



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**

We have recently completed several upgrades to the exterior of our facility which include some roofing upgrades, refinishing the area under the side metal awning, pressure cleaning, as well as curbside appeal painting. Please take a chance to walk, or drive around the building if you have time to see how much this has affected the building in a positive way. Our message with the Joint Commission, and for private businesses along I-49 is to “Own It”; referring to owning the perception that is visible from the interstate. As always, we want to help set the example in this effort.

On July 11th, in collaboration with the LSBDC, ULL SBDC business consultant met with one (1) business in one-on-one consulting sessions. These discussions are in the areas of business planning, market research and other key services. The consistent participation in these numbers demonstrates’ the strong growing entrepreneurial presence within St. Landry Parish. The next scheduled session will be held at SLED on August 8, 2017. These services are available to businesses at any level of growth, are confidential, and are free to our area businesses.

As identified within our SLED 2017 priorities to co-host bimonthly small business trainings, we recently held a forum open to all commercial bankers throughout the St. Landry Parish area regarding the Restore Louisiana Small Business Program designed to provide assistance to small businesses that have experienced a decline in revenue of twenty percent (20%) or more between 2015 -2016 within our nine-parish Acadiana region on July 13, 2017. The South-Central Planning and Development Commission served as the presenter.

A few topics of consideration for future seminars include QuickBooks training, Google My Business training, optimization and setup as well as Employment law. Recent discussions have been had with the ULL SBDC in identifying the appropriate topic for the appropriate scale of business.

The final progress report for grant closeout under the 2016-2017 LBIA Grant was submitted on June 22, 2017 with recent notification of all documents submitted approved. Installation of the Audio/Visual Tele-Conference equipment is the last remaining piece to be installed with Conference Room along with any additional networking upgrades. We anticipate this to be completed by the closeout of July 2017. We are currently exploring ideas for specific projects under the 2017-2018 LBIA Grant. We anticipate the announcement around August 1, 2017.

We currently have 9 tenants active in the Business Center that include:

C&C Painting and Pressure Washing

Boone Speech and Learning Services

Miracle Ear

Happy Housemaids

Magnolia Community Development Corporation

Victory Manufacturing

WIOA 40

Charles G. Lawson Trucking, Inc

Global Environmental Solutions

FuGen Leadership International (Tentatively August 1, 2017)

## **II – Communications**

We are actively gathering input and evaluating best practices from across the country on our primary website at [www.opportunitystlandry.com](http://www.opportunitystlandry.com). We understand that there is a big need for upgrades to clean up the existing site and are in process of identifying a contractor to perform short term upgrades. We are also looking at a larger overhaul as part of the phase II of the moving forward campaign and whether some of our same candidates could perform in both roles.

To date [www.slpforward.com](http://www.slpforward.com), currently holds a total of eighty-one (81) articles shining the light on positive things happening throughout St. Landry Parish. One (1) article per week is typically uploaded onto the site on a consistent basis providing fresh and updated article content.

A Google analytics test for the dates of June 19<sup>th</sup> through July 11<sup>th</sup> revealed that SLPForward's number of sessions identified was 115 which include 72.2% of those sessions viewed by new users. The analytics trend shows an ongoing, and perhaps a more consistent interest in the details of content stories, but a diminishing interest in site hits, which is the basis for initiating Phase II of the SLP Moving Forward Campaign.

Through our ongoing engagement with Aileen Bennett, Creating Clever, we have received the creation of a Road Mapping document equipped with a detailed, actionable frame on a communication strategy for moving forward, as well as parish identification considerations. We are currently looking at identifying those respective parish partners to best assist moving forward as we begin to implement strategies as identified and

reach out accordingly to update on the direction phase II will be taking and secure their buy-in.

Through our continued work with Parish Government on our existing GIS platform and the executive team from Fenstermaker & Associates to establish as roadmap towards getting our parish GIS to optimal levels, multiple layers have been identified to be incorporated into the current GIS platform to included cultural districts, EDD districts, municipal boundaries and school board districts to just list a few. We have actively begun reaching out to those entities where the respective data needed is held.

