

L NORTHWEST *Louisiana*

COMPREHENSIVE
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY

2022-2026



THE COORDINATING & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



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THE COORDINATING & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CDC)

The Coordinating & Development Corporation (CDC) was originally chartered in 1954. It is a private, nonprofit, member-supported corporation that serves the economic, community, workforce, financing, and business development needs of ten parishes in Northwest Louisiana. CDC's clientele includes parishes/counties, municipalities, industrial/economic development organizations, businesses and industries, special purpose governmental bodies, port authorities, and the region's universities, colleges, and technical colleges.

Through its divisions and subsidiary/affiliate corporations, CDC provides a wide range of specialized services for its membership, including:

- ▶ Business Development
- ▶ Business Investment and Finance
- ▶ Broadband Connectivity
- ▶ Community Development
- ▶ Economic Development
- ▶ Entrepreneurial Development
- ▶ Public Works and Infrastructure
- ▶ Planning and Management
- ▶ Transportation Enhancement
- ▶ Technical Assistance
- ▶ Workforce Development

The State of Louisiana recognizes The Coordinating & Development Corporation as one of the State's eight regional planning and development districts. In this capacity, CDC works with governmental agencies, businesses, civic groups, and citizens to develop programs and services that enable the orderly economic, business, workforce, and community development of Northwest Louisiana.

In addition, CDC is the agency that implements the Federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) program in Northwest Louisiana, excluding the City of Shreveport, which has its own program. CDC's WIOA program is administered locally by Workforce Development Board (WDB) #70. The WDB is composed of elected officials and representatives of businesses and community organizations, all of whom are dedicated to ensuring that our business community and workforce can meet the challenges of a global economy.

The WIOA program allows local officials to establish broad-based labor market systems using Federal job training funds for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth, and requires coordination among a wide range of Federal and State job training programs, including the Louisiana Workforce Commission, adult education and literacy programs, vocational education, and vocational rehabilitation. WIOA's goal is to provide workforce development services to employers and job seekers through CDC's accessible, information-driven Business and Career Solutions Centers. A center is available in each of the ten parishes CDC serves in Northwest Louisiana.



INTRODUCTION

The Coordinating & Development Corporation's (CDC) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) has been developed based upon a wide range of input offered by elected officials, business leaders, EDOs, social service agencies, educators, and others located in the ten parishes in Northwest Louisiana. Its primary goals are to (1) identify the programs and services that over the next five years will help create and retain jobs, address human resource development, and actively seek out new methods to improve the quality of life for the residents of Northwest Louisiana, and (2) as a performance-based plan, the CEDS will serve a critical role in a region's efforts to defend against economic dislocations due to global trade, competition, and other events resulting in the loss of jobs and private investment.

To these ends, this document is designed to identify:

- ▶ Projects, strategies, initiatives, and programs that can and should be implemented to improve the overall economy of Northwest Louisiana.
- ▶ The prioritization of critical projects and investments.
- ▶ Criteria that will yield significant economic impact for the region.
- ▶ A process through which significant projects and investment can be determined on a continuing basis.
- ▶ The mechanisms, tools, or systems that can be used to coordinate and set the policy direction for future economic growth.

This CEDS was made possible through a Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). Special thanks to the hundreds of hours devoted to this project by members of CDC's CEDS Committee, Board of Directors, and staff.





THE REGION'S BACKGROUND

Northwest Louisiana is composed of the 10 parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, DeSoto, Lincoln, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, and Webster. Its 7,733 square miles is a mix of urban (the city of Shreveport in Caddo Parish and Bossier City in Bossier Parish) and rural (the balance of the region). CDC is the primary organization for regional economic development in the ten parishes. CDC works with numerous local, state, and federal partners, including workforce development, academia, government, social service organizations, businesses, bankers, chamber of commerce, EDOs, LED, USDA, EDA, DRA, and SBA on both local and regional issues and projects that will benefit the economy of the region's communities and their citizens.

POPULATION

The population experienced a decrease of about 2.7% (-15,850) since 2010 Census data and an approximate 2.9% (-17,032) decrease since the last CEDS was released. According to StatsAmerica, the population of the region is 602,175. African Americans continue to make up the largest minority group, representing 38.1% of the population. Hispanics today account for 3.44% of the population. and females represent 50.87% of the population. Persons under the age of 18 account for 23.8% of the population.

