



Executive Director's Report — June 2018

Greetings! School is out and it's now full-fledged summer vacation time for many families. As the months fly by, it is time once again to look at some of the great things happening in greater St. Landry and across Acadiana. There is increasing confidence that the economy and virtually every level is on the rebound. Parish unemployment continues to drop and is now at its lowest level since July of 2008. Building permits continue to gain momentum. When we look at core indicators in oil and gas it appears that the industry continues its comeback with oil seemingly holding steady around \$65 per barrel. On shore rigs counts are on a steady climb, while offshore counts are on a much more modest growth pattern. The offshore activity will be important to monitor as it is a large contributor to the support industries along the oil corridor in Acadiana. Couple this with the projected new construction growth around the parish, and this area, there is a lot of reason for pride and optimism for the many folks that play a role in helping this area and region grow.



There is still not shortage of factors that continue to impact our regional, state and national economies, most of which we have little, or no control over. From global trade sanctions, to federal reserve interest rates, to budget and policy decisions in the State Legislature, there is a constant stream of events impacting our economy. In every scenario that there are opportunities that are being created for those willing to view these happenings through a view of potential opportunity. As leaders of the parish and this region we value your support in being a consistent voice of optimism towards future opportunity. We look forward to being able to serve you and our area towards what should be unprecedented levels of growth and prosperity throughout the remainder of 2018.

Bill

2018 May Sales Taxes Parish Total Collection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5,340,943.51 • \$5,414,612.09 • <.01 % from March

April 2018 Parish Unemployment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.6% SLP <.01 from March • April 2017 6.5 % • April 2016 7.7%

Communications

The Executive Director’s Report currently goes out to a large number of parish and regional leaders as an update to progress in St. Landry and beyond. We continue to improvise a new format to make it much easier for parish leaders to grasp at a glance information they can then use in sharing positive progress. Improving our communications at many levels is one of our key 2018 priorities.

We are well into the process of our web design and communications strategy review with Golden Shovel. This new platform is being designed to consolidate www.opportunitystlandry.com, slpforward.com into a new site that includes the latest in technology and features for ED Sites in North America. Included in this new communications design effort will be 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. Brandy is the project lead on this effort, which is on the projected timeframe of work. We would anticipate the first looks at the new site to begin in the month of August.

The Sales Force CRM Program has been fully customized and is now a key component of our internal communication, information collection process. This program will form an essential component of SLED’s project and company relations management efforts for many years to come. This is the same system that is being used by LED at the state level and 1A at regional level.

www.slpforward.com



www.slpforward.com More than 100 articles shining the light on positive things happening in St. Landry Parish. We are currently in the site development process with Golden Shovel so these and all the articles will be loaded into the new communications site format. Please take the time to review the site and the attached articles to learn more about some of the great things happening in our area.

Who's looking at St. Landry Parish?

This section of the report highlights companies that may be considering a location of their business to St Landry Parish, or a medium to large expansion being considered by one of our local area employers. These projects are given code names to ensure that other states don't try to pirate these projects to their area. Once the core of the projects are finalized then the name and location of the project is shared in *public announcement*. These projects do not include many of the new construction commercial, retail and office buildings that you see in and around areas of the parish. SLED is involved in many of these projects in various capacities in order to bring them to the area and get to their construction state, but they are not listed for practical considerations in managing the size of the report.

Project Basket - This is a new recruitment project looking to expand operations into the parish at one of our rail site locations. Initial job creation figures are up to 100 FTEs, with a capex still to be determined. *Latest Update: This project site was selected as one of two Acadiana submittals as a partner submission with One Acadiana and LED. No new updates on this project, but we expect final Y/N notification on moving forward in the next 30 days. Percentage for development – 20%*

Project Belt – This project came together because of local BRE efforts. It is a cooperative between a local area employer and SLED in trying to bring a supplier into an existing manufacturing facility. The job creation figures if successful are now estimated up to 45 FTEs. *Latest Update: This project is a go. We are now working with their incentive consultants now on a path of action for all available incentives. There could be a formal announcement on this project as early as July. Percentage for development - 90%*

