



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

Table of Contents

I	–	Business Center/Small Business 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/Small Business Update

The Business Center continues to be a community and business resource for conducting training and counseling sessions and various types of board and planning sessions for multiple entities. Just a few examples are; the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at ULL; the Event Center Joint Commission; SLP Moving Forward Leadership meetings; community leader strategy meetings; development project related meetings; various coordination meetings for various parish wide initiatives. This month we also had state and federal staffs with Louisiana Workforce Commission use our board room for a strategic planning retreat session as they work to complete the final components of their new strategic plan.

SLED continues its support of area entrepreneur's and small business owners through its ongoing partnership with the ULL SBDC. They continue to offer one-on-one consulting sessions with those individuals looking to start-up their own business and/or need additional tools and resources to grow/expand. The next session will be the second Tuesday, April 12, 2016. Two individuals have scheduled for the upcoming free consultation regarding business start-up, growth and/or expansion, proving this service is needed and being well utilized throughout our parish by our residents.

The next recurring business support workshop promoted collectively by SLED and area business owners, although originally scheduled in March 2016, is tentatively scheduled to be held during April 2016 here in the business center, the workshop will focus on the importance of an effective marketing plan. Developing a marketing plan or strategy will enable the small business to identify the most effective means to reach these customers as well as build and cultivate sustaining relationships with them.

All building improvements under the FY2016 LED/LBIA \$25,000 Grant have been completed. The final list of these improvements/upgrades to the building which include:

- Construction and completion of previous break room area entrance way.
- Construction and upgrade completion of back area bathroom regarding ADA compliance.
- Construction and facelift completion to back office entrance area.
- Construction and completion to Board Room back wall area.
- Conversion and completion to storage unit (A) located in warehouse area to a climate controlled storage unit.
- Conversion, construction and completion to office space located in upstairs area of warehouse to be multi-functional serving as additional storage and/or warehouse office with the recent installment of office window.
- Finishing off a partition wall for additional secure storage in the southeast corner of the building.
- Reinstallation of Business Center attic.
- Conversion, construction and completion of wall, door and addition of windows to a once open area of the incubator to develop additional office space in the center.
- LiteShow4 Wireless Presentation and Videoconference Technology Upgrades via Open Meeting Area in addition to television monitor upgrade enhancement.
- LiteShow4 Wireless Presentation and Videoconference Technology Upgrades via Conference Room in addition to television monitor upgrade enhancement.
- Television monitor addition to lobby area for technology upgrade enhancement.

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

C&C Painting and Pressure Washing

Boone Speech and Learning Services

Miracle Ear

Happy Housemaids

Magnolia Community Development Corporation

Victory Manufacturing

WIB 40 (January 1st)

Double J Express, LLC

II – Communications

The world continues to rely on their view of use through the web. Our online brand and image of SLED and St Landry Parish will always be a priority in giving them a positive and progressive message. We urge all of you to regularly review our primary website at www.opportunitystlandry.com and further all of the great things being written and posted at www.SLPforward.com. We would love to hear your ideas and experiences of best practices that we could consider incorporating into one or both of these online portals. `

To date www.slpforward.com, currently holds a total of thirty-five (35) 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. This initiative is now actively supporting NPR radio. We are in the process of working with Parish Government to put together a whole rounded marketing strategy for the campaign as well as considerations for improvements as part of a phase II rollout for this initiative.

With the website's foundation now solid, a Google analytics test is conducted monthly to evaluate website traffic directly to the site. It was discovered that during the time period heavier weighted percentage of the viewers to the site were individuals in the 25 – 34 age demographic. Recently, we are also starting to see a spike in age group 18-24 has been seen throughout this period which illustrates new users are frequenting the site. The website's bounce rate continues to decrease month to month significantly from that of 84.65% to 69.82% to now 65.22%. This shows that new and returning users are browsing more than just slpforward's landing page and committing more time during their visits to read and understand the true intent of the site. We also recently opened the comment section as to article(s) viewed on site. This feedback received to date has been overwhelmingly positive and a sign changes in perception in terms of St. Landry Parish's future outlook. Our goal for 2016 is to exceed 2000 monthly views.

