



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 community and business resource for conducting training and counseling sessions and various types of board and planning sessions for multiple entities. Just of few of these entities are the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at ULL, the new Event Center Joint Commission, SLP Moving Forward Leadership meetings, development project related meetings, as well as broad variety of coordination meetings for various parish wide initiatives.

On December 3rd Matthew Thibodeaux with the Aaron Agency conducted a seminar entitled *Facebook for Small Businesses* which attracted over thirty (30) in attendance from throughout St. Landry Parish and the Acadiana region. Due to such interest as it relates to the topic of social media in business, coordination for a second series is currently in the planning stages with the next seminar to be held in the first quarter of 2016. A special thanks to Nicole Wenger and Dionne Greene in taking a lead volunteer role in this coordination.

In addition, SLED's ongoing partnership with ULL SBDC continues to serve as an added value to entrepreneurs throughout our area via monthly one-on-one consulting sessions with those individuals looking to start-up their own business and/or need additional tools and resources to grow/expand. The ULL SBDC has designated the second Tuesday of each month solely for St. Landry Parish to provide services; the next session will be January 12, 2016.

Their next scheduled business support workshop will be entitled *The St. Landry Parish Banker's Forum* which will be co-sponsored by SLED and the SCPDC on January 21st on the campus of SLED. The forum will be an informational seminar open to all loan officers throughout the parish to inform those banking customers not eligible for traditional bank loans on a alternative loan program offered through LSBDC from monies secured through SCPDC for funds up to \$250,000.00 for industrial, and manufacturing related existing businesses, as well as retail start-ups.

Looking at Business Resource Center improvements; Action items completed under the recently awarded FY2016 LED/LBIA Grant for improvements/upgrades to the building include:

- Construction and completion of additional office space from previous break room area.
- Construction and completion of previous break room area entrance way.
- Construction and upgrade completion of back area bathroom regarding ADA compliance.
- Construction and facelift completion to back office entrance area.
- Construction and completion to Board Room back wall area.
- Conversion and completion to storage unit (A) located in warehouse area to a climate controlled storage unit.
- Conversion, construction and completion to office space located in upstairs area of warehouse to be multi-functional serving as additional storage and/or warehouse office with the recent installment of office window.
- Finishing off a partition wall for additional secure storage in the southeast corner of the building.
- Reinstallation of Business Center attic.
- Conversion, construction and completion of wall, door and addition of windows to a once open area of the incubator in the transformation of additional office space for entering of new tenant effective January 1, 2016.

We have the following tenant activity at the Business Center as of Dec 1st:

C&C Painting and Pressure Washing

Excellent Drivers Academy

Boone Speech and Learning Services

Miracle Ear

Happy Housemaids

Magnolia Community Development Corporation

Victory Manufacturing (Spin)

WIB 40 (January 1st)

II – Communications

It will always be a work in progress in looking at ways to further enhance the online brand and image of SLED and St Landry Parish as being positive and progressive. We would urge all of you to regularly review our primary website at www.opportunitystlandry.com and further www.SLPforward.com. We would 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 twenty-two (24) articles shining the light on positive things happening throughout St. Landry Parish. One (1) article per week is uploaded onto the site on a consistent basis providing fresh and updated article content.

With the website's foundation now solid, a Google analytics test was recently conducted to track website traffic directly to the site. It was discovered that during the time period of November 7th – December 7th 2015 the slpforward.com had a total of 842 views stemming primarily from the 25 – 34 age demographic with an average of 120 users returning to review updated content. This data is indicative of our growing web presence online. Also, it is important to note that in recent weeks we have opened the comment section as it relates to article(s) viewed on site and the feedback received to date has been overwhelmingly positive and a sign changes in perception in terms of St. Landry Parish's future outlook.

Based off of user responses Ahmed Siddiqui, website developer, has revamped the SLPForward website layout giving the viewer a more accurate preview of our stories that define our parish. This new display is a more comfortable browsing and reading experience, its stories primed for sharing with friends and colleagues. We would value your feedback on other suggestions to make the site more user friendly.

Due in large part to the information included in SLPforward.com, we have been approached and are actively in the process of having an exclusive done on the business climate in St Landry Parish by Business in Focus Magazine. This is a national publication that boasts a monthly magazine print distribution of around 380,000. We anticipate this focus article to be included in their February print edition.

