



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 youth.

Executive Directors Report

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I - Business Center Update

We continue to be proactive in holding and promoting planning and education sessions designed to address community, business, property development and education related issues. We are looking to host our next joint ongoing community development roundtable session hosted between Parish Government and Economic Development in the month of November. If you, or if you have any feedback from your communities leadership on items of interest that would help move their community forward please let us know as soon as possible.

We also continue to work concurrently with the St Landry Parish Chamber of Commerce as well as the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at the ULL Campus on hosting additional small business and entrepreneur training sessions in the center. We are looking to host the next session prior to the beginning of the holiday season.

We continue collaborative efforts with the Office of Community Development as it relates to documentation necessary to satisfy their requirements on total job creation for the Business Center. We have received the final closeout package that Judy is working on now with hopes of completing within the next week. There is also a sit down meeting in Baton Rouge with the OCD Director on Monday the 20th of October to ensure that all is moving along smoothly.

Effective October 1st, we have nine businesses operating in our center, which are:

Relentless Designs –

David Joseph Counseling Services

Joie de Vive Counseling

C&C Painting and Pressure Washing

Excellent Drivers Academy

A 24/7 Inspection Services

Boone Speech and Learning Services

Miracle Ear

Eckerd

There is also one large potential tenant for the business center, PPI, which will be an item on this month's agenda for consideration and approval for their location within the center within the next 30 days.

II – Communications

SLED is pleased to announce the release of our new website, designed with a fresh look and user-friendly navigation, updated with the latest information regarding our entity, allies and services. We hope that you will enjoy browsing our new site. It will be yet another tool for strengthening our business. All hits to the previous SLEIDD Site will be automatically redirected to this new site. This site will always be a work on progress and we would welcome any thoughts or ideas that you would like to have considered for inclusion on the new web page.

The SLP Young Professionals *Sip & See* Event was held on October 9, 2014 from 5:30 p.m.- 7:30 p.m. on the campus of Equine Sales @ Copper Crowne. The event attracted roughly 20 individuals eager to participate in an organization focused on engaging those young professionals throughout St. Landry Parish with the main goal of connecting, growing and building St. Landry's future. Quizno's and Bayou Teche Brewery graciously provided in-kind donations as part of the event.

Currently the buzz centered on SLP Young Professionals is simply that of positivity. To date, SLED has received multiple membership fees further solidifying the interest in becoming a member of this organization. The next SLP Young Professionals meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2014 at St. Landry Parish Economic Development, where all membership dues will be collected and the organizational as well as sub-committees structure will be determined.

We would welcome your participation in as board members in this important effort as this group looks to connect and bring other youth related educational leadership programs into the fold and ultimately finds ways to keep St Landry's talented youth here in the Parish.

Our communications team continues active work to compile St. Landry Parish economic development data to begin a complete database of information beneficial to agencies and organizations throughout St. Landry Parish. Recently, these effort paid dividends in the creation of comprehensive overview and incentive package that included, demographics, infrastructure and branding used for Project Shield.

Our communications team has also taken a lead role in public relations team for the future Crowne Parc Community, its advisory committee, and the Harry Guilbeau Road Economic Development District. This has included a broad scope of efforts, most recently the team shined as coordinator for the September 22nd Crowne Parc District Advisory Committee meeting, which included all logistics regarding committee meeting documents, meeting set up, as well as the logistics for an upscale dinner for the evening.

The communications team recently redeveloped and submitted a 30 second script for St. Landry Parish Economic Development, which will be formatted in the form of a commercial as it relates to the Rotary Auction.

With some of the big projects, such as the development project economic development district, it is still critically important that you as board members keep up the positive communications and get feedback from leaders across the Parish on priorities that are important to them. Also, if you as board members have sessions or meetings that you would like to see me give an economic development update at we would welcome your assistance in helping to facilitate these presentations.

III - Property Development (Large-scale)

We are continuing, along with other key stakeholders and leaders in the Parish, to have working sessions with incentive professionals towards incentive structuring along our major transportation corridors. We now have active projects being worked at three of the interchanges along the I-49 corridor. Our goal with these projects is not only success with the project itself, but to use these projects as the catalyst to help build infrastructure capacity around these interchanges.

Later this week there has been a 5th stage planning process meeting the ULL Architecture Department on a master plan rendition for the entire Harry Guilbeau Road Corridor. This work is an excellent example of how public and private sectors can come together to move a meaningful effort forward and will provide a valuable vision blueprint for that area that should payoff many times over.

