



The mission of St. Landry Parish Economic Development is to provide leadership in economic and community development that facilitates growth opportunities leading to enhanced prosperity for St. Landry Parish businesses, communities, its citizens and youth.

Executive Directors Report

Table of Contents

I	–	Business Center Update
II	–	Communications
III	–	Property Development
IV	–	Projects
V	–	Area and Regional Development Items
VI	–	Community Development
VI	--	Training Opportunities
VIII	--	Conclusion

I - Business Center Update

We continue to be proactive in holding and promoting planning and education sessions designed to address community, business, property development and education related issues. Our latest session was recently held early this month as a joint ongoing community development roundtable session hosted between Parish Government and Economic Development. The event brought an attendance in excess of 50 persons and had presentations on:

The new 1 Acadiana Concept being developed by the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce for deployment in the first quarter of 2015.

Cultural Economy and its potential economic development impact for St Landry Parish.

Harry Guilbeau Road Economic Development District and its importance to the multi use event center, as well as its economic potential for the Parish.

We have had the following prospective tenants within the past at the Business Center:

Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc. d/b/a Eckerd – (Executed an Occupancy Agreement.)

Miracle Ear – (Executed Occupancy Agreement.)

Judy has also provided direct business assistance to the following small businesses:

Louisiana Pecan Growers Association-ongoing.

Ethan Slocum-Franchised restaurant location identification.

We have written confirmation from the Office of Community Development as it relates to documentation necessary to satisfy their requirements on total job creation for the Business Center. Getting this approval has included submitting a new 504 ADA compliance application, a very large application, to satisfy the OCD requirement. The paperwork process is now underway to process the forgiveness of the initial loan. It is still unclear how long this will take since the Office of Community Development has never had to do this before. Judy Meche should be commended for her continued hard work on this project! We are scheduling for a sit down meeting with the current persons in OCD over the next week and also have Cornerstone assisting with inquiries to expedite this process.

Effective September 15th, we have nine businesses operating in our center, which are:

Relentless Designs – (Office Relocation)

David Joseph Counseling Services

Joie de Vive Counseling

C&C Painting and Pressure Washing

Excellent Drivers Academy

A 24/7 Inspection Services

Boone Speech and Learning Services

Miracle Ear

Eckerd

II – Communications

The new website development is now at 99% completion. Leaving only a thorough review to be conducted by the Executive Director, ensuring all content and data captured is accurate and inclusive as it relates to economic development.

The SLP Young Professionals *Sip & See* Event is scheduled for September 25, 2014 from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. on the campus of Equine Sales @ Copper Crowne. Brandy is serving as the event planner as well as coordinator for the event. Moreover, she has secured sponsorship for the event providing complimentary beverages and appetizers. With a total of 12 current members thus far, the *Sip & See* will serve as the final recruiting effort in the engagement of members. Marketing efforts in promotion of the upcoming event have begun via multiple social media outlets as well as through eblast.

Brandy is continuing to compile data with relation to St. Landry Parish in terms of economic development to begin a complete database of information beneficial to agencies and organizations throughout St. Landry Parish. Ultimately, this data will be assimilated and used as the catalyst for a Parish Economic Performance Index based off of a comparable model used by the Lafayette Economic Development Authority. Developed and Provided Opelousas - St. Landry Chamber of Commerce with literature as well as imaging to be displayed within the 2014 Chamber Resource Guide. Most recently she has researched, analyzed, and identified multiple parcel descriptions which have been inserted within the “Harry Guilbeau Area Economic Development District”

ordinances to be voted on during both the October St. Landry Parish and City of Opelousas council meetings for the establishment of tax incentivized business improvement district.

As a lead member of the Public Relations team to the future Crowne Parc community piece, Brandy provided the Crowne Parc Development Advisory Committee with an update regarding the marketing efforts thus far at the recently held September 9, 2014 meeting. To date Request for Proposals have been submitted to multiple marketing firms including the Graham Group as well as Cyantist for the development of a recognizable brand as it relates to the development including but not limited to website, video and collateral materials such as brochures, fact sheets and direct mail pieces. She further stated that finalizations in logo design are close to completion with reveal to be presented at the next Crowne Parc District Advisory Committee meeting, scheduled for September 22, 2014 on the campus of Equine Sales @ Copper Crowne.

In her role as Communications Coordinator, Brandy will be featured in the SLEMCO regional commercial promoting St. Landry Economic Development and its partnership as it relates to SLEMCO's services.

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

III - Property Development (Large-scale)

We continue to aggressively work with on planning efforts for large-scale development along the high profile transportation corridors in the parish. We are continuing, along with other key stakeholders and leaders in the Parish, to have working sessions with incentive professionals towards incentive structuring along our major transportation corridors. We continue to work with Parish, City and private sector partners, along with the Adams and Reese Team, to form a business improvement taxing district. This effort will be explained in more detail in the presentation listed on this month's agenda.