Due in large part to the information included in SLPforward.com, SLED's feature in the February 2016 *Business In Focus* publication highlighting the business climate of St. Landry Parish centered on our forward progress encompassed by a 'can do' attitude has began circulating throughout the parish as outreach pieces. The featured article further indicates we are getting noticed in a different light largely in part to our collective parish wide SLPForward campaign.

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

The features we are working to create represent upgrades to the system beyond the core base layers typically included in standard GIS offerings. The primary challenge in GIS is the system is only as good as the quality and timeliness of the data that supports the system. This makes it imperative that there are viable processes in place to input data and update the system.

III - Property Development (Large-scale)

We continue to promote active development project at five of the major interchanges on the I-49 corridor. Each of these developments has the potential for a large development that creates numerous new business opportunities. This includes working with the Mayors, boards and community leaders in most of the impacted communities about formal planning efforts for their communities, or areas, and/or the ability to establish economic development taxing districts that can help provide direct, or matching funding for infrastructure improvement efforts.

Site development efforts with the newly formed team of One Acadiana continues to get added priority emphasis regionally. Our goal is to work towards 2 shovel ready sites in SLP for 2016. We have made considerable progress in moving forward with 3 sites over the past couple months to get down to these 2 sites.

IV Projects Update Summary: 18 Active, 2 New (Brace, Ride, Rest) 2 Pending Announcement, (Lid, Lot), 1 Parked, (Project Glare) 1 Pending Park (Amber) 14 Announced

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

Project Barrier – This is a large manufacturing project that is being worked through LED. We have submitted a proposed industrial site for the project through the site development team at One Acadiana. This project at full development will create up to 500 new direct full time positions. We anticipate an initial 90 to 120 review period before the next phase of the project moves forward with a narrowed site selection list.

Project Base – This is a project looking at the utilization of one of core parish transportation facility assets for international business investment. We are still working through due diligence on feasibility. There are still not direct job creation, or capital investment figures for this project at this point, but their representatives are eluding to a very large investment in the Parish. A follow up site visit from their international delegation is tentatively scheduled for the 17th of this month.

Project Brace – This is a retention project involving the purchase of an existing facility here in the parish. We are working closely with LED, as well as One Acadiana on this effort which could protect as many as 65 existing positions, as well as offer the potential to expand additional positions at this location. A follow up site visit by the company’s executive team is tentatively scheduled for the 21st of this month.

Project Clean – This is a manufacturing infill development project located in the center of the parish. We are continuing solid progress with their leadership in multiple areas with this project. A serious illness with the owner of one of the principal contractor bids has slowed down the ability to finalize the project, but we should still have a solid view of whether the project will come to build/rebuild stage over the next 60 days. If successful this project could create 50 new direct positions.

Project Code – This is an expansion project focused on light manufacturing looking to locate on the main transportation corridor in the center of the Parish. The company is conducting interim operations at their present location, but needs extra capacity to reach full potential. The challenge with this expansion continues to be site location along the I-49 Corridor. We are continuing to facilitate discussions and plans with land owners along the corridor on suitable sites for this effort. This project could add up to 20 additional full time positions.

Project Expo – There are multiple options that are being explored with this project at this time. We have to have the details on each of the potentially 3 different options available for public discussion/consideration as soon as the April or May full board meeting.

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

Project Fountain – This is a large scale commercial development project that discussions have been ongoing for some time national tenants are committed to this project and negotiations with landowners and real estate development partner are continuing on a regular basis. We will be exploring the potential this over the next month to combine these negotiations with an interest in Project Expo. In either event, this is still a large project that would be developed over time in phases.

Project HIPPO – This is a heavy industrial project that is in its early stages, but that continues to make good progress. The project is very large in scope on its investment and job creation potential. Currently, we are working with regional and state partners on identifying and meeting engineering requirements on the footprint site. We hope to have the initial site work requirement completed by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2016, which is happening in unison with industrial layout discussions. There are not accurate job projection figures available on this project, but it has the potential to be very high with both job creation and capital expenditures.

