



**ST. TAMMANY
CORPORATION**
The Economic Development Organization for St. Tammany

THRIVE 2023

— *St. Tammany's 5 Year Economic Development Strategic Plan* —

February 21, 2019

2018 signaled a new beginning for economic development in St. Tammany: a new lead economic development organization led by a new CEO with new directives from the Board of Commissioners. From the earliest conversations, a theme became abundantly clear: we envision the opportunity for St. Tammany to THRIVE. The acronym thrive clearly outlines who we are as an organization and what others can expect from us as leaders, partners, and truth-tellers.

Transformational We intend to move our relationships with business and industry beyond that transactional level, but truly build relationships, partnerships, and coalitions that are transformational—ones that transform the capacity of St. Tammany as a business destination.

Honest Honesty and integrity are paramount in economic development. We must clearly articulate our scope, services, value, and impact as an economic development organization.

Results-driven We aim to move past inputs and outputs and to truly celebrate outcomes. We can produce results-driven work by utilizing our data tools to best understand exactly where our community is right now and creating a program of work that moves the needle towards positive outcomes resulting in a more competitive community for business, industry, and talent.

Intentional We aim to be intentional with our initiatives, programs, resources, and capacity. We want to engage in high value activities that align with our biggest economic development opportunities for sustainable economic growth.

Vital The economic development organization is vital to the maintenance and growth of the quality of life we hold dear in St. Tammany. We serve as the truth-teller of the economic vitality of the parish.

Engaged The economic development organization must be engaged directly with all relevant partners, all while remaining ahead of the curve on international, national, and regional economic development industry trends and best practices. As economic development practitioners, we must be engaged in lifelong learning, active listening to constituents and partners, and aware of threats to the local, regional, and state economy.

The Board of Commissioners and St. Tammany Corporation staff are pleased to present to you Thrive St. Tammany 2023, the comprehensive five-year strategic plan of the St. Tammany Corporation. Today, we begin a new chapter for economic development in St. Tammany, one that will give us the ability to create capacity and sophistication as an organization resulting in transformational leadership with the greater outcome of economic prosperity for all of St. Tammany.

Best regards,



Bill Davis,
President, Board of Commissioners



Christopher A. Masingill,
Chief Executive Officer

Meet the Team

The St. Tammany Corporation took a forward-thinking and collaborative approach to strategic planning when launching this initiative in September 2018 by engaging two firms to prepare the comprehensive economic development strategic plan.



VisionFirst Advisors
Gray Swoope, President & CEO

VisionFirst Advisors led strategic assumptions, the marketing plan, target industries, and organizational infrastructure as it relates to the strategic plan.



Economic Leadership LLC
Ted Abernathy, Managing Partner

Economic Leadership, led by Ted Abernathy, conducted this plan's economic analysis and research and facilitated the community stakeholder engagement and survey.

VisionFirst Advisors and Economic Leadership LLC collectively have nearly 150 years of experience in the field of economic development. These professionals are recognized nationally as respected thought leaders in economic development.

Contents

- Part I. Introduction 4
- Part II. Overview & Approach 5
- Part III. Research & Data..... 6
 - Overview 6
 - Industry Clusters..... 7
 - Labor Supply 14
 - Inflow/Outflow of Talent..... 14
- Part IV. Listening to Community & Business Leaders 19
- Part V. SWOT & Leverage Points 24
 - SWOT Leverage Points 25
- Part VI. Increasing Competitiveness & Economic Opportunity 27
 - Strategic Initiatives 29
 - 1. Organizational Effectiveness: Creating a High Performing Economic Development
 - Organization..... 29
 - Responsibilities..... 29
 - Develop New Model for Private Sector Investment 30
 - Suggested Models 30
 - Purpose 31
 - Compliance and Transparency..... 31
 - Organizational Staffing 32
 - Budget..... 34
 - 2. Business Development: Harness Location & Innovation as Key Drivers of Success..... 35
 - Using Targets for Recruitment Success 37
 - 3. Cross-Cutting Strategies: Building Community Competitiveness..... 47
 - 4. Marketing & Communications: Telling the St. Tammany Story 53
- Part VII. Conclusion 54

Part I. Introduction

The St. Tammany Corporation and the community it represents are at a crossroads in growth and opportunity. St. Tammany Corporation has a new name, new leadership and is in the midst of rebuilding and reimagining its purpose in how it shapes job creation and capital investment for the community it serves.

To ensure continued growth and economic prosperity for the parish, the St. Tammany Corporation should use this plan as a springboard to position itself into a high-performing economic development organization that brings together the community's assets, resources, and stakeholders to collaborate for a common objective.

The parish is already fortunate to have numerous assets that will position it for success. Median household income is close to \$64,000, significantly above the national average and among the highest in Louisiana. In addition, St. Tammany Parish is among the top five most educated parishes in the state with educational attainment well above the New Orleans metro area averages. While these are strong indicators, there is still work to be done to improve the parish's competitiveness.

As the plan is rolled out, it is imperative that all in the community understand it is a “crawl, walk, run” approach that is designed to parallel the ramp up of the St. Tammany Corporation. The challenge will be moving quickly to implement immediate strategies and tactics while at the same time developing a system and process that supports a holistic approach to economic development—something that has yet to be done in the community.

It is important to note that the strategies delivered in this report are designed to accommodate ever-changing market conditions. It is a plan that should be implemented with a laser-like focus and without hesitation to bring together all partners, stakeholders and organizations under a common purpose for the betterment of the community.

By working with stakeholders throughout the parish to leverage assets and mitigate weaknesses, the parish will continue to grow in a way that serves as a point of pride for residents while also offering economic opportunity to all that call the parish home.

Part II. Overview & Approach

In January 2018, the St. Tammany Parish Development District expanded by hiring a full staff and assuming the responsibility as the lead economic development organization. Since that time, the district rebranded itself the St. Tammany Corporation and is undertaking an important first step as a new organization in the development of a five-year strategic plan.

While population centers around the country continue to grow, the competition for jobs and private capital is increasingly more difficult. As such, economic development organizations must constantly plan, implement, evaluate and adjust to market conditions to remain competitive. Additionally, communities must consider a broader approach to grow the economy to ensure prosperity for all segments of the population. The following pages contain a strategic economic development plan for the St. Tammany Corporation, including a suite of recommendations that positions the organization to move forward as a high-performing economic development entity.

Using this assessment as a catalyst, parish leaders must unify themselves to take advantage of the community's assets, overcome its challenges and work together to ensure the organization's success. Overarching goals in conducting the competitive economic development assessment:

- Conduct a comprehensive operational and organizational assessment of St. Tammany Corporation and its work.
- Conduct a competitive review of St. Tammany Parish economic development looking at barriers and opportunities.
- Recommend and develop collaborative strategies to benefit the entire parish.
- Develop a suite of recommendations and strategic short term, midterm and long-term initiatives that will allow the St. Tammany Corporation to become a high-performing economic development organization.

The project approach included:

- Review of previous initiatives, plans and assess progress to date.
- Gather input from numerous stakeholders and community members through town halls as well as a community survey (conducted by Economic Leadership).
- Gather and analyze relevant data and trends (conducted by Economic Leadership).
- Conduct research to understand threats, challenges and opportunities.
- Assimilate, review and analyze trends and research as compiled and conducted by Economic Leadership in addition to data from JobsEQ and national sources.
- Identify leverage points based on SWOT analysis serving as a basis for strategies and tactics.
- Develop a suite of recommendations identifying:
 - Steps to enable the organization to become a high-performing economic development entity.
 - Strategies and tactics to grow the economy.
- A marketing and communications plan that integrates telling the story of both the St. Tammany Corporation and the parish to both internal and external stakeholders and marketing strategy to targeted decision makers supporting business development.

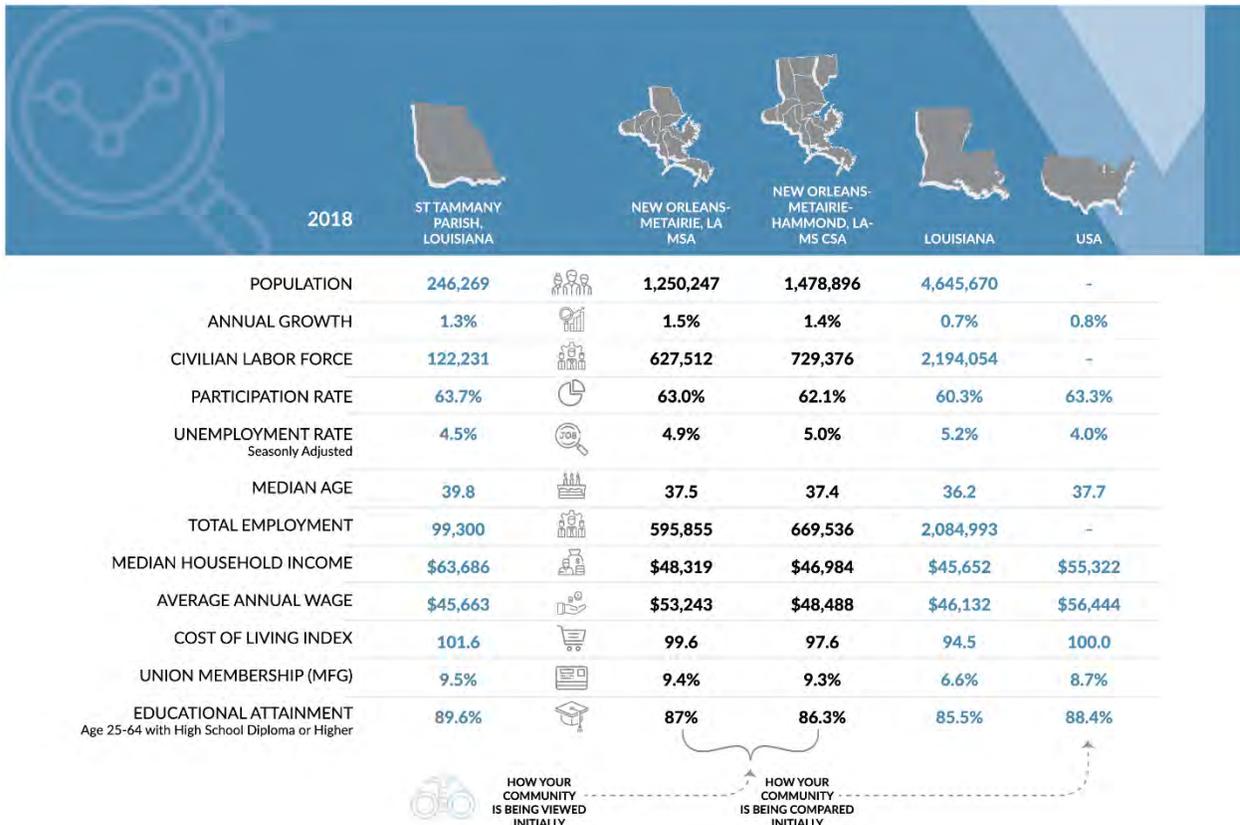
Part III. Research & Data

As part of the strategic plan development process, Economic Leadership compiled data and conducted research on the parish's current economy, labor and workforce, industries clusters as well as a state and metro comparative analysis. In addition, an examination of the local job quality, housing and permitting records was also compiled. The information below is a snapshot of those efforts.

Overview

The table below, with data from JobsEQ, provides a comparison of St. Tammany Parish with the eight-parish New Orleans-Metairie metropolitan statistical area (MSA), the eleven-parish New Orleans-Metairie-Hammond combined statistical area (CSA), the state of Louisiana, and the nation as a whole. The population of St. Tammany Parish is nearing 260,000, with growth of about 17,500 during the past five years. Current estimates are that growth will continue, but slow down slightly between 2018-2023 with a projected net population gain of just fewer than 13,000. The parish is home to more than 100,000 jobs, with strong growth of approximately 7,700 net new jobs added in the past five years and more than 7,000 net new jobs projected for the next five.

Figure 1: Economic Overview and Comparison



Median household income is close to \$64,000, significantly above the national average and among the highest in Louisiana. St. Tammany Parish is also among the top five most educated

parishes in the state with educational attainment well above the Louisiana New Orleans Metro averages. The parish has grown as a bedroom community of New Orleans located on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. The population grew significantly from the resettling following Hurricane Katrina and has continued that growth in recent years – with an overall net immigration of 11,660 from 2011 to 2015.

Consistent with other traditional American bedroom communities in major metropolitan areas, the parish is slightly older, less diverse, and has lower crime rates and higher performing schools than the nearby city. The parish is generally regarded as having an extremely high quality of life and a great place to raise a family. This is reflected in the concentration of families with children under the age of 18 – St. Tammany Parish is at 29 percent, close to the USA average of 28 percent and slightly higher than the New Orleans Metro at 26 percent. St. Tammany also has fewer single person households, 24 percent compared to a regional average of 33 percent.

Industry Clusters

The following page contains a table which outlines St. Tammany’s top six industry clusters, sorted by share of jobs in the total local economy, and compares them to the top industry clusters of the New Orleans CSA and MSA. For each industry cluster, the table also includes the percentage of jobs as it compares to the entire economy, as well as the industry cluster’s location quotient (LQ). Location quotients are a metric that give insight into the concentration of jobs in a region’s industries, where an LQ of 1.00 means that jobs in that industry are exactly as concentrated as the national average; an LQ of below one means that jobs in that industry are less concentrated than the national average; and an LQ of more than 1.00 means that jobs in that industry are more concentrated than the national average, potentially indicating an **industry cluster**. Location quotients are helpful in revealing what industries a region might want to focus its economic development efforts on strengthening.

Based on this, service industries have dominated the economy such as retail trade, health care, and food services. Trade industries like manufacturing, transportation, and finance have lower concentration levels than the national average. The primary reason is likely because a high percentage of the professional and industrial talents of the parish are commuting outside of it for work. Most of the jobs located in the parish are serving the residents who live there, and not bringing in outside money, or increasing exports or innovation.

DEFINING CLUSTERS:¹

According to U.S. Cluster Mapping, a project produced by the Harvard Business School, a cluster is a regional concentration of related industries in a particular location. Clusters are a striking feature of economies, making regions uniquely competitive for jobs and private investment. They consist of companies, suppliers, and service providers, as well as government agencies and other institutions that provide specialized training and education, information, research, and technical support. Clusters exist where the economic activities in a set of related industries in a given location reach critical mass. It is at this point that local linkages begin to have a meaningful impact on the performance of companies, and that important opportunities for local collaboration among firms and other organizations in the relevant fields arise. Clusters emerge naturally in the market

¹ U.S. Cluster Mapping, Harvard Business School Institute for Strategy & Competitiveness

process, providing productivity benefits to companies as they grow. They become attractive to companies looking for a new location and grow through the performance of companies already located there. Companies in clusters gain access to specialized regional suppliers, service providers, and institutions, and can also benefit from deep pools of skilled employees and shared infrastructure dedicated to their needs.

