



Executive Director’s Report — November 2018

Greetings and happy holidays! It is time once again to summarize some of the forward momentum for our area and for Acadiana. We continue our climb in fundamental indicators, such as sales taxes and the real estate markets. We are also seeing steady strengthening in the area unemployment rates as listed below. The net sales tax increase, month over year, is particularly striking.



| November SLP Sales Taxes Collection Comparisons | October SLP Unemployment Comparisons |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •\$5,469,250 November 2018 •\$4,995,308 November 2017 •Parish overall net up7% from last year. (CSLEDD Intake Adjusted) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Oct 2018 6.0% < 6.3 Sept •Oct 2017 5.5 % •Oct 2016 7.8% •Oct 2015 7.7% |

Since I have had numerous folk’s comment with interest about including some information related to our oil and gas sector, I am including sections of an article written by, Zachary Fitzgerald, Morgan City Daily Review, last week on a presentation provided to the Atchafalaya Chapter of the American Petroleum Institute. This presentation was provided by Eric Smith, professor of practice at Tulane’s A.B. Freeman School of Business and interim director of the Tulane Energy Institute

Deepwater oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico is growing but at the slowest rate seen in the recent past, while continental shelf production is decreasing, Smith said. Total U.S. rig count is starting to increase, and the number of oil rigs is rising faster than gas rigs, he said.

Though a boom of energy production in shale plays outside Louisiana has hurt the gulf region, there are still problems with shale production. Among those problems is that operators

haven't returned the capital that they have borrowed. Issues with sustainability in shale production will be to the benefit of deep-water energy producers in the Gulf of Mexico, Smith said.

Smith expects deep-water oil production to continue to increase. Deepwater operators have discovered about five billion barrels of oil in the past few years.

"The Gulf of Mexico, especially for large companies both operators and service companies, remains one of the best places in the world for rebuilding and optimizing reserve portfolios," Smith said. However, those further developments will come at high production costs. Still, sticking to deep-water production and using available technology to access oil and gas is a good long-term plan, he said.

The midstream and downstream sectors of the industry "continue to see unparalleled growth in new capital investment," Smith said. Roughly \$40 billion on oil- and gas-related infrastructure such as liquefied natural gas terminals and petrochemical plants is spent annually in Louisiana.

But continual issues with getting pipelines permitted in the state is highly detrimental to the state's refineries and the rest of the of the downstream sector, Smith said. "We've got to figure out a way to solve these pipeline permitting issues," he said.

Most of the new drilling platforms coming online this year and next year in the gulf are deep-water projects that started three to 10 years ago. Significant amounts of discovered oil and prospective oil will be available going forward in the gulf. Implementation of financial standards for operating in the Gulf of Mexico during former

President Barack Obama's administration has partly caused small independent operators to leave the gulf. Those new standards benefit large operators, he said. One reason that shallow water production has become less attractive is due to natural gas being the main product coming out of shallow water.

Now, natural gas in the gulf is having trouble competing with gas being extracted from shale elsewhere, he said. The number of smaller boats working in the gulf has also declined, and that number won't increase until overall drilling activity rises, he said."

While oil and gas is still a big influence in our region, it is also important for us in this area to be aware of the converse impacts that a continued recovery of the industry could bring. Many of our larger area employers have had a much larger pool of experienced and qualified workers come to them from the oil field over the past couple of years. While many of these workers may decide not to go back to the industry, the economics of the industry will pull many back to work in field. Being aware and taking care of area employers faced with this challenge will be an important focus of our 2019 BER Outreach Program.

From all of us at SLED and its affiliated entities we want to wish all of you a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year Holiday!

Bill

Communications

With our all new comprehensive website complete and fully operational for the past sixty (60) days we will continue to work with Golden Shovel on a monthly basis in continually improving our website presence to include social media platform.

These services will include development of a marketing strategy that addresses five primary components: purpose and goals, advantage, target, marketing, and niche.

This strategy will contribute to the overall marketing success and develop pathways for digital marketing, content strategy support, and overall awareness of the goals and objectives. It will also contribute to the development of the product box, which is the community identifier(s) used to attract the target audience.

In addition, SLED has entered the space of numerous social media platforms which include LinkedIn and Facebook.

A GIS database now allows site selectors to search, select and compare sites and has details about key industries and leading employers. Users also can create custom reports.

Each of St. Landry Parish's communities is profiled on the site, which also outlines recreation, education and health care options as well as the area's distinct arts and cultural heritage. 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.