Project Lid – This project is a manufacturer planning to locate along one of our key transportation corridors. The company closed on their purchase agreement on property and is working through site layout and building architectural on the production facility now. Although the project has been delayed overall by about 60 to 90 days beyond their initial projections they still anticipate a formal announcement and groundbreaking in the 1st of April. Exact time and date details should be forthcoming in the next couple weeks. This project will relocate up to 100 immediate jobs and has potential to add an extra 75 full time direct positions to the parish for a total of 175 positions. The ground breaking for the project is on the regular agenda as a save the date item for April 11th.

Project Lot – This project is the expansion of an existing parish company into construction at new location and the further modification and refit of their existing facility within the parish. The property for this site has been closed on and although there have been some delays; we now anticipate a groundbreaking on this project in March due to some delays in the corporate approval of the site plan. The exact time and date details for a groundbreaking are tentatively planned for May. Assuming the existing facility backfills the same number of positions in its new use this project would create 45 new direct full time positions. The existing location now has approximately 25 full time positions.

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

Project Rest – This projects is in its early stages, but deals with the redevelopment and reuse of land surrounding one of our interstate intersections. There have been multiple positive meetings with pivotal state agencies that continue to afford reasons to move the project forward. Detailed job creations figures are not yet available on the project. This will be a month to month tracking of progress to see if the project hits a critical no move point in its development.

Project Ride – This project represent an expansion of a large area retail site in the center of the parish. Property has been acquired and some initial site clearing work has been started. There is not a set date for facility ground breaking. We hope to have better clarity over the next 30 to 60 days. If successful this project could create up to 40 new positions.

Project Shell – This was a previously parked project that now has been brought back into play in St Landry Parish. The project has a facility secured currently and is looking to refocus their feasibility back at this site. We anticipate a determination on the refocus of this project on the site over the next 60 days. If successful this project could create up to 20 new positions.

Project Vertical – This project is dealing with a light industrial manufacturer looking to put a new production facility in the Parish. We are currently working on site locations offering suitable heavy transportation access, but have developed a strong interest by the company in a site next to the Distribution Center. This project is a separate line item on the agenda as an update. We are still waiting on the bank letter saying the project is fully financed and is ready to move forward. We hope to have conclusion one way or another on this viability over the next several weeks. If successful this project would create up to 30 direct full time positions.

Project Zeus - This is a heavy industrial recruitment related project we are working on in coordination with LED and One Acadiana. It relates in part to the overall efforts associated with Project Hippo. We submitted our final detailed request for proposal (RFP) response on February 15th and anticipate a 60 day review period to determine eligibility for the next round of review. This project is expected to have \$1.3 billion in capital expenditures, and create 300 direct new positions at an average annual wage of \$45,000

Announced Projects

Project Outpost (A) – Announced Recruitment - This is a one of a kind Loves Travel Center that broke ground early in January 2016 in Port Barre. This will be the first center for Loves not located on an interstate highways. The location will serve as a full service 24 Hour travel center with a Subway Restaurant on location. This project will create at up to 35 direct full time positions.

Project Bayou – Announced Recruitment - This Wal-Mart Neighbor Center projected was announced earlier this month as being an example of highlighting the retail development potential here in the center of the Parish. This project is well into its construction process now and is projecting a formal opening on January 20th. This project will create between 90 and 100 direct full time positions.

Project Slip – Announced Expansion - This project was a major turnaround project with the Alon Refinery in Krotz Springs. The company made major investments in this effort, which brings significantly enhanced capacity to the Alon facility. For industry concerns the company would prefer that this project not be included in a major press announcement. This does not diminish the positive impact on our parish from this project. SLP Tourism continues to recognize record breaking lodging numbers for the later portion of 2015 as temporary workers made their place in area hotels, campgrounds, and RV Facilities. Over 2000 temporary construction jobs were brought into the parish with this effort. We are working now to confirm the number of permanent

jobs that will ultimately be created with this expansion. We do not anticipate this number exceeding 15 in total.

Project Outpost – Announced Recruitment - This is the original Project Outpost. This project, the Go Bear Travel Center is going to be opening its doors within the next 2 weeks. The company is Gaubert Oil, which is based out of the Houma Thibodaux area and will be the 13th retail travel facility for the company. We along with Acadiana Works has been providing various levels of hiring assistance, including the use of the Business Center to interview management candidates for the new facility. This project is projected to create up to 45 new full time positions.