Bossier experienced an 8.8% population increase since the 2010 Census followed by DeSoto Parish experienced a 3.7% increase.

Claiborne's population has declined by -9.8%, followed by Bienville at -9.5%, Red River at -8.9%, Webster at -7.9%, Caddo at -6.9%, Natchitoches at -4.8%, Sabine at -1.8%, and Lincoln by -0.4 %.

INCOME

Northwest Louisiana's income levels are low compared to those of the State of Louisiana and the United States. According to Stats America, the median household income level in the region was \$43,547, well below the State median of \$51,073 (American Community Survey 2019) and the United States \$67,521 (Census 2020).

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The percentage of persons with high school or higher education totaled 86.9% versus 86% for the entire state of Louisiana and 88.6% in the

United States. Persons who held a bachelor's degree or higher totaled 22.3%, versus 25% for the state of Louisiana and 33.1% for the United States respectively.

UNEMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

According to Stats America, in 2020 the region claimed a civilian labor force of 244,892 and the number of employed standing at 226,243. The region was struggling with its unemployment rate of 7.6% in 2020, which was lower than the state's unemployment rate of 8.3%. Although, in 2021, the unemployment rate took a massive downswing to an unemployment rate of 3.49%, according to the National Economic Resilience Data Explorer (NERDE).

GEOGRAPHIC, CLIMATIC, AND NATURAL RESOURCE PROFILE

The physical geography of much of Northwest Louisiana is dominated by the presence of the Red River, which runs through the center of the parishes comprising the region. The land along the river valley is a part of the Southern Mississippi Alluvial Plain, while the remainder of the region is referred to as the North Louisiana Uplands. This section of the State has fertile country, as well as cities and towns. This is a green land dotted with cypress, pecan, pine, ash, hickory, and huge oak trees.

The area is not lacking in color, due to the abundance of flowering trees, shrubs, and animals.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Northwest Louisiana's natural resources have been an impetus in shaping the area's economy. Louisiana is well known for its production of fossil fuels, with producing oil or natural gas wells in each of the ten parishes. The Haynesville Shale was a tremendous economic boost to the region about a decade ago, with natural gas still being a resource of significance in the area. The region had significant lignite production, but on the 31st of December 2021, the Dolet Hills Lignite mine and plant shut down operations. This comes five years earlier than anticipated. Deposits of Lignite also are known to exist in Sabine, Natchitoches, and Bienville Parishes.

FORESTRY

This section of the State also benefits from large areas of forestry making it a green land dotted with cypress, pecan, pine, ash, hickory, and huge oak trees. Wood processing, once a dominant cluster in the region, has declined dramatically over the past two decades due to the global economy and the expanded import of wood products and furniture. Much of today's forestry products manufactured regionally are wood chips and lumber, which are shipped to other locations, usually internationally, for further value-added activities.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Most of Northwest Louisiana's populated areas are served by water and wastewater systems. Water quality varies greatly from system to system, but the poorest quality is generally found in the rural systems. The more densely populated areas of the region have sewer collection and treatment systems. Many of the sewage collection problems are associated with the fact that lines are old and tend to take in storm water during heavy rain, thus overburdening the treatment facilities and causing them to discharge untreated wastewater. Although most treatment facilities are adequate to handle the present load, there are some which do not have the capacity to handle much of an additional load. For many of the systems in the region, under-capacity and inadequacy serves as a major hindrance to development and the recruitment of new industry. Maintenance of highways, roads and bridges, especially in the rural areas, continues to be a struggle as State, Federal, and local funds continue to dwindle. The region is blessed with two good interstate systems (I-20 & I-49). Construction of I-49 to the north and south have been completed. Port facilities, located at Shreveport, Natchitoches, and in Red River Parish allow the Red River to serve as an inducement for industrial recruitment, such as the fully operational \$900 million Benteler Steel facility in Shreveport. Efforts are currently underway to expand Amtrak to run from Marshall, TX to Meridian, MS along the I-20 corridor.

HEALTH SERVICES

There is at least one hospital or medical clinic in each parish in Northwest Louisiana. Medical facilities in Shreveport and Bossier City are excellent. Shreveport and Bossier City serve the major and specialized medical needs of the entire district and portions of Northeastern Texas and Southwestern Arkansas. LSU Health and Science Center also resides in Shreveport and has a huge economic impact on the surrounding communities. Since the last iteration of CEDS, LSU health has become Ochsner LSU Health Shreveport. Over the course of a few years, numerous new clinics have opened up throughout the region having a wide range of purposes.