Figure 2: Top Six Industry Clusters: Comparing the CSA, MSA, and St. Tammany Parish

NEW ORLEANS-METAIRIE-HAMMOND, LA-MS CSA	NEW ORLEANS-METAIRIE, LA MSA	ST TAMMANY PARISH, LA	- CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT -	
			10-YEAR HISTORICAL	5-YEAR FORECAST
Health Care & Social Services Assistance (14.1%) (LQ 0.99)	Health Care & Social Services Assistance (13.6%) (LQ 0.95)	Health Care & Social Services Assistance (15.8%) (LQ 1.10)	2.4%	2.2%
Accommodations & Food Service (12.9%) (LQ 1.43)	Accommodations & Food Service (13.3%) (LQ 1.47)	Retail Trade (14.3%) (LQ 1.34)	0.5%	0.9%
Retail Trade (11.3%) (LQ 1.06)	Retail Trade (10.9%) (LQ 1.02)	Accommodations & Food Service (11.6%) (LQ 0.71)	2.7%	1.3%
Manufacturing (LQ 0.65) & Transportation/ Warehousing (LQ 1.17) (10.5%)	Manufacturing (LQ 0.64) & Transportation/ Warehousing (LQ 1.20) (10.6%)	Educational Services (9.5%) (LQ 1.29)	1.2%	1.1%
Educational Services (8.7%) (LQ 1.06)	Educational Services (8.4%) (LQ 1.02)	Construction (7.8%) (LQ 1.40)	-0.3%	1.7%
Admin & Support & Waste Management & Rem Services (6.2%) (LQ 0.96)	Admin & Support & Waste Management & Rem Services (6.4%) (LQ 0.99)	Manufacturing (LQ 0.48) & Transportation/ Warehousing (LQ 0.76) (7.2%)	4.3%	0.1%
			2.6%	1.3%

Source: JobsEQ Q3 2018

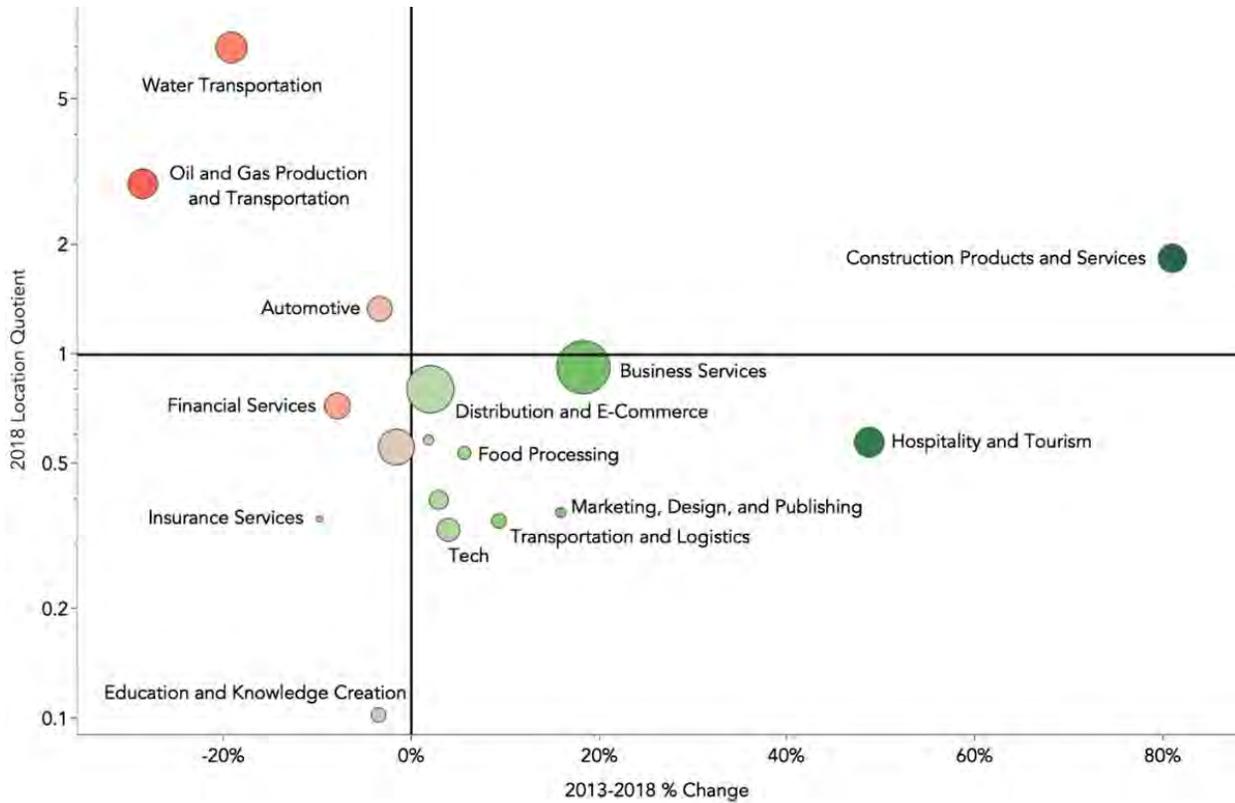
ST. TAMMANY PARISH CLUSTERS

Although traded clusters often account for less than 40 percent of a region’s employment, they are usually responsible for more than half of a region’s income and innovation. To determine the current state of traded clusters in St. Tammany Parish, Economic Leadership collected employment and wage data for more than 680 six-digit NAICS code industries, which were then grouped into 53 traded clusters. These cluster groupings, closely related to those provide by U.S. Cluster Mapping, have not been updated to reflect the most recent iteration of NAICS codes. Therefore, Economic Leadership used EMSI’s conversion of the Harvard clusters to 2017 NAICS codes. A few tech-related sectors were moved from the business services cluster to the technology cluster. These clusters were then evaluated on recent growth, location quotients, wages, and total employment. A cluster analysis of the greater St. Tammany labor shed, the zip codes within a 70-minute drive time, was also conducted to understand where the Parish’s strengths could be aligned with the greater region.

In this analysis, the concentration and recent employment growth of clusters determine their significance. As mentioned previously, location quotients (LQs) are the measure of employment concentration in a region compared to national employment levels. A location quotient of 1.00 or greater demonstrates a higher concentration than what would be expected based on national levels. This can reveal what clusters are unique to St. Tammany Parish and are generating money

from outside of the region through exporting. When mapped alongside employment growth, LQs can show which clusters are thriving or declining. The chart below demonstrates where a cluster may fall on the map and how it corresponds to its strength and growth over the past five years.

Figure 3: St. Tammany's Cluster Map



Note: The size of each cluster bubble is determined by the size of 2018 employment levels. The color of each cluster is determined by the employment growth from 2013 to 2018. Source: EMSI 2018.4

The most striking takeaway from the analysis for the parish is the presence of only one asset cluster, construction products and services, which has demonstrated both high growth and high employment concentration. A strong construction services cluster is bolstered by a higher-than-average number of construction and civil engineering firms as well as rapid new commercial and residential growth.

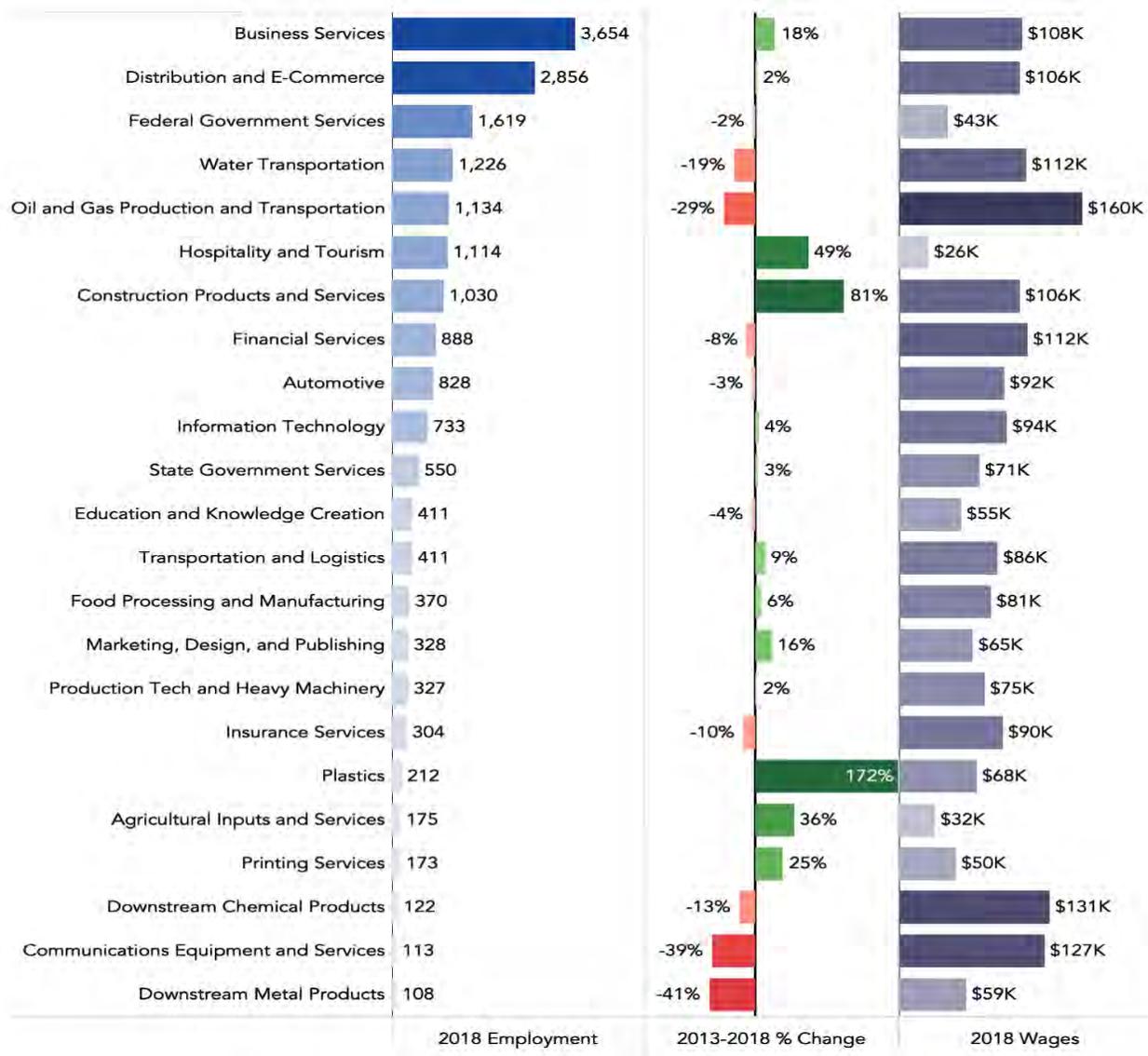
Another takeaway from St. Tammany's cluster map is the indication of emerging clusters in the regional economy, or already strong industries that have demonstrated continued growth. Among the industry clusters that have grown the fastest over a five-year period are Business Services, which increased employment by 20 percent, and Hospitality and Tourism, which grew by nearly 50 percent. Although growth in these sectors is encouraging, the low-wage, low-skill job opportunities that are often associated with the hospitality industry should be considered when selecting which industries to target.

The parish also has high concentrations in legacy sectors such as water transportation, oil and gas, and automotive manufacturing. These legacy sectors have experienced employment decline over

the last five years and are becoming less impactful to the economy. The water transportation cluster also includes ship building and navigational services of which St. Tammany often serves as a headquarters location (corporate, regional, etc.) for this legacy.

The following table, which lays out the top traded clusters by employment in St. Tammany, shows that business services are a top employer and growth cluster. These services include management, consulting, and accounting. As regional companies like Chevron look to locate near where their management live, Economic Leadership believes St. Tammany can position itself as an emerging regional hub for business services. The parish is home to several management consulting companies that are included in this cluster.

Figure 4: Top Traded Clusters by Employment in St. Tammany



Source: EMSI 2018.4

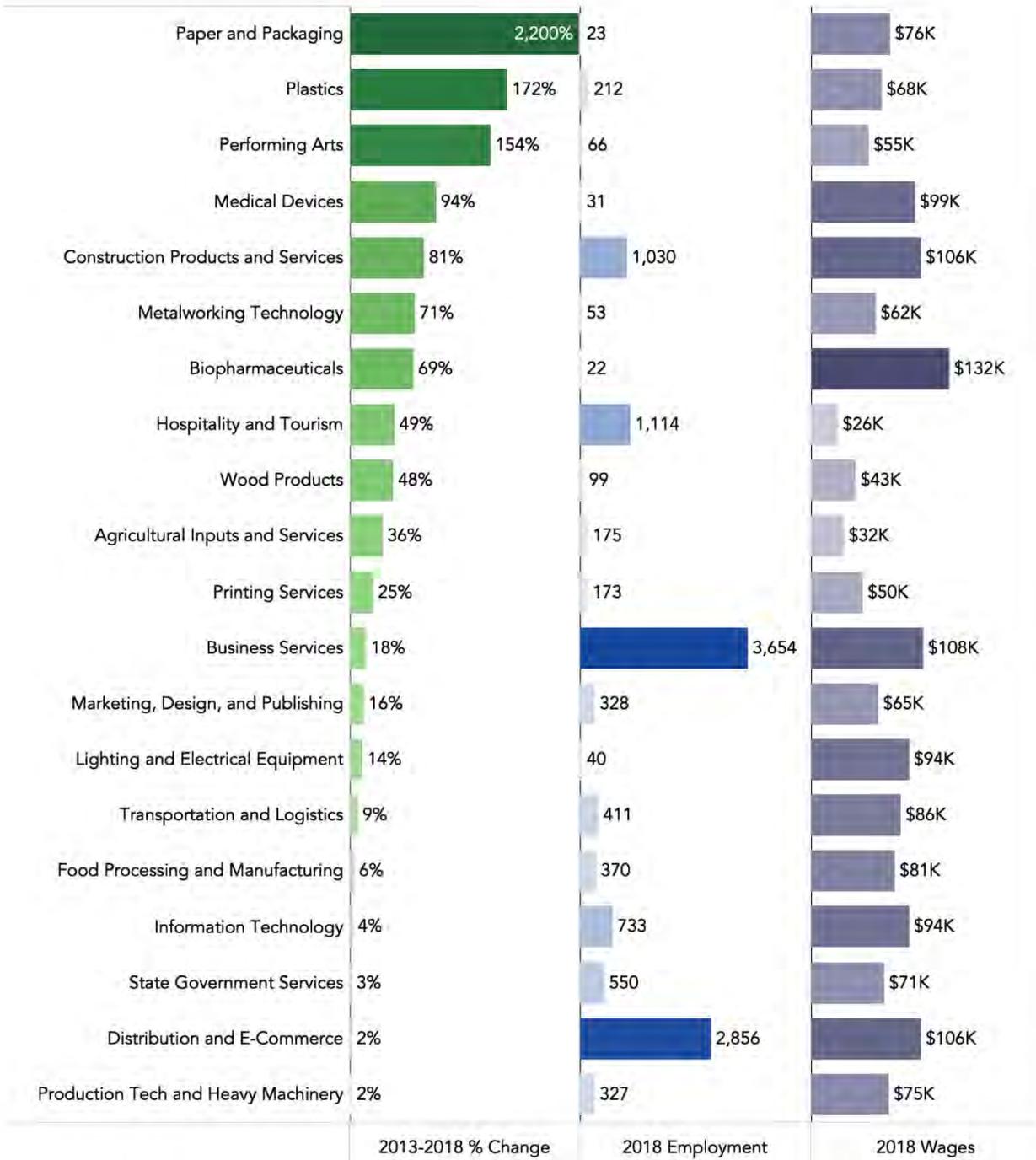
CLUSTER GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY

The labor shed region (depicted in Figure 5) benefits from several clusters that are highly concentrated. Many of these clusters are similarly concentrated in St. Tammany as well. The unique draw of New Orleans accounts for the presence of Video Production and Performing Arts cluster specialties. Tech is also a high-growth cluster in the labor shed. While Construction Products and Services is a significant industry for the parish, it has seen employment decline in the labor shed. The same is true for the Business Services cluster. With NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center and other military facilities included in the labor shed, the federal government is the top employer in the region. While growth for some of the top employers in the labor shed has been down over the last five years, there has been concentrated growth in the smaller clusters.

