



Executive Director's Report — August 2019

Greetings! Hope you are all getting to enjoy doing something special this summer. It is time once again to give a quick high-level monthly summary of the forward momentum in our area and for the Acadiana Region. As a parish, we saw a slight dip in two of our key forward indicators; unemployment and sales tax collections. There are no specific events that can be linked to either movement so it bears tracking over the next couple months. |



July St Landry Composite Sales Taxes Collection
• \$ 5,892,714 July 2019
• \$ 6,130,613 June 2019
• \$ 6,396,248 July 2018
• \$ 5,401,414 July 2017

April St Landry Unemployment Comparisons
• June 2019 6.9 % - May 5.3 %
• July 2018 7.3%
• July 2017 7.3 %
• July 2016 8.9 %
• July 2015 8.5 %

To start the report, we continue to try identify topics that help paint of picture of the area economy. It so happens that there was were two more good articles produced in the Acadiana Advocate over the past month dealing with residential real estate in the region. One was an interview and article written by Adam Daigle on a presentation given by Bill Bacque. The Advocate that includes some input segments. Here is some content from the article:

The market has changed a bit, Bacque told members of the Acadiana Home Builders Association on Tuesday, and Lafayette Parish may have lost some of the allure it had years ago. “We’ve never been, going back to the early 1990s, a relocation hub,” said Bacque, president of Market Scope Consulting. “Back in the ‘90s, when the major oil companies had their executive offices here, we had a lot of people moving in and out. What has fed our market over the years was the surrounding parishes. People wanted to move to Lafayette. What we’re seeing in the marketplace now as far as numbers is the growth in housing outside of Lafayette Parish.”

The 505 homes sold in Acadiana last month fell just short of last year’s 510, but it’s the outlying areas that’s driving the market. Of those 505, 212 of those came from outside the parish, up from the 170 reported last year.

It’s also an economic issue, he noted. The average sale price outside of Lafayette Parish is \$140,000, about \$50,000 lower the average inside Lafayette Parish.

“Does that have an impact? The answer is yes,” Bacque said. “The second thing is infrastructure. If I live in New Iberia, I can drive less than 20 minutes to Broussard, and I’ve got every kind of shopping and restaurant opportunity I could want. If I live across town in Lafayette, I can’t get across town in 20 minutes. “Is that a problem? Yeah, I think it’s a problem.

Again, this is an important trend to follow with the economic picture for St Landry and other outlying parishes? This does not substitute for the importance of growing industry, both from within and from without. Quality residential roof tops, however; are a catalyst for a population mix that becomes desirable for companies that compete on a national and international scale with complex products and equally complex business models.

We hope these thoughts provide some value and would welcome your thoughts, or additional insights into these areas of conversation. We at SLED and its affiliate entities thank you for all you do and look forward to working with all of you through the second half of 2019 to create further positive momentum while building sustainable foundations for future growth.

The SLED Team

Communications

In August, we will begin aggressive communication efforts in working with Klout9 to handle a renewed campaign to take the place of SLPForward. The emphasis of the campaign will be to rely heavily on video production that ties into Opportunity St Landry, as well an aggressive social media campaign effort in venues such as LinkedIn and Facebook.


We are discussing a detailed BRE Program and Workforce Development component in a concierge type service for the start of 2020. We are also looking at a web strategy of the product box, which is the community identifier(s) used to attract the target audience. A GIS



There have been 120 articles written for this campaign to shine a light on positive things happening in St. Landry Parish. While we are no longer loading articles into the site, we will be including these and future articles into the newly developed opportunitystlandry site, so people can continue to hear more about some of the great things happening in our area.

database allows site selectors to search, select and compare sites and has details about key industries and leading employers. Information can be collected in a cart.

Each of St. Landry Parish's communities is profiled along with, cultural, recreation, education and health care options. Citizens will appreciate that the user-friendly website includes positive business news stories and a government page with up to date information on services and contacts.



Twenty-two St. Landry Parish projects announced over the past 45 months have created

- 1,228 new fulltime jobs.
- Retention of 540 existing jobs.
- Creation of at least 430 indirect jobs
- Support of an estimated 7,345 temporary constr. jobs
- 319 Million in direct construction investment

Who's Growing?

In total we are tracking 15 project inquiries. The end of the list are recent wins, the early list are projects that have a 90% or better of success. FTE is full time employee. Capex is investment in property and equipment. Projects that have been soft announcements are indicated below and include updates to the graph to the left.

Project Doughnut – Area recruitment, in state expansion. 3.5m capex, 15FTE's (3rd quarter public announcement anticipated)

Project Link – Area expansion. 10.5m capex, 25 FTE's (Pending local ITEP and land acquisition legal considerations)

Project Ride – In state expansion, area recruitment 9m capex, 55FTE's (Currently in construction, **Team Honda**.) Anticipate 3rd quarter completion. Part of the Gateway Plaza Project as well.