ENERGY

Electrical distribution is handled by private companies, rural cooperatives, and in a few cases, municipalities. The area has not experienced major problems with respect to electricity. Major outages occur during ice storms and thunderstorms and power is usually restored in a short period of time after the causing event. In Northwest Louisiana's metropolitan areas, electricity costs are among the lowest in the nation and this is often used as an inducement to attract manufacturing operations. In many rural areas served by smaller companies the rates tend to be higher. The costs of natural gas are no higher in this region than others across the south.

HOUSING

Although there are a few areas in the region (particularly in the rural areas) where public housing is limited or unavailable, there is generally an adequate supply of public housing throughout Northwest Louisiana. Quality of public housing ranges from new to poor. There is still much need for housing rehabilitation, especially for low-income rental property.

LAND USE PATTERNS

The largest land uses in Northwest Louisiana are forests and agriculture. The region is mostly rural. Very few land use controls are exerted in the region. Zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations are strongly enforced in Shreveport, Bossier City, and several of the larger municipalities such as Ruston, Minden, and Natchitoches. Even a few smaller municipalities enforce zoning. Although

several parishes have zoning ordinances in place, they are seldom enforced. It should be noted that land use controls are currently used to protect the value of property rather than to promote economic development.

CULTURAL, RECREATION, AND TOURISM

Northwest Louisiana has numerous recreational and tourism facilities, many of which can be enjoyed year-round. Excellent public and private facilities exist throughout the area for golf, tennis, swimming, and boating. There are lakes and parks all over the region. Toledo Bend Reservoir, one of the largest man-made lakes in the South, runs along the southwest boundary of the region. Spectator sports also are available and range from the annual Independence Bowl to thoroughbred horse racing at Harrah's Louisiana Downs. The Mudbugs are in another stint of calling Shreveport home. Some of the better-known events include the Louisiana State Fair, the Red River Revel, Holiday in Dixie, the Ruston Peach Festival, and the Natchitoches Christmas Festival. There are also cultural attractions, including an opera, a symphony orchestra, a theater which provides live productions, and visiting theatrical shows. There are major venues in the Shreveport Bossier area for concerts and different sporting events at the Hirsch Coliseum, the Strand Theatre, the Shreveport Municipal Auditorium, and the newly-named Brookshires Grocery Arena. A number of art museums housing a variety of paintings, sculptures, and decorative art, are augmented by traveling art exhibits at area libraries and numerous arts and crafts. Shreveport's Sci-Port Discovery Center and the Shreveport Aquarium provide a fun and educational experience for all age groups. Additionally, there are sites of known and potential historical and archaeological significance throughout the region. The known sites are documented with the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development. Additionally, the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame & Northwest Louisiana History Museum in Natchitoches is a highly rated museum that perfectly documents the region's talent and history. The casinos located along the Red River in Shreveport-Bossier bring in many shows and musical acts that draw in plenty of visitors to the area.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Two school districts are in the top 10, Sabine at number six and Lincoln at number two. Most of Northwest Louisiana's parish school systems have made efforts to keep elementary, middle, and secondary school facilities in good condition. There are, however, a few areas in Northwest Louisiana in which upgrading of substandard school facilities has not taken place. A number of institutions of higher learning are located in Northwest Louisiana. Louisiana Tech University is located in Ruston, Grambling State University is located in Grambling, and Northwestern State University is located in Natchitoches. All three of these schools have a number of undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Centenary College, Louisiana State University Shreveport, and Southern University Shreveport are all located in Shreveport. (LSU and Southern are satellite campuses of the main schools, which are located in Baton Rouge.) Additionally, the Cyber Innovation Center is working with Louisiana Tech to create LTRI (Louisiana Tech Research Institute),

satellite program in the Cyber industrial park in Bossier City. Vocational training programs are available throughout Northwest Louisiana. There are three Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTC) campuses located in the region. The technical college campuses are in Mansfield, Minden, and Shreveport; there is also one Central Louisiana Technical & Community College campus in Natchitoches; Bossier City is home to the Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC). Louisiana's Governor and Legislature recognize the value of vo-tech training and have called upon the LCTC system to assist in workforce training in an effort to make the training provided at the local LCTC campuses more responsive to the needs of area employers. In addition to the technical colleges, there are a number of business colleges and specialized schools which offer a variety of types of training. Grambling State University and Southern University of Shreveport are both HBCUs. GSU, in fact, is among the most renowned HBCUs in the country.