The state and metro competitiveness analysis, combined with the cluster assessment, shows that St. Tammany Parish needs to focus on specific sectors and opportunities where there are reasons for a company to consider investment. The region has strong infrastructure, a global engagement history and specific strengths in energy and water, and the parish can play an important regional role as a center for white-collar business services and finance jobs that would allow businesses to locate close to a desired residential location. Emerging technology sectors, broadly defined, offer an opportunity to exploit the sector's new regional momentum.

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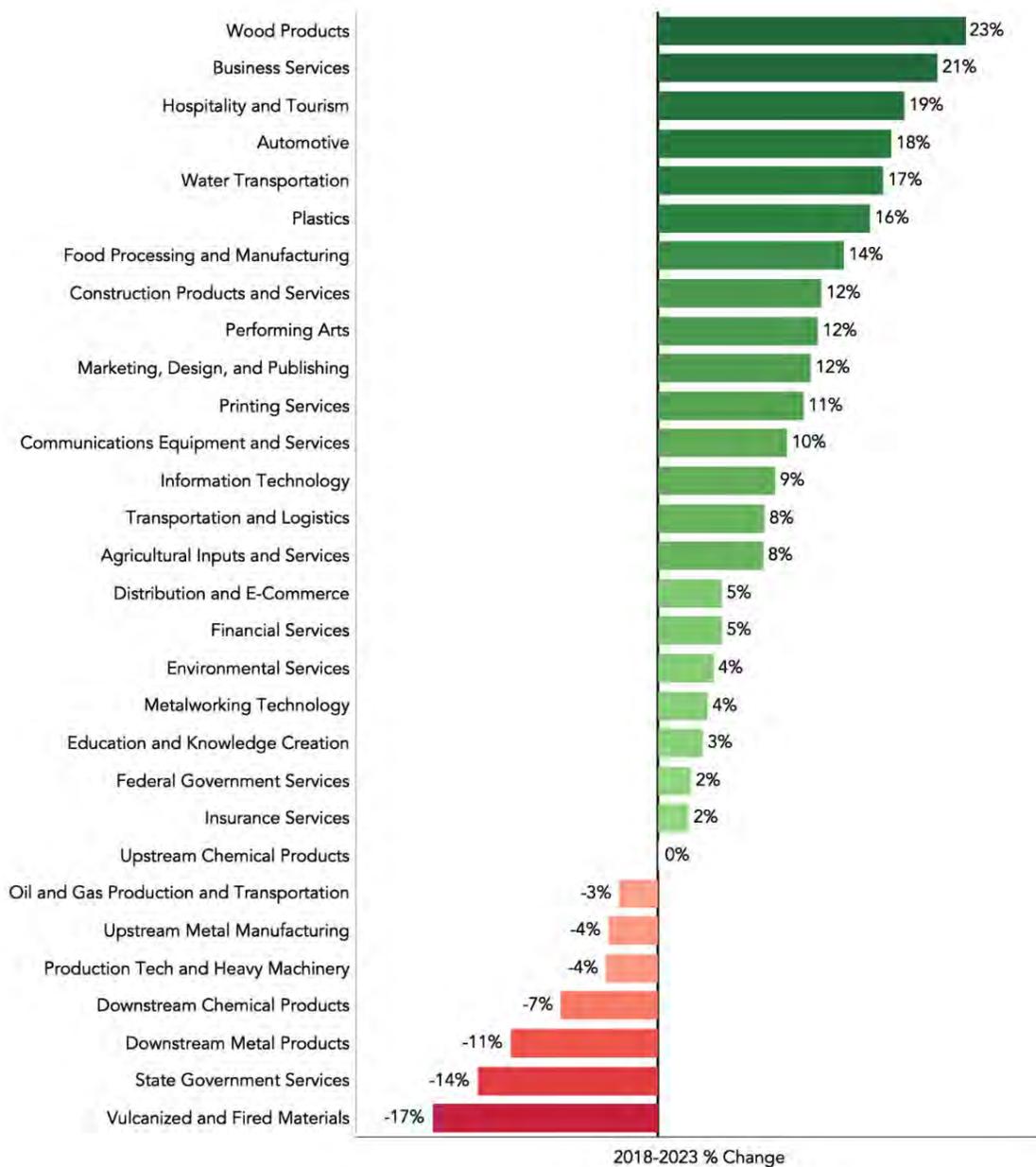
Figure 5: Fastest Growing Clusters in St. Tammany



Source: EMSI 2018.4

As shown in Figure 6, the Automotive cluster is predicted to grow employment by 18 percent by 2023. This is good news for St. Tammany because the cluster is one of the few that has a higher concentration in the parish. Tech is another emerging cluster that could offer a future job growth direction for the parish. The high concentration of white-collar workers living nearby would be a competitive advantage and a competitive differentiation within the region. Only seven cluster groupings are predicted to experience an employment loss during the next five years. Unfortunately, one of those shrinking clusters is oil and gas, which is a legacy cluster in the parish.

Projected Employment Change in St. Tammany, 2018-2023



Looking forward, the trend of the large employing clusters seeing little to no employment growth will continue. However, several of the smaller clusters are expected to see strong growth in the next five years. This offers St. Tammany Parish an opportunity to position itself as a prime location for future growth, taking advantage of company prioritization of access to quality labor.

Labor Supply

2017 JOBS BY WAGES

An analysis of the jobs by average wages per hour shows the disparity in wages across the parish. Just under half (47%) of the jobs pay \$15 per hour or less, about \$30,000 per year or less. At the other extreme, just under a quarter of all jobs (22 percent), pay over \$25/hour, approximately more than \$50,000 annually, underscoring the need for better quality, high-paying jobs. Job quality varies within the different cities with a higher percentage of lower paying jobs in Slidell and a higher percentage of higher paying jobs in Covington. The information for average household income for the parish, combined with out-commuting numbers, suggests that many residents out commute each day for higher paying jobs.



As mentioned previously, because St. Tammany's labor shed includes population centers along the Interstate 10 corridor such as New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast, representing access to more than 717,180 workers, it is a major advantage for the community's competitiveness. This advantage, combined with St. Tammany's surplus of workers compared to jobs, indicates a major strength in terms of labor supply.

Inflow/Outflow of Talent

In order to get a better idea of St. Tammany's workforce landscape, it is important to look at the commuting patterns of our residents and workforce. Understanding who lives in St. Tammany

compared with who works in St. Tammany is important in terms of understanding how the size, make-up, and dynamics of the parish's neighborhoods are changing as population and workforce grow. In addition, businesses use commuting flow data on employment, industry, and workforce concentration to make plant location decisions, with commuting as a consideration. The data below paints a picture of what the community has to offer in terms of both jobs and workers.

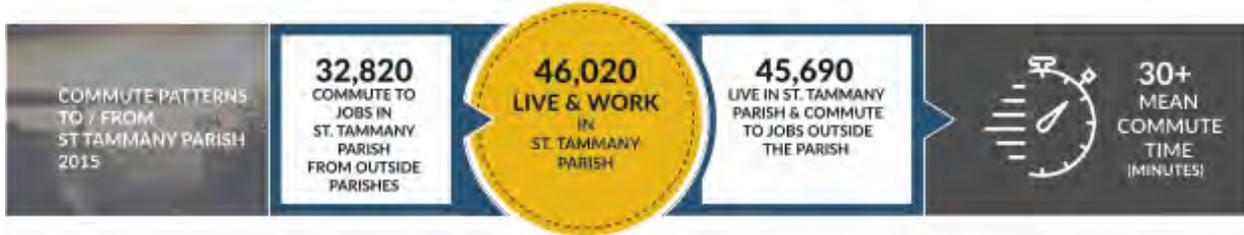


Table 1: Age Demographics of Workers

Demographic	Out Commuters	In Commuters	Live and Work
Aged 29 or younger	20%	28%	23%
Aged 30 to 54	56%	54%	55%
Aged 55 or older	24%	18%	23%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015

Out-commuters also had the highest percentage of workers earning a monthly wage of \$3,333 or higher. People who live and work in the parish had the lowest percentage of high wage earners but had the highest level of middle wage earners. As shown in Table 2, in-commuters were more likely to earn wages lower than \$1,250 per month than out-commuters.

Table 2: Wage Demographics of Workers

Demographic	Out Commuters	In Commuters	Live and Work
Earning \$1,250 per month or less	17%	23%	23%
Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	28%	36%	39%
Earning More than \$3,333 per month	55%	41%	38%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015

Table 3 breaks the workers into three industry groups. Those who live and work within the parish were more likely to work in the broad services industry group and less likely to work in manufacturing. In-commuters had the highest percentage of workers in the trade, transportation, and utilities industry group. This is likely due to the high levels of retail trade jobs within the parish.

Table 3: Industrial Grouping of Workers

Demographic	Out Commuters	In Commuters	Live and Work
"Goods Producing"	18%	16%	11%
"Trade, Transportation & Utilities"	26%	32%	20%
"All Other Services"	56%	51%	68%

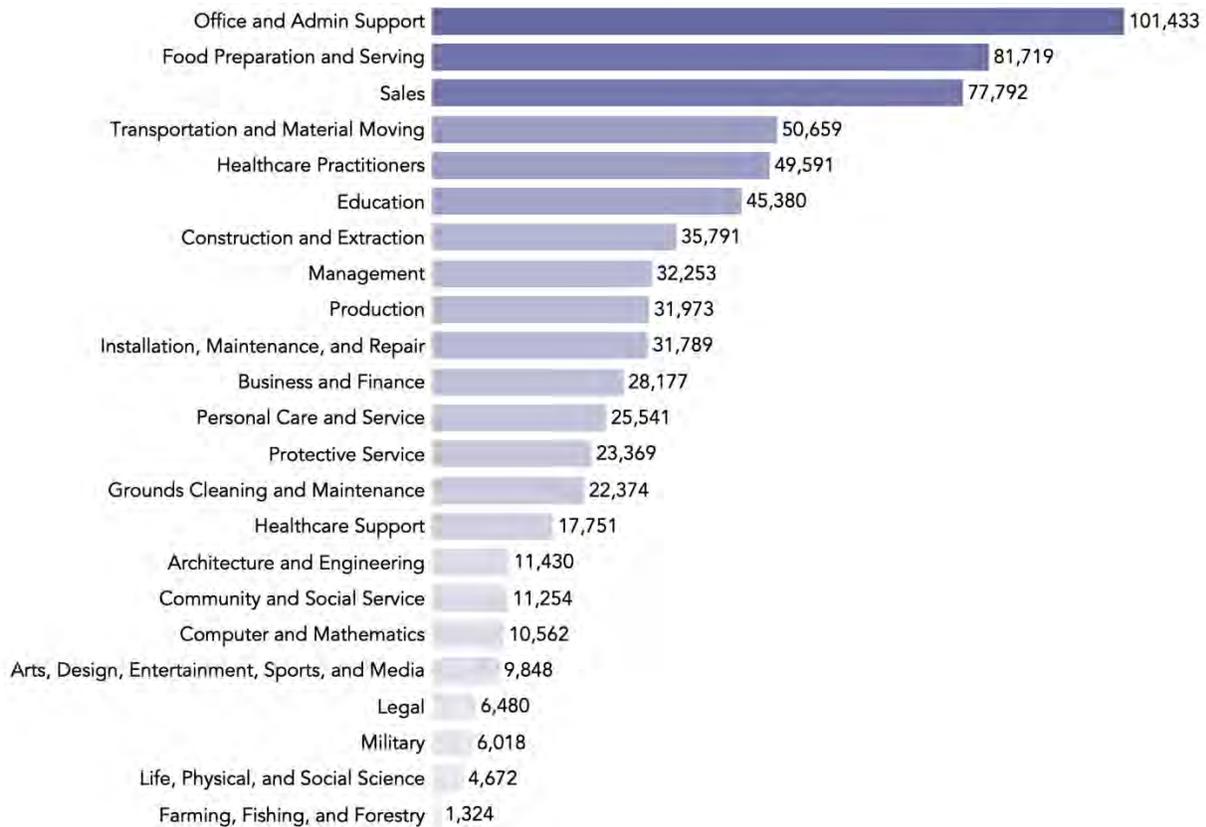
Source: US Census Bureau, 2015

Based on this information, the out-commuting population generally tends to be older, higher income, and work for service or manufacturing employers, and the population that commutes into St. Tammany Parish is more likely to be younger, work in retail trade, and earn less money. The live and work population is generally more diverse across wage, age, and industry affiliation.

Looking deeper into the labor shed reveals what type of work these resident workers are conducting. The chart below shows the top employing occupation groups in the labor shed. This type of data can be helpful for prospective clients interested in the supply of a specific type of

labor. The labor supply can also be broken down on more granular levels. The results show that the labor shed has a diverse labor supply across many fields, with a particular concentration of administrative and sales workers.

Figure 7: St. Tammany Labor Shed Occupation Groupings of Resident Workers in 2018



Source: EMSI 2018.4

REGIONAL GRADUATES

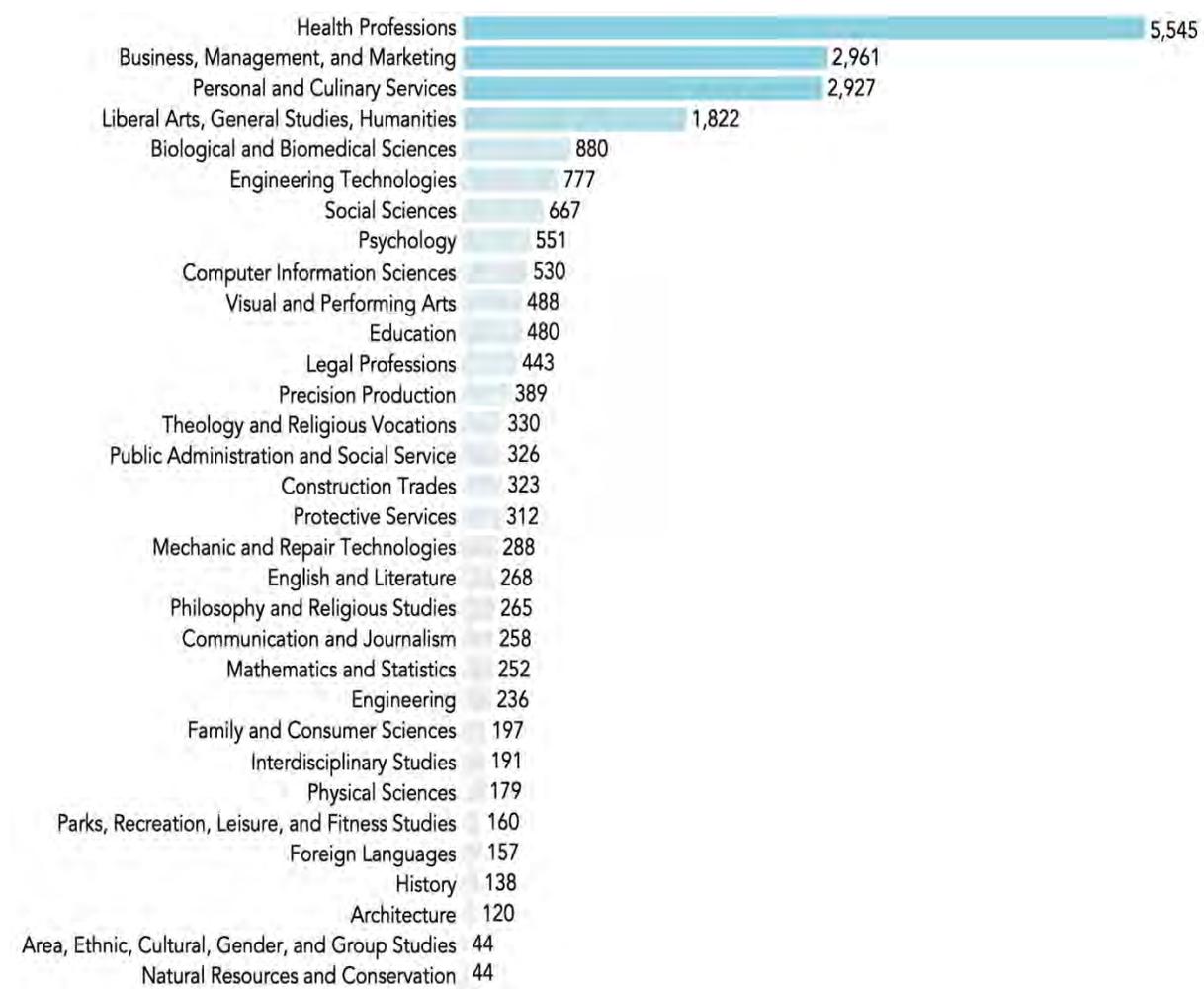
An additional potential source of labor are the students coming out of regional training programs each year. These students are an important part of the labor supply because they are usually looking to go to work and are recently trained. While there are only a small number of annual graduates in the parish, the labor shed offers a strong supply. Within a 70-minute drive time there are 37 institutions that granted 22,578 certificates and degrees in 2017. This includes community colleges that train middle skills, including 355 welders annually. The labor shed also includes four-year degree granting institutions that produce, for example, 236 annual engineering graduates.