The work with the Corps of Engineers on the wetland mitigation work on the property adjacent to the Wal-Mart Distribution Center has now been completed. Department of the Army permit, special conditions, and drawings have been signed and returned to U. S. Corps of Army Engineers in accordance with their directive dated September 11, 2014. Our community development team has to be commended on their work to help with meeting the Corp requirements. We should also commend the Cornerstone team for reaching behind the scenes to help move our package forward..

We continue to put significant efforts into prioritizing identified industrial sites for potential partnership development with LED and AEDC. We have now come to a conclusion on the top site, as well as an alternate and are moving forward with continued contract negotiations that will help move this project forward. Both the primary and alternate site are located on Hwy 167. We believe that this corridor has the potential to form the basis for a broader scale job creation corridor.

Our 422 acres site is now being listed for sale again beginning last week. It is still the intent to have this property close on in the final quarter of 2014 for a sale closing in January 2015. Our communications team has drafted and submitted the notice of sale advertisement which has been provided to five newspaper outlets being that of, Eunice News, Daily World, Quick Quarter, Daily Advertiser and The Advocate with advertisement dates beginning on October 19th running through November 9th of 2014.

IV Projects Update

Summary: 12 Active, 6 Announced, 1 Pending Announcement, 1 Dropped, 1 Pending Drop,

Project Expo –

We continue to work with Parish, City and private sector partners, along with the Adams and Reese Team on formalizing the process of creation for the Harry Guilbeau Road Economic Development District, as well as the District Joint Commission that will oversee the operations of this district. As you know, work on this project is actively ongoing from multiple angles. There will be a presentation update on the status of this project as part of this month's agenda.

Project Shield – There have now been four presentations made to the company's executive team on locating this project to St Landry Parish. It is likely that there will be conclusion to these negotiations within the next month. This project would be a large win for the Parish and could immediately bring as many as 400 direct full time positions to St Landry Parish.

Project Cloak – There has been significant due diligence on the site being considered for this project. Contractors continue to work through this process at this stage legal official with the project give it a medium chance for final success. Recent discussions over the past couple of weeks with legal team members tend to give a very positive tone. It is possible that there could be information on this available for discussion by the end of November. This project could potentially create in excess of 60 direct full time positions.

Project Prairie – This is an in state expansion project targeted for the western part of the parish. Company executives are continuing to evaluate results from sites and buildings visits. This outcome could come much more clear over the next 3 – 5 weeks. This project could create up to 15 direct full time employees if successful.

Project Crude – This project continues to move forward, but is now working on permitting issues with the refurbishment of an existing industrial facility in and neighboring parish that would be the destination of its rail operation in St Landry. The timeframe for a decision on this project is still 4th quarter 2014. This project could potentially create in excess of 12 direct full time positions.

Project Mat – This project directly ties back into Project Roto. The company is one of the suppliers in their system and is very interested in starting an additional location on site if certain transportation infrastructure assets can be put in place. This project is successful could potentially create in excess of 40 direct full time positions.

Project Outpost (A) - This location was brought to community leadership last week for an overview and the start of the community input process. The property for this location is under contract. If successful this project could create in excess of 30 direct full time positions depending on the scope of the footprint model chosen.

Project Outpost (B) - It is possible that a contract proposal could be in on a this second site in another parish location as early as this week This location if successful could create 50 full time positions depending on the scope of the footprint model chosen for this location.

Project Strip – This is a large commercial project within the Opelousas area to where we are providing assistance as needed to an investment group to acquire and begin the upgrade/renovation process on a large multi tenant commercial facility on a high profile corridor. This project could allow for potential full time job creation figures in excess of 50 direct jobs. This project has made substantial progress over the past several weeks and will likely be announced over the next month.

Project Neighbor – This a medium size retail location project on the western side of the parish. We continue to work with our community and parish partners on various items with the companies engineering team on the details of a facility layout for this project. The potential for this project is very high and it is likely that there will be an announcement within the next 60 days. This project if successful could create in excess of 65 direct full time positions.

Project Focus – Large scope project dealing with historic properties in the parish. Initial meetings with the partners have been positive. Follow on face to face discussions

continue to move forward, but the it has been a slow process. This project would be primarily event driven so the number of jobs created would vary.

Agra Tech, Kyosan USA – Conversations with the Agra Tech CEO have confirmed that the company has ran into some insurmountable challenges that with waste water permitting that will prohibit their operation in the Opelousas Industrial Park. This project will be removed from the active project list on next month's report.

Project Crush – While project crush is still considered active, there are some challenges. We will continue to work with every avenue possible for their consideration of St Landry Parish and should have a much better conclusion of this project one way or another by our meeting next month. If successful this project could create 100 direct positions.

