the creation of 1,646 new direct permanent jobs. The seven companies will be investing \$356 million in capital investment in



new facilities in the parish. This reflects ongoing high performance by the BRAC team, which was recognized in April 2013 by *Site Selection* magazine as one of the Top 10 Economic Development Teams in the United States. This is the fourth consecutive year BRAC has received this honor.

Projects completed during the first three quarters of 2013 include:

- **IBM** announced a first-of-its-kind software development center at the former downtown site of The Advocate, which will provide 800 new jobs and be housed in a new office development downtown on River Road. Fourteen million dollars in state funds have also been dedicated to assisting higher education in doubling the size of computer science faculty with the goal of tripling the graduation rate of students with computer-science-related degrees.
- **CB&I**, the former Shaw Group, will be expanding its Government Solutions Group in Baton Rouge by 400 jobs. The project will retain 180 existing positions in this group with salaries averaging \$68,000 to \$78,000 per year plus benefits. Recently, CB&I announced an expansion into the former State Farm building in Towne Center.
- **Katoen Natie** is a Belgian company, which announced plans to create 210 new jobs and spend \$150 million to build a two million square foot building located on Highway 61 near Baker. Katoen Natie has also played a continuing role in working to recruit new companies to East Baton Rouge Parish in 2013 by hosting other Belgian companies considering expansion in the Capital Region.
- **Unifirst** is planning to build a new \$12 million regional laundry facility that will service Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Lafayette. The new operation will be located north of Cortana Mall and the company will hire 120 new employees with potential to hire additional people in the coming years.
- **Genesis Energy** will create 50 new direct jobs with an average salary of \$80,000 a year plus benefits as it builds a new 18-mile crude oil pipeline to connect its Port Hudson terminal to ExxonMobil Corporation's Baton Rouge refinery. Genesis will also add additional storage capacity to its terminal.
- **Honeywell** will invest more than \$200 million in new manufacturing projects at four Louisiana production facilities; one of which is in East Baton Rouge Parish. BRAC anticipates 24 new jobs to the Capital Region at an average wage of \$68,000 plus benefits. Significant investments will be used for engineering and new production capacity for new products being manufactured in Louisiana.
- **Jogler LLC** will relocate its liquid level gauge manufacturing and headquarters facility from Houston to Baton Rouge with plans to create 60 jobs. Their facility will be located in the Industriplex with potential to build a new facility in the coming years.

For the remainder of 2013, BRAC is working on three projects that could result in an additional 120 jobs through local expansions and national recruitment efforts.

To yield these results, BRAC's business development team marketed the City-Parish at national trade shows and site consultant events; conducted site consultant familiarization tours in the parish; conducted visits to existing small businesses and large employers, which are economic driver firms; advertised in targeted-sector trade publications; and served as the "one-stop" office for business recruitment and expansion prospects, consultation on state and local incentives, site details and visits, and project management. BRAC's recruitment efforts in 2013 have included recruitment missions to trade shows as well as industry-specific recruiting trips to meet with manufacturing and information technology companies in Detroit, Cleveland, Toledo, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Toronto.

Based on independent research, BRAC has identified target industry sectors that could yield major economic development opportunities in 2014 in the following sectors: chemical manufacturing and new energy, fabricated materials, software design and development, technical consulting and research, and advanced shared services. For the next year, the keys to



the parish's success in business retention and attraction will be continued high-quality prospect marketing and project management, industrial and commercial site certification and development, targeted international recruitment to attract foreign direct investment, talent development, and proactive workforce solutions.

To maintain transparency and accountability, BRAC's business development team presents monthly reports to the Administration and reports quarterly to the Metropolitan Council on projects, jobs and investment levels, and current activity. These reports keep both entities abreast of the overall activities of the team, and additional information is provided to individual Council Members regarding potential projects in their districts as they arise.

Baton Rouge Film Commission

This economic development agency of the City-Parish has been tasked with increasing the diversity of business within East Baton Rouge Parish as it relates to film and television production. The role of the Baton Rouge Film Commission continues to be two-fold, to market the City-Parish as a premiere international destination for film and television production, and to provide continuous logistical support to all productions filming in our region. Our hospitality and attention to detail continue to set Baton Rouge apart from the competition. Specific services include location scouting and script analysis, assistance in securing competitive rates on housing and accommodations through partnership with Visit Baton Rouge, assistance in securing permits, connection with local production resources, and liaison services among production companies, the community, and local government throughout the entire production schedule.

In 2013, the Baton Rouge Film Commission continued to promote and market the use of "BY BATON ROUGE," a software application hosted by Real Scout. This app provides productions with the opportunity to scout locations and to seek out crew personnel with a touch of a button on their smart phone, but more importantly it promotes local businesses to the film industry by connecting the needs of both, and it instantly provides mapping and navigational capabilities. The app has increased awareness of the Baton Rouge region with 1,692 downloads and 1,044 updates by local crew personnel and support service providers. In total there are currently 632 local businesses, photographs of over 1,500 local filming locations, and over 800 resumes included in the database.