Our continuing efforts for completion of a GIS platform are ongoing and phase 1 of mapping tool can now be found on the home page of www.opportunitystlandry.com. We are currently working diligently with multiple stakeholder entities throughout the parish to ensure we incorporate and highlight our area's greatest assets and what tools and information are most beneficial to our constituents as well as site selectors, tourist, companies etc. Some of the enhanced GIS layers being built now include:

- The top employers in the parish by sector
- An updated overlay on the Parish Road Home Program
- Training institutions in the parish
- Core cultural resources in the parish
- An up to date commercial property listings

These features represent upgrades to the system beyond the core base layers typically included in standard GIS offerings.

III - Property Development (Large-scale)

Significant work continues using taxing districts as a means to help communities upgrade infrastructure capacity along the major I-49 exits as well as along Hwy 190. We continue to work with the Mayors and other community leaders in most of the impacted communities in discussion about formal planning efforts for their communities, and/or the ability to establish economic development taxing districts that can help provide direct, or matching funding for improvement projects. We continue to work active development project at four of the major interchanges on the I-49 corridor. Each of these developments incorporates a large development creating numerous new business opportunities.

Site development efforts with the newly formed team of 1 Acadiana continues to get added priority emphasis. The focus for us is to develop industrial sites in the parish to a “shovel ready” status with the support of the LED Site Development Program. This fits one of the key economic development priorities for One Acadiana in actively pursuing industrial development opportunities. We have two primary sites that are in the process of consideration and certification here in St Landry Parish.

IV Projects Update Summary: 17 Active, 1 New (Base) 4 Pending Announcement, (Slip, Outpost A, Lid, Lot) 10 Announced, 1 Parked, (Mat), Pending Park (End Termination).

Project Amber – This project continues to be in the discussions with rail upgrades in the Opelousas Industrial Park. It is part of the picture of a rail master plan, which has multiple partners in discussion as part of the ongoing planning process. Recently, it has come to light that this project also comes into consideration of a corporate merger with one of their main customers, which should be clear by February. We will keep the project on the active list in the interim. If successful this project could create up to 10 full time positions.

Project Base – This is a project looking at the utilization of one of core parish transportation facility assets for international business investment. Early meetings with their representatives have been positive, but we are still working through due diligence on feasibility. There are not direct job creation, or capital investment figures for this project at this point, but their representatives are eluding to a considerable investment in the Parish.

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. Contractor bids are now being solidified and we could have a solid view of whether the project will come to build/rebuild stage as early as next month. If successful this project could 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 is conducting interim operations at their present location, but needs extra capacity to

reach full potential. The challenge with this expansion continues to be site location along the I-49 Corridor. 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.

Project End Termination – This was a general RFP by LED that was submitted by our team through the team at One Acadiana. We anticipate the short list for this project being announced sometime later this month. Indications from LED appear as though this site will not be included into the next search phase, but this has not been confirmed. This project will go on the parked list next month pending no new updates. This project is in the initial stages that if successful would create 20-30 net new direct jobs.

Project Expo – An update on some of the high level activities associated with this project will be provided for on the regular board meeting agenda related to this project and the property for the event Center.

Project Focus – This is a large scope sector driven project dealing with historic properties in the center and northern parts of the parish. Since this is a “sector” project the number of jobs created would vary by individual properties/events. Progress has been very slow, this has been in large part due to the lessening of state level incentives specific to the industry, but we are still optimistic that some recent discussions by municipal leadership in the middle of the parish may help to give this project some additional momentum, particularly in downtown related properties.

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. 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 Glare – This is a light industrial manufacturer with locations in other states that is looking to add an additional facility here in the Parish. We are working with them at this time on identifying suitable site locations/costs. We anticipate this process continuing over the next 30 to 60 days on finding a good location. Initial job creation figures are up to 35 direct full time positions being created.

Project HIPPO – This is a heavy industrial project that is in its early stages, but that continues to make good progress. The project 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. We hope to have the initial site work requirement completed by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2016, which is happening in unison with industrial layout discussions. 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.

Project Lid – This project is a manufacturer planning to locate along one of our key transportation corridors. The company closed on their purchase agreement on property and is working through site layout and building architectural on the production facility now. Although the project has been delayed overall by about 60 to 90 days beyond their initial projections they still anticipate a formal announcement and groundbreaking in the 1st Quarter of 2016. 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.