TOP SCHOOLS IN ST. TAMMANY LABOR SHED:

- Tulane University of Louisiana
- Delgado Community College
- Southeastern Louisiana University
- University of New Orleans
- Aveda Institute-Covington
- Northshore Technical Community College
- Loyola University New Orleans
- LSU Health Sciences Center-New Orleans
- Pearl River Community College
- Southern University at New Orleans
- Xavier University of Louisiana

In addition to current programming, the proximity to regional educational and technical training institutions demonstrates the opportunity for St. Tammany Corporation and its strategic workforce partners to continue to working together to create new local training programs that may be needed by both existing and prospective Industry.

Figure 8: Top Educational/Training Programs Completed in St. Tammany in 2017



Source: EMSI 2018.4

Part IV. Listening to Community & Business Leaders

The approach to this project has been multi-phased, with the first phase focused on discovery and obtaining the voice of the community. VisionFirst and Economic Leadership along with the staff of St. Tammany Corporation outlined its plan of work to include group discussions and town forums – personally speaking to more than 125 people – to gather key stakeholder input from local leaders, community advocates and business executives.

However, the St. Tammany Corporation wanted to ensure the broader community had the opportunity to be heard, so Economic Leadership developed a survey to gather input from residents on where they would like to see St. Tammany Corporation focus their economic and community development efforts over the next five years. The eight-question survey included topics such as perceptions around the community, what type of growth and industry is desired, the area’s strengths and weaknesses and how residents feel about the quality of life that is currently enjoyed. During a three-week period, more than 130 residents provided input using the survey.

This open dialogue with various private and public-sector leaders and stakeholders provided context as VisionFirst developed a suite of recommendations and strategies that is reflective of the priorities of the parish, with an awareness of the existing challenges and a focus on measurable, achievable goals and objectives. Although the interviews provided important baseline information, the strategies recommended are not merely a compilation of the feedback provided; instead, they are built around the firm’s insight, experience and industry best practices.

Below is a synopsis of the survey results.

QUESTION 1: “IN THE FUTURE MY PRIORITIES FOR THE ECONOMY WOULD BE...” AND PROVIDED FACTORS TO BE RANKED AS EITHER A ‘LOW PRIORITY’ (1), ‘MIDDLE PRIORITY’ (2) OR ‘HIGH PRIORITY’ (3). THE CLOSER THE WEIGHTED AVERAGE TO ‘3’, THE HIGHER THE PRIORITY.

Respondents ranked technology businesses consistently at the top as far as desired types of businesses – but “home grown businesses” and “small to mid-sized businesses” were close second and third. Indicating the parish wants their community to offer the same type of high-quality jobs that can be found across the causeway. “Manufacturing” and “Agriculture” ranked low on the survey results, yet “regional facilities of Fortune 500” ranked high.

- Technology Sector – 2.78
- Home Grown Businesses – 2.64
- Small-to-Mid Size Companies – 2.59
- Office (White collar) Jobs – 2.59
- Medical Facilities – 2.55
- Regional Facilities of Fortune 500 – 2.48
- Tourism & Creative Placemaking – 2.22
- Organized Recreation and Sports – 2.21
- Large Companies – 2.13
- Manufacturing – 2.09
- Agriculture – 1.8

QUESTION 2: "IF YOU COULD ADD ONE COMPANY TO ST. TAMMANY PARISH WHO OR WHAT TYPE WOULD IT BE?"

Again, "technology" was a top theme mentioned. The word "technology" was mentioned 15 times, the word "manufacturing" was mentioned 10 times, the word "Amazon" was mentioned nine times. Clean manufacturing and brand name companies like Amazon and Google indicate the community is more focused on the aspect of "clean and attractive" companies as opposed to the specific types of jobs. *Other comments included:*

- Clean manufacturing company
- Sustainable and renewable energy technology
- Trader Joes and other retail establishments
- Large scale family entertainment
- Information technology and communications
- Regional headquarters or a mid-sized New Orleans based company to move here
- Various sectors which help employ various people of all ages
- A huge tourism draw to make St. Tammany a destination on its own, not as a side trip to NOLA
- More oil industry
- We have too many now
- Hemp
- One with high paying white collar jobs

QUESTION 3: "PLEASE RANK ST. TAMMANY PARISH ON THE FOLLOWING FACTORS, FROM "MAJOR WEAKNESS"(1) TO "MAJOR ADVANTAGE"(5). THE CLOSER THE WEIGHTED AVERAGE TO '5' THE HIGHER THE RANKING.

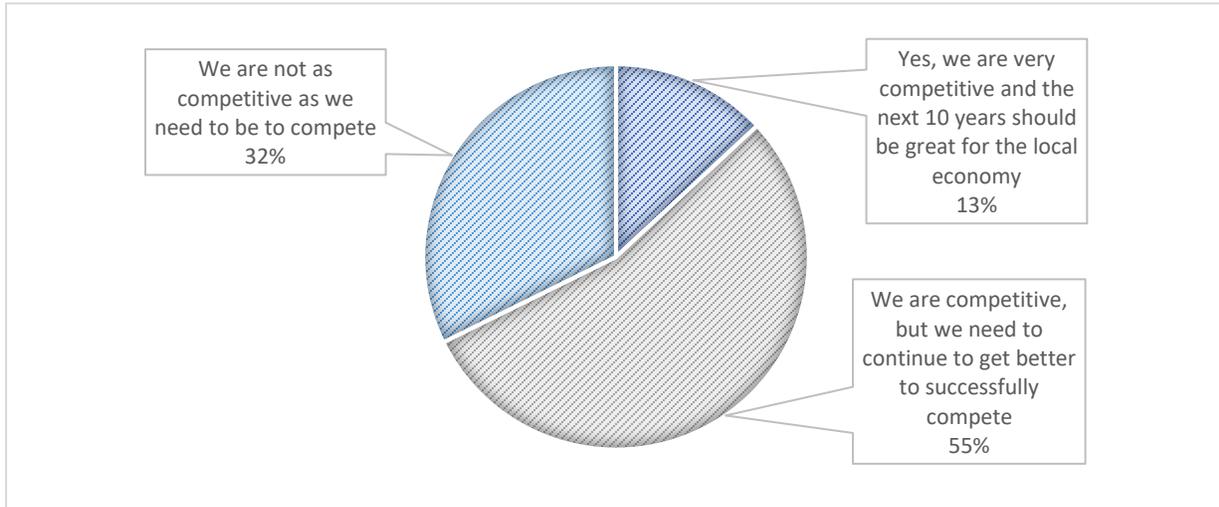
Respondents ranked low crime as the major advantage as well as other quality of life factors. This points to the fact that most of the people who live on the North Shore feel that they enjoy more quality of life amenities such as lower crime rates and higher rated public schools. "Low crime rate" (4.29) was ranked as the highest advantage, while "local permitting process" (2.28) and "local regulatory process" (2.29) were ranked lowest.

- Low Crime Rate – 4.29
- Quality of Life – 4.21
- Ratings of Public Schools – 4.02
- Healthcare Facilities – 3.9
- Highway Accessibility – 3.35
- Energy Availability and Costs – 3.34
- Labor Costs - 3.18
- Housing Availability – 3.15
- Availability of Buildings – 3.12
- Availability of Shovel-Ready Sites – 2.97
- Availability of Skilled Labor – 2.92
- Occupancy or Construction Costs – 2.83
- Corporate Tax Rate – 2.7
- State & Local Incentives – 2.7
- Housing Costs – 2.65
- Local Regulatory Process – 2.29
- Local Permitting Process – 2.28

QUESTION 4: "BASED ON THE COMMUNITY'S OVERALL COMPETITIVENESS, CAN ST. TAMMANY PARISH SUCCESSFULLY COMPETE FOR JOBS AND EMPLOYEES IN THE NEXT 5-10 YEARS?"

More than half of the respondents believe that St. Tammany Parish is "competitive, but needs to continue to get better to successfully compete" (55%)

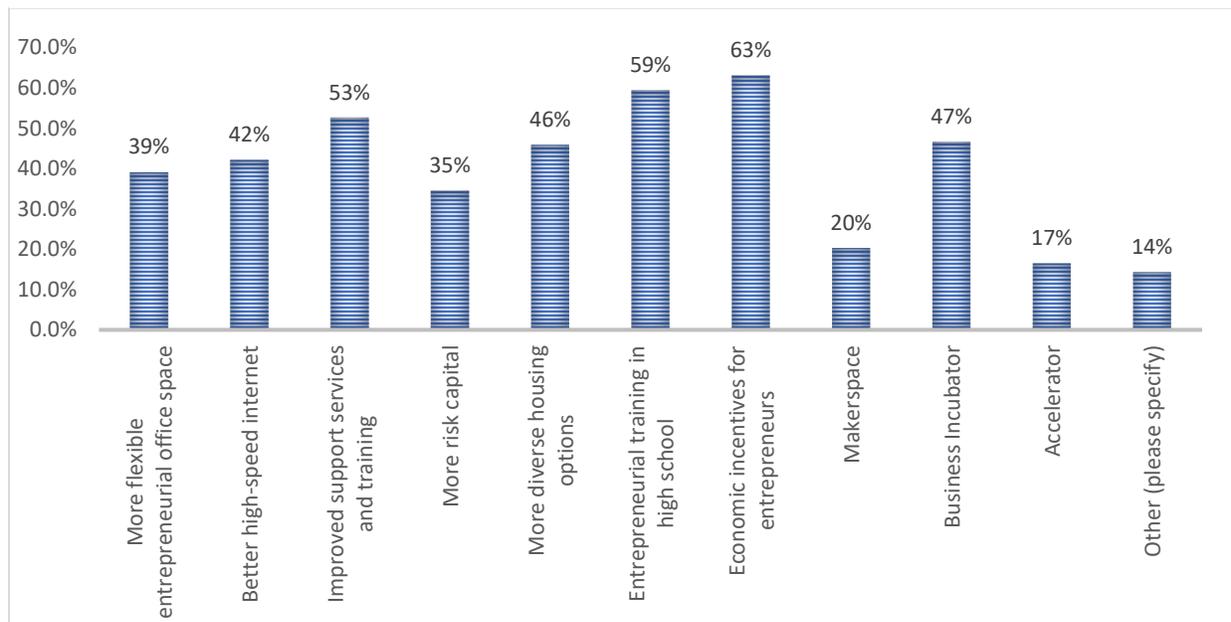
Figure 9: Survey Responses: Public Perception of St. Tammany's Competitiveness



Source: Economic Development Public Input Survey, St. Tammany Corporation, 2018

QUESTION 5: "WHAT DO YOU THINK IT WOULD TAKE TO CREATE A ROBUST CULTURE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN OUR COMMUNITY? (CHECK ALL THAT YOU FEEL ARE NEEDED)".

Figure 10: Survey Responses: Public Perception of Most Important Tools for Supporting Entrepreneurs



While 63 percent responded "economic incentives for entrepreneurs" was most important, it's worth noting that the next two highest choices are easier to provide intermediately: 59% -

“entrepreneurial training in high school” and 53 percent for “improved support services and training.” *Additional comments included:*

- Better infrastructure
- A willingness to diversify the economy
- Less federal and local regulatory burden
- Broaden occupational training in High School and allow students that what to take those programs go to schools that offer them
- Supporting/partnering with SLU's College of Business
- Fewer planned unit developments (PUDs) and more support for small groups creating mixed use non-Homeowners' Association (HOA) communities
- A co-working campus like a We Work
- Reduce taxes and increase tax base

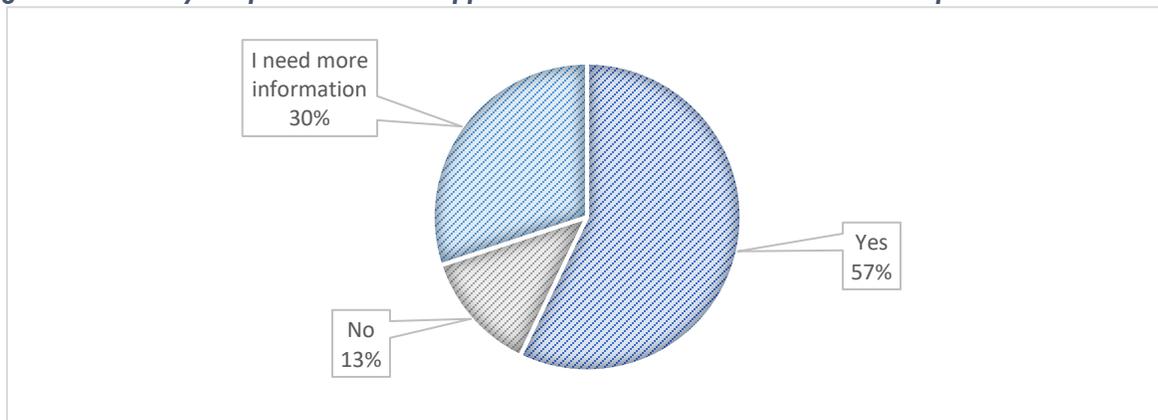
QUESTION 6: “WHAT NEXT HIGH-IMPACT PROJECT(S) CAN YOU ENVISION IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH”?