Project Wrench – Area expansion, .9m capex, 12FTE's (Soft announcement in construction)

Project Clean – Recruitment. 2.3m capex. 25 growing to 50 FTE's (Project is now hiring. Working to coordinate timing on a formal announcement) **Westport Medical**. Not reflected in count.

Project Gateway - This is a large multi-use development project in the central parish on a 100-acre site. **Lily Pad Pediatrics**, in construction, multiple new medical facilities anticipated to be in construction in 2019. Not reflected in count

Recent Announced:

Project Anchor – Expansion 2.5m capex 45 FTE's, 15 retained **Geaux Bear Development**.

Project Belt – Area expansion. 2.1m capex 15 FTE's (**Noble Plastic Expansion** at Opelousas Site)

Project Boost – Area expansion/retention. 107m capex, 5 FTE’s, 90K Annual, 8 Indirect Jobs, 800 Temp Constr. **Delek Refinery Alkalization Facility.**

Project Drop Off - Area expansion. 1.5m capex, 10FTE’s **Dixie Storage Expansion**

Project Vista – Area expansion, **Delek Refinery**, 156.5m Capex, or more, and 30 FTE creation, 90k Annual Salary, 48 indirect jobs, and up to 1500 temp construction jobs. 200 FTE retained.

SLP Homestead Location Expansion/DCG Relocation/Expansion

Business Outreach (BERG)

We continue ongoing conversations driver employers in area. This includes roughly 25 companies. It is not uncommon for our group to engage with them multiple times on challenges they may be having through the year that may affect their competitiveness, or growth potential. We often become their bridge with government entities

Area Development



Vision St Landry - has been focused on advocacy and support for core areas has included:

- Improving education (SLP District Plan and Efficiency Evaluation)
- Redevelopment of downtowns (Opelousas DDD, Eunice Planning)
- Development of the I-49 Corridor (CSLEDD, GCEDD, Midway, Gateway Plan)
- Building leadership capacity – Vision Member in Training Consideration

Key Parish Employer Visits

- Sunland Construction
- Med Express
- Piggly Wiggly Stores
- C&G Container
- Delek Refinery
- Wal Mart Distribution Center
- Evangeline Downs
- Dixie Storage
- Savoies Foods
- Gaubert Oil
- Riceland Crawfish
- Dupree Carrier Godchaux Insurance
- Giles Automotive Group
- Acadian Medical Group
- Opelousas General Hospital
- MANCO Containers
- Prairie Construction
- Design Precast Concrete & Pipe
- Lemoyen Timber
- Gaienne Lumber
- Noble Plastics
- Courville Toyota
- Stage Retail
- Lowes Opelousas

Vision St. Landry held its quarterly meeting of 2019 on June 10th where it:

- Approved is recommendations to be submitted to the respective appointing authorities for CSLEDD reappointments.

- Updated By-laws were approved.
- Project identification was discussed for the I-49 Midway Corridor Plan.
- Working committees are currently meeting to look at future roles of Vision.



The Central St Landry Economic Development District, CSLEDD - Continues to progress with implementing their 2018 priorities and aggressively moving into 2019. These include:

- Improving wastewater capacities to the north and south
 - The land acquisition for a wastewater facility plant to south end of the district should be complete in August.
 - The plant design process is now underway with the blessing of State F&P.
- Maintenance of the grounds and trash along the I-49
 - The lawn maintenance and litter abatement schedule for 2019 remains on task.
 - Spot litter abatement around intersections of 1-90, Creswell Lane and Judson Walsh should start in August
 - Herbicide treatment has begun and near completion for aprons and rail pads
 - The tree trimming and mulching on all sides of Hwy-190 and I-49 is 90% complete. Please remember to check on the difference when you go by.
- Lighting along the I-49
 - Harry Guilbeau – Currently waiting on two (2) poles with fixtures to come in. Once installed all lighting at interchange will be complete, including LED.
 - Creswell Lane/I-90 – Retro and refurbishing at interchanges Lighting Bid Proposal upgrading light fixtures to LED has been authorized by the district.
 - Judson Walsh Exit – Permitting for the exit will be handled through the Lafayette District Office. The estimated cost to complete new lighting at interchange is \$1.35 million – \$1.5 million. The district has authorized Morgan Goudeau & Associates to proceed forward with preliminary analysis for installation.
- Master planning the EVD Property.
 - Tentative Sept 2019 presentations on plan layout.
 - Current active conversation with RV developers as well as commercial site developers with active tenants having an interest in the area.
 - September/October presentation to Boyd Gaming for the release, or option of property of highest interest by developers in the plan.