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. The property for this site has been closed on and although there have been some delays; we now anticipate a groundbreaking on this project in January due to some delays in the corporate approval of the site plan. 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.

Project Neighbor – This is a medium size retail location project on the western side of the parish. The project continues to work through, contracting and due diligence and now additional challenges with land acquisition. We hope to have some resolution on the land contract with this project one way, or another in the next several weeks. If successful, this project could create up to 100 direct full time positions.

Project Outpost (A) - The national tenant is in under contract and in the due diligence stage on one site located on Hwy 190. The building plan for this project is in the final stages of approval by the State Fire Marshall. We are in coordination with the company's national corporate office now coordinating an official ground breaking ceremony. This project will create at least 25 - 30 direct full time positions.

Project Slip – This project deals with a major effort with a regional employer who is looking to upgrade their footprint in St Landry Parish. This major upgrade is now underway and has brought an estimated over 2000 temporary construction jobs to the parish over the past 90 days. We are working now to confirm the number of permanent jobs that would be created with this expansion. We do not anticipate this number exceeding 15 in total. We are coordinating now with company officials on releasing a public announcement.

Project Spin – This project is a light industrial application looking for relocation and support getting established in this area with high demand labor force. We are also looking at the potential to provide initial support to this project through the lease of the warehouse area in the business center. This project is still scheduled to formally announce soon, but is also being hit hard by the downturn in oil and gas.

Project Vertical – This project is dealing with a light industrial manufacturer looking to put a new production facility in the Parish. We are currently working on site locations

offering suitable heavy transportation access, but have developed a strong interest by the company in a site next to the Distribution Center. It is possible that we could have an offer on property to the SLED board for this site plan within the next 45 to 60 days. If successful this project would create up to 30 direct full time positions.

Announced Projects

Project Bayou – 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. The company had a temporary hiring office set up in the old Daily World Office on Heather Dr. Acadiana Works is providing direct assistance to this company in recruiting and screening potential employment candidates.

Project Lift – Announced Recruitment - This project was formally announced over the weekend. The company Air Evac Lifeteam 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 Lynx – 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. This project also has the potential to lay the framework for significant future development.

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:

Collaboration efforts with the St. Landry Chamber of Commerce board are moving forward at multiple levels. They will be transitioning to a new board chairman, Jody Soileau, from the previous, Paula Mills at the 1st of the year. We will be continuing to work on items such as our capital outlay request for the 2016 Legislative Session, slpforward.com, as well as looking to prioritize other community development related initiatives that might have a direct impact on St Landry Parish Businesses.

Our work with SLP Tourism also continues to move forward. At their board meeting last week Celeste was able to report one of the strongest income months that they have experienced to date for the month of November. This was likely do in large part to the temporary workforce created by Project Slip We continue to regularly collaborate on regional and state priorities that are important to the cultural economy of SLP, both through our Cornerstone collaboration, as well as other areas, such as the Parish GIS Project, slpforward.com and the St Luke’s Hospital Project.

Seventeen BERG collaboration meetings have been held over the past eight months with the following SLP companies:

- Wal-Mart Distribution Center
- Alon Refinery Krotz Springs
- Savoie’s

- Tony Chachere's
- Bayou State Lumber
- Cal-Chlor
- Riceland Crawfish
- International Snubbing Services (ISS)
- Sunland Construction
- Ventura Foods
- Dominique Stock Yards
- Dixie Storage
- Noble Plastics
- Sterling Automotive Group
- Giles Automotive Group
- Opelousas General Health Systems (OGH)
- Waveland Services

We are awaiting the final deliverables from efforts as part of the advisory committee for a major United Way Effort economic analysis project called The ALICE Project. We anticipate these to be shared at our meeting in Baton Rouge in January. It is our hope this comprehensive research effort will help provide some critical answers on key workforce issues due to underlying societal issues that may not always be apparent and perhaps open the door to being able to provide more detailed economic grant related data.