There has been a 4th stage planning process meeting the ULL Architecture Department on a master plan rendition for the entire Harry Guilbeau Road Corridor. This work is an excellent example of how public and private sectors can come together to move a meaningful effort forward.

The work with the Corps of Engineers on the wetland mitigation work on the property adjacent to the Wal-Mart Distribution Center may now need some more information in order for the permit to be signed off on. We continue to work with the engineer to make available all necessary information to receive the final permit. Previously, we were told by the Corp that permit was just awaiting final signature. UPDATE: All information has been submitted. We are waiting for further action by the Corps of Engineers. Cornerstone Governmental Affairs is assisting in moving this permit forward through the short staffing situation with the Corps of Engineers.

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

We are moving forward with the process of sale for our 422 acres site in the final quarter of 2014 for a potential sale closing in January 2015.

IV Projects Update

Summary: 12 Active, 4 Announced, 1 Pending Announcement, 1 Dropped, 1 Pending Drop,

Agra Tech, Kyosan USA – Agra Tech has ran into some challenges that with waste water permitting that are making it difficult to consider their location in the parish for the initially proposed scope of operations. They are in the process of considering alternatives for their location in Opelousas now. A sit down meeting with their CEO is scheduled this week to further discuss the final disposition of this project.

Project Crush – The company consulting team, as well as the organizational executive team is still focusing their effort on the construction of a facility Nevada. They still have an interest here in St Landry Parish and we will continue to work with their team to bring an additional production facility to Louisiana. If successful this project could create up to 100 direct full time jobs.

Project Prairie – This is an in state expansion project targeted for the western part of the parish. Company executives are currently visiting sites and buildings with community representatives. This project could create up to 15 direct full time employees if successful.

Project Cloak – Although the details of this project continue to be confidential there is a contract in place to allow for the performance of due diligence on the site being considered. Contractors continue to work through this process at this stage legal official with the project give it a medium chance for final success. This project could potentially create in excess of 60 direct full time positions.

Project Crude – This project continues to move forward and will hinge largely on our ability to find ways to expand rail infrastructure. This will not likely be an initial high job creation project, but is important because it could dramatically expand infrastructure capacity for other projects to come in behind it. The timeframe for this project is 4th quarter 2014. This project could potentially create in excess of 12 direct full time positions.

Project Roto – This is an existing company within the Parish that is looking to branch into a new location to expand their production with a new production process and array of products. There are property offers now in place on this project and the due diligence process is currently ongoing. We should have a conclusion on this project one way or the other by the end of August. There is a good potential that this project would bring in a partner supplier, Project Mat. This project if successful would create 15 or less direct full time positions.

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

Project Outpost - This project is with a national tenant for 2 locations on a high profile corridors in the Parish. The company is in the contract offer stage on one site and is in the due diligence process on the second site. Both of these locations if successful could create in excess of 80 direct full time positions.

Project Strip – This is a large commercial project within the Opelousas area to where we are providing assistance as needed to an investment group to acquire and begin the upgrade/renovation process on a large multi tenant commercial facility on a high profile corridor. This project to could allow for potential full time job creation in excess of 50 direct employees.

Project Shield – Early discussions are underway with company principals on expanding and relocating their HQ and general operations to St Landry Parish. This project would be a large win for the Parish.

Project Focus – Large scope project dealing with historic properties in the parish. Initial meetings with the partners have been positive. Follow on face to face discussions will continue to move forward over the next several weeks. This project would be primarily event driven so the number of jobs created would vary.

Project Neighbor – This a medium size retail location project on the western side of the parish. We are currently working with their design team on the details of a facility layout for this project. This project if successful could create in excess of 65 direct full time positions.

Project Expo –

We are still working along the following action steps:

Need to formalize the structure of a public private partnership for this project. The basis for this concept is in final legal draft at this time.

We are on the 5th review of the ULL master plan overlay for the plan. This meeting is scheduled for next week.

We are waiting on final legal agreement prior to committing any of the additional 100k if needed to support soft cost efforts for this project.

A public private advisory committee structure for this project has been formed and has had two formal meetings to date. The persons on this advisory committee include:

Pat Morrow, Bobby Dupree, Mark Marley, Sue Brignac, Tommy Dejean, Lynn Lejeune, Leslie Schiff, Harold Foreman, Mike Richard, Art Leblanc, Bill Fontenot, Don Cravins, Rhyn Duplechein, and Bill Rodier representing stakeholder entities.

A formal update presentation of this project will be of this month's agenda.

Project Essen - Announced Expansion Project: Crest Industries, based in Pineville, Louisiana, will invest \$5 million to develop a new cutting, machining and fabrication facility in Eunice and add new machining centers to existing PCS equipment. Crest will retain 18 PCS jobs, and the expansion project will create 20 new jobs averaging \$50,000 per year, plus benefits. LED estimates the investment will result in an additional 24 indirect jobs, for a total of 44 new jobs in the Acadiana Region.