Project Roto – Announced Expansion Project: This project was announced last week as Noble Plastics purchasing the existing Yahoo Facility. The company is expanding their production with a new process and array of products. It will not have any adverse impact on their existing location in Grand Coteau. There is still a good potential that this project would bring in a partner supplier, Project Mat. Much of this success will hinge on our ability to work with various partners to expand rail capacity in the park. This project will create 15 or less direct full time positions.

Project Essen - Announced Expansion Project: 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 – Cleared for Announcement: This project is now formally under construction, as well as having temporary operations now underway. The company, Top Timber, will soon be set to employee 12 – 15 full time positions with the potential to grow very quickly if certain international agreements can be established. The principal has requested that we wait until September to make this announcement

Project Alon – Announced Expansion Project: 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 is expected to created as many as 12 full time positions.

Project Runway – Announced Recruitment: A formal announcement was made for this project on 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 build process. The company expects operations to commence in a matter of weeks. This project could 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:

We continue to foster an active relationship on many important initiatives being addressed by the St. Landry Chamber of Commerce. Some of the key items that we are currently focusing on are:

Conducting joint business retention/expansion/recruiting visits

Exploring potential for collaboration on education related initiatives

Integration of website presence

Building Opelousas/Eunice Alliance

1 Acadiana initiatives

We also continue to work closely with Parish Tourism to ensure we are aligned on key initiatives through the region. The staffs of both agencies have also been actively collaborating on ideas and concepts for joint marketing and parish promotion. We now have bi-weekly meetings with their leadership and other key partners in the identification and prioritization of priority projects for the parish that can be promoted by Cornerstone Governmental Affairs in the next session. We are now in agreement that the ED will give a recurring update to their board at their upcoming meetings.

We continue to work on face to face outreach with our top 25 employer. Currently all have been contacted by phone to verify some of their key information by our communications team. The meetings are being held jointly with LED, AEDC and will local leaders whenever possible.

We continue to have dialogue with economic development professionals from the southwest region on collaboration potential to meet the demands of \$67,000,000,000 in

new investment that create 29,264 construction and 20,866 new permanent positions. This subject is always a topic of discussion with our key employers on how it may or may not impact their business model here in the parish.

The 1 Acadiana Initiative continues to build momentum in the region. It is the goal of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce to rebrand themselves into 1 Acadiana in the first quarter of 2015. It is important to note that this initiative is not intended to have any kind of adverse impact on local EDO, or Chamber of Commerce operations. It is intended to bring the resources of the region together to make us stronger as a unified voice to address some of our key priorities in Acadiana.

As a recurring note, Cornerstone Governmental affairs recently helped to secure 50k in matching funds from the Dept of Wildlife and Fisheries to satisfy a state fund contribution for the upgrade of a boat launch in Leonville.

AEDC (Acadiana Economic Development Council) Update:

There was no monthly meeting for AEDC, but a recap of the boards latest priorities are:

Louisiana International Board of Commerce - The meetings are held quarterly, and since they have been put into place they have had 5 meetings to date. They are working through a master plan that is mostly focused on deep water ports. Iberia Parish will serve on the cargo task force.

As an update, LED also has its International Outreach team in place. This group will be focusing on recruiting international manufacturing companies.

LRLC – Had an August meeting in Lake Charles. Secretary Barfield came in and told them all about the tax amnesty program which is where we hope to collect the \$4 million for the 8 economic development regions.

Acadiana now has its top 10 site profiles in place. The 10 profiles include 1 in each parish with 2 in St. Landry and Iberia, and 3 in Acadia. Only Acadia Parish has sites that are 500 acres or more.

Regional GIS Map – AEDC is meeting with Fenstermaker this week to have the final po

Project Toaster – This is a concept, more so that a real project. It is an effort to seek opportunities to bring light manufacturing geared towards the workforce such as those employed with Fruit of the Loom and other similar companies. This will require extensive research on our labor force and looking into locations, property, and sites that are available for use. It could have direct implications for some of our parish employers such as the WalMart Distribution Centers and other.

It also worth note that AEDC co hosted the annual Acadiana Economic Forecast by Lauren Scott, LSU Economist, last week. As usual, the event was sold out, and was extremely well received by a high level regional business audience.

VI – Community Development in St Landry Parish

We continue to work with LSU-E on meaningful ways to engage their students in the business community of St Landry Parish and to help to develop their leadership capacity. These students will be attending out November board meeting as part of this formally established program.

Leonville recently celebrated the receipt in excess of 1 million dollars for use in drainage infrastructure to address critical flooding issues in the community. These funds were secured through the Southeastern Drainage Project Grant offered through FEMA.

