



The mission of St. Landry Parish Economic Development is to provide leadership in economic and community development that facilitates growth opportunities leading to enhanced prosperity for St. Landry Parish businesses, communities, its citizens and its youth.

Executive Directors Report

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I - Business Center/Small Business Update

The Business Center continues to be a growing resource for conducting training, planning, counseling, board sessions and various types of planning sessions designed to promote enhanced partnerships and collaboration for the parish.

On August 10, 2016, in collaboration with the LSBDC, 'Defining Your Target Market' small business seminar was held with strong attendance. Presenters discussed the importance in defining your target market and knowing your existing customer data. The next session of the ULL SBDC free consultation services for those entrepreneurs and recent business start-ups is scheduled for Tuesday, September 6, 2016.

Our next upcoming small business seminar is scheduled for August 24, 2016 on the topic of 'Search Engine Optimization/SEO' conducted by Accolades IT Consulting. Presenters will discuss important aspect of SEO in making your website easy for both users and search engine robots to understand.

We will be temporarily storing some of the salvageable furniture items from the tourism center being flooded in our warehouse area. At this point there is no need to for their staff to have working space, but we have space identified should it become necessary.

From our discussion at the last meeting pertaining to the roof of the business resource center we have an individual coming to provide an overview assessment of the roof, complete with photos, as well as a list of long and short term solution alternatives.

The 2016/2017 Louisiana Business Incubation Association (LBIA) Business Incubator Application was successfully submitted on August 8, 2016. The total amount of grant funding requested was in the amount of \$25,000. If the grant is awarded there is a 25% match requirement for SLED making the total investment 31,250 for the building upgrades. The grant announcement date is scheduled for August 25, 2016. The focus on this grant has to be technology related upgrades, which is a change from previous years. Based off these new requirements the following items listed below were outlined in detail throughout application for funding usage.

- Transformation of old kitchen area into a collaborative think tank to serve as an innovative technology setting that could be used for business brain storming, student innovation contests and in general an area where people come together to solve issues and build capacity. CAVE (Collaborative Audio Visual Environment)
- Updating the conference room with advanced video/teleconferencing technology

- Upgrading the Wi-Fi technology to service the back section of the Business Center.

We would welcome discussion on additional improvements the board may have on additional ideas, specifically as it pertains to technology.

We project to have 10 tenants active in the Business Center effective August 1st:

C&C Painting and Pressure Washing

Boone Speech and Learning Services

Miracle Ear

Happy Housemaids

Magnolia Community Development Corporation

Victory Manufacturing

WIB 40

Double J Express, LLC

Charles G. Lawson Trucking, Inc

Relentless Designs

United Transportation is still a question mark for September 2016.

II – Communications

We urge all of you to regularly review our primary website at www.opportunitystlandry.com and further all of the great things being written and posted at www.SLPforward.com. Currently, we are in the process of linking both websites by way of RSS feeds to maximize website traffic and allow users a method of getting relevant and up to date information sent to them as each respective website is updated in a timely manner all in one space. We would love to hear your ideas and experiences of best practices that we could consider incorporating into one or both of these online portals.

To date www.slpforward.com, currently holds a total of forty-nine (49) articles shining the light on positive things happening throughout St. Landry Parish. One (1) article per week is typically uploaded onto the site on a consistent basis providing fresh and updated article content. This initiative continues to be active on NPR radio.

We are in the process of working with Parish Government to identify the final team of contractors for the Phase II of this campaign. We anticipate final outcome of these discussion to come before the SLED Board for review and financial consideration at the September round of board meetings.

With the website's foundation now solid, a Google analytics test is conducted monthly to evaluate website traffic directly to the site. During the time period beginning July 11th through August 12th Slpforward's number of page views reached 722 with a total of 454 sessions. The numbers on a recurring monthly basis continue to remain consistent.

We continue to work with Parish Government to collect data sets, such as the smooth ride home improvements, that will be used to upgrade our existing GIS platform. Phase 1 of mapping tool can now be found on the home page of www.opportunitystlandry.com. We are also working the Acadiana Planning Commission on an EDA Grant that would allow for a regional GIS program that would provide value to each of the communities of Acadiana in addition to site selectors, tourist, companies, etc.