Project Boost – This is a very large potential expansion project in terms of capital expenditure. The project would produce about 15 new employees at very high wage scales and well up to 170 temporary construction jobs for a year or more. *Latest Update: This project is a go and initial construction is underway at this time. We are working with company officials on their willingness to do a public announcement. Historically they have preferred to keep their project low key so it may end up being a soft announcement over the next 30 days. Percentage for development - 100%*

Project Black Top – *This is now an expansion project by a well-established area company Prairie Construction. The company had built a new facility in the Opelousas Industrial Park that will allow them to consolidate its central head operations into a newly constructed administration facility. Announced Retention/Expansion: Soft announcement. Prairie Construction Headquarters Construction: Total State Employment Figures 85. Solidifies presence for core operations in Opelousas Industrial Park. 10 new positions. Percentage for development – 100%*

Project Care – This is a health care project that could set the stage for significant additional development on a high profile corridor in the central parish. The project itself would allow for up to 18 new jobs being created. *Latest update: We anticipate a final approval on this project by the June. Possible announce for July. Percentage for development 80%*

Project Clean – This is a manufacturing infill development project located in the center of the parish. If successful this project will create 25 new direct positions, with the ability to grow up to 50 FTEs. *Latest Update: The company has purchased the building and received all local permit and variance requirements. The last step on this being announced is finalization of a DEQ Permit. We anticipate this project being available for announcement in July. Percentage for development – 95%*

Project Cleanse - This is a new recruitment project looking to expand operations into the parish at one of our rail site locations. Initial job creation figures are up to 50 FTEs, with a capex still to be determined by existing building, or greenfield selection of the site. *Latest Update: We are early in this process and expect the site selection to progress to a site visit over the next 30 to 45 days. Percentage for development 30%*

Project Drop Off - This is an area expansion project that is likely to set the stage for the development of an additional industrial development area in the parish. This specific project is scheduled to create up to 10 Direct FTE's *Latest Update: We are working on state project incentive in anticipation of an announcement in July. Percentage for development – 100%*

Project Expo/Fountain



Twenty-two St. Landry Parish projects announced over the past 30 months have created potential for

- 1,058 new fulltime jobs.
- Retention of 265 existing jobs.
- Creation of at least 353 indirect jobs
- Support of an estimated 3,315 temporary jobs

Estimates on job creation are 30 FTE and temporary employment of up to 200 positions. The capital expenditure on this project is from a baseline of \$25 million, ranging to \$40 million, Fountain has the potential for in excess of 100m in capital investment and hundreds of new jobs created. The clock continues to tick on the on the land use of the property where the expo project would be located. We are currently working with several area professionals to tie this discussion these projects together, which will require a master planned development. *Latest Update: Four of the key players are in place regarding the Master Plan Conceptual. The Master Plan would include a market feasibility study to the back side of property and a land-use planning and design to frontage. An initial consolidated proposal for a conceptual master plan design has been received. We are meeting again for a second time this week with property officials to discuss more details of this plan. We plan to come to both SLED and CSLEDD within the next 30 to 45 days with a proposal update on this project. Percentage for development – 75%*

Project Gateway – This is a large commercial retail development project in the central parish. Property sales are in process in accordance with a detailed master plan for close to 100 acres of prime I-49 property. There will be a mix of projects going into this gateway development, which will include big ticket retail, medical office, commercial, and religious facilities. On completion, this gateway will have generated close to 100m in construction investment and will lead to the direct created of more than 100 FTE's *Latest Update: We continue to work closely with central development group. There are now up to five parcels in this development in contract, or being closed on. We also anticipate an additional non-tenant to begin an 8-10m project construction in July.*

Percentage for development – 100%

Project HIPPO – This is a heavy industrial project that is very large in scope on its investment and job creation potential. Currently, we are finalizing with regional and state partners on identifying and meeting engineering requirements on the footprint site. *Latest Update: We are meeting with senior officials on this project in Baton Rouge on Thursday of this week for the latest progress/plans/status on this project.*