Next steps will be to process data sets into the proper format to then be uploaded into the GIS in layer form. We will be working to model some of the innovative GIS work done in Lake Charles, Calcasieu Parish, and the Port of Lake Charles. The GIS platform is now accessible through HTML 5 and can be viewed on all web browsers, including Google Chrome. To view the GIS platform in its new skin please visit <http://sled.totaland.com:81/> The site currently includes updated mapping on SLP Smooth Ride Home improvements.

### **III – Property/Site Development**

There continues to be good progress with the actual and planned development on four of our major interchanges along I-49. The general pace of the development of the intersections moves from south to north. We will be continuing our focus on building the infrastructure artery capacity in these areas throughout 2017. While some growth is inevitable as Acadiana continues its organic expansion to the north, our goal is to not only accelerate this growth, but also to see it done with a “smart growth” philosophy in mind.

We continue our efforts with the site development team from LED, One Acadiana, as well as private realtors. We continue to work towards NLT two shovel ready sites for St Landry Parish by the end of 2017. We have identified four with high potential, but continue working through ownership expectation on involvement in the program. We had one good land owner meeting earlier this month, but still have concerns on the property pricing expectations.

### **IV Projects Update Summary: 21 Active, 6 Pending Announcement, (Belt, Blacktop, Flash, Flow, Hippo, Open Road), 1 New (Project Fast) 1 Pending Park, Parked (Hue, League) Please note (*Latest Updates*)**

**Project Belt** – This project has come about because of local BRE efforts and is a cooperative between a local employer and SLED in trying to bring in a supplier into their existing manufacturing facility. The job creation figures if successful are now estimated up to 45 FTE's. *Latest Update:* Although the project has seen some unforeseen delays, it has started in small growth stages. We continue our meetings with company officials to work towards a project announcement soon.

**Project Boost** – This is a very large potential expansion project in terms of capital expenditure. The project would produce less than 15 new employees at very high wage scales and well up to 170 temporary construction jobs for a year or more. *Latest Update:* Due to recent efforts, this project will likely be delayed to go/no go until at least the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of this year. We are looking to sit down again with new leadership at some point over the summer to try and confirm their new strategy with the expansion.

**Project Black Top** – This is a location expansion project with a well-established area company. The company will be looking to consolidate central operation into a newly constructed central administration facility. *Latest Update:* This project is going vertical and we anticipate a formal announcement in in the next month when keys corporate officials are in the area.

**Project Clean** – This is a manufacturing infill development project located in the center of the parish. If successful this project will create 50 new direct positions, with the ability to grow up to 100 FTE's. *Latest Update:* The success of this project currently hinges on the ability to rezone the existing facility towards suitable use, which has changed from its original intent due to some corporate acquisitions. Currently, the new use is in a Phase I environment evaluation. We anticipate these results to be available in the next month, or so. This will be a key component of the project having the ability to progress.

**Project Expo** – *Latest Update:* The conclusion step in the option agreement has been completed. This means that the clock is on the land use of the property. We have been in active discussions with Boyd leadership on next steps and hope to facilitate more in depth discussion and strategy over the course of the summer.

**Project Fountain** – This is a large scale commercial development project that discussions have been ongoing for some time. National tenants remain committed to this project and negotiations with landowners and real estate development partners are continuing. *Latest Update:* We continue active discussions on how this project can be combined with Project Expo planning efforts to create a destination location. This project will be a part of our July discussions related to Project Expo.

**Project Flash** – The is a project currently underway along one of the main parish corridors that is a sub expansion of a long-time parish employer. While small in job creation, up to 5, this project could set a foundation for considerable transportation/distribution related growth around it. We are working with company leadership on a formal announcement/opening of this new facility and anticipate this happening over the next 30 days.

**Project Flow** – This is a retention and expansion project from a regional company. They are in the process of solidifying a move to a new location could allow the company to potentially grown from its current level of 45 FTE's to as many as 100 FTE's within the next 30 months. *Latest update:* We are working with communications and company officials on a soft announcement over the next 30 days.

**Project Gas** – This is an industrial recruitment project being worked as a cooperative project with LED and 1A. The initial cap ex on the project is up to 150m. Job creation figure are 35 FTE's. A final decision and construction is targeted for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2018. Project would be operational in early 2019. *Latest update:* Site Visits are being scheduled for July of 2017. The site visit final list has not been determined.