“Infrastructure” was mentioned 16 times, “roads” were mentioned 14 times and “traffic” was mentioned 14 times. This is understandable since many residents in St. Tammany Parish moved from NOLA to get away from crowding and traffic. St. Tammany Corporation needs to remember to address this point and reassure residents when they announce new companies that they won't place a traffic burden on already strained infrastructure. And they need to investigate the infrastructure needs now and work with Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) to determine a five and 10-year plan for the community. *Additional comments included:*

- Business incubator
- ROADS!!!
- Projects for alleviate traffic congestion
- Port Marigny in Mandeville
- Mega-Sites
- Distribution center
- Light manufacturing
- IT
- A state-of-the-art recreational facility for BMX bike riding and skateboarding
- Cultural arts center
- Hemp growing and product development

QUESTION 7: “WOULD YOU SUPPORT FUNDING FOR ARTS, CULTURE, ORGANIZED SPORTS, AND RECREATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS?”

Figure 10: Survey Responses: Public Support for Recreational Economic Development Efforts

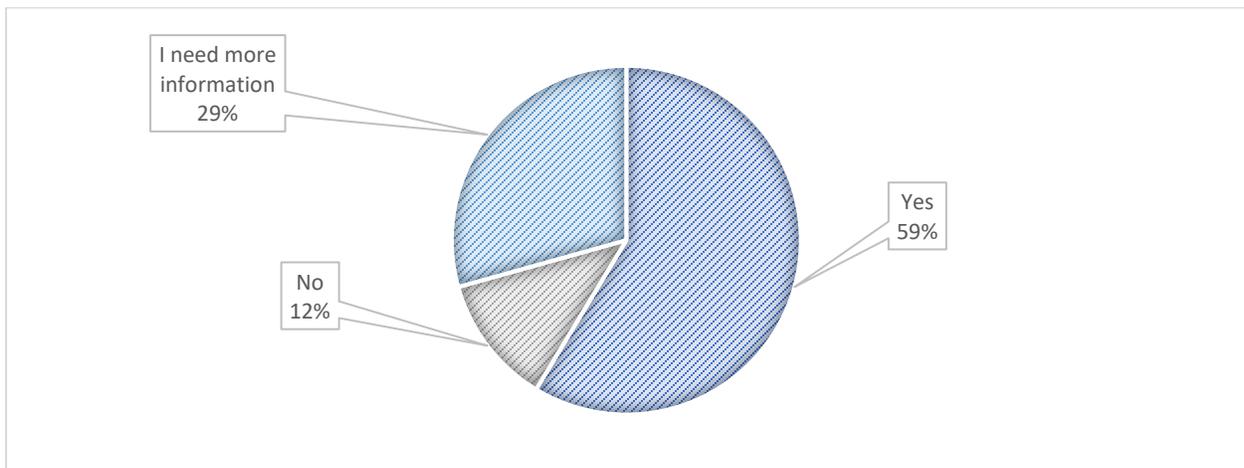


The majority of respondents answered “Yes” (57%) to support funding for arts and recreation, however, 13 percent said “No” and the remaining 30 percent would want more info before saying “Yes.”

QUESTION 8: “WOULD YOU SUPPORT LOCAL DOLLARS BEING UTILIZED FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES”?

Almost mirroring question 7 in results - 59 percent answered “Yes”, but 12 percent answered “No”. and the remaining 29 percent need additional information before making a choice. This is good indicator of support in the community, however, roughly a third of the community would need additional information before making a choice on such an initiative.

Figure 11: Public Support for Funding Local Economic Development Incentives



Source: *Economic Development Public Input Survey, St. Tammany Corporation, 2018*

Part V. SWOT & Leverage Points

VisionFirst identified the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats regarding St. Tammany Corporation's economic development efforts as well as its competitiveness as a regional leader based on qualitative and anecdotal sources including the economic development public input survey, public forum meetings, stakeholder roundtables conducted by Economic Leadership

Strengths

- Excitement about the new direction of St. Tammany Corporation
- Responsiveness of Northshore Technical Community College
- Available and affordable energy
- Available buildings in East St. Tammany Parish
- Abundant recreational opportunities
- Numerous community events
- Proximity to NASA's Stennis, and Michoud facilities.
- Attractive lifestyle that embraces lakefront and outdoor activities such as biking
- Strong public schools

Weaknesses

- Expansion projects not receiving economic development assistance
- Perceived as a retirement or bedroom community, not a destination for business
- Negative legacy mindset about economic development
- Fragmented support of the whole Parish
- Not enough value placed on legacy industries
- Suffers from a negative South Louisiana image
- Lack of affordable workforce housing
- Complexities to do business



Opportunities

- Redevelopment of Hwy 190
- Master plan for parish moving west
- Positioned to lead business development
- Reimagining the vacant mall in Slidell
- Work closer with GNO for regional strategy
- A "can do attitude" of the people
- Increase in movie production in the area
- Underutilized lakefront
- Dredging of the Bogue Falaya River

Threats

- Growth has out-paced infrastructure
- A fear of increased crime
- Moratoriums on growth in West St. Tammany
- Lack of understanding about incentives
- Businesses struggling with talent
- Complicated business process is a barrier to entry for businesses
- Increased frequency of flooding along the lakefront
- Lack of agreement on what success looks like
- Ability to work together for betterment of the entire parish

SWOT Leverage Points

Far too often SWOT analyses are conducted for discovery purpose only. VisionFirst goes beyond the initial step of conducting the analysis. Given the strengths and opportunities the St. Tammany Corporation and the parish possesses as well as its weaknesses and threats, VisionFirst looks to develop strategies that help leverage or capitalize on each strength or opportunity and to minimize or mitigate weaknesses and threats. These strategies or “leverage points” help to illustrate the timeliest, most important calls-to-action for the parish to execute to strengthen its position, achieve its mission and move the parish to a greater competitive stance for jobs and investment.

Table 4: Leverage Points Based on SWOT Analysis

STRENGTH	LEVERAGE POINTS
Excitement about the new direction of St. Tammany Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructure the new organization to a public-private model that allows for the inflow of private funding and private-sector leadership.
Responsiveness of Northshore Technical Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the College to tell the St. Tammany workforce story as it relates to the pipeline and industry support.
Access to Stennis & Michoud Space Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use space, buildings and hub zone to take advantage of the technology and innovation surrounding NASA facilities.
WEAKNESS	LEVERAGE POINTS
Perceived as a retirement or bedroom community, not a destination for business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an external strategic marketing plan that leverages and highlights the region’s assets for business growth and relocation as well as entrepreneurship.
Negative legacy mindset about economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an internal communications plan that conveys the benefits of economic development to the public and local stakeholders.
Expansion projects not receiving economic development assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the project drivers in targeted industry sectors and where the Parish can offer assistance in incentives such as rebates and tax credits.

OPPORTUNITIES	LEVERAGE POINTS
Align St. Tammany's strengths with GNO regional strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position St. Tammany Corporation to become a stronger, more active regional partner, as well as an asset for regional attraction in the Greater New Orleans area
Available buildings in East St. Tammany Parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and evaluate product to take advantage of opportunities of existing buildings and space such as vacant retail including the mall.
Positioned for business development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take advantage of the parish's reinvigorated commitment to economic development to implement a robust marketing effort showcasing the parish and its opportunities for business.
THREATS	LEVERAGE POINTS
Complicated business process is a barrier to entry for small businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local government as advocate for business and assess where changes to current tax and regulatory policies may be needed to encourage innovation and growth.
Lack of agreement on what success looks like	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the strategic plan, create a St. Tammany Corporation quarterly indicator report that measures agreed upon milestones for success.
Businesses struggling with talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with partners in the schools as well as Northshore Technical College to align course offerings with target clusters, national trends for demand and current occupation gaps.

Part VI. Increasing Competitiveness & Economic Opportunity

The effectiveness of any economic development entity is predicated upon its ability to identify clear goals, decide on priorities within the goals and develop measurable strategies for achieving them. Simultaneously, the entity must identify any challenges that may impede the ability to achieve its goals and fulfill its mission. Often this process is just as important as setting job creation and capital investment metrics. Without identifying and addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities for collaborative efforts, ongoing success is less likely to be achieved. The most successful economic development entities are always adapting to ever-changing market conditions and place a premium on responsiveness to the customer.

VisionFirst Advisors has outlined four strategic initiatives and subsequent tactics focused on increased collaboration, implementable targets and measurable results for the new St. Tammany Corporation. Only then after some amount of measurable and success is achieved, can and should the organization look to more aspirational targets.

However, before diving into tactics that can leverage these legacy and emerging clusters it is important to consider the various aspects of economic development. For the sake of this plan, the focus will be on the three categories that embody job growth as a holistic system as identified by VisionFirst Advisors years of experience.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES	FACILITATED STRATEGIES	COMPETITIVE
<i>Follows an Existing Market</i>	<i>Strategic Actions Taken to Increase Competitive Opportunities</i>	<i>Multiple Communities are Competing, High-Wage Jobs</i>
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speed of Doing Business - Ease of Doing Business - Environment Conducive to Start-Ups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Retention & Expansion - Innovation & Commercialization - Infrastructure - Business Formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Target Industry Recruitment - Business Drivers - Led By Site Selectors or Corporate Real Estate

The first set of strategies is centered on **market driven growth**. Often referred to as “organic growth,” these are jobs created by businesses who seek to serve an existing market or a created market, i.e., people or businesses to which they can sell products or services. For St. Tammany this may include retail outlets, certain healthcare facilities or professionals that are attracted to the growing population of the community.

The second set of strategies examines all ways a state or community can **facilitate job growth** through specific, targeted investment in programs that encourage and support job growth. Examples of facilitated growth in the community include the investments made into incubator

programs or co-working spaces to support entrepreneurial development, or investments made to targeted assets to increase commercialization opportunities associated with the space related assets in Michoud and Stennis.

Finally, while the smallest subset of the holistic economic development approach, **competitive projects** ultimately prove to be the most impactful in creating high-wage jobs and becoming cornerstones to continued job growth through targeted industry clusters. Area Development Magazine, an industry standard, notes that domestically only approximately 6,000 such projects are in process of looking to locate or expand annually, making the universe of such projects limited and highly competitive. Understandably, these projects are extremely desirable by states and communities and are competed for aggressively. Traditionally, these projects are influenced by favorable business and tax environments; environmentally-conscious but business-friendly regulatory environments; and both financial and non-financial economic development incentives.

All three strategies, along with other non-traditional economic development strategies such as creative economy programs, innovative partnerships with colleges or federal assets for specific job growth and other initiatives are necessary to build and create an ever-expanding, balanced, diversified economy. The total job growth over all these strategies is difficult to track accurately, however, the best overall, independent job growth metric chosen to follow monthly and annually has been the federal government's *Net New Non-Farm Job Growth* numbers. While far from perfect, this data set does provide an overall comparative set of industry-provided job growth/loss numbers from which a state or parish can draw conclusions as to overall job growth success.

Strategic Initiatives

1. Organizational Effectiveness: Creating a High Performing Economic Development Organization

Any successful model of economic development includes a structure that maximizes the roles of civic engagement, nonprofits and the intellectual capital of business leadership. As such, it is important that the St. Tammany Corporation's board fosters a culture of collaboration that incorporates both the public and private-sectors into the process.

VisionFirst Advisors' collective experience has shown high performing economic development organizations share the following characteristics:

- Collaboration of business and government to achieve economic success.
- Development of a strong staff structure with the appropriate level of resources to fulfill the mission as a cohesive team.
- Fiscal responsibility and management of programs and initiatives.
- Programs and strategies that demonstrate measurable success.
- A balance of board involvement between organizational transactions and the time necessary to discuss strategies that can lead to transformational change.
- Provide thought leadership on issues and opportunities related to business growth and economic vitality.
- Transparent with operations and communications.

While this approach in economic development is a departure from an exclusively public-driven model, it is crucial to have private-sector participation to facilitate transformational change. The businesses responsible for that transformational growth are making decisions based on speed-to-market with an aversion to any real or perceived risk that could impact that timeline. Because of this, communities no longer have the luxury of operating in a bureaucratic bubble. The structure of any successful local economic development organization designed to attract and retain industry must understand the challenges facing the private-sector today and have the flexibility to adapt quickly to the changing marketplace.

Outlined below are a suite of recommendations to transform the current St. Tammany Corporation economic development structure to one designed to promote proactive outreach and flexible processes.

TACTIC: AUGMENT THE PUBLIC ORGANIZATION WITH A PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERSHIP AND INVESTMENT. (*SHORT-TERM*)

Responsibilities

Today, in economic development it is not states competing against states for projects and growth but communities against communities. As the world of site selection continues to evolve, local economic development organizations must adapt and grow to compete. As a result, St. Tammany Corporation as the organization responsible for economic development must be able to operate

with considerable efficiency but be flexible enough to identify market changes and adapt to meet the demand.

Currently, the community expects the organization along with its limited staff and budget, to be everything to everyone with many requests outside the traditional role of an economic development organization. To be effective, the organization's focus must be narrow and clearly defined. As such, the recommendation for the St. Tammany Corporation's responsibilities should be primarily focused on sales and marketing to promote the parish as a preferred business location. The responsibilities of the new organization would center around five main efforts:

1. Thought leadership on economic development issues
2. External business development
3. Internal business recruitment and retention
4. Marketing and communications outreach
5. Lead collaborator of business formation activities

Develop New Model for Private Sector Investment

In January 2018, the St. Tammany Parish Development District assumed the role of lead economic development organization in St. Tammany. In September, the St. Tammany Parish Development District took on a new identity as part of its restructuring effort, calling itself St. Tammany Corporation. Moving forward, it is important for St. Tammany Corporation to devise a structure that engages private sector leadership to increase diversity of thought and funding.

Suggested Models

The St. Tammany Corporation Board of Commissioners will continue to be the lead governing body in any suggested model for increased private support. In addition, the model should include ways to involve industry-to-industry participation that will drive the development of future existing business retention and expansion efforts.

While there are many models available for leveraging private support, it is suggested to create one similar to a capital campaign, or Committee of 100. Any model would be an extension of St. Tammany Corporation but complement the existing leadership to further strengthen the parish's economic development efforts. Any private support model should not be viewed as competition, but rather as a way to strengthen the organization with private investment and intellectual capital. To broaden support, it is recommended that the private efforts include an advisory board of six to nine at-large private business executives from each of the clusters identified by research conducted by Economic Leadership:

- Business Services
- Technology
- Marketing, Design & Publishing
- Water Transportation
- Oil & Gas Production & Transportation
- Automotive
- The private advisory board would provide the oversight and accountability for the organization.
- Private board members would be prohibited from project engagement.

Purpose

The main purpose of a supplementary model is to raise dollars to support specific goals of the St. Tammany Corporation strategic plan. It can be used as a vehicle to raise funds for marketing, staff needs, studies, etc. Whatever its purpose, the plan must have clear metrics of success.

A Committee of 100 model usually represents approximately 100 investors contributing a set amount of funding. For example, 100 investors providing \$3,000 per year nets \$300,000 per year to support the organization.

A second approach would be to have a support group tasked with raising private dollars by investor level categories. Either way, it is important to determine the private dollar amount needed to support the economic development program and how will the investors be included in the process.

Having a public organization leading economic development and a private sector arm supplementing it will increase capacity and effectiveness and further engage the entire community. This model will also help broaden the knowledge and involvement of the citizens into the parish's economic development efforts.

Compliance and Transparency

Anytime a public organization explores adding private investment and responsibilities, scrutiny will increase. Taxpayers want to understand the benefit and how their dollars will be spent responsibly. Any public-private model is usually just as transparent as a local government entity but is not perceived as such by the media and certain advocacy organizations. Mitigating this reality will require a communications professional, along with the entire board and staff, focused on positive messaging to combat some of this initial apprehension.