Percentage for development – 90%

Project Home – We don't normally track projects that are dealing with residential development, but this project has the potential to soon become the largest residential development in St Landry Parish with 168 home parcels becoming available in this phase of the project.. *Latest Update: We anticipate the final details of the project to be complete this month and for a formal announcement coming available in July.*

Percentage for development – 95%

Project League – This is a new recruitment project with major impact potential that would expand across the region and even the state. If successful this project would create up to 100 white-collar, high paying positions, collectively averaging close to \$100,000 annually. *Latest Update: This project has received significant renewed momentum with nationally recognized consultants recently completing in a feasibility analyses. The results of these analysis have come back positive. Teams are now in the process of plugging in various stakeholders into the various pieces of the feasibility analysis*

Percentage for development – 65%

Project Link – This is a proposed expansion project with an existing parish company. If successful this project would create up to 25 new direct jobs and see more than \$10 million of investment into equipment and new facility construction. *Latest Update: The financing for this project is in place and initial incentive applications have been submitted. We anticipate and announcement and construction of this project to be in July.*

Percentage for development – 95%

Project Protect - This is an in-parish expansion project that has already made the land acquisition for their new site. The project could expand to up to 12 new manufacturing positions once the new location is operational. *Latest Update: Latest discussions are that the company still*

has the potential for beginning their new construction but that they have now moved their timeframe into the 2nd or 3rd quarter of 2018 pending final some final local variance requests. This is a go/no go for the project.

Percentage for development – 80%

Project Ride – This project represents the recruitment of a large retailer into the center of the parish. This project will create up to 50 new positions. *Latest Update: There have been some delays with property boundaries in the new development have delayed the accountment for construction, but we still anticipate an actual construction start for this project in the third quarter. This project will be one of 17 a smaller development within of Project Gateway.*

Percentage for development – 90%

Project Sap - This is a new recruitment project looking to expand operations into the parish at one of our rail site locations. Initial job creation figures are up to 125 FTEs, with a capex still to be determined. *Latest Update: This project site was selected as one of two Acadiana submittals as a partner submission with One Acadiana and LED. There are no new updates this month. We anticipate the next notification in the evaluation process within the next 30 days.*

Percentage for development – 20%

Project Shell –The project is looking to refocus their feasibility back at the original building site, or a greenfield site in near proximity. If successful, this project could create up to 20 new positions. *Latest Update: This was a previously parked project that now has been brought back into play. This project has received preliminary USDA grant approval. Company officials have are working with equity investors now to supplement this grant. This process must be complete by mid-July.*

Percentage for development – 70%

Project Tactical – This is a redevelopment project in the center of the parish. It is exciting in that it could put a large distressed building back into commerce while creating considerable visitor activity to the location. The FTE on this project could be as high as 12. Capex could be as high as 4m. *Latest Update: This project appears to have fallen apart due to lack of capital access and will be moved the parking lot. It still leaves the need for a refit of a large building in Opelousas that is currently vacant. The financing for this project does not appear to be available. Pending no new information, this project will move to the parking lot for the next report.*

Percentage for development – 5%

Project Vertical – This project is dealing with a light industrial manufacturer looking to put a new production facility in the Parish. If successful this project would create up to 30 direct full-time positions. *Latest Update: As of the 14th of this month, company officials still say the funding for the project is go. This is will be a land sale/lease consideration for SLED, which may come to the board as early as the July Meeting.*

Percentage for development – 50%

Project Wrench – This project is a recruitment project dealing with an industrial service provider that would create up to 12 FTEs over the first 18 months of operation. Initial capex is projected at less than 400k. *Latest Update: Construction of this facility is underway, but has slowed. We will still see an announcement being imminent on this project. Over the next 45 days. Percentage for development – 90%*