Included in this new communications design effort is new board reporting materials, as well as the ability for any visitor to collect portions of the web material into a shopping cart type feature that will build the material into a PDF for save/print. The active hard launch was

We are also working on a pilot plan initiative now that will see a news letter go out every other month to the businesses in the Central St. Landry Economic Development District, so they are aware of the latest progress in their area. The plan is to use this same communication model in updating businesses within the development district in Grand Coteau, as well as the ODD District in Opelousas.



There have been 109 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.



Twenty-two St. Landry Parish projects announced over the past 39 months have created

- 1,068 new fulltime jobs.
- Retention of 325 existing jobs.
- Creation of at least 360 indirect jobs
- Support of an estimated 3,355 temporary jobs

Who's Growing?

This month will consolidate the projects section into those projects at a 90%, or better rating for completion. In total we 25 projects that we are actively engaged with at this time. Of these 25 we have the following 11 that are at currently at, or close to an imminent development status. FTE stands for full time employee. Capex means money invested in property and equipment. Most of the projects listed below have been at the cusp of announcement for a while. We anticipate most of the projects to have either a soft, or public announcement early in the new year and into the first quarter of 2019.

- **Project Anchor** – In state expansion, area recruitment. 2.5m capex 35 FTE's
- **Project Belt** – Area expansion. 2.1m capex 45 FTE's
- **Project Boost** – Area expansion/retention. 250m capex, 15 FTE's (High Wage)
- **Project Clean** – In state expansion, area recruitment. 2.3m capex. 25 growing to 50FTE's
- **Project Doughnut** – Area recruitment, in state expansion. 3.5m capex, 15FTE's
- **Project Drop Off** - Area expansion. 1.5m capex, 10FTE's
- **Project Gateway** - This is a large multi-use development project in the central parish on a 100-acre site.
- **Project Link** – Area expansion. 10m capex, 25 FTE's
- **Project Ride** – In state expansion, area recruitment 9m capex, 55FTE's
- **Project Tail** – Area expansion. 3m capex, 10FTE's (Nov announcement ceremony)
- **Project Wrench** – Area expansion, .9m capex, 12FTE's

Once formally, or informally announced, depending on the company's preference these projects will be added into the total figures listed in overview. Project Gateway is an overview for four development projects within the Gateway Master Plan Located on east Harry Guilbeau Road.

Business Outreach

We continue regular outreach to employers throughout our parish having logged 18 new visits to improve the quality of relationships with these leaders. Many of the expansion projects we deal with are initially founded in these outreach visits. We also continue to visit key employers through the past year in regular conversation with on items affecting their growth in the parish.

Area Development

Vision St Landry - has been focused on identifying priorities that will have significant impacts for SLP over the next 5 to 20 years. The group continues to make significant strides with its work with its support for long-terms priorities such for as:

- 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
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Vision St. Landry will host its next quarterly meeting on February 4th.

The Central St Landry Economic Development District, CSLEDD - continues to progress with their 2018 priorities, which include:

- Improving wastewater capacities to the north and south
 - Morgan Goudeau has completed a wastewater infrastructure assess plan for both the north and south sections of the I-49. We anticipate a plant to the south to be in construction in as soon as 24 months.
- Maintenance of the grounds and trash along the I-49
 - The commission has paid for the final trash pick-up on the corridor last week. Beginning in the 2019 growing season there will be continuous bi-weekly grass cutting and trash pick up paid for by the commission.
- Lighting along the I-49
 - The notice to proceed on Harry Guilbeau Lighting Project was signed on October 22, 2018. Work is now in progress at this intersection. We anticipate all lighting

Parish Employer Visits This Year

- Gaienne Lumber
- Dixie Storage
- Lowes Opelousas
- C&G Container
- Giles Automotive Group
- Courville Toyota
- Wal Mart Distribution Center
- Savoies Foods
- Noble Plastics
- Riceland Crawfish
- Design Precast Concrete & Pipe
- Evangeline Downs
- Gaubert Oil
- Iron Horse Implement
- Jerry's Furniture
- MANCO Containers
- Prairie Construction
- Lemoyen Timber

there being upgraded to LED and operational by the end of this calendar year. Once complete, the commission will begin bidding the work on Creswell and Highway 190/I-49.