With the public's skepticism of incentives, the new organization should be proactive in educating members of the media, stakeholders, staff and the public on who it is and the benefits to locating to St. Tammany. A new website and subsequently the newsroom are key components of that conversation. At a minimum the following information should be included:

- Organizational chart
- Board members and governance policies surrounding the board
- Board meeting materials
- Financials and financial disclosures
- Annual reports
- Incentive fact sheets, frequently asked questions about incentives and a database of incentives
- Fact sheets about the organization and its transition from the old model – explaining public benefits
- Fact sheet surrounding the use of private funds

TACTIC: EXPAND THE ST. TAMMANY’S CORPORATION’S BUDGET AND STAFF FOR OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND FISCAL EXCELLENCE. (MID-TERM)

Organizational Staffing

Due to funding limitations and a reorganization of St. Tammany Corporation, the CEO and Deputy Director are responsible for most of the day-to-day functions regarding strategic planning and business development efforts. As the organization grows and additional private funding is secured, the three positions in green should be hired – with the project manager the first hire followed closely by a talent development manager to focus on workforce issues and opportunities and a marketing and communications professional.

Table 5: Core Organizational Functions

Area of service	Responsibilities
Economic Research and Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep track of local, regional, state, and national economic trends • Provide information for external data requests • Compile, analyze and explain data from common sources such as US Census, JobsEQ, StatsAmerica, BLS, National Association of Counties, etc.
Business Development (BR&E, Lead Generation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markets the parish to prospects, helps clients evaluate key location issues, find real estate solutions, engage appropriate state and local leaders and utilize research information to develop proposals to companies • Develop and maintain list of top corporate prospects and develop and execute outreach plan to these contacts, as well as site location consultants serving this industry, to uncover potential projects • Develop and conduct an existing industry outreach plan for the purposes of retention, expansion and market intelligence
Marketing & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, oversee and implement a robust marketing and communications plan • Understand key audiences (internal and external) and prepare communications tools for each

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves as media relations expert on various economic development topic
Workforce & Talent Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile, analyze, explain and utilize education and workforce data to promote St. Tammany’s talent pipeline while also identifying areas for improvement • Coordinate with local, regional and state workforce providers to improve services and identify opportunities for new programs or initiatives • Identify success stories with local businesses and education providers to promote to internal and external stakeholders
Public Policy Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drives thought leadership on economic policy in the region • Propose and promote legislation, rules or policies designed to stimulate economic development in the Parish • Monitors, analyzes, and tracks changes to parish policy and related local, state, and federal laws and regulations
Organizational Development & Investor Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and communicate benefits of investing in St. Tammany Corporation • Solicit public and private investment to support the annual program of work • Cultivates a strong network for investor relations to highlight value and promote involvement
State & Local Incentives Management & Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor jobs and investment to insure compliance • Coordinate with relevant parties to ensure incentive requirements are understood for human resources and payroll • Work with relevant parties to develop necessary reports to satisfy state incentive reporting requirements
Finance & Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates budget process and execution to maximize use of funds and stay within budgeted amounts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages all financial operations of the organization including accounts payable, accounts receivable, deposits, monthly reconciliations, payroll, invoicing and incentive reporting • Provide strategic financial planning advice to upper management for long-term growth
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- As a stand-alone organization, oversight would be the responsibility of the private board of directors.
- Regardless of the private nature of the organization, the bylaws must outline the need for transparency and accountability to the taxpayers.
- Performance-based compensation and competitive salaries are a must and can be handled out of corporate funds. The new model with improved compensation has the potential to aid both in the retention and attraction of employees while at the same time providing needed intellectual capital through the increased engagement of private sector leadership.

Budget

Regardless of approach, whether the organization follows a public, private, or a hybrid model, it is critical that the organization continues to explore creative ways to expand the current budget capacity. An infusion of private funding into the organization offers a myriad of benefits including talent, capacity, and professional development; additional operational capacity; and extended marketing and outreach capability.

In considering this type of fundraising effort, the organization must be realistic and pragmatic in its initial approach. As the private investment begins to show a measurable return on investment, the campaign can become more aggressive in its outreach, but initially these requests must be attainable and not jeopardize any future outreach. VisionFirst examined other similar sized organizations in order to make the following recommendations:

Initial Private Fundraising Goal: \$150,000 up to \$300,000 annually

Given the diverse nature of the private sector in the parish, in addition to the momentum created by the new team and approach this is a realistic target that would increase operational capacity by just more than 20 percent a year. The goal would be to raise \$150,000 per year the first three years and reaching \$300,000 to be budgeted the beginning of year four.

2. Business Development: Harness Location & Innovation as Key Drivers of Success

TACTIC: DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM (*SHORT-TERM*)

Most economic development organizations understand the importance of the employers currently in their community. They understand the value of a strong outreach program and the return on their engagement with local business. Yet the focus of many of these organizations centers on new business recruitment. The allure of a new company and the splash it will garner are coveted not only by the economic development organization but by elected leadership as well. However, without an emphasis on engaging existing industry a recruitment effort is less likely to succeed.

The health of a community's existing industry has long been a leading indicator of the overall state of that local economy. If local businesses are growing, the economy will soon follow suit. Conversely the inverse is also true. There are many different reasons for this but generally, existing industry growth is an indication of a strong workforce, favorable business climate and a strong market. These factors not only promote existing growth but will soon lead to new opportunities as well, leading to competition that stimulates innovation and further growth.

While this is certainly the most obvious reason to develop a comprehensive business retention and expansion outreach strategy, there are others. It has long been maintained that most job creation comes from existing companies, which places an even greater emphasis on the need for outreach. Another reason existing industry is so important to the continual growth is somewhat less obvious. As a prospective business considers an area for location typically, they will reach out to local businesses to get their perspective of the area. They will ask:

- Is the hiring process cumbersome?
- Is talent readily available?
- Will the area's local leadership be a partner as the company attempts to grow?

Previously, St. Tammany's economic development efforts included working in conjunction with LED to conduct existing business visits. While it was helpful, this effort should be viewed as minimal at best for operating a comprehensive business retention and expansion program.

Moving forward, St. Tammany Corporation should make its business retention and expansion program a cornerstone of business development. This would include developing industry roundtables and survey instruments to accumulate critical information that leads to policy changes and economic development strategy supporting job growth. In addition, the information collected can be used to drive business formation and entrepreneurial activities in the parish.

Leveraging the Dialogue with Businesses

At its core, the recommended existing industry outreach plan is designed to assist the St. Tammany Corporation in building relationships with company leadership. This relationship will invariably lead to three main benefits:

1. **Customer Focus Group.** St. Tammany Corporation will establish positive relationships with local company officials and will create community business ambassadors to a host of potential prospects and serve as a built-in customer focus group for staff.
2. **Market Intelligence.** Valuable information related to business climate will be provided. For example, a company's struggles can help provide a roadmap for St. Tammany Corporation to remain competitive in the market.
3. **Expansion Possibilities.** Staff will become aware of issues and obstacles early in its relationship with the company allowing time to address any challenges. The same can be said of opportunities for growth and expansion.

The benefits to existing businesses are significant. Companies that participate in comprehensive outreach programs with economic development organizations are statistically more likely to grow and expand. They not only benefit from a partnership with the St. Tammany Corporation, but they know whom to call to support their need. This provides quicker access to needed resources, reduction in cost of doing business and improved community services.

At the end of a successful business retention and expansion strategy is an improved business climate for the existing industry. Their challenges become the community's challenges; but so, do their opportunities. Not every company they are competing with in the market has that kind of support structure in the local community. Having local leadership engaged will ultimately help to make the company become more competitive in its own industry.

Existing industry programs come in many different variations, but one constant remains, peer-to-peer engagement at a personal level. Written communication is vital in business today but for any program to succeed engagement must take place at the business location. It allows the company to see the St. Tammany Corporation's commitment and allows the economic developer to gain a better understanding for how the company operates.

Visiting Industry Partners

One-on-one visits are a key component to any outreach program along with a survey tool. The survey must be concise and adaptable to different industries. It must be designed to elicit honest feedback that can be used to help both the company and the community. The results of the survey will be confidential and analyzed only by staff and all results should be recorded leading to a database of business intelligence. There are several key components that are instrumental to the success of the program:

- Select company candidates based on diversity of industry and diversity of impact. The largest private sector employers must be part of the program due to their impact, but small businesses must be a factor here as well. A good cross-section to represent the community is imperative.
- Conduct one-on-one visits with each account utilizing the survey tool to focus on the needs of the company and its employees. Identify and address companies at risk and potential expansion opportunities.
- Analyze all data and develop action plans to define the priorities for the community as it relates to existing business. Allocate resources to address concerns.

- Follow up. Each meeting must be of consequence. Companies need to trust that the information they are sharing has a chance to make a lasting impact or they will stop sharing it.

TACTIC: LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH ASSETS SURROUNDING STENNIS AND MICHOU D AS A DRAW FOR PRIVATE-SECTOR BUSINESSES. (MID-TERM)

Using the information and data provided by Economic Leadership, the below industries were identified as both existing clusters and emerging clusters. St. Tammany Parish offers immediate and quantifiable advantages to companies in the industries of professional services, auto/auto-related, financial services, freight transportation and machinery manufacturing sectors. Using data from Economic Leadership, St. Tammany can highlight its advantages such as existing workforce talent, proven college training programs, available product suited to the targets and an appetite of the community to support the industry



Using Targets for Recruitment Success

Understanding the three buckets of growth, outlined earlier, combined with the legacy and emerging sectors outlined by Economic Leadership, the St. Tammany Corporation can further refine its industry targets for improved chances of success. Using data from JobsEQ, there are several industries that St. Tammany Parish has opportunity within including: Professional Services, Auto/Auto-Related, Financial Services, Freight Transportation and Machinery Manufacturing. Each of these industries are expected to grow, have a higher average annual wage and the parish currently offers industry strength.

The average annual wage currently in the parish is nearly \$46,000 and over the next 10 years employment growth across all industries is expected at 1.3 percent. Although some of the industries highlighted on the following page are not expected to grow at the same level, the higher wages combined with available product in the community offer significant opportunities.

Table 6: Top Industry Clusters in St. Tammany

Industry Group	Average Annual Employment Forecast Rate (%) 2018 Q3-2028 Q3	Average Wages	LQ
Auto/Auto-related	1.17	\$43,641	0.76
Machinery Manufacturing	0.15	\$62,016	0.76
Coal/Oil/Power	2.05	\$158,777	1.69
Retail	0.90	\$40,261	1.27
Professional Services	1.34	\$60,194	0.81
Consumer Services	1.25	\$20,699	1.08
Education	1.09	\$38,047	1.15
Financial Services	1.06	\$78,946	0.85
Construction	1.60	\$56,084	1.43
Freight Transportation	1.00	\$75,325	1.13
Utilities	1.51	\$48,578	1.17
Public Administration	0.85	\$47,097	0.68
Health	2.17	\$47,466	1.07

Source: JobsEQ®; 2018 Q3. Note: Yellow highlights reflect potential industry targets.

The NAICS codes associated with these industries include:

Auto/Auto Related:

- 811 Repair and Maintenance
- 3336 Engine, Turbine, and Power Transmission Equipment Manufacturing
- 3361 Motor Vehicle Manufacturing
- 3362 Motor Vehicle Body and Trailer Manufacturing
- 3363 Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing

Financial Service

- 521 Monetary Authorities - Central Bank
- 522 Credit Intermediation and Related Activities
- 523 Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investments and Related Activities
- 524 Insurance Carriers and Related Activities
- 525 Funds, Trusts, and Other Financial Vehicles
- 533 Lessors of Nonfinancial Intangible Assets (except Copyrighted Works)

Freight Transportation

- 482 Rail Transportation
- 483 Water Transportation
- 484 Truck Transportation
- 488 Support Activities for Transportation
- 491 Postal Service
- 492 Couriers and Messengers

Machinery Manufacturing

- 3322 Cutlery and Handtool Manufacturing
- 3325 Hardware Manufacturing
- 3327 Machine Shops; Turned Product; and Screw, Nut, and Bolt Manufacturing
- 3329 Other Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing
- 3331 Agriculture, Construction, and Mining Machinery Manufacturing
- 3334 Ventilation, Heating, Air-Conditioning, and Commercial Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturing
- 3335 Metalworking Machinery Manufacturing
- 3339 Other General Purpose Machinery Manufacturing
- 3346 Manufacturing and Reproducing Magnetic and Optical Media
- 3364 Aerospace Product and Parts Manufacturing
- 3365 Railroad Rolling Stock Manufacturing
- 3366 Ship and Boat Building
- 3369 Other Transportation Equipment Manufacturing
- 3391 Medical Equipment and Supplies Manufacturing
- 3399 Other Miscellaneous Manufacturing

Professional Service

- 516 Internet Publishing and Broadcasting
- 517 Telecommunications
- 518 Internet Service Providers, Web Search Portals, and Data Processing Services
- 532 Rental and Leasing Services
- 541 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- 551 Management of Companies and Enterprises
- 561 Administrative and Support Services

Using this data, St. Tammany Corporation should develop marketing materials and a value proposition for 50-100 job projects in the Professional Services, Auto/Auto-Related, Financial Services, Freight Transportation and Machinery Manufacturing sectors that take advantage of:

- **Existing workforce talent**
- **College training programs**
- **Available product**
- **Appetite of the community to support the industry**

It is important to note that these are not the only industries or size of projects, the St. Tammany Corporation should pursue. The information and conclusions are highlighting the advantages the community already boasts allowing it to better take capitalize on immediately. The organization should continue to pursue projects both large and smaller than the target and in broad industry areas that the community wants to locate.

Building on the indicators above combined with location, warehousing and distribution is a natural target St. Tammany Parish. The parish offers two intersecting interstates as well as proximity to New Orleans, the Port of New Orleans and the proximity between Houston and Jacksonville. St. Tammany Corporation should consider sites in Pearl River for best opportunity for warehouse/distribution centers.

The health sector is also expected to grow and boast higher-than-average wages. Although this sector is considered a market-driven industry, the St. Tammany Corporation can market the parish's strengths in the sectors to incoming professionals, industries as well as supply chain targets.

Building on Technology Expertise

Given St. Tammany's proximity to the Michoud Assembly Facility combined with industry strengths in technology and business services, the community can attract unmanned vehicle technology companies – utilizing business recruitment and formation strategies.

Currently, the unmanned systems market is growing faster than demand can keep pace. Between now and 2020, Goldman Sachs predicts \$100 billion market opportunity for drones – helped by the demand from the commercial and civil government sectors.² These projections alone have driven communities and regions around the globe to adopt aggressive location strategies to lure anchor tenants as well as start-up businesses in the unmanned system industry to their cities. The wide-spread growth potential applications for air, land and maritime unmanned systems is endless.

The competition is sizeable with millions of dollars being spent at the state level and collaborative initiatives being formed to demonstrate and leverage assets at local and regional levels to lure businesses. However, leveraging its location near two key NASA facilities, a growing highly-educated workforce, combined with a favorable business climate, St. Tammany Parish has opportunities for a share of this growing industry. In addition, the community's HUB zone offers another bottom-line advantage for the parish to leverage businesses seeking federal procurement opportunities.

St. Tammany Corporation should focus its strategy around technology to include:

- Target small manufacturing projects of 50 to 100 new jobs.
- Recruitment of technology start-ups or regional offices that are seeking to leverage federal procurement opportunities at the Michoud Assembly Facility or Stennis Space Center.
- Highlight logistics and distribution opportunities in the region with the growing population in the parish.
- Coordinate with experts in the unmanned industry to identify other similar businesses that may be targets for cluster development.
- Develop concise, unmanned vehicle specific sales materials and the tools to showcase the parish's assets and HUB Zone opportunities.
- Explore economic gardening techniques that could help existing technology start-ups in the parish expand.