The Downtown Development District Board (DDD) – Their recent progress includes:

- Consultant proposals for an ODDD Master Plan on were made in August by 3 firms 2019.
- Follow up presentation(s) being scheduled for September
- TAP Grant final design due in August
- Coordination and support of the New Life Center Environment Evaluations

In the Region



One Acadiana - SLED takes an active leadership role in many of the *One Acadiana Committees* and board efforts. The committees include:

- 1. Site Development Committee – Increased the number of certified sites in the region from 3 to 14. St. Landry currently has the most certified sites in the region.*
- 2. Urban Revitalization and Development Committee – Focusing on carrying forward many of the systemic lessons learned by the leader’s exchange group that visited Greenville in March.*
- 3. Transportation Infrastructure Committee – Focused largely on moving forward the priorities in infrastructure included in the RIVR Report created by this committee.*
- 4. Government Affairs Committee – Tracks key legislative and political influences that could adversely impact the business development, education, infrastructure or other growth inhibitors for area businesses.*
- 5. Workforce Development Committee – Champion of the 55 by 25 Project designed to get workers more prepared through two-year degree and certifications for tomorrows work force.*



Acadiana Planning Commission (APC) We regularly engage on a broad range of planning and related efforts that include:

- The I-49 Midway Corridor Project
- The Opportunity Zone Investment Program Presentations (Recent White House Visit)
- St Luc Hospital Environmental
- Sunset/Grand Coteau MPO related projects



AEDC, Acadiana Economic Development Council:

Economic development professionals from 7 Parishes focused on making progress on issues that impact all the parishes in Acadiana, particularly in the parishes surrounding Lafayette. This group works to find solutions to common challenges faced by the economic development leaders in Acadiana and host monthly board meetings that facilitate these actions.

Educational Progress



District K-12 Education: We continue our work with Patrick Jenkins, St Landry Parish Schools Superintendent, his staff and the SLP School Board through efforts that include:

- Presentation in recent convocation event on education as a pillar of community.
- Direct supporter of the SLPS JAG Program.
- Recognizing of career and technical teachers and administrators of the year.
- Continuing advocacy support for St. Landry Parish Schools Plan Strategic Plan.
- Active in selecting the students of the year for the district and ongoing competitions.
- Advisory Board for the OHS Bio-Med Academy
- Partnered with JD Bank for the Junior Achievement financial literacy program at Opelousas Middle
- Supporting leadership to establish a St Landry Parish Foundation.



T.H. Harris: The TH Harris enrollment figures are up again in for the fall. We continue to work with the TH Harris on:

- The new LPN/RN Program supported by SLED was official announced with it initial cohort session for fall 2019.

- SLED Scholarship through Vision St Landry for 2019/2020.
- Continue with Quarterly meetings with key leadership of SLCC to discuss current needs and standings.
- Regularly meet to identify critical area workforce shortages and proactive educational solutions, which has led to current considerations for CDL Training in Opelousas.



LSU-Eunice: LSU-E looks to increase its enrollment with to increase for fall with to over 3300-students. Our engagement includes:

- An active member of the LSUE Board of Advisors
- Active member of the LSUE Business Management Advisory Committee
- LSUE Chancellor Search Committee. New Chancellor, Dr Nancy Sorenson named as Chancellor in June.
- SLED Scholarship through Vision St Landry for 2019/2020.
- Continued discussion with developers on area student/housing projects.

Community/Cultural Development



Eunice: Multiple planning efforts and initiatives through effort led through:

- The Eunice Strategic Plan, which was facilitated by a team from SLED, was unanimously approved presented at the July 2019 Eunice City Council.
- Ongoing meetings with LSUE, the LSU Real Estate Foundation and developers on student housing project potential.
- Ongoing work with the Eunice ED Committee on site development and OZ's



Opelousas: Multiple planning efforts and initiatives through effort led through:

- Area economic development district, CSLEDD initiatives
- Area economic development district, ODDD initiatives
- Secondary and post-secondary education direct support

- Midway Corridor Project implementation (August 28th Policy)
- Midway Corridor Project action (August 8th Working Group)
- Coordination on Opportunity Zone session with the White House Office of Recovery Management.