**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. Crews are now working on initial infrastructure on the sit

**Project Green** – This is an industrial project looking to locate in central St. Landry due to the unique infrastructure assets. The project has a CAPEX of 203 million and would create 75 direct full time positions and more than 1000 temporary construction positions. *Latest update:* There are investment partner discussions ongoing with this project. The site continues to be a consideration option. We are continuing to provide information as needed and will track progress.

**Project Green Leaf** – This is a cooperative university project with an existing facility. Site visits with the project teams have been positive. This project would create up to 50 full time positions once build out is complete. *Latest Update:* The project proposal package is due by June 30<sup>th</sup>. We anticipate a decision to come in fairly short order, possibly as a soon as July, or August.

**Project Fast** – This is a large joint submittal project with several cooperating stake holders for a site in St Landry Parish that is looking to capitalize on some of the unique assets in our area. The project has a projected capital Investment of \$475 million. It would create up 50 direct jobs with high salaries in the range of 90k annually. It would also be a significant indirect job creator, estimate 75 – 90, as well as significant numbers of temporary construction jobs. *Latest update:* This request was just submitted so we anticipate 30 – 60 in evaluation.

**Project Fresh** – This is an expansion for the company in Louisiana, but a recruitment project for our parish. Initial job creation numbers are less than 6 with room for expansion. The project hinges to some degree on project vertical with land acquisition. *Latest Update:* although we have received a letter of interest to move forward with property negotiations; a detailed impact worksheet is still going through the corporate approval process. As a reminder; this project also considers Project Vertical on finalizing site property layout.

**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:* The permitting for this project is on schedule to be completed in the second quarter. We hope to be able to announce the site and its website at some point this summer.

**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 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.

**Project Ride** – This project represents an expansion of a large area retail site in the center of the parish. This project could create up to 50 new positions. *Latest Update:* There were key meetings at the corporate level with this project last week that will identify local ownership and operation of the facility. We expect this information to be available soon and are optimistic this project could be in construction by the end of the year.

**Project Rest** – This project deals with the redevelopment and reuse of land surrounding one of our interstate intersections. There continues to be positive meetings with pivotal state agencies to move the project forward. Detailed job creations figures are still not available on the project. *Latest Update:* The investor group for this project has recently had their project plan turned down by DOTD. This decision is now in the appeals process. While we are not optimistic on this outcome, we will continue to monitor its conclusion.

**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. Per company principals this project has received USDA Grant approval and in coming close to solidifying additional investor support. We anticipate this decision will bring this project to a go/no go very soon.

**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:* We received a recent update from the location consultant they are coming to conclusion with funding from their overseas investment group. We are still waiting on a project intake worksheet for this project, which is a step aside from the funding efforts. We will continue to monitor progress.

**Project Wrench** – This project is a recruitment project dealing with an industrial service provider that would create up to 12 FTE's over the first 18 months of operation. Initial cap ex is projected at less than 500k. *Latest Update:* Company officials are working to finalize property acquisition for a site in the center of the parish. We anticipate this coming to a go/no go within the next 45 to 60 days.

**Project Open Road** – This is an expansion project for a major employer in the parish. This will take main facility numbers from around 700 to close to 945, 245 FTE's, much of which has already take place. In total this will make the total employee base close to 1100 employees. *Latest Update:* We plan to coordinate a formal press release announcement on this project in the next 30 days.

## **Announced Projects**

**Project Brace – Announced Retention – Expansion** – Retain 65 FTE's create 25 FTE's. estimated 29 indirect, estimate 50 temp construction positions.

**Project Incubate – Ongoing Business Center Incubation** – Create 105 FTE/PT positions

**Project Lot – Announced Expansion** – Retain 25 FTE's, create 45 FTE's. estimated 85 temp construction positions.

**Project Lid – Announced Regional Retention** – Retain 100 FTE's, create up to 75 FTE's, estimated 45 indirect, estimated 120 temp construction.

**Project Outpost (A) – Announced Recruitment** – Create 35 FTE's. estimated 95 temp construction.

**Project Bayou – Announced Recruitment** - Create 100 FTE's, estimated 160 temp construction positions.

**Project Slip – Announced Expansion** – Create 14 FTE/Contract, estimated 18 indirect estimated 2100 Temp Construction positions.