III – Property/Site Development

We continue to promote active development at the major interchanges on the I-49 corridor by working with the Mayors, boards and community leaders in most of the impacted communities about planning and building capacity for development.

Our industrial site development efforts with the newly formed team of One Acadiana are steadily moving forward. Our goal is to work towards 2 shovel ready sites in SLP for 2016. We hope to begin an active recruiting campaign on a 500 acre heavy industrial site, Nexus Energy Park in partnership with LED and OA in the next 30 days.

IV Projects Update Summary: 23 Active, 1 New; (Nova) 2 Pending Announcement, (Hippo, Lot), 2 Parked, (Shell, Zeus) 1 Pending Park (Code)

Project Base – This is a project looking at the utilization of one of core parish transportation facility assets for international business investment. We are still working through due diligence on feasibility. We are told by company execs that the project still has an interest in our location, but are still waiting now for detailed responses to some of the requests for information made by our legal team.

Project Belt – This project has come about as a result of local BRE efforts and is a cooperative between a local employer and SLED in trying to bring in a supplier into their existing manufacturing facility. The project could create up to 100 FTE's if successful. An original proposal was submitted late last week so we don't anticipate a direct response, or direction for at least another 30 days

Project Brace – This is a retention project involving the purchase of an existing facility here in the parish. We are working closely with LED, as well as One Acadiana on this effort which could protect as many as 65 existing positions, as well as offer the potential to expand additional positions at this location. We are now told that there are more

details to be worked through with investment partners, which will slow the final decision/announcement of this project although it appears to still remain active.

Project Boost – This is a very large potential expansion project in terms of capital expenditure. This area company is planning to submit final plans to their board of directors at their May board meeting for final approval. The project would produce less than 15 new employees at very high wage scales and well up to 170 temporary construction jobs for a year or more. The current lending markets for this industry have slowed the projection for this project until 4th quarter 2016, 1st quarter 2017.

Project Clean – This is a manufacturing infill development project located in the center of the parish. We are continuing solid progress with their leadership in multiple areas with this project. We should still have a solid view of whether the project will come to build/rebuild stage over the next 30 - 45 days. If successful this project will create 50 new direct positions.

Project Code – This is an expansion project focused on light manufacturing looking to locate on the main transportation corridor in the center of the Parish. The company continues to conduct interim operations at their present location, but needs extra capacity to reach full potential. We are continuing to facilitate discussions and plans with land owners along the corridor on suitable sites for this effort. This project could add up to 20 additional full time positions. Pending any new updates this project will be parked for next month.

Project Duncan – This project is a cooperative submittal with OA and LED. It deals with a light fabrication and assembly. It has a CAPEX of \$3 million, 85 permanent jobs, with an average production wage is \$19.50 per hour plus benefits. We are pending updates from site consultants for next steps on this project.

Project Dye – This project is a cooperative submittal with OA and LED for development-stage Energy Company to build a chemical manufacturing facility. The project has a CAPEX of \$30 million, 100 permanent job and an average annual wage of \$60,000. This project is currently going through the site consultant process.

Project Expo – There will be an update on this project as part of the regular agenda.

Project Flap – This project is a cooperative submittal with OA and LED. The company looking to set up a new aerospace component manufacturing facility. Details of the project are being asked to remain confidential for the time being. The project is currently in the site consultant review process.

Project Fountain – This is a large scale commercial development project that discussions have been ongoing for some time national tenants are committed to this project and negotiations with landowners and real estate development partner are continuing on a regular basis. The development consortium for this project collectively met to move options forward with the project last week. We will be exploring the potential this over the next month to combine these negotiations with an interest in

Project Expo. In either event, this is still a large project that would be developed over time in phases.

Project Fresh – This is an in state expansion for the company, but a recruitment project for our parish. Initial job creation numbers are less than 6 with room for expansion. The project hinges to some degree on project vertical with land acquisition. The company is will to move quickly and the project could be a reality in as early as August of this year.

Project HIPPO – This is a heavy industrial project that is very large in scope on its investment and job creation potential. Currently, we are working with regional and state partners on identifying and meeting engineering requirements on the footprint site. There are not accurate job projection figures available on this project, but it has the potential to be very high with both job creation and capital expenditures. This project will soon be announced as the Nexus Energy Park.