Arnaudville: Multiple efforts associated with the cultural economy including:

- Continued input and guidance on plans for the St Luc Hospital, which includes helping to get support for phase II environmental reviews and future uses.
- Establishment and management of Creative Placemaking Task Force
- Received revised design for Phase I of the project: "The Sculptural Pathway." This included dimensions and installation under the Hanging Garden Project.
- Community planning efforts were featured in Southern Lifestyle Magazine
- Engaging the LSU School of Art and Design for an area cultural economy plan

Grand Coteau: Ongoing efforts include:

- Midway Corridor Plan (August 28th Policy Team)
- Midway Corridor Project (August 8th Working Group)
- Leading progress on a TAP Grant for pedestrian access through the business corridor.
- Leading capital outlay requests to fund the roundabout traffic solution at Exit 11.
- Using our government affairs team expedite roundabout design.
- Promoting and engineering plan for overhead lighting at the Exit 11 interchange
- Promotion of the Blue Andrus Certified Industrial site

Sunset: Support of the town through:

- Implementation of the Midway Corridor Plan (August 28th Policy Team)
- Midway Corridor Project (August 8th Working Group)
- Assistance in promoting MPO project call request for a 182 Resurfacing Project.
- Cultural economy projects; including the Old Sunset High School and the Sunset Arena
- Continued promotion of the Blue Andrus Certified Site.

Port Barre:

- Working on additional pad development in the Port Barre Industrial Park.
- Project Greenleaf assistance
- Established boundaries that could be used as an area economic development district

Washington:

- Implementation of the Midway Corridor Plan (August 28th Policy)
- Midway Corridor Project action (August 8th Working Group)

St Landry Young Professionals, TheSLP



The St. Landry Professionals partnered with Doran & Cawthorne, P.L.L.C for the upcoming July 19th Groovin on the Green Series. Groovin' on the Green for a free family concert series held at the law firm of Doran and Cawthorne located at 521 E. Landry St. Opelousas, LA 70570. The concerts going forward will be held every other week from 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Due to the cross pollination amongst the two platforms www.opportunitystlandry.com has seen an increase in users and new users over 600, sessions have increased by 850 and page views have increased from 2,866 to 5,099, with the higher traffic pages being that of articles posted in Moving Forward. This is in large part due to The SLP's large Facebook following and direct driving of a different audience that shows interests.

We have 9 tenants in the Business Center that include

- Boone Speech and Learning Services
- Miracle-Ear
- Magnolia Community Development Corporation
- Victory Manufacturing
- WIOA 40
- Mind and Body Connections, LLC
- St. Landry – Evangeline United Way
- Infinity Back-Ground Chex
- Starr Staffing, LLC

The Business Center

The Business Center now has more than 26 employees in working out of the Center in addition to hundreds of persons visiting the center in some capacity each month.

We are continuing our work with on-going facility upgrades and now have an additional LBIA Grant application that Brandy submitted prior to leaving. If approved, this will allow for substantial renovations in the center of the building. We recently replaced the mother board in for our front sign which is now 100% operational.

The last LSBDC, ULL SBDC counseling session was held on Aug 13th, 2019. The next sessions will be held on Sept 10th. Services are available to businesses at any level of growth, are confidential, and are free of charge.

On average, the CAVE room is getting used several times per week. It is highlighted on our new website displaying all the technology assets offered. Please let us know if you are aware of businesses in the area that could utilize our CAVE area.

Grants Update

In concert with our Government Affairs team we engaged with the Parish and CSLEDD on capital outlay funding for wastewater capacity projects along I-49. We now have 1.395m that has been secured for the new wastewater facility in Harry Guilbeau area. We plan to be in

construction of a fully enclosed wastewater treatment facility to the south in early 2020. We have also been successful in securing 2.67m that will be targeted for the construction of a new roundabout at the Exit 11 Interchange.

The 2019-2020 LBIA Grant of \$25,000.00 grant application for facility improvements has been submitted. This grant is targeted towards improvements in the center of the building with modifications to the restrooms, break areas and janitorial areas.

We continue partnership work with Grand Coteau on their DOTD TAP Grant designed to address the accessibility and safety of pedestrian transportation in the business district area.

We continue with local partners TAP Grant for sidewalk improvements around the Courthouse. Currently the preliminary analysis is near completion for the two (2) sidewalks along W. Landry Street between the intersections of S. Market Street and S. Court Street. A final design is to be submitted to DOTD in the 3rd quarter of 2019 by the Cities engineering firm.



Training Opportunities

SLED is committed to paying the tuition of board members, or a limited number of elected officials in the area to participate in the next basic economic development courses. *The New South Basic Course* in Hattiesburg this September of 2019 will focus on:

- Managing the Economic Development Organization; Ethics in Economic Development; Transportation and Logistics; Real Estate Development and Reuse; Community Development; Understanding Retail; Workforce Development; Marketing and Attraction; Finance /Incentives; Strategic Planning; Small Business & Entrepreneurship

Upcoming Meetings

- Opelousas DDA Board Meeting, 9 a.m. on Sept 17th, SLED Bldg.
- Central St. Landry EDD Board Meeting, 8:30 a.m. on September 12th, SLED Bldg.
- Vision St Landry Board Meeting, 11:30 a.m. Pending new Sep date, SLED Bldg.