Project Lynx – Announced Recruitment -This project, The Hazelwood Energy Project, was formally announced on Sept 30th. This project is projected to create 123 direct full time positions, 135 indirect positions and 200 temporary construction related positions. Initial capital investment projections on this project are 400 million. This project also has the potential to lay the framework for significant future development.

Project Spin – Announced Recruitment This project is a small project that we are piloting as an incubation for oil field support services in C&C machining with Victory Manufacturing. We had hoped throughout the later part of 2015 to make a large announcement, but the company principal had some health challenges that slowed their work to a temporary stop. We are hopeful that in supporting this area of high demand labor force that we will be able to keep some of our machinist workforce in the parish with career opportunities.

Project Lift – Announced Recruitment - This project was formally announced over the weekend. The company Air Evac Life team will be basing rotary wing operations out of the St Landry Parish Airport. They are completing significant upgrades to one of the existing facilities and now have aircraft on the ground to assume operations. This successful project further highlights the huge upside for the SLP Airport, which tends to get overlooked as a key transportation asset of St Landry Parish. This project is anticipated to create 16 direct full time positions.

Project Strip – Announced Expansion - This is a large commercial project on a large multi-tenant commercial facility located on the I-49 Service road corridor, St Landry Plaza. The company, Rock Step Capital, made a formal announcement earlier this month through their President, My Andy Wiener. He pledged to bring as many as 8 new national tenants to the facility over the next 2 years. This project could allow for up to 75 direct full time and a greater number of part time employees.

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

Project Rip – Announced Recruitment - This Company, Top Timber, and deals with the timber hardwood related processing. It is located to the rear of S&B Sawmill in the proximity of the Wal-Mart Distribution Center. The company had indicated that it could initially employ up to 12 full time positions with the potential to grow very quickly if certain international agreements can be established.

Project Roto – Announced Expansion - This is an existing company within the Parish, Noble Plastics that has acquired the Yahoo building to begin production of additional plastics components through a process call roto mold plastics production. There is a good potential that this project would bring in a partner supplier, Project Mat. This project will initially create 15 or less direct full time positions, but has a great potential for future expansion.

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

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

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

V – Area and Regional Development Items:

Collaboration efforts with the St. Landry Chamber of Commerce board are moving forward at multiple levels. We will be continuing to work on items such as our capital outlay request for the 2016 Legislative Session, slpforward.com, and formalizing strategy on initiatives that will have a direct impact on St Landry Parish Businesses. We are also working with their team on the Annual Awards Banquet along with our two annual business awards that we provide at that event.

Our work with SLP Tourism also continues to move forward. We continue to regularly collaborate on regional and state priorities that are important to the cultural economy of SLP, both through our Cornerstone collaboration, as well as other areas, such as the Parish GIS Project, slpforward.com, the St Luke’s Hospital Project and on working in collaboration for and economic development day in the upcoming French Week in April.

We are in the process of laying out our BERG collaboration meetings with SLP companies. Throughout 2015 we tracked the progress of roughly 25 companies we met with throughout the year. In 2016 we look to expand that visitation base to 30 of the top sector employers we have in the Parish. With many of the challenges facing the regional economy it is important that we do everything we can to take care of our core employers. Our visits kicked off this month through discussions with Gaienne Lumber and the Giles Automotive Group.

We are continuing efforts with Cornerstone Governmental Affairs, SLED, SLP Government, SLP Tourism, SLP CHOC, and SLP Solid Waste on funding priorities for the 2016 Capital Outlay Session. These requests are now in for the 2016 session. We are also working now with Cornerstone to sit down face to face with all of our elected delegation to bring them up to date and start to build that new relationship with some of our freshly elected delegation. As part of the most recent special session we have asked Cornerstone to directly convey strong concerns on items listed in proposed bills to the Acadiana delegation at the Capitol.