We have had in depth meetings LSU-E to help them develop a framework for using the Incumbent Worker Training Program as a tool to provide value to area and parish businesses. These have been very positive and exciting discussions that highlight a renewed proactive approach by LSU-E leadership towards the businesses in St Landry Parish.

We are also assisting LSU-E in the development of a STEM Council for the parish that will work towards highlighting the important career opportunities available through STEM educational opportunities.

In addition to Arnaudville recently announcing their intent to renovate facility to host French Immersion. They have also come very close to secure necessary funds to implement a formal business plan for the use of the old hospital there for French Immersion related opportunities. These efforts continue to highlight the cultural development success in that area.

We continue to work with Cornerstone and other state leaders to find options for Melville in further developing their waterfront potential along the Atchafalaya by looking at a boat launch and other possibilities.

Our staff maintains a regular presence in the Eunice Satellite office on Thursdays. They are continuing community outreach and meeting with interested small business clients that are being referred by the Eunice Economic Development Committee. They are also continuing to play an active role in providing technical assistance where possible to the various sub committees of Eunice Economic Development Committee.

All of the staff continues to participate with the Steamboat City Association in Washington on various community development initiatives. We are still working on a

project with the Wal-Mart Distribution Center that if successful could provide a blue print that other communities in the parish could use in helping connect career opportunities for persons in their communities that have some kind of challenge to employment.

We continue to hold regular meetings with the Parish President, Parish Tourism and the Chamber of Commerce, to identify priorities that can be worked on by Cornerstone Governmental Affairs in this legislative session. They are hosting a meeting with 3 state department directors on Oct 20th in Baton Rouge to look at moving key priorities forward for the parish.

We continue to work with Parish Government to explore planning potential for the Parish by looking at some of the planning initiatives and processes that have been used in Sunset.

We are also working the South Central Planning District to develop resources, tools and education for the communities throughout the Parish. There will be a formal collective meeting to discuss parish priorities for this district in the early half of November.

We continue to work with both private and public sector partners in efforts to proactively engage in infill development within downtown Opelousas. There is still ongoing work for the development of a small park in the parking area just down from Java Square. While small, this park will show real progress on downtown moving forward.

Grants related efforts:

- Application is complete for the \$25,000 LBIA Grant to be used for the Business Center at an 80/20 match. The total grant application for this grant is \$30,355 due to the match requirement. The executive committee has approved these funds allocation for building upgrades and improvements. UPDATE: Received official notification dated August 22, 2014, that the grant application has been approved for funding in the amount of \$25,000. Work has begun on the Business Center. Task 3 of the Project was completed and a request for reimbursement of 80 percent of the costs was submitted to LED/LBIA. Task 3 consisted of the completion of Room 17; area previously occupied by Rhythm Solutions.
- USDA RBEG Grant; by the Delta Regional Authority accepted our grant application; however due to the slow process in the change of ownership by OCD we may not be in a position to accept this grant award for the electronic marquee sign. This grant application has been approved and funded by USDA Rural Development, National Office, Washington, D.C., contingent upon change of ownership.
- We are working closely with the SCPDD on the potential for grant funding for rail upgrades designed to support Project Roto, Project Mat, Project Outpost, and potentially Project Crude.

Darnel, Sikes, Frederick, and Gardes performed an audit of the St. Landry Parish Economic and Industrial Development District; August 11th and August 12th. Audit findings should be presented once the Report of Audited Financial Statements is finalized. We anticipate them by the November IDB meeting.

There has been substantial work done this month by our operations team to research and developed a SLED Employee Handbook, which clearly defines our workplace policies. This is seen as an extreme benefit to our entity as there was no prior written policy and procedure. The Employee Handbook was presented to the executive committee this month. It is now in the review stages by legal. Once this process is completed it will be brought back to the executive committee for review and recommendation and then to the full board for their record and review. We anticipate this process taking place at the November board meeting.

VII – Training Opportunities

As a reminder, the next Economic Development Basic Course in near proximity will be offered at the main campus of LSU from January 13th – 16th. I would highly encourage those of you with an interest to getting with me with more questions if you have any interest in this valuable training.

VIII – Conclusion

We continue to be looked at by many people in the parish for that ongoing positive message that positive change is here and that is just the beginning of good things for St Landry Parish. It is imperative that we collectively continue to be that voice of optimism and solutions for moving the parish forward. You as board members are an important part of that effort and we are very grateful to all of you for your direct support to me and our staff in promoting this message to the businesses, leadership and residents of our parish. We continue to welcome your thoughts and ideas on things that can help promote our efforts to continue this forward momentum. With your continued active support we are confident that we will continue to see real project successes and unprecedented opportunities blossom through St. Landry Parish through the final quarter of 2014.