Project Zeus – This is new recruitment project that is cooperative submittal with SLED, 1A and LED. This project has a project 40m capex with the creation of up to 40 FTE's. *Latest update; The submission was made last month so it will be at least 60 days before we get any feedback on the next short list. Percentage for development – 20%*

Business Outreach

We continue outreach to employers throughout our parish. Our first goal is to determine any challenges, or opportunities for these employers. An additional goal is to improve the quality of relationships with these leaders so that they can provide input on key challenges and decisions we are actively engaged in around the parish, the region, and the state. We have continued to visit key employers through the past year, many of which we are in regular conversation with on items affecting their growth in the parish. We are now well into the outreach process for 2018.

Parish Employers Visited This Year

- Gaienne Lumber
- Dixie Storage
- Lowes Opelousas
- C&G Container
- Giles Automotive Group
- Courville Toyota
- Wal Mart Distribution Center
- Savoies Foods
- Noble Plastics

In the Region

Some of the key high level regional priorities being drive by One Acadiana this year are:

- Accelerating economic development activities using the “South Louisiana” brand for business and talent recruitment
- Further identifying and advancing regional infrastructure priorities there a regional steering committee structure
- Strengthening business-led workforce development initiatives that align K-12 and higher education institutions with market demands
- Aggressively developing shovel ready, certified sites across the region

One Acadiana also has a number of committees focused on various key elements in the region, which includes:

- Governmental Affairs Committee
- Workforce and Education Committee

- Urban Revitalization and Development Committee
- Business Development Committee
- Site Selection Committee (3 St Landry Sites Pending Certification)
- Acadiana Regional Alliance Committee
- Regional Transportation Steering/Transportation Committee

SLED takes an active leadership role in many of these committee and overall board efforts.

The regional business accelerator effort, Accelerate Acadiana continues to make solid progress This accelerator project is the result of a partnership with the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Winrock International, Chase Bank, One Acadiana, the Acadiana Economic Development Council, INNOV8 Acadiana and ULL. The first 10 company cohort recently graduated in a well-attended ceremony. ***INNOV8 and ULL are now in the process of identifying their 2nd cohort class to participate in this project. This second class will have a healthcare focus and will look to begin their formal process in the third quarter of 2018. There are still a couple slots available to participate in this program. If any of you know small health care companies in this area, or out of this area that may want more information please have them contact SLED.***

Educational Progress

St. Landry Parish: We continue our work with Patrick Jenkins, St Landry Parish Schools Superintendent, his staff and the St Landry Parish School Board through our support of a strategic plan and efficiency analysis for St. Landry Parish Schools. Gibson Consulting, the firm identified to provide the services for the comprehensive strategic plan and cost efficiency evaluation for the district. All of this work is scheduled to be completed by Oct. 31st of this year. There will be milestone updates, which we will share as this work continues over the next several months. As a reminder, neither of these types of efforts have ever been done for SLP Schools so all of this represents unprecedented progressive actions to set a blueprint for growth over the next 3 – 5 years.



T.H. Harris: We now meet on a regular basis with leaders from SLCC and the TH Harris Campus, both at the parish level, as well as the regional level. Locally, the TH Harris enrollment figures were up more than 20% for the spring semester Early reenrollment figures for the fall look just as encouraging. We continue to work with the TH Harris on the new LPN/RN Program and its 2019 targeted launch. We also continue to follow the progress of SLCC being the new service provider for the Acadiana Workforce Investment Area. There was a formal opening of their new Area Career Center in St Landry Parish managed by SLCC in April. We have also committed through GOEIDC/Vision St Landry for an additional student scholarship for 2018/2019

LSU-Eunice: LSU-E continues to increase its enrollment with another five percent increase for the spring to over 3,000-students. More than 200 graduates made their walk at LSUE in May. Many exciting announcements continue to come from the campus, including plans to create multiple new program offerings, and 2 new programs for Bengal Sports. Bengal Baseball recently made history in winning their 6th 2 Year College World Series Championship. We are very pleased to have the Chancellor on Vision St Landry this year and look forward to even more active partnership activities with LSU-E through this coming year. We have also committed through GOEIDC/Vision St Landry for an additional student scholarship for 2018/2019