Baton Rouge Film Commission marketing efforts in 2013 included premiering a vastly upgraded www.filmbatonrouge.com website. Following the new website launch, an average of 6,000 visit the site each month from around the world, with the bulk of those visits coming from the domestic market, followed by site visits from China, the United Kingdom, Canada, France, and Germany. The social media presence of the office is also increasing with over 7,000 "likes" on Facebook and 2,500 Twitter followers.

Local direct spending resulting from film and television production in 2013 is expected to be approximately \$104 million. These numbers are based on certified applications with the Louisiana Entertainment Office for film and television production. The types of production include studio-financed and independent feature films, commercials, reality television, films made-for-television, and a television mini-series.

Since the inception of the Baton Rouge Film Commission in 2007, the organization's efforts have attracted over more than 150 productions to film in our area and have generated direct spending of over \$700 million. This budget includes \$170,000 for the operations of the Commission in 2014.

Ardendale Development (Smiley Heights)

The proposed Ardendale development, originally known as Smiley Heights, will be located on a 198-acre undeveloped parcel of land owned by the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority (RDA). The development is located along Ardenwood and Lobdell Boulevard, north of Florida Boulevard. The proposed site was purchased with the assistance of the City-Parish through a Community Development Block Grant of \$1.5 million, and a grant from the East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority of \$460,000.



Ardendale is planned to become an Urban Village providing a mixed-use neighborhood with educational, residential, commercial, recreational, and passive activity uses. The RDA initiated a master planning process for the entire site through a week-long planning charrette ending in late September of 2013. The implementation of the master plan will begin with Phase I, a 28-acre site in the northeast quadrant off Lobdell Boulevard. A Baton Rouge Community College campus expansion for an Automotive Training Center (ATC), Allied Health and other community college facilities, as well as a Career Academy Charter High School of the East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP) School System will be included in this phase. Over \$30 million has been funded by the state for the ATC and other programs such as Allied Health. Architects are under contract working on site and building plans for the ATC, with building construction scheduled to begin in early 2015. The EBRP School System has budgeted \$17 million for the Career Academy High School.

A supplemental appropriation of \$433,300 was approved in 2013 to provide funding for land clearing. The 2014 budget includes \$184,500 to complete the pre-development scope of work for Phase I, which includes final planning and design, and preliminary infrastructure engineering.

Baton Rouge Events

In partnership with Visit Baton Rouge, the Official Travel Resource, the City-Parish will assist with several tourism-related events in 2014. Tourism brings more than two million visitors to Baton Rouge annually, and these visitors spend more than \$1 billion dollars in the area.

In 2014, Baton Rouge will host the fifth annual Bayou Country SuperFest to be held in Tiger Stadium. The event has grown to three days with the addition of George Strait as the headliner on Friday night. Baton Rouge was selected as a site for one of the final concerts of Strait's highly anticipated farewell tour, adding to this event's national appeal. The estimated economic impact of the 2013 event to our area was more than \$30 million. More than one-third of the visitors came from outside of the state of Louisiana with over one-half staying in area hotels. Other performers in the 2014 lineup will include Reba McEntire, Chris Young, Luke Bryan, Florida Georgia Line, Lee Brice, Easton Corbin, Gloriana, Jason Aldean, Eric Church, Hunter Hayes, Big & Rich, and Joe Nichols. The fifth Bayou Country SuperFest will be held during Memorial Day weekend next year.

The Louisiana Municipal Association has chosen Baton Rouge to host their 2014 annual convention. The convention will be held at Baton Rouge River Center and area hotels. With more than 1,200 attendees expected to use 3,000 room nights, the economic impact of hosting the state's municipal leaders in Baton Rouge is expected to be more than \$1.2 million. The City-Parish is considered the host of the convention and \$50,000 is included in the budget to provide funding for a portion of the costs associated with the event.

In 2012, Baton Rouge hosted the United States Bowling Congress Open Championships at the Baton Rouge River Center. Seventy thousand bowlers and guests visited the area over the 151 days of the tournament, with direct spending of more than \$64 million and an economic impact of \$113 million. With this success, Baton Rouge was awarded the 2017 Women's Championships and the 2025 Open Championships. The 2017 Women's Championships is expected to attract an estimated 36,000 bowlers and guests to the area, with an estimated economic impact of \$50 million. The budget includes \$100,000 for the 2014 commitment related to the 2017 event.

Conclusion

Our Administration continues to seek ways to provide greater services with increased efficiency to the citizens of our parish. While we have made much progress and have had many accomplishments over the last nine years, there are many challenges ahead. I believe that we have what it takes to work together to face those challenges, many of which are impacting local governments across the nation.



In closing, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our Metropolitan Council, and all of the employees, for their service to the citizens of East Baton Rouge Parish. It is an honor and a pleasure to serve as your Mayor-President.

Sincerely,

Melvin L. "Kip" Holden
Mayor-President