Project League – This is a new recruitment project with major impact potential that would expand across the region and even the state. Meetings with company execs have been very positive, including the meetings with their team here last week. We are on the short list and expect some conclusion on their commitment over the next 30 -45 days. If successful this project would create up to 100 white collar high paying positions, collectively averaging close to 100k annually.

Project McCarty – This is a cooperative submittal with OA and LED for a new heavy manufacturing facility. Details of this project are asked to be held confidential at this point. This project is still in the site consultant evaluation/selection process.

Project Nova – This is joint submission project with OA and LED. It is a light manufacturer looking to locate in an existing central parish facility. This project would look to invest up to 4 million in facility upgrades and employ 50 full time positions over the first 3 years of operations. This is on the short list of two sites for the state so it has strong potential for a site visit in the near future.

Project Lot – This project is the expansion of an existing parish company into construction at new location and the further modification and refit of their existing facility within the parish. Assuming the existing facility backfills the same number of positions in its new use this project would create 45 new direct full time positions. The existing location now has approximately 25 full time positions. There is a ground breaking announcement on this project scheduled for August 28th on site in the Harry Guilbeau District. Time is TBA.

Project Protect - This is an in parish expansion project that has already made the land acquisition for their new site. The project could expand to up to 12 new manufacturing positions once the new location is operational. Construction on the new facility is tentatively slated for the 3rd quarter of this year.

Project Rest – This project deals with the redevelopment and reuse of land surrounding one of our interstate intersections. There continues to be positive meetings with pivotal

state agencies to move the project forward. Detailed job creations figures are still not available on the project. This will continue to monitor and update progress on a monthly basis.

Project Ride – This project represent an expansion of a large area retail site in the center of the parish. Property has been acquired and some initial site clearing work has been completed. There are currently some items being working out in a corporate structure that may move this project forward in the 4th quarter of 2016, 1st quarter 2017 start date. If successful this project could create up to 40 new positions.

Project Vanilla – This is a cooperative site submittal with OA and LED. Their site consultant has on a quick turnaround. The project is targeted towards an industrial facility to batch process chemicals for the oil and gas industry. At this stage the project does not have investment and job creation figures, but has specific site requirements that are a good fit for 2 SLP sites. Each of these has been submitted.

Project Vertical – This project is dealing with a light industrial manufacturer looking to put a new production facility in the Parish. We are still on formal funding verification from their overseas investment group. We continue to be assured that is coming soon. If successful this project would create up to 30 direct full time positions.

Project Youth – This is a very large recruitment project that we are currently in completion on a site in Houston. This project could be a very large capital expenditure project with projections as high as 400m. The site consultant is currently working on a specific site location in the central parish. This project had a significant setback late last month in property acquisition and is in the process of identifying alternative sites. We will assist and monitor this process by month.

Announced Projects

Project Lid – Announced Regional Retention - This project will relocate up to 100 immediate jobs and has potential to add an extra 75 full time direct positions to the parish for a total of 175 positions. The ground breaking ceremony for this project, C&G Container Scientific, was held on April 11th on site and was very well attended.

Project Outpost (A) – Announced Recruitment - This is a one of a kind Loves Travel Center that broke ground early in January 2016 in Port Barre. This will be the first center for Loves not located on an interstate highway. The location will serve as a full service 24 Hour travel center with a Subway Restaurant on location. This project will create at up to 35 direct full time positions.

Project Bayou – Announced Recruitment - This Wal-Mart Neighbor Center projected was announced earlier this month as being an example of highlighting the retail development potential here in the center of the Parish. This project is well into its construction process now and is projecting a formal opening on January 20th. This project will create between 90 and 100 direct full time positions.

Project Slip – Announced Expansion - This project was a major turnaround project with the Alon Refinery in Krotz Springs. The company made major investments in this effort, which brings significantly enhanced capacity to the Alon facility. For industry concerns the company would prefer that this project not be included in a major press announcement. This does not diminish the positive impact on our parish from this project. SLP Tourism continues to recognize record breaking lodging numbers for the later portion of 2015 as temporary workers made their place in area hotels, campgrounds, and RV Facilities. Over 2000 temporary construction jobs were brought into the parish with this effort. We are working now to confirm the number of permanent jobs that will ultimately be created with this expansion. We do not anticipate this number exceeding 15 in total.