We are still engaged in multiple areas with the newly formed Acadiana Planning Commission, APC and its newly incorporated Metropolitan Planning Organization. We are looking at furthering resources to support a robust regional GIS model that would be a resource to all communities and conducting multiple phase zero studies for various challenged traffic points in the south part of the parish. We are also directly involved in the development of the CEDS Regional Economic Plan for Acadiana required by EDA.

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

We will be sitting down on the 23rd of this month with Dr. Natalie Harder, the Chancellor for SLCC in order to discuss strategies for the TH Harris campus that will effectively meet the needs of business in this area, as well as some of their regional areas of focus. We have also agreed to once again support a SLED scholarship for a St Landry Parish resident attending SLCC next year through proceeds provided through GOEIDC.

We continue to efforts to support Dr. Kimberly Russell and her team at LSU-E in multiple areas that include; starting their workforce testing center; the establishment of their new position, Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development, as well as other smaller staff and course related efforts. We remain engaged with their Advisory Board that intends start meeting on a more frequent basis than the previous annual meetings. We have also agreed to once again support a SLED scholarship for a St Landry Parish resident attending LSU-E next year through proceeds provided through GOEIDC.

AEDC (Acadiana Economic Development Council)

We are still moving forward with an exciting regional business accelerator program that would be cooperative initiative with InnoV8 Acadiana, seven parish economic development organizations, and Winrock International. This is in part funded through an EDA matching grant in order to get full funding. We hope to have a preliminary answer on their portion of the grant application by the end of March.

Other items being considered for AEDC funding support include:

Purchasing Sales Force CRM tracking for the all EDO's in the region

Funding a portion of a comprehensive workforce strategy to address placement of impacted workers from the mining sector

Funding a portion of a detailed economic impact analysis of the of the I-49 extension.

Setting aside a small pot of funds for a film series initiative being developed for Acadiana.

Professional high grade photography of key employers in the region

Drone flyovers of key Acadiana Assets

Promoting high profile recruiting trips, such as the Site Selectors Guild and the IAMC.

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

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

On the 17th of this month will be participating in the rollout of the target industry analysis for Acadiana that was done by Jay Garner and Associates. This unveiling will be held at 11:00 at the student union building on the ULL Campus. This comprehensive analysis provides a clear picture on regional strengths and opportunities and will act as a blue print that we can quickly adapt into formal strategies to target over both the near and mid-term from a regional perspective.

VI – Community Development in St Landry Parish

With a business plan that focuses on the Cultural Economy of Arnaudville with an emphasis on the alternative usage of St Luke’s Hospital we are now facilitating efforts between Parish Presidents on legal options for valuation and transfer of ownership with the facility. The process currently sits in getting the final results from a private appraisal on the building.

We are further exploring the potential to establish an economic development district if the facility were to transfer to the control of St Landry Parish. On a parallel front; we are also providing technical assistance in the structure of a 501c3 dealing with the cultural economy in that area that could potentially operate such a facility under the right structure and contractual agreement.

We continue efforts with Opelousas leadership to explore options for them to consider using the resources of the APC to help identify and prioritize some of the key priorities that will make significant positive impacts in the City. We had some quality dialogue with their leadership as recent as last week to get traction on this effort.

We are working with the leadership of Port Barre in their efforts to formally move forward as one of only five communities in Acadiana that will participating in a pilot planning program offered through the Acadiana Planning Commission, APC. This initiative has been approved by their council and is now in the contractual process. We also continue to work with town leadership on the potential for establishing an economic development district on their primary business corridor.

Now that there is clarity on mayoral race in Eunice we will look to resume our work with the leadership in Eunice on moving forward with updating a comprehensive plan and a follow up action plan to move strategic priorities forward. Previously, the city council voted to establish the legal language for a Eunice Planning Commission, as well as to formally identify the funds needed to engage the APC in a formal 12 month planning priority process for the city.

Our efforts in support of the community of Grand Coteau have further paid dividends in a positive way with their approval to provide internal costs incentives for infrastructure incentives on project Lid. They have also agree to move forward on a contract with the APC to do a 12 month strategic planning a prioritization effort for their community. This process will ultimately allow businesses in the newly established economic development

district a voice in what infrastructure improvements are done and in what order they get listed and should get started over the next several weeks.