Community Development

The CEO Roundtable Board, 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 focus groups on education, redevelopment of downtowns and growing the I-49 Corridor. The group recently identified another key area of facilitating more visionary leadership in the parish and in elected positions. During their most recent meeting the group considered some new initiatives that will include assisting in professional development programs, an I-49 N Strategic Corridor Plan, the continued support of a strategic plan and efficiency analysis for St Landry Parish Schools. They plan to have a follow on facilitated strategic planning update session on the 25th of June.

The facility and the finances for the St Luc Hospital are now in motion. A Phase I Environmental Assessment of the building has been complete and received. There are also production discussions with entities such as the Community Foundation for Acadiana and the Baton Rouge Area Foundation on partnership opportunities on this project. These efforts come on the tail of a site visit to St Luc, which included a group which included former Governor Blanco. This included reviewing 16 different floor plan layout options for the building that were created by a focus group through LSU. There are also efforts underway to update the business plan for the facility, as well as an updated building appraisal. This should ultimately lead to a consideration by the parish council on putting the building back into commerce, either by sale, or by lease.

The new Central St Landry Economic Development District is off and running with their 2018 priorities. These priorities include:

- Improving wastewater capacities to the north and south
 - Planning and property acquisition efforts are in progress now
- Maintenance of the grounds and trash along the I-49
 - The corridor has been cleaned and cut for the third time this year, two of which have been paid by CSLEDD
- Lighting along the I-49

- Upgrades proposals for complete rehabilitation will be considered over the next 30 to 45 days as blue prints come available from DOTD.
- Master planning the EVD Property.
 - One consolidated proposal has been received. A second proposal is anticipated in the week of the 18th of June.

Through their partnership with SLED, this district will be a landmark in the future growth throughout the core of St Landry Parish along the I-49.

We are continuing to work with the Mayor of Eunice and his chairperson of the local economic development committee on a number of different priority items for the city. Some of the things being discussed are the creation of “Why Eunice, certifying sites, and gathering area specific data.

As part of the economic development district process, Grand Coteau continues their planning progress in several areas which include:

- A TAP Grant that will provide pedestrian transportation access through the business corridor of the town.
- A 95% complete engineering analysis of roundabout traffic solution for the east frontage road.
- An engineering plan for providing lighting at the Exit 11 interchange

The placemaking for the areas of Sunset, Grand Coteau, and Arnaudville area has no indication of slowing down. Progress continues with the former St. Luc Hospital, the Sunset School Project, the Hanging Garden Project, and ideas for the Sunset arena. We presented on some of these efforts and their impact on breaking down traditional barriers at a recent regional event on the cultural economy that was held in Abbeville.

The Downtown Development District Board in Opelousas that is progressing as expected through its partnership with SLED. The board has done considerable outreach and education to date, which will continue through the course of the year. Beyond education, the board is fundamentally working on some key high level priorities which are:

- To establish its dedicated funding source through legal processes provided for by the state legislature.
- To develop a top list of priorities that provide the best initial returns on investment for downtown.
 - This will include engagement consideration of an outside consultant team

In June 2018 SLP hosted a Networking Social at a newly opened restaurant located in Washington, La. The event drew an estimated twenty plus young professionals throughout the parish where multiple new memberships were secured. The SLP is also experiencing an increase in exposure and interest through their bi-monthly YP Business and Individual Spotlight

in addition to our summer BOGO membership deal. The BOGO promo runs through August 15, 2018 which entails a reduced annual membership price and a complimentary membership for a friend or co-worker.

Upcoming events important to mention include facilitation of a City of Opelousas Mayor Forum for the upcoming November 2018 Election. More details forthcoming

The Business Center

We are continuing our work with on-going facility upgrades at the main business center. We have completed our second phase of additional upgrades to the rear portion of the building in preparation for our newest tenant, St. Landry-Evangeline United Way, which includes the construction of an entrance for the warehouse office lavatory as well as improvements with the core restrooms located in the middle of the business center. The electronic sign in the front of the building is temporarily down with a defective motherboard, which has a replacement on order.

