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July 20, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT RELEASES 2018 DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

Baton Rouge, LA - The Downtown Development District has released the 2018 update to their Development Toolkit - a document offering demographics, statistics, and other resources meant to meet the needs of the development and business community.

The data presented within the document gives a current snapshot into the downtown economy, indicating the continuance of a strong, positive direction for downtown in all areas. With 43 active projects and approximately \$2.25 billion total invested, the data reflects a high private investment total over the last seven years catalyzed by initial public investments.

"The data shows that downtown continues to grow and attract private investment. This toolkit highlights the many levels of development happening downtown and the dynamic transformation we are currently experiencing." - Davis S. Rhorer, Executive Director of the Downtown Development District.

Some notable developments in addition to those found in the toolkit:

- The **Water Campus** is the economic and cultural southern anchor of downtown, strengthening the connection to LSU along the Nicholson corridor. Several developments have recently been completed including The Estuary Conference and Event Venue and the WaterWorking co-share workspace. Additional residential units, offices, and parks are currently under construction.
- Recent **Riverboat Gambling State Legislation** has been approved and allows landside gambling, promoting adjacent land developments/improvements for our two riverboats and the opportunity to use existing docks.
- A 2 cent **Hotel Occupancy Tax** was recently approved by voters and will be used to attract conventions/major attractions/sporting events to the Capitol City and its Raising Cane's River Center. The funds are also allocated for capital improvements to the Raising Cane's River Center.



- The **City-Parish of East Baton Rouge Administration** continues prioritizing quality of life and transportation improvements including the renovation of the Theatre for Performing Arts and Mestrovic Plaza, as well as Bus Rapid transit connecting LSU, Downtown, Mid City, and North Baton Rouge.
- Public greenspaces continue to be implemented including **Town Square Phase II**, **Riverfront Plaza**, the **Downtown Greenway**, and the **reconfiguration of River Road** to three vehicular lanes and a bicycle/pedestrian path.
- Investment continues to stabilize **Downtown East** with 15 current projects that include residential units, office space, and entertainment venues.
- The redesign of **Government Street**, to include three vehicular lanes, sidewalk improvements, and bicycle lanes, is currently under construction and will better link Downtown to Mid-City. The project has spurred a number of investments and solidified a strong inner-city urban core.

The Toolkit shows that over the last five years, property values have increased and the total number of construction related permits as reported by the EBR Permit and Inspection Department is over 600; evidence of the continual investments made within the downtown area.

Downtown living is still on the upswing with 273 residential units currently under construction or in planning. \$167.8 million has been invested in residential development since 2010.

Commercial activity and taxable sales continue to increase due in large part to the 140,000 daily visitors to downtown. Downtown is now home to almost 26,000 jobs and 644 businesses.

The Toolkit also features a demographic summary of downtown residents and workers, and provides information about the DDD office, economic incentives, maps such as land-use and daily population inflow/outflow, and a section that explains the steps for obtaining planning commission approval and required City/Parish permits.

Also found within the Toolkit document, is detailed information on downtown tourism, the hotel market, and the Raising Cane's River Center. The 1,000 events and 9 major attractions bring over 1.5 million tourist into the downtown area on an annual basis, creating a perfect synergistic relationship with downtown businesses. Downtown will soon have seven hotels within walking distance to the River Center, with the recent opening of Watermark Baton Rouge and upon the completion of the Courtyard by Marriott, capturing approximately 9% of the total number of rooms within the Metropolitan Statistical Area.



Downtown's successes are made possible by all of the individuals, developers, and businesses supporting our cause and enabling Downtown Baton Rouge to grow and develop into a place to live, work, and play. Special thanks to the Honorable Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome and the Metropolitan Council for their continued support of our efforts.

The 2018 Development Toolkit can be viewed online at <https://downtownbatonrouge.org/spotlight/2018-development-toolkit/>.

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