**Project Outpost – Announced Recruitment** – Create 45 FTE's, estimated 100 Temp Construction positions.

**Project Lynx – Announced Recruitment** - Create 123 FTE's, estimated 135 indirect positions; Estimated 200 Temp Construction positions.

**Project Spin – Announced Recruitment** – Create 2 FTE's, estimated 8 Temporary Construction positions.

**Project Lift – Announced Recruitment** - Create 16 FTE's, estimated 20 indirect, Estimated 35 Temp Construction Positions.

**Project Strip – Announced Expansion** – Create 75 FTE's, estimated 90 temp Construction positions.

**Project Essen - Announced Expansion** – Create 20 FTE's, estimated 24 indirect positions, estimated 70 construction positions.

**Project Rip – Announced Recruitment** – Create 12 FTE's, estimated 19 temporary construction positions.

**Project Roto – Announced Expansion** – Create 15 FTE's, estimated 19 indirect positions, estimate 22 temporary construction.

**Project Alon – Announced Expansion** – Create 12 FTE's, estimated 14 indirect, estimated 48 temporary construction.



**Project Runway – Announced Recruitment:** Create 25 FTE's, estimated 16 indirect, estimated 55 temp construction.

**Project Martin – Announced Expansion:** Create 29 FTE's, estimated 35 temp construction.

## **V – Area and Regional Development Items:**

### *1A (One Acadiana)*

We made significant progress over the past several months in getting a better aligned AEDC and 1A towards a focused and connected regional economic development entity. The results of these efforts afford the chairperson of AEDC a seat on the exec committee for 1A and allows a formal board seat on 1A for each member of AEDC. This is a significant step in building stronger communication between local economic developers in Acadiana with the regional vision of 1A.

We will have a short presentation in our meeting by One Acadiana Chair, Jason El Koubi. The topic of this conversation will surely be in part on his acceptance of a new position in Virginia where he will take on an executive role with previous LED Secretary, Stephen Moret.

As part of our new format for AEDC, we will be hosting the AEDC Board meeting next week on the 25<sup>th</sup> at the SLED building. This will be part of our new format to where the board will be meeting on every other month basis at an outlying host parish.

Progress is also continuing a regional level with a regional business accelerator effort. This is a partnership with the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Winrock International, Chase Bank, One Acadiana, AEDC and INNOV8 Acadiana. Currently, we are making considerable progress on strategy for marketing Acadiana to entrepreneurs from around the country. An initial pitch event with prospective candidates will take place in mid-August.

We continue to actively participate in the ARA (Acadiana Regional Alliance), which is made up of area Tourism entities, Chambers of Commerce, and Economic Development organizations. Some of the other key near term items from this group are:

- Feedback from the Acadiana Day at the Capitol held on May 15
- Planning efforts around regional tour that includes St Landry, Evangeline and Lafayette Parishes.
- Planning for the upcoming Louisiana Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, LACCE, in September.
- General updates from around the region on items of relevance for Chamber of Commerce and tourism.

For 2017 we have a target of sitting down with quality meetings with 20 of our top parish employers. Our goal will be not only to determine any challenges, or opportunities for

these employers, but also to continue 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. Currently we have visited with the following 13 employers:

- Stage Retail
- Giles Automotive Group
- St Landry Homestead
- Alon USA Energy INC
- Tony Chachere
- Evangeline Downs Racetrack
- Wal-Mart Distribution Center
- LHC Group
- C & G Containers
- Riceland Crawfish, INC
- Opelousas General Health Systems
- Noble Plastics
- Ortego Oil & Supply Company

We also have some very specific organizational goals that associate with these visits through 2017. One is to find a good fit with the Economic Gardening Program offered through LED for at least one of our parish employers. Another is to identify and assist in expansion opportunities for at least three of our parish employers. Some of these efforts are well in the works with projects listed in the report.

The new look and feel of the school board meetings under the new superintendent is very noticeable and very positive. We continue our work with Mr. Jenkins in multiple areas, including communication, working through the details of a strategic plan for the district, private industry support, a “grass roots” awareness of the importance for parents and the community to be involved with education, as well as the consideration of a foundation for SLP Schools.