Project Outpost – Announced Recruitment - This is the original Project Outpost. This project, the Go Bear Travel Center is going to be opening its doors within the next 2 weeks. The company is Gaubert Oil, which is base out of the Houma Thibodaux area and will be the 13th retail travel facility for the company. We along with Acadiana Works has been providing various levels of hiring assistance, including the use of the Business Center to interview management candidates for the new facility. This project is projected to create up to 45 new full time positions.

Project Lynx – Announced Recruitment -This project, The Hazelwood Energy Project, was formally announced on Sept 30th. This project is projected to create 123 direct full time positions, 135 indirect positions and 200 temporary construction related positions. Initial capital investment projections on this project are 400 million. This project also has the potential to lay the framework for significant future development.

Project Spin – Announced Recruitment This project is a small project that we are piloting as an incubation for oil field support services in C&C machining with Victory Manufacturing. We had hoped throughout the later part of 2015 to make a large announcement, but the company principal had some health challenges that slowed their work to a temporary stop. We are hopeful that in supporting this area of high demand labor force that we will be able to keep some of our machinist workforce in the parish with career opportunities.

Project Lift – Announced Recruitment - This project was formally announced over the weekend. The company Air Evac Life team will be basing rotary wing operations out of the St Landry Parish Airport. They are completing significant upgrades to one of the existing facilities and now have aircraft on the ground to assume operations. This successful project further highlights the huge upside for the SLP Airport, which tends to get overlooked as a key transportation asset of St Landry Parish. This project is anticipated to create 16 direct full time positions.

Project Strip – Announced Expansion - This is a large commercial project on a large multi-tenant commercial facility located on the I-49 Service road corridor, St Landry Plaza. The company, Rock Step Capital, made a formal announcement earlier this month through their President, My Andy Wiener. He pledged to bring as many as 8 new

national tenants to the facility over the next 2 years. This project could allow for up to 75 direct full time and a greater number of part time employees.

Project Essen - Announced Expansion Crest Industries, based in Pineville, Louisiana, will invest \$5 million to develop a new cutting, machining and fabrication facility in Eunice and add new machining centers to existing PCS equipment. Crest will retain 18 PCS jobs, and the expansion project will create 20 new jobs averaging \$50,000 per year, plus benefits. LED estimates the investment will result in an additional 24 indirect jobs, for a total of 44 new jobs in the Acadiana Region.

Project Rip – Announced Recruitment - This Company, Top Timber, and deals with the timber hardwood related processing. It is located to the rear of S&B Sawmill in the proximity of the Wal-Mart Distribution Center. The company had indicated that it could initially employ up to 12 full time positions with the potential to grow very quickly if certain international agreements can be established.

Project Roto – Announced Expansion - This is an existing company within the Parish, Noble Plastics that has acquired the Yahoo building to begin production of additional plastics components through a process call roto mold plastics production. There is a good potential that this project would bring in a partner supplier, Project Mat. This project will initially create 15 or less direct full time positions, but has a great potential for future expansion.

Project Alon – Announced Expansion - The Alon Refinery has recently completed an expansion at their facility to include the building of a rail transfer facility that will allow them more efficiently loading on and off load bulk rail materials to be utilized both in and out of their production facility. The project will create as many as 12 full time positions.

Project Runway – Announced Recruitment: A formal announcement was made for this project Thursday, February 20th at 1:30 PM at their new construction site just past Beau Chene High School. We conducted a follow-up site visit last week. There is solid progress on the foundation structure, which is the most time consuming portion of their building process. The company expects operations to commence in a matter of weeks. This project will create as many as 25 direct full time positions.

Project Martin – Announced Expansion: Bayou State Lumber Company, LLC, formerly known as Acadiana Hardwood, LLC. This company will create 29 permanent new jobs and retain 21. This mill is the only viable employment opportunity for most individuals in the area.

V – Area and Regional Development Items:

OA (One Acadiana)

We continue quality interaction on multiple levels with the staff at OA and LED as we look to enhance the economic development capacity for region. Some of the most recent activities include:

- Identifying support resources for businesses affected by flooding
- Efforts associated with the I-49 connector project
- Site identification/certification
- Joint request for proposal submittals

The St. Landry Chamber of Commerce board is in the process of significant change and transformation. We have implemented a new steering committee to help provide suggestions on future strategic alignment for the chamber. We have also selected a new leader for the Chamber, Mrs. Raquel Manual. Raquel started her new role last Wednesday.