² Goldman Sachs Research: Drones – Reporting for Work

Best Practice: Greater Rochester (NY) Enterprise Economic Gardening Program³

Greater Rochester Enterprise's (GRE) economic gardening program is based on the well-known program started in Littleton, Colorado, focusing on helping Stage 2 companies accelerate their growth. Research has shown that most job creation is produced by local companies. This small group — 15 percent of U.S. companies — produces about 40 percent of the jobs. Rochester's Economic Gardening program is more than five years old and 134 companies have already participated. Combined, these growth companies have added more than 900 jobs and reported an average revenue increase of 32 percent in the two years



following their involvement in the program — totaling more than \$170 million additional revenue to the local economy. A sample of technology-based companies assisted by the program include:

- Construction Robotics makes equipment that lays bricks for commercial buildings
- Jamko Technical Solutions has robots for visual inspection in harsh environments like nuclear reactor sites
- Lumetrics makes non-contact measuring systems
- VetPharm runs clinical trials for vet medicines

WHAT IS ECONOMIC GARDENING?⁴

Economic Gardening targets second-stage companies already operating in a community. It helps these existing businesses grow larger by assisting them with strategic issues and providing them with customized research. Economic Gardening differs dramatically from traditional types of business assistance. Researchers assist in five key buckets: core strategy, market dynamics, qualified sales leads, innovation and temperament. Within these areas, Economic Gardening specialists leverage sophisticated corporate databases, geographic information systems, SEO and Web marketing tools to help second-stagers:

1. Identify market trends, potential competitors and unknown resources.
2. Map geographic areas for targeted marketing.
3. Raise visibility in search engine results and increase web traffic
4. Track websites, blogs and online communities to better understand competitors as well as current and potential customers.
5. Refine their core strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.

³ Greater Rochester Regional Economic Development

⁴ The Edward Lowe Foundation, National Center for Economic Gardening (based on Littleton, CO)

TACTIC: ASSESS AND EVALUATE PRODUCT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL PRODUCT OPPORTUNITIES SUCH AS VACANT RETAIL. (ONGOING)

Regardless of the opportunities afforded to a community, parish, region or a local economic development organization, success attracting competitive economic development projects depends on the availability of sites and buildings. In today's competitive environment, where speed-to-market is critical, having available product is simply not enough. Asset control, existing infrastructure and quality ingress and egress are all factors that add risk to a prospect's location. Mitigating this risk is a central tenant of every economic development organization's activity.

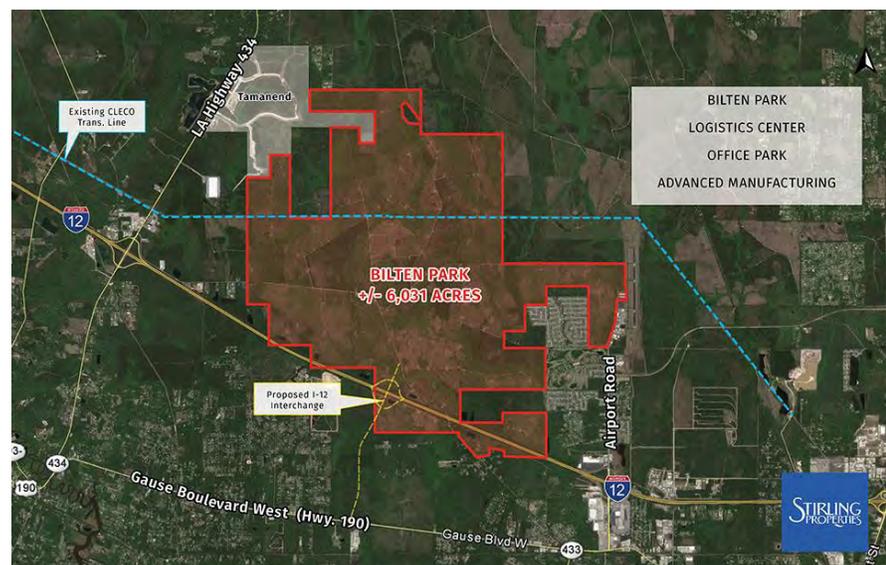
As St. Tammany Parish continues to grow it is important to consider how development decisions may impact economic development possibilities. As the Parish considers urban boundaries and land planning, the St. Tammany Corporation should work in tandem with the local planners to consider the parish's direction for land use; community appearance and design; housing and neighborhoods; jobs and economic vitality; transportation; public services and facilities; natural resource protection; open space and recreation; history, arts and culture; and regional coordination.

Currently, St. Tammany Parish has a total of 75 sites and 68 buildings listed on Entergy Louisiana's sites and building database with a total of nine Louisiana Economic Development (LED) Certified Sites and a total of 941 properties in Louisiana's Commercial Database. (On page 45 and in the appendix, there is a product review of select properties of interest.)

While these numbers point to an ample supply of available sites and land, control and price certainty remain potential risks for prospects considering St. Tammany Parish as a location for a new business. The lack of public property to offset this risk is a big concern for manufacturing projects. Generally, these projects expect property at little-to-no-cost as part of an incentive package. Based on VisionFirst's findings and research there is currently only 15-acres of public property that the St. Tammany Corporation has to market. All other properties are in private ownership with the vast majority classified commercial.

Nevertheless, St. Tammany Parish is fortunate to have a significant amount of private property along Interstate 12 which provides a seamless corridor through the major towns from east to west and the intersection of Interstate 59 in the eastern portion of the parish. In addition to the

Figure 12: Aerial Map of Bilten Park Property



multitude of sites, the Parish also has two extremely large parcels (6,000+ and 3000+ Acres) that are currently zoned industrial and would be appealing to mega projects looking for 1,000+ acres. Projects looking for these size parcels are becoming increasingly rare. However, having two mega-sites is a definite benefit for the time when those projects inquire within the state. Having mega-sites that have the proper due diligence conducted mitigate risk for the company and offers a more concrete timeline for speed-to-market – both are critical factors in decision making.

To increase St. Tammany’s competitiveness for a large-scale project as it relates to these sites, some improvements are needed. In VisionFirst’s review:

- **Currently, neither site appears to have much due diligence listed.**
- **The marketing is geared towards the location and the community assets.**
- **Neither site is certified though LED.**

In looking specifically at the Bilten Park property, by compiling all the data including the due diligence, timeline for development (i.e., tree clearing, grading, pad, interstate interchange, etc.) as well as a cost associated with each would greatly increase the viability and marketing of the site.

The North Shore Square Mall is operating at a less than desirable occupancy rate. As traditional retail continues to diminish, St. Tammany Corporation should explore alternative occupancy options. A common practice taking place nationwide is the conversion of traditional retail spaces into medical hubs/centers, like Vanderbilt Health in the One Hundred Oaks Mall⁵, in Nashville. A similar mall in Jackson, Mississippi is being retrofitted as a new workforce center that will house multiple care-technical and workforce training programs focused on high-tech training and middle-skilled education. The 11-organization partnership is led by the local community college and will serve 17 counties as a “comprehensive one-stop center” for workforce training.⁶

In addition, consider other uses that support the development of a logistics cluster in St. Tammany Parish. In Mesquite, Texas, FedEx Corp. opened a 340,000 square-foot distribution facility on what once was the site of the former Big Town Mall. Located along U.S. Highway 80 in Texas, the mall declined after newer malls were built nearby. It was demolished in 2006 and the land was later rezoned for industrial use.⁷

In the middle of St. Tammany Parish is the new 1,248 acre mixed used Weyerhaeuser development called Tamanend. There are two LED certified sites, **Tamanend East and Tamanend West, in the development that provide a unique opportunity to offer a campus type location to the right prospect.** In addition, the development is home to the Northshore Technical Community College located in the innovation district. The college has a new Advanced Technology Center under construction that will further support its focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The Weyerhaeuser brand is another strong selling point for this

⁵ [Malls Make a Comeback – as Medical Centers](#)

⁶ [Hinds CC trustees approve moving forward with Metrocenter Mall proposal](#)

⁷ Wall Street Journal, The Best Place for a New Warehouse? An Old Mall

development. The company is one of the world's largest private land owners, recognized for its strong ethics and commitment to sustainability.

Finally, over the long-term, St. Tammany Corporation should consider the value of publicly-owned property. From a site selector standpoint, publicly-owned parcels virtually eliminate all risk as it relates to a site as its intended use is to increase economic opportunity for the community. It mitigates risks by:

- Allows the consultant or company to negotiate with one willing owner
- Shortens the negotiation and purchasing timelines
- Provides opportunities for creative financing and tax benefits
- Eliminates the risk of price increases with a private land owner

Even if the property in public ownership is more expensive, the removal of risks mitigates the concerns over an increased cost. Many of the adjacent parishes and other locations that St. Tammany Corporation competes with offer a number of industrial/logistics sites that are owned by public entities. Given limited resources, St. Tammany Corporation should continue to advance a discussion with the board and elected leadership on the advantage of public ownership when it goes to competing for manufacturing and some logistics driven projects.

Secondly, the strategy should include developing ways to make privately-owned sites competitive with public sites that might be in consideration in locations outside of St. Tammany Parish. This would include definitive pricing, infrastructure improvements, and other site due diligence.

Lastly, as the St. Tammany Corporation implements strategies to increase competitiveness, it should coordinate closely with LED and the parish's utility providers to market the existing sites while also showcasing the available properties on its own new website.

TACTIC: FORM A COALITION TO CONDUCT AN ASSET REVIEW OF ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE PARISH, WHERE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES EXIST. *(MID-TERM)*

Entrepreneurs and small businesses are critical to the economic vitality of any community, providing contributions in additional employment opportunities for residents and industry diversification. Even beyond the typical benefits, these businesses can help foster community development by embodying the live, work and play mantra – engaging in local activities, supporting other entrepreneurs and small businesses and often giving time and money back to the community.

But even in the most supportive local economies, only one to two percent of the workforce starts a business in a given year.⁸ To attract and keep innovative entrepreneurs a community must be receptive to their innovation by reducing over-regulation and providing support systems that limit bureaucracy and foster innovation and increased productivity.

Currently, there are more than 8,400 establishments in the parish, of which roughly two-thirds are likely small businesses of less than 100 employees. In addition, roughly 9.3 percent of the population is self-employed. According to data from JobsEQ, strong entrepreneurial activity is indicative of growing industries. Using self-employment as a proxy for entrepreneurs, a higher share of self-employed individuals within a regional industry points to future growth.

Figure 13: Establishment Ownership in St. Tammany



	Empl	%
Private	73,038	74.2%
Self-Employment	9,192	9.3%
Local Government	13,335	13.6%
State Government	727	0.7%
Federal Government	501	0.5%
Other Non-Covered	1,576	1.6%

Source: JobsEQ®

Source: JobsEQ, 2018.3

Understanding that these firms along with those who are self-employed are the backbone of the parish’s economy, the St. Tammany Corporation should work with local leaders and organizations dedicated to small business to explore opportunities for co-working spaces, business formation programs and maker spaces.

Given the existing commercial properties available, no new space should be built but rather retrofitting of an existing location. In addition, there are immediate business formation opportunities that can be leveraged based on the growth in the market including healthcare and the outdoor lifestyle amenities that residents are coming the parish to enjoy.

⁸ Entrepreneurs and their impact on jobs and economic growth, Alexander S. Kritikos

Best Practice: Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub

The Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub is an organization that focuses on three areas: Make, Design, and Co-work. The Hub's collaborative community approach introduces youth and adults to creative possibilities, offering ready access to information, resources, and instruction they need to bring new ideas to fruition. This approach is a response to the challenges of developing, retaining and attracting talent.

The Hub created an open "makerspace" in Little Rock that combines cutting-edge equipment and technologies guided by mentors. The Hub's arts and design studios provide spaces for individuals to work by themselves or with professional mentors. The Hub also offers workspace for entrepreneurs who are looking



for an inspiring and collaborative environment in which to launch new enterprises and accelerate their success.

Most recently, the Hub launched a Mobile Makerspace that takes the technology currently available at the Little Rock Hub and puts it on wheels. The space is housed in a converted trailer and will provide STEM education to underserved areas across the state of Arkansas to prepare K-12 students for school and the workforce. Students will experience educational activities that utilize innovative technology and methods at schools, community centers, libraries, and other venues where non-traditional and underserved students can be reached.

The Hub combines the best of many program offerings to provide an impact in the community focusing on retaining existing talent, allowing small business ideas to flourish while also preparing a workforce of tomorrow. In addition, the Hub has the Innovation Fund (I-Fund) which is an early stage, proof-of-concept accelerator formed to train entrepreneurs in the eight-state Delta Regional Authority territory.

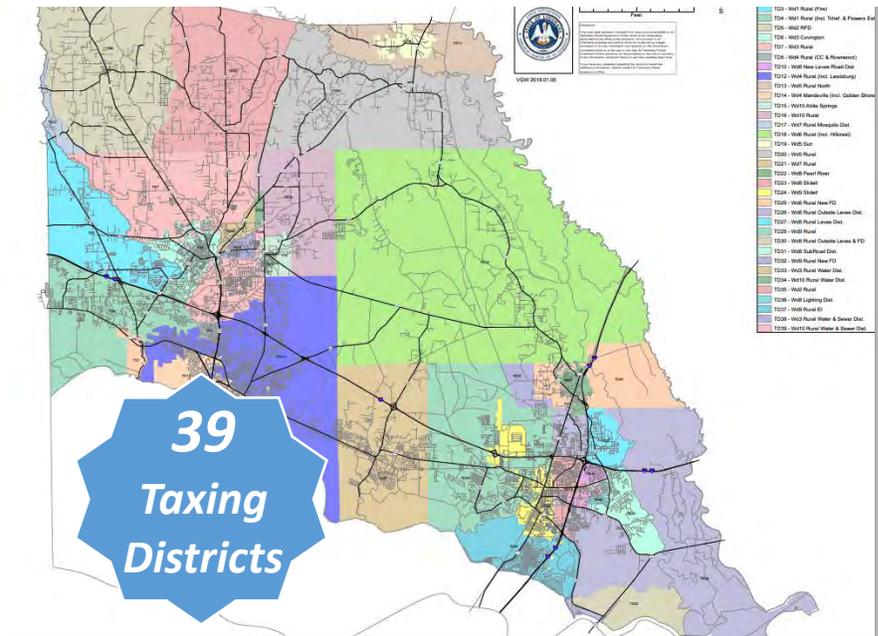
The Innovation Hub launched the original I-Fund in 2016 with an initial investment of \$1 million from IBERIABANK, and in 2017 the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) expanded that effort with an additional \$1 million grant to create the Delta I-Fund, a new accelerator for early stage startups across the eight state Delta Region. In December 2018, the U.S. Department of Commerce announced a \$576,302 grant for the Innovation Fund (I-Fund) through the Economic Development Administration's Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) program. Each startup team accepted into the program will be matched with a mentor, complete 12 weeks of rigorous training alongside other startup teams and receive technical assistance or access to seed stage capital, depending on the team's geographical location. The Delta I-Fund is administered by Winrock International.