In Sunset, we are working to help broaden the scope of the Sunset Merchant Alliance to extend across the 93 corridor. We will initially be bringing in 3 core business from Sunset, Grand Coteau and Arnaudville as part of a feasibility discussion. We have also had initial conversations with St Martin Parish about extending the alliance across the corridor through Cecelia and down to Breaux Bridge as potential for a phase II of the effort.

We are also working to facilitate discussions with the leadership in Sunset and Grand Coteau on expanding broadband capacities in their communities.

We continue our work to support the St Landry Municipal Authority by working to provide direct information and future content presenters that can provide hands on information that can immediately be used as a tool by community leaders across the parish. On the 29th we had members of Cornerstone Team present to the group on the capitol outlay process and some of the more recent news on the happenings at the capitol.

We continue to explore with the Wal-Mart DC executive team and community leaders from Washington on the potential for using the Wal-Mart Mentor Program for the small communities in the proximity of the DC. We hope to have some progress in moving this effort forward over the next 60 to 90 days.

On February 24th the St. Landry Professionals hosted a membership social in best efforts to recruit and inform new members to all the benefits of joining SLP and our vision for the future of St. Landry Parish. As a result of our last informative social SLP added two (2) new members to our ever growing organization.

On Wednesday, March 23rd the St. Landry Professionals are hosting its second session of LEAD St. Landry, a Leadership Developmental Series. The development series is sponsored by over seven (7) entities and will be held on the campus of LHC in Opelousas. LEAD St Landry is free for active SLP members and non-members can register for a total fee of \$60.00 @ \$10.00 a session. The goal of these presentations is to provide members and welcome attendee's hands-on leadership ideas and techniques that they can immediately take back to their professional and personal lives to help effect positive changes in their lives and the lives of those around them.

James M. (Jay) Winford Jr., president of Opelousas-based Prairie Contractors, will serve as the host speaker. He has been, among other things, an active member of the international Young Presidents Organization, made up of young leaders worldwide who share the achievement of success before the age of 45. Aside from his business success, he is noted for inspirational speaking and has a wide and varied background of experiences to draw from. He teaches leadership courses at Loyola University in New

Orleans and regularly attends executive leadership training at the Harvard Business School. His company has been a key contactor in the parish Smooth Road Home program. He holds an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from Tulane University and a Ph.D. in civil engineering from Auburn University, and has been associated with engineering delegations to Japan China, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Middle East. In addition, he has been very active with the National Academies of Science, most recently as part of a committee studying the essential federal role in highway research and innovation.

Grants Update:

All task items as outlined within the FY2016 LBIA \$25,000 grant proposal are now complete and all required reimbursement paperwork has been submitted to LED. We have received our first of two reimbursement payments.

The signage provided under the USDA RBEG Grant for the digital marquee is now fully functioning and has garnered rave reviews since its installation. Upon completion final write-up following our January 2016 Civil Right Site Visit we are now found to be in total compliance with the full grant reimbursement successfully rewarded in the total amount of \$40,000.00.

As part of our 2016 goal structure we will be looking to complete 2 successful grant applications that will make a meaningful impact on our mission and efforts to build capacity in the parish. One of the efforts we are looking hard at is how we can identify funding

VII – Training Opportunities

Mid-South Basic Economic Development Course

April 4 - 7, 2016

Location: Little Rock, AR.

Course Overview: The Basic Economic Development Course is an introductory look at economic development in North America, with an emphasis on the state of Louisiana. Students are given an overview of the tools and techniques of modern economic

development, including the professional specialties that have formed in the last 20 years.

VIII – Conclusion

2016 promises to be packed with challenges, but as our parish branding campaign shows, there is lot to be proud of in SLP and a lot more coming. It will be tempting for us to fall into a mode of allowing the circumstances that are happening around us to dictate the future outcomes for the progress in our parish. As leaders we all have to guard against falling into that trap. We have always said, it is in the challenges where the opportunities lay in disguise for the right kinds of proactive thinking. I truly believe that this case here now! We once again we want to thank all of you for continued incredible support. Despite what is happening around us we are continuing to significantly move the needle to make good things happen for the people and businesses of St Landry Parish!