The Business Center is now at near occupancy, apart from 1 office and 1 storage area. Inquiries on space is continuing to grow. We are now looking at the feasibility of an additional building to the back of our current parcel.

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

The Business Center now has more than 20 employees in working out of the building on a regular basis with hundreds of persons visiting the center in some capacity each month.

The last LSBDC, ULL SBDC counseling session was held on June 12, 2018 at SLED. The next date for these counseling services will be July 10, 2018. These services are available to businesses at any level of growth, are confidential, and are free to area businesses.

On May 17, 2018 SLED in collaboration with St. Landry – Evangeline United Way hosted the live viewing of the ALICE Data Reveal and Forum on Financial Hardship in America live from Washington D.C. Among those in attendance spanning across our Parish included St. Landry Parish Government, economic development education partners, elected officials, workforce commission, etc. The United Way ALICE Project is a grassroots movement inspired by United Ways in 18 states, intended to use hardcore captured data to upend the rosy economic picture portrayed by conventional unemployment and jobs reports.

Our new CAVE area is getting used frequently by area nonprofit and governmental partners for planning and presentation meetings. On average, the room is

getting used by partners, as well as some of our boards at least several times per week. If you

know of businesses in the area that may find value in using the room for small retreats, or breakout planning sessions please let us know so we can get them more information on its use.

Grants Update

With the successful closeout of the 2017-2018 LBIA Grant we will be looking to identify other grant opportunities as it relates to facility upgrades that we may be able to capitalize on for items such as our business center roof. As always, we work to set an example of "Owning It"; referring to owning the perception. We would value any ideas that you may have to help promote this concept. Improvement of the main area lavatories is part of this consideration.

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 first preliminary analysis should be submitted to DOTD for review in the month of June 2018. The town has confirmed their match allocation of 210k to match for 480K.

We continue work with a local engineering firm along with Opelousas Downtown Leaders about a TAP Grant for sidewalk improvements in the downtown area around the Courthouse. Currently a checklist has been completed as well as field work to determine status of sidewalks as it relates to ADA compliancy. Sidewalk elevation shots have most recently been completed to then be included in the original preliminary analysis to be updated in anticipation to be submitted to DOTD in the next 30 to 60 days.

We are working on planning and engineering efforts within the CSLEDD with funds received through the capital outlay process last fall that will be used as the basis for a heavy infrastructure plan for the south side of Opelousas along I-49 as well as the Grolee area. A CEA has been successfully completed between CSLEDD and St. Landry Parish Government regarding the inclusion of additional property for a possible wastewater treatment facility as well as upgrades have been made to current engineering analysis which include additional options as it relates to wastewater infrastructure upgrades throughout the CSLEDD. Per the local engineering firm the cost analysis is roughly 80% complete, with the general report near 30% completion. Additional capital outlay requests for CSLEDD are still in play with the legislature due to the cooperative efforts of our legislative leadership and our government affairs team.

On April 30, 2018 in collaboration with APC a RDBG Grant was submitted for assessing the needs of a I-49 North Strategic Growth Corridor Plan. We will be notified no later than August 31, 2018 regarding moving forward in phase II of the award process.

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 course.

True South Basic Economic Development Course
September 17 - 20, 2018 Hattiesburg, MS

A brief overview of economic development will be given in the following areas:

- 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

- Vision St Landry Strategic Plan update meeting June 25th
- Opelousas DDA Board Meeting, 9 a.m. June 29th, SLED Bldg.
- Central St. Landry EDD Board Meeting, 8 a.m. on July 12th, SLED Bldg.
- SLED Board of Directors Meeting, 10 a.m. on July 17th, SLED Bldg.
- Vision St Landry regular board meeting, July 30th