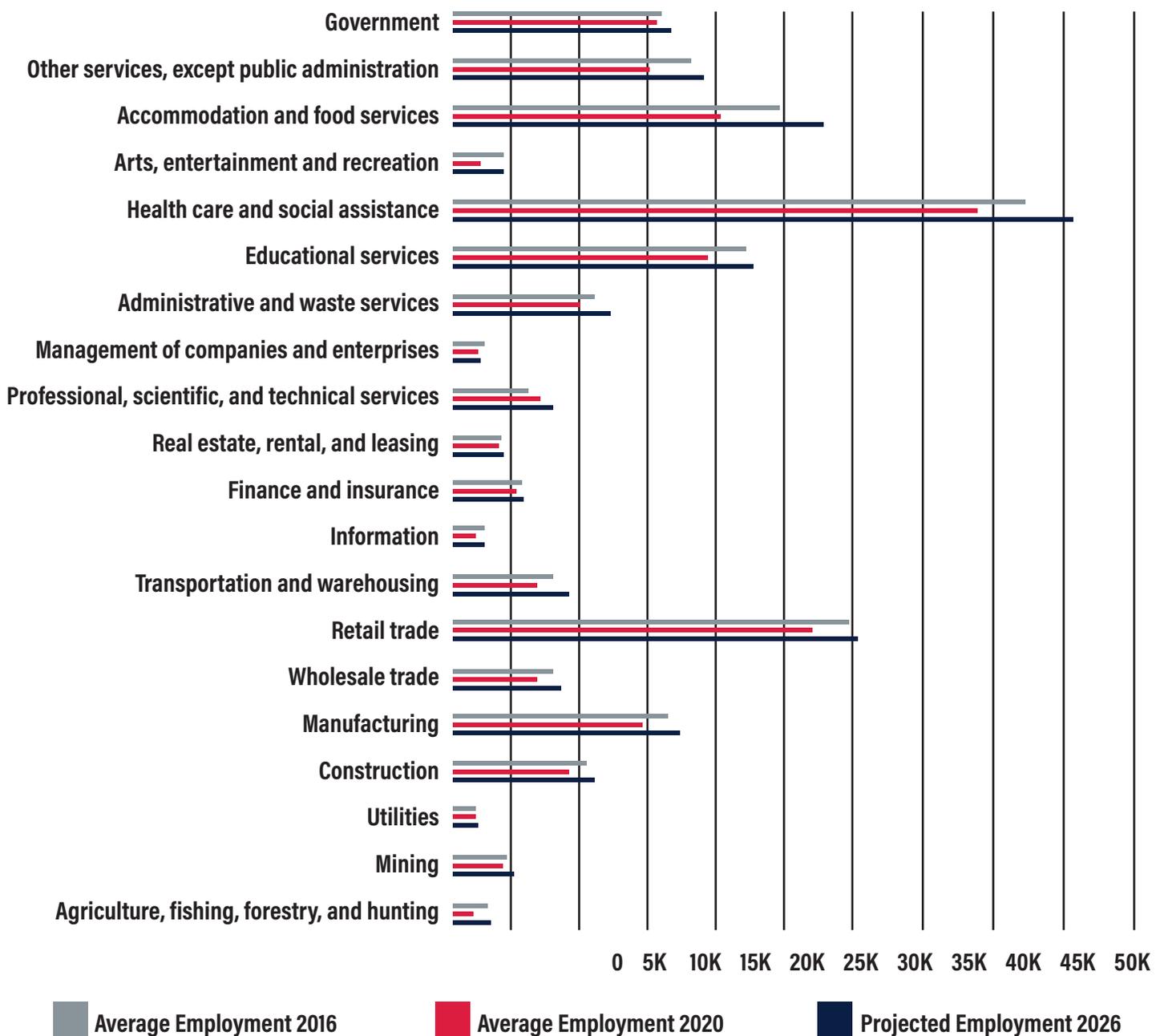




MAJOR EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS

This graph is a visual representation of the major industry clusters from 2016 through the projected 2026. The latest information from the Louisiana Workforce Commission is 2020 data. This will reflect unusually low employment numbers for the industries in the region. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment in the United States is up 470,000 as of January 2022. This likely means the region and state is experiencing some sort of employment bump as well. Employment is still down compared to pre-pandemic standards, but data is showing signs of improvement. This improvement will not be reflected in the data that is shown, as it is from 2020.