This month we hosted a session at the Business Center that included a broad array of clergy in the area to talk about their grass roots role in engaging parents in education. We have also engaged in conversations with District leadership and Gibson Consulting on their role in assisting with the strategic plan process.

We continue to look for ways to build future value into the OGH Bio Medical Academy here in Opelousas as member of the advisory board for the academy. A new director has been selected and we hope to reengage this new director before the start of the school academic year on strategy for the year.

We have established a new schedule and will be meeting on a regular and recurring basis with leaders from SLCC and the TH Harris Campus. We have had several

meetings with month with SLCC Leadership and key stakeholders to build support for a new RN Program that is partnered with OGH. We still hope to see an initial cohort for spring of 2018. We also continue to support a SLED scholarship for a St Landry Parish resident attending SLCC through funding provided through GOEIDC.

Some of the latest progress with LSU-E includes: 164 applications have been received for the LSU-E Academy. They are in the process of evaluating the applications for admission. The fact that some of these students will be eligible for Pell funding is a real milestone.

The LSU-E Lady Bengal Softball claimed a fifth national title in May!

The campus looks to break yet another record in dual enrollment with high school students in the region this year; offering college access to more high school students than ever before in LSUE history.

We continue to actively participate as a member of their board of advisors with the goal of making this group more proactive and relevant towards helping grow the capacity and awareness of LSU-E. With new leadership from Dwight Jodan the Board of Advisors has made great progress in assuming a visible public advocacy and awareness role for the university. We also continue to support a SLED scholarship for a St Landry Parish resident attending LSU-E next year through proceeds provided through GOEIDC.

The CEO Roundtable support organization called Vision St Landry on strategic priorities that will have significant impacts for SLP over the next 5 – 20 years. This work continues to focus largely on supporting *education, redevelopment of downtowns and growing the I-49 Corridor*. Each of these focus groups aligned around these areas are tracking the progress of these initiatives in a matrix dashboard that is reported on to the entire board in quarterly meetings.

## **VI – Community Development in St Landry Parish**

The St Luc's Hospital has now come to a legal resolution. The facility and the finances are now in the process of evaluation by St Landry Parish and the State. Actions now turn towards looking at effectively mitigating any future damage to the facility, what immediate improvements should be made to the facility, as well as what the process would be to determine future occupancy tenants for the building.

As part of the regular meeting agenda we will be providing an update on a plan for the DDA in Opelousas, as well as the Central St Landry Business Development District.

We continue to work towards regaining progress with the leadership of Eunice on how we can best help them to identify and progress priorities for their community. A few areas of progress have been:

- Sending the Mayor of Eunice to an ED 101 Basic Course.
- Paving the Eunice Industrial Park Road under Smooth Ride Home
- Town moving forward to reinstate an economic development advisory committee.
- Actively engaging the Eunice Rotary Club
- Meeting with chamber leaders about best practices in other areas.

Grand Coteau planning and infrastructure efforts along their business corridor continues and includes:

- Engineering phase zero for a traffic solution at the frontage road cross over intersection
- A pedestrian transportation plan (TAP Grant)
- Wastewater, water and drainage improvements in the district.
- Overhead lighting at the interchange
- Improvements in landscape and art scape at the overpass.

A traffic solution in Sunset at Highway 93 and 182, as well as the potential for an economic development district that could be used to fund the match needed for these infrastructure improvements.

The Placemaking Task Force comprised of businesses from the Sunset, Grand Coteau and Arnaudville area are making excellent progress on project priorities identified that will result in business growth as they become successful. For example, the Old Sunset High School has been recently approved to serve as a French Immersion Charter School, while the Hanging Garden Project has made tremendous strides with an anticipated RFP release date in coming months.

Task force members will serve as attendees under the Delta Region Authority's two-day workshop, July 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, learning more about the creative placemaking approach as well as the Delta Creative Placemaking Pilot Initiative.

In the month of June 2017 the SLP hosted its first Lunch and Learn on Emotional Intelligence and its importance to professional development and workplace culture. In excess of fifteen (15) individuals from both the Lafayette and St. Landry Parish area were on hand to attend the event conducted by Madelaine Landry, Owner, of Listen Hear, LLC.