- Master planning the EVD Property.
 - Kick-Off Workshop” for this event was held November 28th and 29th at the Club House of EVD. The events were well attended on both days with a lot of good interaction and feedback. We anticipate the next follow up with the consultant groups to fall late in January, or the first part of

The Downtown Development District Board (DDD) - has done considerable outreach and education to date. Beyond education, the board to date has achieved the following notable tasks:

- Announcement motion of proposed 1% sales tax levy in the Opelousas DDD Economic Development District No. 1, State of Louisiana.
- Adoption of resolution giving Notice of Intention to create the proposed Opelousas DDD Economic Development District No. 1, State of Louisiana.
- Developed a top list of priorities that provide the best initial returns on investment for downtown.
- Implemented via social media and by way of a website landing page a Public Education/Outreach Campaign as it relates to DDD information and education.
- Considerations in play now on Identifying a consultant team to help formalize a comprehensive downtown development plan.

In the Region

One Acadiana - Some of the regional priorities driven by One Acadiana in 2018 have been:

- Active Promotion: Accelerating economic development activities using the “South Louisiana” brand for business and talent recruitment
- Infrastructure and planning: Advancing regional infrastructure priorities through a regional steering committee structure working to produce a RIVR Report of regional infrastructure priorities. SLED is a member of this steering team.
- Supporting Education: Strengthening business-led workforce development initiatives that align K-12 and higher education institutions with market demands, which includes:
 - The 55 in 25 initiative
 - The Nepris Career Education Platform
- Developing Product: Aggressively developing shovel ready, certified sites across the region. One has been recently announced and two are in progress in SLP.

SLED takes an active leadership role in many of the *One Acadiana Committees* and board efforts that focused on various key elements in the region, which include the following committees that provide input to the board structure:

- Regional Transportation Steering/Transportation Committee
- Business Development Committee
- Site Selection Committee (2 St Landry, Port Barre, Sites Pending Certification)
- Urban Revitalization and Development Committee
- Workforce and Education Committee
- Governmental Affairs Committee
- Acadiana Regional Alliance Committee

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

- The I-49 Midway Corridor Project,
- St Luc Hospital Environmental studies,
- Discussion on feasibility for a phase 2 northbound public transportation system on I-49
- Regional prospectus for the Opportunity Zone Investment Program
- Regional transportation infrastructure priorities
- Community MPO related projects

AEDC, Acadiana Economic Development Council, is another regional asset made of economic development professionals focused on making progress on issues that impact all the parishes in Acadiana, particularly the parishes surrounding Lafayette.

Educational Progress

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

- Recognizing outstanding career and technical teachers through the district
- Support of a strategic plan and efficiency analysis for St. Landry Parish Schools by Gibson Consulting.
- Direct support of the district JAG Program.
- Active leadership in selecting the students of the year
- Advisory Board of the Bio-Med Academy
- A leadership role in implementing priorities for the district in community and business engagement
- Active roles in attendance in formal district board and related meetings.
- Discussion of a lead role in helping to establish a St Landry Parish Education Foundation



- Lead role in support of getting sponsorship for the Junior Achievement financial literacy program that will begin in January.

T.H. Harris: The TH Harris enrollment figures were up more than five percent for the fall semester. SLCC overall was recently recognized as one the top ten colleges nationwide for enrollment growth We continue to work with the TH Harris on:

- The new LPN/RN Program and its 2019 targeted launch.
- We have also committed through Vision St Landry for an additional student scholarship for 2018/2019.
- Quarterly meetings with key leadership of SLCC to discuss currents needs and standings.
- Assistance in identifying critical area workforce shortages and proactive educational solutions

LSU-Eunice: LSU-E continues to increase its enrollment with to increase for the fall with enrollment figures that shows more than a six percent increase and brings their numbers close to 3300-students. We look forward to even more active partnership activities with LSU-E through:

- An active member of the LSUE Board of Advisors
- Leading the effort to have Vision \$10,000 in matching scholarship monies for St Landry Parish students looking to attend LSUE.
- A lead role in helping to facilitate a Eunice Area Plan that puts LSUE in a pivotal role in the process
- Active member of the LSUE Business Management Advisory Committee

Community/Cultural Development

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

- Facilitating a planning session on October 22nd for the City that will focus on the SWOT, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.
- Leading a follow-on planning work group session on the afternoon of December 18th with City and LSUE being the two local lead entities.

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

Arnaudville: Multiple efforts associated with the cultural economy including:

- Alternative use considerations and plans for the St Luc Hospital.
- Engagement of the LSU School of Art and Design in doing a formal are cultural economy plan

- Establishment and management of Creative Placemaking Task Force
- Creation and recent announcement of the Hanging Garden placemaking anchor project.