Our most recent collaboration with Parish Tourism is assisting with their damage and storage of property with the flooding this is still ongoing at the Nubba Exit. This assistance will be ongoing along with our other regular coordination efforts.

With many of the challenges facing the regional economy it is important that we do everything we can to take care of our core employers. We are well into the process of BERG collaboration meetings with SLP companies. Throughout 2015 we tracked the progress of roughly 25 companies we met with throughout the year. In 2016 we look to expand that visitation base to 30 of the top sector employers we have in the Parish. To date this year we have sat down with twelve of these employers, which includes:

- Gaienne Lumber
- Giles Automotive Group
- Opelousas General
- Wal-Mart Distribution Center
- Alon Refinery
- Evangeline Downs
- Targil
- Sterling Automotive Group
- Noble Plastics
- Dixie Storage
- Crest Industries
- Service Machine Specialties
- Ventura Foods
- Acadian Medical Center
- Savoie's
- International Snubbing Services
- Immaculate Heart of Mary PCS – scheduled for August 19th

As a direct result of these visits Savoie's is now directly engaged with a partnership program called "economic gardening" that takes and in depth look at viable market expansion opportunities around the country and how they can possibly target these identified opportunities. Our recent direct involvement with flooding issues around the

Wal-Mart Distribution Center is another example of why this outreach and relationship building is important.

We have been reaching out to members of the St Landry School Board on an individual basis to discuss their selection process for a new superintendent. We have also help to facilitate multiple meetings with school board leadership and community and business leaders in the parish to provide input on their current selection process. The closeout for their search is scheduled for August 19th.

We are directly involved with numerous initiatives with the Acadiana Planning Commission, APC and its newly incorporated Metropolitan Planning Organization. The development of the CEDS Regional Economic Plan, as well as a Regional Transit Plan for Acadiana are two of the largest picture items we are currently engaged on with the APC. We continue to engage them with the Grand Coteau Council on improvements to their business corridor.

We are continuing our active efforts with a board seat on the ARA (Acadiana Regional Alliance). Some of the key items of consideration at the last board meeting were:

- Continuing updates on the evolving I-49 South Project
- Updates on the Acadiana Food Alliance
- Best practice discussion for the parish entities
- Reginal Acadiana familiarization tour this fall.

We have had very productive discussion over the past six weeks with SLCC and their leaders on important educational items for the area. These discussions have ranged from the discussions of the process for a new K-12 Superintendent, dual enrollment with SLP Schools, the new RN Program, the LPN Program, as well as other new programs being considered as part of their Corporate College Program. We have also agreed to once again support a SLED scholarship for a St Landry Parish resident attending SLCC next year through proceeds provided through GOEIDC.

We continue to efforts to support Dr. Kimberly Russell and her team at LSU-E in multiple areas. This includes some exciting K-12 connection opportunities that will identify LSU-E as one of only 44 colleges in the United States for this dynamic pilot opportunity with Pell funding. They have also been engaged in the discussions of the process for a new K-12 Superintendent for SLP. We have also agreed to once again support a SLED scholarship for a St Landry Parish resident attending LSU-E next year through proceeds provided through GOEIDC.

AEDC (Acadiana Economic Development Council)

We working with InnoV8 Acadiana, seven parish economic development organizations, Winrock International and JP Morgan Chase on the formal process for a regional business accelerator program. We are planning a dedicated retreat later next month to ensure that AEDC is well aligned to compliment development needs of the region.

Other items that have already been funded by AEDC this state fiscal year include:

- A detailed economic impact analysis of the of the I-49 extension.
- High grade photography of key employers in the region
- Drone flyovers of key Acadiana Assets
- Promoting high profile recruiting trips, such as the Site Selectors Guild and IAMC
- Supporting eligible individual key priorities in each parish

We continue efforts with the CEO support organization called Vision St Landry on strategically identifying priorities that could have significant impacts for SLP over the next 5 – 15 years. This group has also been instrumental in the communication with SLP Schools in their Superintendent search process.