We are continuing efforts with Cornerstone Governmental Affairs, SLED, SLP Government, SLP Tourism, SLP CHOC, and SLP Solid Waste on funding priorities for the 2016 Capital Outlay Session. These requests are now in for the 2016 session. We will be once again in bi-weekly conference calls with our partner entities to ensure strong communication on the latest progress. We are also working now with Cornerstone to sit down face to face with all of our elected delegation to bring them up to date and start to build that new relationship with some of our freshly elected delegation.

We are moving forward with active participation in multiple areas with the newly formed Acadiana Planning Commission, APC and its newly incorporated Metropolitan Planning Organization. This is already paying big dividends in the planning staff capacity within APC and their support of SLP. The most recent example is with the MPO currently getting updated traffic counts for us on key transportation areas in the Parish primarily in and around I-49 and the close proximity Hwy 190 areas.

We are continuing our active efforts with a board seat on the ARA (Acadiana Regional Alliance), which is an additional component of the 1 Acadiana effort to bring a collective voice together to enhance regional economic and community development efforts. Some of the key items of consideration at the last board meeting were in depth discussions on the I-49 extension efforts, the Acadiana Regional Food Alliance, best practices by area Chambers of Commerce and an the discussion of an early planning for an Acadiana Day at the State Capitol.

AEDC (Acadiana Economic Development Council)

We are nearing the deadline for an exciting regional business accelerator program that would be cooperative initiative with InnoV8 Acadiana, seven parish economic development organizations, and Winrock International. This is in part funded through an EDA matching grant in order to get full funding. We are coming to the deadline for this project later this month.

As a fallback to this initiative if the timing does not correspond with the Winrock project we are looking at the potential to support a workforce testing facility at LSU-E and also looking to reimburse local EDO's for qualifying funds usage for eligible workforce development, marketing, or other eligible activities up to a cap limit.

We continue quality interaction on multiple levels with the staff at OA as we look to enhance the economic development capacity for region. As a reminder, their economic development priorities for 2016 are:

- Maintaining strong executive leadership and financial support for LED.
- Proactively pursuing industry development for Acadiana.
- Restoring, protecting, and reforming key economic development incentive programs.
- Supporting game changing opportunities.

We spent significant time with staff from OA this month being actively engaged in a comprehensive regional economic development analysis that is being done by Jay Garner and Associates.

VI – Community Development in St Landry Parish

With a business plan that focuses on the Cultural Economy of Arnaudville with an emphasis on the alternative usage of St Luke's Hospital we are now facilitating efforts between Parish Presidents on legal options for valuation and transfer of ownership with the facility. We are further exploring the potential to establish an economic development district if the facility were to transfer to the control of St Landry Parish. To a lesser extent, we are also providing technical assistance in the structure of a 501c3 dealing with the cultural economy in that area that could potentially operate such a facility under the right structure and contractual agreement.

The Washington Steamboat City Association continues to work on an initiative to deal with substandard housing in Washington both by seeking grants and partners for larger-scale work and by working with local churches to organize youth groups and other working parties to do minor repairs.

The Historic Washington Art Gallery, organized through the association, held its second open house on Dec. 5 and had good patronage. Eight artists exhibit at the gallery. Sales have been sufficient to cover costs plus give them a small profit.

This is in part due to Washington's designation as a state cultural district. Steamboat City Association is the designated administrative agency for the Historic Washington Cultural District. We have just completed the annual report for the district, documenting creation and operation of the art gallery, work toward promoting the upcoming Washington tricentennial, and work with St. Landry Economic Development to promote cultural tourism in Washington and throughout the parish.

We recently funded a student garden program at Washington Elementary, which is part of a larger goal toward organizing community gardens.

We are studying revision of the provisions under which Steamboat City Association scholarships are awarded, taking into greater account the need of the student as well as the academic potential

We recently had the initial pilot program meeting this month in Opelousas with LED and State Main Street that is designed to help downtown businesses succeed. Opelousas is one of only 4 communities in the state selected to participate in this program. It is essential that we continue to look for ways to inject new business investment in the Opelousas Downtown area.

We are making some progress with the Opelousas leadership now to explore options for them to consider using the resources of the APC to help identify and prioritize some of the key priorities that will make significant positive impacts in the City. The need for this proactive planning was directly highlighted in some recent controversial council decisions that allowed a new commercial business on Highway 182 (Union Street).