Grand Coteau: Active and ongoing efforts include which include:

- Established an area economic development district along the business corridor
- Helping to promote progress on a TAP Grant that will provide pedestrian access through the business corridor of the town.
- Promotion of engineering analysis of roundabout traffic solution for the east frontage road has been completed and is now in Baton Rouge for its final evaluation.
- We are assisting the town in a capital outlay request for the roundabout project
- Working with the town to complete and application for the MPO Project call to help fund a round about
- Promoting and engineering plan to provide overhead lighting at the Exit 11 interchange
- Working as a liaison with local businesses in construction with DOT to ensure the interests of long-term drainage are in concert with new development
- Numerous areas associated with the cultural economy and the place making task force
- Certification and promotion of the area's first certified shovel ready light industrial site
- Development of the Midway Corridor Plan

Sunset: Support of the town through:

- Cooperative employment of our development planner
- Assistance in putting in 2019 Capital Outlay request through our government affairs team
- Numerous areas associated with the cultural economy and the place making task force, including the Old Sunset High School and the Sunset Arena
- Certification and promotion of the area's first certified shovel ready light industrial site
- Development of the Midway Corridor Plan

Port Barre:

- In process of establishing the area first for industrial park with two large sites in process of becoming certified shovel ready light industrial development sites
- Established boundaries that could be used as an area economic development district

Washington:

- Development of the Midway Corridor Plan

St Landry Young Professionals, TheSLP – In closing out a great 2018 year, TheSLP hosted its Holiday Social, on December 13th at the Old Courtableu Café located in Washington, La, for its valued members and interested young professionals in which our accomplishments as an organization were highlighted and a mini SWOT session was conducted to assist with identify future priorities for 2019. In addition to our recent social, paid SLP members are invited to attend the upcoming ‘SLED’ing Through the Sneaux Social which will provide them the networking opportunity amongst board members comprised of four additional boards SLED overseas.

Grants Update

SLED received notice as a 2018-2019 LBIA Grant Recipient in the full amount of \$25,000.00 to be dedicated towards the total amount to replace the business center roof. The first quarterly report will be sent out NLT December 21, 2019 per the grant requirements.

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 of Grand Coteau. The town has confirmed their match allocation of 210k to match for 480K.

We continue with local partners TAP Grant for sidewalk improvements around the Courthouse. Currently the preliminary analysis is complete for the two (2) sidewalks along W. Landry Street between the intersections of S. Market Street and S. Court Street. A final design is anticipated to be submitted to DOTD this month.

We continue our work on planning and engineering efforts within the CSLEDD on substantial funds received through the capital outlay process as the basis for a heavy infrastructure plan for the south side of Opelousas along I-49 as well as the Grolee area.

On April 30, 2018 in collaboration with APC, a RDBG Grant was submitted for assessing the needs of a I-49 Midway Growth Corridor Plan. This grant will should be funded by the Delta Regional Authority. There will be more in-depth discussion on the Midway Corridor Project throughout December and into our next regular meeting on January 15th.

The Business Center

The Business Center now has more than 25 employees in working out of the building on a regular basis with hundreds of persons visiting the center in some capacity each month. The center is at near capacity with new inquiries on space is continuing to grow.

We are continuing our work with on-going facility upgrades at the main business center with roof replacement being the big improvement project that is now coming to a completion stage.

The last LSBDC, ULL SBDC counseling session was held on December 11, 2018. The next round of sessions are scheduled for January 8th. These services are available to businesses at any level of growth, are confidential, and are free to area businesses.

We have 9 tenants in the Business Center that include

- Boone Speech and Learning Services
- Miracle-Ear
- Happy Housemaids
- Magnolia Community Development Corporation
- Victory Manufacturing
- WIOA 40
- Global Environmental Solutions (Storage Only)
- Mind and Body Connections, LLC
- St. Landry – Evangeline United Way

Our CAVE area is getting used frequently by area nonprofit and governmental partners for planning and presentations. On average, the room is getting used at least several times per week. In addition, the CAVE will soon be highlighted on our new website highlighting all the technology assets offered. If you know of businesses in the area could utilize our CAVE area for small retreats, or breakout planning sessions please let us know so we can get them more information on its use.

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 will be held in Hattiesburg in September of 2019. The LIDEA Basic

Economic Development Course is being held later this month in New Orleans. Both courses offer overviews in:

- 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. December 18th, SLED Bldg.
- Central St. Landry EDD Board Meeting, 8 a.m. on January 8th, SLED Bldg.
- SLED Board of Directors Meeting, 10 a.m. on January 15th, SLED Bldg.
- Vision St Landry regular board meeting, February 4th, SLED Bldg.