MAJOR EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS 2016-2026



Shreveport – Northwest Regional Labor Market Area 7

2016 and 2020 Average Employment

Industry Sectors	NAICS CODE	2016 Average Employment	2020 Average Employment	2016-2020 Employment Change	2016-2020 Percent Change
TOTAL, All Industries		239,944	211,850	-28,094	-11.7%
Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, and Hunting	11	2,723	1,210	-1,513	-55.6%
Mining	21	4,519	4,162	-357	-7.9%
Utilities	22	1,189	1,192	3	0.3%
Construction	23	10,214	9,098	-1,116	-10.9%
Manufacturing	31-33	16,415	14,325	-2,090	-12.7%
Wholesale Trade	42	8,634	7,150	-1,484	-17.2%
Retail Trade	44-45	29,586	27,086	-2,500	-8.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	8,347	7,262	-1,085	-13.0%
Information	51	2,405	1,697	-708	-29.4%
Finance and Insurance	52	5,759	5,275	-484	-8.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	3,552	3,490	-62	-1.7%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	54	6,604	7,227	623	9.4%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	1,639	1,333	-306	-18.7%
Administrative and Waste Services	56	11,358	9,831	-1,527	-13.4%
Educational Services	61	22,371	19,207	-3,164	-14.1%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	62	42,304	38,564	-3,740	-8.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	4,214	2,451	-1,763	-41.8%
Accommodation and Food Services	72	24,392	20,400	-3,992	-16.4%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	81	17,697	15,073	-2,624	-14.8%
Government		16,022	15,817	-205	-1.3%

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the latest employment numbers are down tremendously. Almost every industry in the region took a massive hit due to stay-at-home orders, supply chain issues, and a shortage of willing workers. There are two industries that did not decline from 2016 to 2020, and neither industry are top employers in the region.

DECLINING

AGRICULTURE, FISHING, FORESTRY, AND HUNTING

This industry from 2016-2020 had the largest percentage drop in employment. Though the pandemic did cause massive job losses, this industry showed signs of decline previously. The employment decline likely would not be as severe as the numbers indicate, but they likely would not have been favorable either.

MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing has declined, following a nearly decade-long trend. The shut-downs of different mills, plants, and factories in the region has hurt the manufacturing industry.

ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, AND RECREATION

During 2020 and beyond, the entertainment industry faced many struggles. Casinos were closed for a long while, slowly opening back up as time went on. The casinos are considerably large employers in the region, and the shutdowns were felt. Movie theaters were hit hard as well, being closed for an extended period.