We have spent extensive time with the new Chancellor for LSU-E, Dr. Kimberly Russell, who will officially assume her new role effective September 1st. We are working now with Dr. Russell to assist with establishing their workforce testing center and the establishment of their new position, Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development. We will also remain engaged with their Advisory Board that intends start meeting on a more frequent basis than the previous annual meetings.

We continue to work with the leadership of Port Barre in their efforts to formally move forward as one of only five communities in Acadiana that will participating in a pilot planning program offered through the Acadiana Planning Commission, APC. This initiative has been approved by their council and is now in the contractual process.

We also continue to work with the leadership in Eunice on moving forward with updating a comprehensive plan and a follow up action plan to move strategic priorities forward. We facilitated a meeting with the members of their planning committee last week and the APC December 3rd to help them explore and understand the available tools and options that are provided by the APC.

Our efforts in support of the community of Grand Coteau have further paid dividends in a positive way with their approval this month to move forward with contract with the APC to do a 12 month strategic planning a prioritization effort for their community. This

process will ultimately allow businesses in the district a voice in what infrastructure improvements are done and in what order they get listed.

We have been actively engaged in multiple ways with the discussion of the I-49 South Coalition. The project is moving forward in many ways with the extension through Lafayette being the biggest hurdle in the project. The Lafayette portion is looking at 3.5 miles being elevated and 2 miles built at grade. The extension is project at 6 to 8 lanes and will have 20 total ramps. It will require modifications to the airport runway and will involve between 150 to 200 existing properties in its projected path.

We continue our work to support the St Landry Municipal Authority by working to provide direct information and future content presenters that can provide hands on information that can immediately be used as a tool by community leaders across the parish.

We are not giving up on discussions with the Wal-Mart DC executive team with community leaders from Washington on the potential for using the Wal-Mart Mentor Program for the small communities in the proximity of the DC. Realistically we don't anticipate any new movement on this until at least late January.

On Thursday, November 19th the SLP hosted a Political Voice Forum, a non-partisan community information event, for the constituents of St. Landry Parish to meet and become better informed with the recently elected officials and their platforms as well as those in run-off. Over 75 engaged constituents were in attendance.

On October 29th SLP served as a sponsor for the Opelousas City of Tourism's Annual Halloween event in an effort to further promote our organization as well as assist in Girl Scout recruitment. From that event over forty girls were registered. A meeting will be held in mid-December for parent follow-up and troop assignment. Prior to SLP's involvement there were roughly three (3) active troops in the area, since SLP has doubled their capacity to six (6) with the hopes of forming roughly four (4) more troops based off the aforementioned event's success.

The St. Landry Professionals will host its SLP Membership Holiday Social on Monday, December 21st at 5:30 pm at Sombrero's Mexican Grill. At this time we will be collecting non-perishable foods items to be donated to the local ICONZ food bank.

Grants Update:

FY2016 LBIA \$25,000 Grant building improvements have begun as of September 15, 2015. To date a total of twelve of fourteen items have been completed.

The signage to be provided under the USDA RBEG Grant for the digital marquee arrived in the United States on Tuesday, December 8th and is currently being

assembled at Triple AAA signs, located in Lafayette, La. All images to be displayed on signage have been provided to the graphics department for review and upload. The sign is expected to arrive on SLED's campus in the coming week with complete installation of signage to be complete prior to the Christmas date of December 25th.

As part of the agenda you will asked to approve expenditure for the first community to formally use our new Increment Finance Policy. We anticipate this will be used by other communities on major transportation corridors over the near term. The use of these funds will be to enhance transportation infrastructure along the corridor will be strong area of near term focus as we look to capitalize on the I-49 potential.

VII – Training Opportunities

Basic Economic Development Course; January 26 – 29, New Orleans

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

Here we are at the close of an exciting year. I believe we can honestly look back and say that despite many current economic factors that continue to cause concern for the Acadiana Economy in the minds of many people there is a renewed sense of “can do” in St Landry Parish. I truly believe that you as board members are the catalyst for helping to spread this message and for that we are very grateful. As our new branding campaign shows, there is lot to be proud of in SLP and a lot more coming that we can all be proud of. I want you all to know how much I appreciate your support in being such an integral part of making good things happen for other people. With your support we are continuing to grow the capacity of our organization, as well the prosperity of our parish. With your continued backing we will continue to hit 2016 running by expanding opportunities, growth, and positive impact across St Landry Parish!!