The inaugural 'Pig Out for the Pantry' event to aid our struggling community food pantries in the Eunice and Opelousas area collected at total in excess of \$1,700.00 with

the award presentation to be provide on August 26<sup>th</sup> at our SLP Membership Social to be held at Frank's Po'boys located in downtown Opelousas, La.

On Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup> SLP presents a Girl Exclusive event in collaboration with the St. Landry Cinema for the private movie screening of 'Girls Trip'. This sold out 110 seated event will also entail a red-carpet style photo-op, complimentary hors d'oeuvre's and wine (while supplies last). Through our efforts to promote entrepreneurship and small business throughout the parish vendors will be on site promoting their respective services catered to ladies exclusively accompanied with giveaways and more.

The SLP will begin the month of August 2017 hosting its second Lunch and Learn Series centered on the concept know as the 'Drama Triangle' presented by Carl Herrick. Mr. Herrick Carl is a Sales & Marketing Executives of Baton Rouge Excellence Award winner for 2017, a Platinum Level Sandler Franchisee and a volunteer coach for the Better Business Bureau and SCORE organizations. He is also Past-President for the National Speakers Association's New Orleans Chapter and the American Institute of Chemical Engineers New Orleans chapter, a retreat leader with his church and devoted father of four grown and thankfully independent and successful children!

### **Grants Update:**

The final progress report for grant closeout under the 2016-2017 LBIA Grant was submitted on June 22, 2017 with recent notification of all documents submitted approved. Installation of the Audio/Visual Tele-Conference equipment is the last remaining piece to be installed with Conference Room along with any additional networking upgrades. We anticipate this to be completed by the closeout of July 2017. We are currently formulating ideas for the 2017-2018 LBIA Grant, scheduled to be announced August 1, 2017.

We have worked with leaders in the Acadiana Planning Commission, as well as the Leadership in Grand Coteau in applying for a DOTD TAP Grant designed to address the accessibility and safety of pedestrian transportation in the business district area of Grand Coteau. We hope to have a final word on funding for this grant very soon.

Grand Coteau also has an engineering assessment underway for a traffic solution at the frontage road intersection and approved a resolution last week to engage on a lighting engineering analysis with the MPO and DOTD.

There has been some renewed progress on identifying strategies on moving forward with a TAP Grant for sidewalk improvements in the Opelousas Downtown Area.

We continue working with the Acadiana Planning Commission, APC, on identifying good fits for a recently announced pedestrian safety grant that offers up to 350k for each qualifying project. This consideration is based largely off of previous pedestrian safety incidents so if you know of particularly dangerous pedestrian areas in your communities, please let us know.

We have engaged the community of Sunset with the MPO to identify grant opportunities for an initial engineering assessment on a traffic solution at the intersection of 182 and Hwy 93 in Sunset.

We are working with Morgan Godeau, along with Parish Government, to implement engineering efforts within the Harry Guilbeau EDD. These are 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. We anticipate this planning process to continue through the end of the year.

## **VII – Training Opportunities**

### True South Basic Economic Development Course

Course Overview: The Basic Economic Development Course is an introductory look at economic development in North America. 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.

September 11 - 14, 2017

Location: Hattiesburg, MS

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## **VIII – Conclusion**

For the first time in years, the state overall has shown a growth in overall job creation. While there are still question marks regionally in oil and gas, there is good evidence to support a stabilizing of the overall Acadiana Economy for balance of 2017 and the potential for modest industry sector growth through 2018. In the parish, there are many front-line indicators, such as sales tax collections and building permits, that elude to steady growth. We anticipate this accelerating for St Landry over the next 18 months. Preparing our governmental entities to be proactive towards this development is key.

Your backing as board members has been instrumental in allowing us to make meaningful progress on establishing frameworks that will set a path for continued

growth in St Landry Parish over the next 5, 10, 15 years, and beyond. This is not easy. It takes persistence and patience, but we are getting there. We have some big initiatives over the next two months that we really need to pull together on. We have always said it is in the challenges where the opportunities lay in disguise for the right kinds of proactive thinking. With your tremendous support, we continue to stay “Moving Forward” and leaders of positive change that will bring a bright future for St Landry Parish!