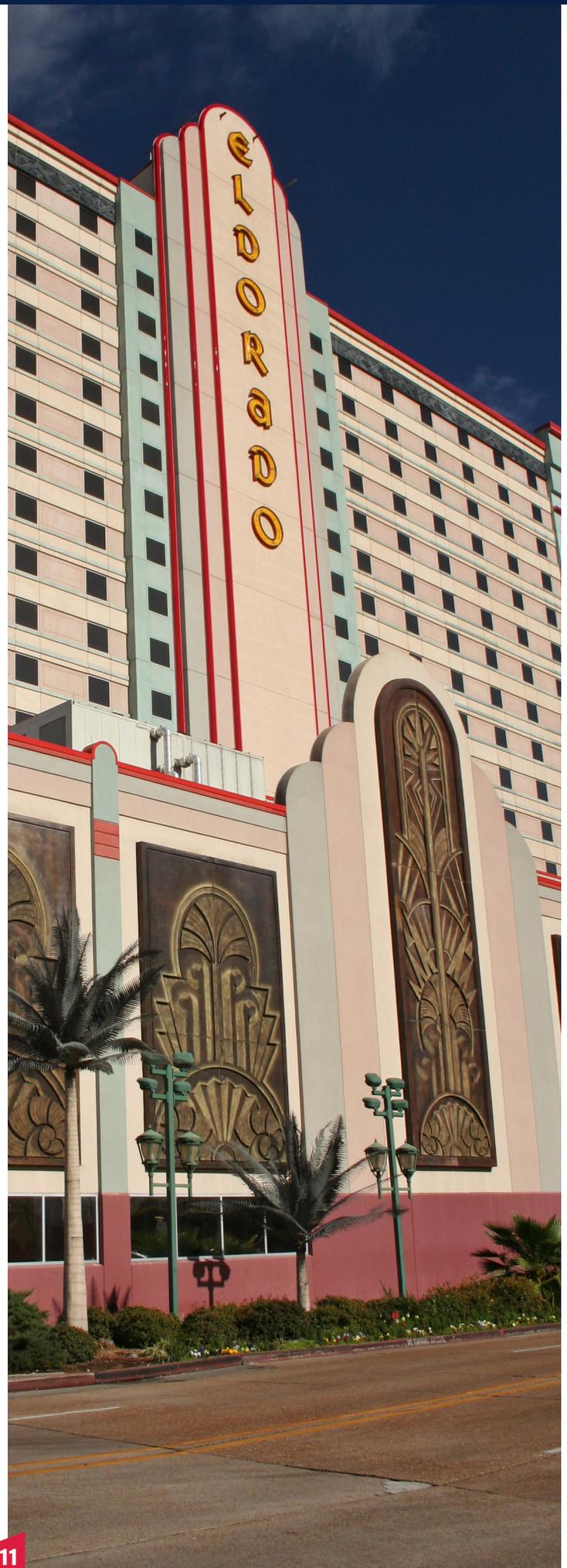
GROWING

PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

This is one of the two industries that experienced growth in 2020 from 2016. This can be attributed to a growing industry, but also an industry that easily translates to at-home work. This industry includes a highly skilled and well-trained workforce, and includes the following sub-groups: accounting, legal services, architecture and engineering, computer systems design, etc. This is an industry that's growth will continue to help the regional economy.

UTILITIES

The declining population makes it surprising that the utilities workforce has grown. Though, with an ever-changing landscape of sewer and water repairs and upgrades, it is understandable that this industry did not decline.





INDUSTRY TREND PROJECTIONS

2020 – 2026 Industry Trend Projections

Every industry is projected to grow in employment numbers over the next four years. Obviously, some of this is due to the low employment numbers from the global pandemic. A more accurate depiction of job growth will be shown on the Ten-Year Projection, from 2016-2026.

Industry Sectors	NAICS CODE	2016 Average Employment	2026 Projected Employment	2016-2026 Employment Change	2016-2026 Percent Change
TOTAL, All Industries		239,944	256,167	16,223	6.8%
Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, and Hunting	11	2,723	2,881	158	5.8%
Mining	21	4,519	5,086	567	12.5%
Utilities	22	1,189	1,262	73	6.1%
Construction	23	10,214	10,938	724	7.1%
Manufacturing	31-33	16,415	17,204	789	4.8%
Wholesale Trade	42	8,634	8,858	224	2.6%
Retail Trade	44-45	29,586	30,276	690	2.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	8,347	9,022	675	8.1%
Information	51	2,405	2,390	-15	-0.6%
Finance and Insurance	52	5,759	5,726	-33	-0.6%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	3,552	3,692	140	3.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	54	6,604	7,955	1,351	20.5%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	1,639	1,603	-36	-2.2%
Administrative and Waste Services	56	11,358	12,473	1,115	9.8%
Educational Services	61	22,371	22,941	570	2.5%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	62	42,304	46,018	3,714	8.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	4,214	4,165	-49	-1.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	72	24,392	28,160	3,768	15.4%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	81	17,697	18,686	989	5.6%
Government		16,022	16,831	809	5.0%

Biggest Losses of the Area

Name	Location	Year	Closure/Layoff	Job Loss/Gain
Blue Cliff College	Shreveport	2017	Layoffs	-40
LifeCare Specialty Hospital of North Louisiana	Ruston	2017	Closure	-167
ExpressJet Airlines Maintenance Facility	Shreveport	2017	Closure	-53
FTS International	Shreveport	2018	Closure	-89 (displaced)
Monster Moto	Ruston	2018	Closure	-30
CenturyLink Call Center	Shreveport	2019	Closure	-54
Libbey, Inc. Glass Plant	Shreveport	2020	Closure	-450
Dolet Hills Lignite Mine	DeSoto	2020	Closure	-100 (displaced)