3. Cross-Cutting Strategies: Building Community Competitiveness

TACTIC: WORK WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS TO ASSESS WHERE CHANGES TO CURRENT TAX AND REGULATORY POLICIES MAY BE NEEDED TO ENCOURAGE INNOVATION AND GROWTH. (MID-TERM)

St. Tammany Corporation should be the continuous voice in leading activities that support a culture of business friendliness and formation. It is encouraging to see stakeholders are committed to pursuing development and revitalization that support small business formation. Ultimately, the success of any effort depends on the private sector deciding to invest capital in the community. The biggest barrier to capital investment is risk. The goal is to support and accelerate efforts to make St. Tammany Parish a place that easily

Figure 14: Map of St. Tammany's 39 Tax Districts



welcomes private investment and provides a greater value proposition than other locations being considered. In some cases, it may even be the decision to either start a business or not. Having 39 taxing districts combined with any inconsistencies in permitting, bureaucratic approvals and difficulties in starting-up a business are all factors that can negatively impact deployment of private capital and create barriers to optimize on current market opportunities.

St. Tammany Corporation should host business roundtables with existing industries of various sizes to collect information and experiences on how government can better support business and where government is already succeeding. This input should be shared with parish leadership to learn more about how to improve their processes and make the client experience of investing a positive one.

In addition, the St. Tammany Corporation should serve as the voice and advocate on behalf of business to reduce taxing districts. In a recent report prepared by the Task Force on Structural Changes in Budget and Tax Policy, the task force said, "...a tax structure should generate sufficient revenues to fund legitimate and necessary government expenses. In so doing, the tax structure should be fair, simple, competitive with other states, and stable over the short and long term. These qualities are best achieved with taxes that are broad-based with low rates, and that do not play favorites for or against a particular constituency." This is the same approach the parish should take when looking at its many taxing districts and how they impact residents and businesses alike.

EVALUATE INCENTIVES AS IT IMPACTS COMPETITIVENESS IN THE TARGET INDUSTRIES (ONGOING)

Interviews with LED and Greater New Orleans, Inc. revealed St. Tammany Parish competes on a large scale as part of the New Orleans MSA. What this means is, businesses are first considering New Orleans as a location for a variety of industries before considering St. Tammany Parish specifically. As site selection consultants, VisionFirst Advisors also, first reviews the resources of a region before narrowing down a specific site within a community.

The feedback from interviews indicated the New Orleans MSA competes with Houston, Dallas, Memphis, Jackson, Mobile, Birmingham, Charlotte and Nashville. When asked specifically about St. Tammany Parish, there was no clear answer; however, for financial services, back office, energy services, The Woodlands was mentioned as a competitive choice. In the distribution/logistics sector, there was a clear delineation of access to interstates 12, 10 and 59 and the markets on those routes such as Mobile, MS Gulf Coast Counties, Hammond, Baton Rouge, Jackson and Memphis that position St. Tammany Parish favorably.

Process for Using Incentives

Today's economic development landscape is highly competitive. Incentives are very much a motivator in the decision process for where a business expands or not.

As St. Tammany Corporation builds this process out, it is important to maintain the current approval process which requires a return-on-investment analysis be performed on each project considered for approval.

Most importantly, St. Tammany Corporation should build into the process a way to track performance of all incentives approved. Being transparent and demonstrating fiscal accountability will further strengthen the community support for economic development.

As St. Tammany Corporation continues to expand and further identify industry targets for recruitment, retention and expansion efforts it should consider incentives focused on the

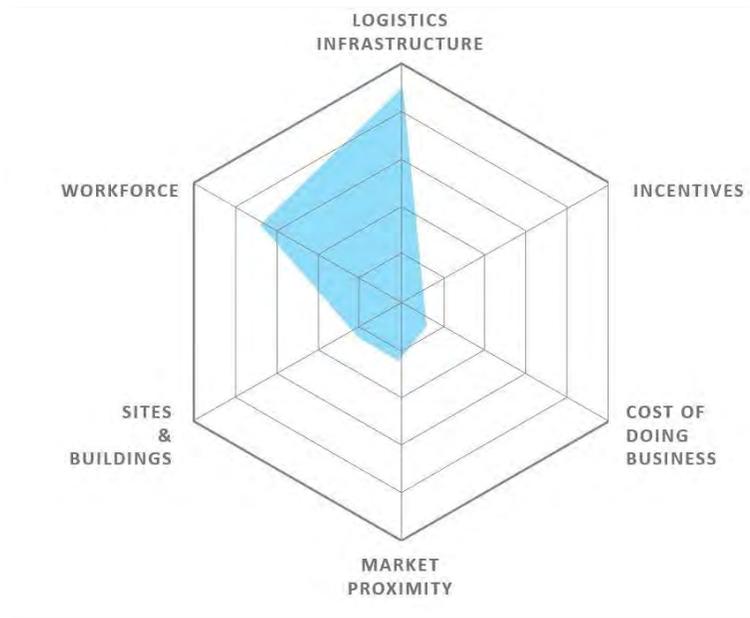


Figure 15: Location Factor: Industry Standard

This is a graphical representation of relative weighted importance of each location factor within this sector. It demonstrates the mix of location factors used by businesses across major industry sectors while evaluating potential sites for future investment.

areas that are most impactful to the industry sector. Below is a list of incentive program types that weigh heavily in the decision process by sector:

DISTRIBUTION/LOGISTICS PROJECTS

- Transportation grant assistance that improves access to a market i.e. road, rail, port improvements that directly benefit the project
- Inventory tax exemptions
- Property tax abatements and exemptions
- Workforce training assistance
- Exemption or rebates on sales and use taxes on building and equipment
- Expedited permitting for large buildings
- Payroll rebates

MANUFACTURING PROJECTS

- Extension of public infrastructure to site for little or no costs
- Capital investment tax credits
- Inventory tax exemptions
- Property tax abatements and exemptions
- Exemption or rebates on sales and use taxes on building and equipment
- Lowest possible land cost (public owned land can be a big advantage)
- Energy costs reductions and rate incentives
- Foreign Trade Zones
- Site prep/shovel-ready sites
- Cash grants to offset startup

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES/OFFICE LOCATION PROJECTS

- Skilled workforce
- Payroll rebate
- Jobs tax credits
- Site improvements
- Cash grants

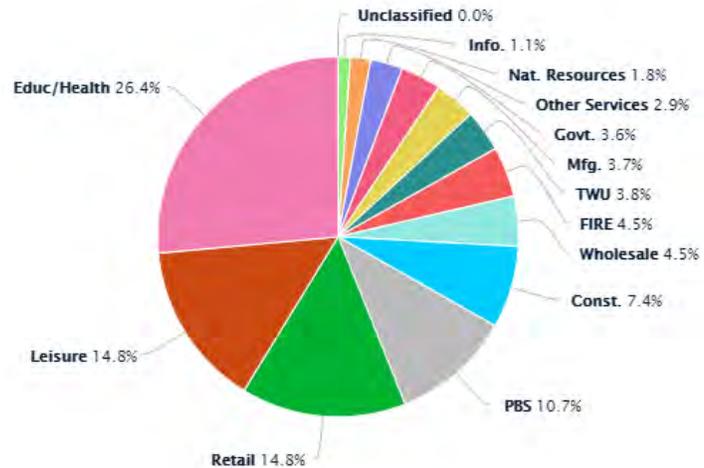
DRIVERS FOR ALL PROJECT SECTORS

- Value proposition of access to interstate at the lowest possible land cost (*public owned land is a factor*)
- Payroll rebate
- Jobs tax credits
- Transportation incentives such as infrastructure improvements and port tax credits
- Income tax exemptions/credits
- Property tax abatements and exemptions
- Speed to market with expedited approvals permitting

TACTIC: ASSUME A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN COORDINATING AND ALIGNING WORKFORCE PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP TALENT AND TRAIN INDUSTRY. (*SHORT-TERM*)

In many communities, workforce is the greatest limiting factor for community growth and the attraction of higher-wage jobs and investment. According to five-year estimates by the US Census, St. Tammany’s labor force participation rate for the population between the ages of 20 and 64 is 77.3 percent – nearly full employment – a number that could cause employer labor challenges. Currently, the top three sectors in the labor inventory include Educ/Health (Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance) at 26.4 percent; Leisure (Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services) at 14.8 percent and Retail at 14.8 percent. However, where higher wage jobs and opportunity exist are in the Professional Business Service sector (PBS) which is at 10.7 percent and it includes PBS - Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Management of Companies and Enterprises; and Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services.

Figure 16: Labor Inventory, Covered Employment, in St. Tammany (JobsEQ Q4 2018)



Economic development organizations can no longer simply rely on competitive project wins alone to be successful. For the St. Tammany Corporation to continue to add value to the parish, it should include measures that go beyond new jobs and capital investment, and addressing product and competitiveness is critical. **When communicating to internal and external stakeholders, the St. Tammany Corporation should reframe the definition of product to be more holistic and always present the parish as land, buildings, available assets and accessibility plus workforce.**

Improving the value proposition for conducting business in the parish is the objective when talking about talent as a product. Value is derived from numerous ways. One of the biggest differentiators for site selectors and expanding businesses today is workforce. **St. Tammany Corporation should look at and participate in skills development or ongoing training, attraction of talent, retention of talent and how to grow the pipeline of workers to meet the demand for jobs.**

With strong existing educational and talent partners throughout the region, the St. Tammany Corporation already has advantages. **Together, the partners should examine the target industries in conjunction with educational programs and trainings available for gaps and/or surpluses.** The table below provides data generated from JobsEQ showing some potential gaps. Although not all are in targeted industries, the data proves useful in long-term planning efforts.

Figure 17: Potential Average Annual Occupation Gaps over 10 Years in St. Tammany

SOC	Title	Annual Supply Gap (or Surplus)	Current Employment 2018Q3	Annual Growth Demand	Annual Sep Demand	Total Annual Demand	Projected Employment 2028
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	80	7,021	144	404	548	8,460
11-0000	Management Occupations	42	5,283	82	435	517	6,108
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	34	6,068	108	664	772	7,152
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	25	3,755	61	354	415	4,364
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	20	3,888	53	392	445	4,415
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	15	6,320	92	559	651	7,238
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	13	2,937	78	369	447	3,721
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	11	1,254	22	96	118	1,469
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	10	1,381	25	97	122	1,630
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	4	1,346	26	158	184	1,607
23-0000	Legal Occupations	4	895	14	56	71	1,037
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	4	476	9	44	53	564
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	3	1,449	19	146	165	1,636
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	1	6,173	82	774	857	6,997
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	(1)	1,828	20	195	216	2,032
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	(1)	3,289	46	434	480	3,750
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	(1)	227	2	31	33	246
51-0000	Production Occupations	(8)	3,630	17	414	431	3,802

39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	(14)	4,084	102	641	743	5,103
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	(44)	13,433	83	1,543	1,626	14,260
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	(74)	12,591	121	1,795	1,916	13,802
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	(124)	11,041	153	1,990	2,143	12,569

Source: JobsEQ; Data as of 2018Q3 unless noted otherwise. Occupation wages are as of 2017 and represent the average for all Covered Employment. For MSAs, states, and the nation, wages in this analytic are aggregated from the county/parish level details and so may not match exactly the wages for these types of regions shown elsewhere.

As the St. Tammany Corporation outlines its activities, it should consider workforce attraction and skills development a top priority. Its leadership, along with an ability to galvanize entities will further improve the parish’s competitiveness and economic outlook. Building on the key themes from the discovery phase of this project, the recommended tactics focus on availability, retention, attraction, growth and leadership. In addition to the workforce efforts already in motion, consider the following as St. Tammany enhances its talent development and retention efforts:

- Make workforce a key agenda item for each board meeting as a strategic discussion. This would include inviting skills providers to attend and present at board meetings. This would be enhanced once a talent development manager is hired in the long-term.
- Regularly review workforce programs, progress, skills gaps and statistics
- Invite the local school board partners to attend and present at board meetings to better understand how to support the school system’s teacher recruitment efforts and initiatives.
- Create a workforce “Delta Team” to provide additional capacity in assisting the St. Tammany Corporation staff to meet the employment needs of prospects. Prospects would include not only new opportunities but support existing business with expansions. Delta Team members should not participate because of position, but by the ability to deliver services. Suggested team members could include Northshore Technical Community College president or representative, TriParishWorks workforce development board, school district superintendent.

4. Marketing & Communications: Telling the St. Tammany Story

The leadership at St. Tammany Corporation was thoughtful and deliberate in its desire for a strategic plan. The idea was not just to have strategies and tactics to implement but to build upon both data collection and community opinion to move forward. The staff also knows to be truly successful as the voice for business recruitment, expansion, formation and retention it must tell the St. Tammany Parish's economic development story.

Often, economic development organizations spend countless hours developing product and business development efforts but forget to communicate their efforts to stakeholders – leaving elected officials and others to merely focus on the “big wins.” To change that narrative, the economic development staff should consistently convey where it's going and how it's going to get there. This can be done through marketing and communications planning both to internal and external audiences. Having a marketing and communications plan provides clarity of purpose, staff alignment and audience definition.

While there are two distinct audience groups between internal and external, the communications and marketing efforts can and should be conveyed to both. For example, if the economic development team decides to launch an outreach effort using digital media to target business decision makers in three target industries and in three states, the details and then the results of those efforts should be conveyed to elected officials showcasing the decision process behind those targets, the creative that accompanied the campaign and the results. This type of information should be shared monthly.

Implementing the series of marketing and communications goals ensures that St. Tammany Corporation makes the most of its resources by establishing priorities and focusing on the most important tasks. As the plan is implemented alongside its business development efforts, staff can clearly delineate its objectives and target audiences. Furthermore, a solid marketing and communications plan will help ensure that all internal audiences involved in the parish's economic development efforts are aware of the goals, strategies, metrics and most importantly the agreed upon messages.

St. Tammany Corporation is fortunate to have stakeholders that are excited about the parish's renewed economic development efforts. Now is the time to harness the realm of influence and the intellectual capital of these stakeholders to effectively communicate the benefits of the parish's efforts. Clear, well-constructed messages help people break through information overload and choose among many different sources of information. The plan developed provides a marketing and strategic communications approach that leverages the parish's strong internal base of stakeholders, business leaders and elected officials combined with outreach to targeted business decision makers and influencers to shape opinion and motivate behavior about the region.



Part VII. Conclusion

“A grade ‘A’ implementation of a grade ‘C’ plan is better than no implementation of a grade ‘A’ plan.”

—Van Cunningham, retired BNSF Executive and Former Site Consultant

The St. Tammany Corporation, through its professional staff, board of directors, stakeholders and elected leadership, is positioned to positively impact the future economic development activities of the parish. A balance needs to be struck between conducting transactional business items at the board meetings to positioning the discussion to be more strategic and transforming the parish economy.

Similar to advice in the book *Good to Great*, this plan was developed based on getting the facts first and understanding the current situation. Stakeholder input was solicited, further research conducted, and a set of recommendations developed that will help St. Tammany Corporation perform at a high level effectively and efficiently. Now is the time for implementation.

It is important to understand that this plan is only the beginning; it will be modified and adjusted to reflect the everchanging times in which we live. Economic development success depends on this flexibility and the stakeholders understanding the process. All too often we see organizations suffer from analysis-paralysis. Plans keep being debated, changed, modified to please everyone and suffer from never getting fully implemented. As we have said throughout the process, “crawl, walk, run” is the key to a successful strategic plan being implemented.

We look forward to watching St. Tammany Corporation refine its operations, build a strong program of work, tell the story of why businesses thrive there and foster the development of a vibrant parish economy.