Project Rip – Cleared for Formal Announcement in September: This project is now formally under construction, as well as having temporary operations now underway. The company, Top Timber, will soon be set to employee 12 – 15 full time positions with the

potential to grow very quickly if certain international agreements can be established. The principal has requested that we wait until September to make this announcement

Project Alon – Announced Expansion Project: The Alon Refinery has recently completed an expansion at their facility to include the building of a rail transfer facility that will allow them more efficiently loading on and off load bulk rail materials to be utilized both in and out of their production facility. The project is expected to created as many as 12 full time positions.

Project Runway – Announced Recruitment: A formal announcement was made for this project on Thursday February 20th at 1:30 PM at their new construction site just past Beau Chene High School. We conducted a follow-up site visit last week. There is solid progress on the foundation structure, which is the most time consuming portion of their build process. The company expects operations to commence in a matter of weeks. This project could create as many as 25 direct full time positions.

Project Martin – Announced Expansion: Bayou State Lumber Company, LLC, formerly known as Acadiana Hardwood, LLC. This company will create 29 permanent new jobs and retain 21. This mill is the only viable employment opportunity for most individuals in the area.

V – Area and Regional Development Items:

We continue to foster an active relationship on many important initiatives being addressed by the Chamber. Having recently redefined itself as the St. Landry Chamber of Commerce, Brandy will be working with Lynn Lejeune, Chamber CEO, on a potential collaborative effort that will merge the chamber and economic development under the same website presence forming essentially a economic alliance, providing a unified effort for economic development and business growth. The idea of website collaboration amongst chambers of commerce and economic development authorities has been seen as a national trend of late allowing to the opportunity to pull all available resources into a single pipeline. Brandy will assist with research and provide written content as to what the chamber would like to display.

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

Our top 25 employer list here in the parish has been scrubbed for accuracy and we continue process of physical outreach with all of these employers face to face, with the goal of hitting all of them in 2014. The meetings are being held jointly with LED, AEDC and will local leaders whenever possible.

We continue to have dialogue with economic development professionals from the southwest region on collaboration potential to meet the demands of \$67,000,000,000 in new investment that create 29,264 construction and 20,866 new permanent positions. This is going to put a big strain on our already strained workforce environment in this parish and in this region. It will be imperative that we actively work with existing local employers and training providers to find ways to ensure their ongoing workforce needs are met.

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

AEDC (Acadiana Economic Development Council) Update:

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

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

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

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

Regional GIS Map – AEDC is meeting with Fenstemaker this week to have the final population of the GIS Map included on the AEDC website.

SWLA Contractors & Vendors Meeting_ This meeting to be presented by David Conner with SWLA will be October 1 here at LEDA in the Conference room at 9 am. AEDC will put together an invitation together and send out to interested businesses and work with

the local chambers. We have worked to get this out to area businesses through the SLP Chamber of Commerce

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

VI – Community Development in St Landry Parish

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

We are also working with LSU-E to formally explore the potential of using IWTP funding as part of their value component to area and parish businesses. This is a very exciting discussion that highlights a renewed proactive approach by their leadership towards the businesses in St Landry Parish.

A recent announcement in Arnaudville of a facility to host French Immersion continues to highlight the cultural development success in that area.

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

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

All of the staff continues to participate with the Steamboat City Association in Washington on various community development initiatives. We are still working on a project with the Wal-Mart Distribution Center that if successful, this effort could provide a blue print that other communities in the parish could use in helping connect career

opportunities for persons in their communities that have some kind of challenge to employment.

We continue to hold regular meeting with the Parish President, Parish Tourism and the Chamber of Commerce, to identify priorities that can be worked on by Cornerstone Governmental Affairs in this legislative session. The value of their services was recently highlighted in their ability to help our legislative delegation bring forward priorities that were submitted through capital outlay by Parish Government prior to Cornerstone coming on board. These included an additional hanger at the SLP Airport, lighting upgrades for the Delta Grand and some other small items. These requests totaled more than 500k now are still awaiting placement with the state bond commission.

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

We are also working the South Central Planning District to develop resources, tools and education for the communities throughout the Parish.

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

We continue to reach out with the Parish President to each one of the Mayor's within SLP to just establish the open communication that needs to be present in quality relationships that will move the parish forward in positive ways. There has been sit down meeting with all expect for Cankton and Palmetto, to which we continue to work towards scheduling these final meetings.

Grants related efforts:

- Application is complete for the \$25,000 LBIA Grant to be used for the Business Center at an 80/20 match. The total grant application for this grant is \$30,355 due to the match requirement. The executive committee has approved these funds allocation for building upgrades and improvements. UPDATE: Received official notification dated August 22, 2014, that the grant application has been approved for funding in the amount of \$25,000.
- USDA RBEG Grant; by the Delta Regional Authority accepted our grant application; however due to the slow process in the change of ownership by OCD we may not be in a position to accept this grant award for the electronic marquee sign.

- We are working closely with the SCPDD on the potential for grant funding for rail upgrades designed to support Project Roto, Project Mat, and potentially Project Crude.

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

VII – Training Opportunities

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

VIII – Conclusion

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

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