



8/7/17

August Director of Economic Development Report

St. John the Baptist Parish

Jerry W. Jones Jr., Director

August 7, 2017

Greetings,

To the Committee, Stakeholders, and citizens of St. John the Baptist Parish, I would like to thank everyone who is in attendance today for our monthly Economic Development Committee (EDC) meeting. The **St. John the Baptist Parish 44th Andouille Festival** is already in the planning phase. We are already having initial meetings to start moving forward in preparation for a record crowd. Last year, we estimated 25,000 in attendance and this year we anticipate 30,000. According to our Facebook reviews, our 43rd Andouille Festival was special. I received positive feedback from so many people and look forward to making this year better! Last year, the festival was highlighted on several media outlets throughout southeast Louisiana. This year, we see the opportunities to take the festival to the next level.

Today marks the final date for the Andouille Festival Arts and Craft Vendor applications. We have closed out our applications for the **Food Vendors**. The committee will meet within the next two weeks and finalize the selection of vendors.

Attended the **Rotary Club of LaPlace** meeting. Our meeting highlighted areas we believe we can grow the community and chapter.

Industry Career Day planning efforts are continuing to develop. The library has now connected with both the Community College and Chamber of Commerce. We continue to have planning sessions in order to make this day special. This is an awesome opportunity to take students from our school system and assist in opening their minds to options in the **workforce**. Our next meeting is scheduled for tomorrow. The team is working diligently on this event.

Louisiana Calling is a program that serves as an opportunity to achieve career and financial success. We all have a calling and we are focused on helping every one of us find our path.

Our first priority with **Louisiana Calling** is making sure everyone recognizes the many opportunities available in Louisiana, right here, right now. Louisiana Calling's multi-year public messaging campaign, resources and strategic partnerships will help Louisianans to discover and learn about the many **pathways** to career and financial success.

Our second priority is connecting Louisiana's citizens to those opportunities to develop the high-value skills for short- and long-term success. By partnering with organizations like **Jump Start**, or colleges and universities, technical institutes and private training facilities, Louisiana Calling is doing just that.

Our **newsletter** is in the review phase and will be submitted for a final design. We will begin distribution upon final approval and print out. We work collaboratively with the St. John the Baptist Parish Library through JoAnn Procter. We receive 300 newsletters called “**Bookmarks**” from them and now share them along with our newsletter.

A ribbon cutting was held for **Jambalaya Shoppe**. Parish President Natalie Robottom, Economic Development Director Jerry Jones and other Administrative staff and Councilmen Snyder and Madere joined owners **Creshelle and David Brown** for a ceremony for their restaurant in St. John. Members of the River Region Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Committee were also in attendance. The Browns will offer dine-in, takeout and catering services at their LaPlace restaurant, which is at **150 Belle Terre Blvd.** next to the Walmart Super Center.

We are working on scheduling meetings with **Retail** Shop owners, and **Commercial** Real Estate Agents. We would like to hear from them on how to best assist them with growing our commercial sector. Also, we will address debris and trash that may be visible on their properties. We look forward to working with them and assisting in addressing their concerns. We would like to build a consensus with them in efforts to get up to date information on **available** properties.

LA SAFE—Louisiana’s Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments. LA SAFE is a planning process to develop a common vision with coastal residents intended to guide parish-specific decision-making in coming decades relative to projected flood risks. The Louisiana Office of Community Development’s **Disaster Recovery Unit**, in partnership with the Foundation for Louisiana’s Coastal Resilience Leverage Fund and the elected leadership of the parish, is coordinating the LA SAFE planning initiative. The planning process is a key step in the implementation of LA SAFE, a \$40 million initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Once plans are developed, the LA SAFE team will use the balance of funds to invest in proposed programs and projects. LA SAFE is a **community-focused** resilience and adaptation policy framework complementing the state’s Coastal Master Plan. GNO Inc. and our department are collaborating in an effort to hold a meeting with some of the business leaders within the parish. We are in the **planning** phase of this meeting. More information will come within the next few days.

The **Delta Regional Authority** (DRA), in partnership with leading national arts and government organizations, launched its pilot **Delta Creative Placemaking Initiative** to strengthen the Delta economy and improve the quality of life for the region’s 10 million residents. DRA will contribute nearly \$460,000 to stimulate economic and community development efforts through promoting the unique places, arts, culture, music, and food of our Delta communities.

Creative Placemaking Fosters Economic Development

- Revitalizes vacant and underutilized land, buildings, and infrastructure;
- Supports job creation in construction, local businesses, and cultural activities;
- Expands entrepreneurial ranks of artists and designers;
- Trains the next generation of cultural workers;
- Attracts and retains non-arts-related businesses and skills; and
- Enhances the quality of place and improves the quality of life for residents.

Key Facts

- In 2014, the arts and cultural sectors contributed more than \$729 billion or 4.2% to the U.S. economy – in fact, the arts and culture produced more than some other sectors, such as construction (\$619 billion) and utilities (\$270 billion)
- Between 1998 and 2014, the contribution of arts and culture to the nation's gross domestic product grew by more than 35%
- Spending on arts and cultural goods and services in 2014 reached \$1.1 trillion
- Employment increased by 3.8% to support more than 1 million jobs in core arts and cultural production industries.

The **Planning and Zoning and Economic Development** Departments have teamed up to apply for this DRA grant. This endeavor will continue to build upon the creation of our new **Cultural District Coalition**: a new community partnership aimed at spurring revitalization of the Parish's historic and culturally significant areas. Serving both a communicative and advisory role, members of the coalition will consist of local stakeholders, community leaders, and staff from several Parish Departments. The Coalition will meet quarterly to develop a strategy to promote four proposed cultural districts located in **LaPlace, Reserve, Garyville and River Road on the West bank**.

The **Fairfield Inn & Suites LaPlace** is under construction and we are excited about the impact it will have on our community once the construction is complete. Our department stands ready to support this development.

Please visit our new website. This site will continue to evolve. Once again please review our website at **www.OpportunityStJohn.com**. Moving forward we will update the site to include available properties in St. John.

Met with Livability Magazine who is doing the **St. John Livability Economic Development Magazine**. This is an Economic Development data driven magazine that will highlight editorial pieces on positive stories about the parish. Education, Small Business Development, Developments on the Levee, the Port and how it is a major contributor to not only St. John but the country as well.

We will continue to work on other efforts to grow the **economic viability** of our parish. Thank you all for continuously sharing your ideas. I truly appreciate them. It is important we highlight what contributing **advantages** economic development has on St. John the Baptist Parish. If you have any other ideas that you would like to share please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Kind Regards,

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