VI – Community Development in St Landry Parish

We continue to help facilitate efforts between Parish Presidents on legal options on the St Luke’s Hospital for valuation and transfer of ownership with the facility. We now have a formal appraisal on the property. The project outcome is in final consideration by both parish presidents to present to their respective parish councils.

We continue efforts with Opelousas leadership to explore options important to their leadership structure. Our most current discussions and planning efforts are focused around three priorities:

- Developing the I-49 Corridor
- Revitalizing Downtown
- Improving Education

We are working with the leadership of Port Barre on Project Bulletproof, as well as continuing support their intent to formally look at proactive measures that can take to stay ahead of what looks to be major growth in their area over the near term.

We continue discussions with various components of the leadership of Eunice on how we can best help them to identify and progress priorities for their community and on the potential of keeping their economic development committee intact.

We continue work with the community of Grand Coteau on planning and infrastructure efforts along their business corridor, which will ultimately provide a better retail environment for the community along I-49. We will be presenting a plan for an EDD Task Force this evening to establish funding priorities for their district.

We have been facilitating meetings this month with the leadership from Sunset and Grand Coteau with fiber optic providers on upgrading capacities in their communities.

Multiple strategic planning meetings have been held with representative businesses from the Sunset, Grand Coteau and Arnaudville area. To date, Identification of organizational priorities e.g. mission statement, name, and determination regarding formal organizational structure have been identified in draft form as well as an alliance name entitled Do & See 93. Currently a logo is being created as well as a list of inventory of assets and resources amongst the '3' key communities.

The Steamboat Association continues its efforts with its housing initiative, the association was informed the Walmart Foundation declined to fund a grant application for the Washington housing initiative but they are currently investigating a program offered through a federal rural housing initiative that would fund up to \$20,000 to qualifying applicants. Through collaboration with the St. Landry Council on Aging hot meals are now being distributed to about a dozen home bound elderly people in Washington and others are being encouraged to apply for the program. In closing, the recently opened thrift store is now open and seeing steady, if not voluminous, traffic as well as the art gallery.

Due to not meeting in the month of June 2016 there are no updates to provide at this time as it relates to the Steamboat Association. The next monthly meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, July 23rd beginning at 10:30 am at the Immaculate Conception Church Hall.

On Wednesday, July 20th our fourth installment of LEAD St. Landry was held on the campus of SLED with Dr. Kimberly Russell, LSUE Chancellor, serving as presenter. This event was well attended with numerous new faces attesting to our growing presence throughout the parish.

On August 18th the SLP will host its bi-monthly Membership Recruitment Social in best efforts to recruit and inform new members to all the benefits of joining SLP and our vision for the future of St. Landry Parish. The event will take place at the Grand Coteau Bistro located at 234 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Grand Coteau, Louisiana 70541.

Grants Update:

The FYE 2017 LBIA Grant application has been submitted with the grant announcement date to take place on August 25th.

As part of our 2016 goal structure we will be continue to explore the potential for two successful grant applications that will make a meaningful impact on our mission and efforts to build capacity in the parish. On August 4, 2016 a USDA strategic session was conducted at the Business Center on grant funding opportunities throughout St. Landry Parish for businesses, community facilities, telecommunications, electric and water and environmental projects. As we continue to identify priorities for each our respective municipalities, information received through our most recent strategic session will assist in aligning potential

funding opportunities provided through the USDA with those parish-wide priorities.

VII – Training Opportunities

Mid-South Basic Economic Development Course

True South Basic Economic Development Course

September 19 - 22, 2016

Location: Hattiesburg, MS

Course Overview: The Basic Economic Development Course is an introductory look at economic development in North America, with an emphasis on the state of Louisiana. Students are given an overview of the tools and techniques of modern economic development, including the professional specialties that have formed in the last 20 years.

VIII – Conclusion

This year continues to be packed with challenges for our region, for our state and for our nation. It is clear that we are not immune. The most recent flooding events are just another example of things impacting our area that are out of our control. As leaders we all have to stay focused on the potential. We have always said it is in the challenges where the opportunities lay in disguise for the right kinds of proactive thinking. We once again we want to thank all of you for continued incredible support. Despite what is happening around us we are continuing to significantly move the needle to make good things happen for the people and businesses of St Landry Parish and Acadiana!