*NLEP

Biggest Wins of the Area

Name	Location	Year	Jobs Retained	Jobs Gained
Allorica	Shreveport	2017	N/A	450 PT
Sabre Industries	Bossier	2017	167	50
Haughton Environmental	Haughton	2018	N/A	28
YoungWilliams	Bossier	2018	N/A	80
House of Raeford	Simsboro	2019	36	13
House of Raeford Expansion	Bienville	2019	924	105
E.I. Williams Industries	Webster	2020	N/A	100
Tomakk Glass Partners	Shreveport	2020	N/A	50
Weyerhaeuser Improvements	Natchitoches	2020	200	20

*NLEP

COMMITMENTS FOR THE FUTURE

Amazon - A \$200 million dollar fulfillment center is currently under construction in Shreveport. The location is convenient to I-20, I-220, and I-49. This is a \$200 million capital investment, and a huge win for the region.

AEP/SWEPCO - There is a new American Electric Power /SWEPCO investment committed to Shreveport. This \$100 million dollar facility will bring in 20 new high-paying jobs and preserve 20 existing jobs. It will be a transmission control center to help strengthen the grid in Texas and Louisiana.

- *Shreveport Times*

Teal Jones Group has proposed a \$110.5 million dollar sawmill in Plain Dealing of Bossier Parish. This is a huge investment in a rural area, as it would create 125 new jobs.



WOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Sportsman's paradise
- Natural resources
- Strong interstate systems
- Community support for workforce development
- Diverse training/education opportunities
- Tourism destination
- Casinos and sportsbooks
- Low cost of living
- Potential for growth
- Barksdale air force base
- Strong universities and community colleges
- Several major health systems
- Beautiful landscapes and waterways
- Geographical location
- Local agencies supporting new and existing businesses
- Local cooperation for economic development projects

WEAKNESSES

- Poor road quality
- Workforce lacking skills
- High percentage of low-income households
- Lack of high paying job opportunities
- Declining quantity of skilled laborers
- Poor Infrastructure in several communities
- Very few development-ready certified sites
- Major regional flooding
- Salvinia in major waterways
- Not enough technology businesses
- Poor education opportunities in low-income areas
- Growing number of blighted communities

OPPORTUNITIES

- Broadband initiatives
- Flood mitigation
- Ideal locations for new industrial sites
- Resiliency and pandemic planning
- Pandemic meeting spaces
- New partnerships due to new sports betting laws
- Further bolster strong recreation in the region
- AMTRAK expansion
- Great workforce development programs in the area
- LED certified sites

THREATS

- Public health
- The digital divide growing larger
- Location in reference to neighboring states
- Youth leaving the area
- Cultural and wealth disparities
- Losing businesses to larger markets
- Continued loss of manufacturing (GM, Libbey glass, etc.)
- Blighted communities
- High dropout rate
- Inflated real estate costs

CAPITALIZING ON STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

STRENGTHS

Sportsman's Paradise

Recreation activities of NW Louisiana are renowned in the South for an abundance of hunting and fishing, as well as other outdoor sports such as golf. The region could further improve this defining industry through better parks. There are new programs that promote parks and green spaces for the low-moderate income communities. The region could be marketed better to draw visitors in for numerous outdoor activities.

Natural Resources

An abundance of natural gas from the Haynesville Shale created plenty of jobs and an economic boom to the region. The area has been plentiful in oil and gas companies for years. Supporting the energy sector is vital in today's ever-changing landscape.

Strong Interstate Systems

I-20 runs through the heart of the region, intersecting with I-49, another major roadway of Louisiana. Because of these major roads, many travelers have access to the region.

Access to a large workforce

Working-age individuals are plentiful in the area.

Tourism

Several festivals and destinations bring visitors into NW Louisiana.

Casinos and Sportsbooks

The casinos in Shreveport-Bossier have kept a steady flow of employment and tourists coming for years. The legalization of sports betting will make a great economic impact in the region.

Low Cost of Living

This has always been a bonus for the residents of the region. The threat of national inflation is looming and threatening the lower costs of living, which ultimately conflicts with the lower wages of the area.

Barksdale Air Force Base:

Several thousand active duty and reserve Air Force members serve at Barksdale AFB. It serves as a huge catalyst for the region's economy.

Strong Universities and Community Colleges

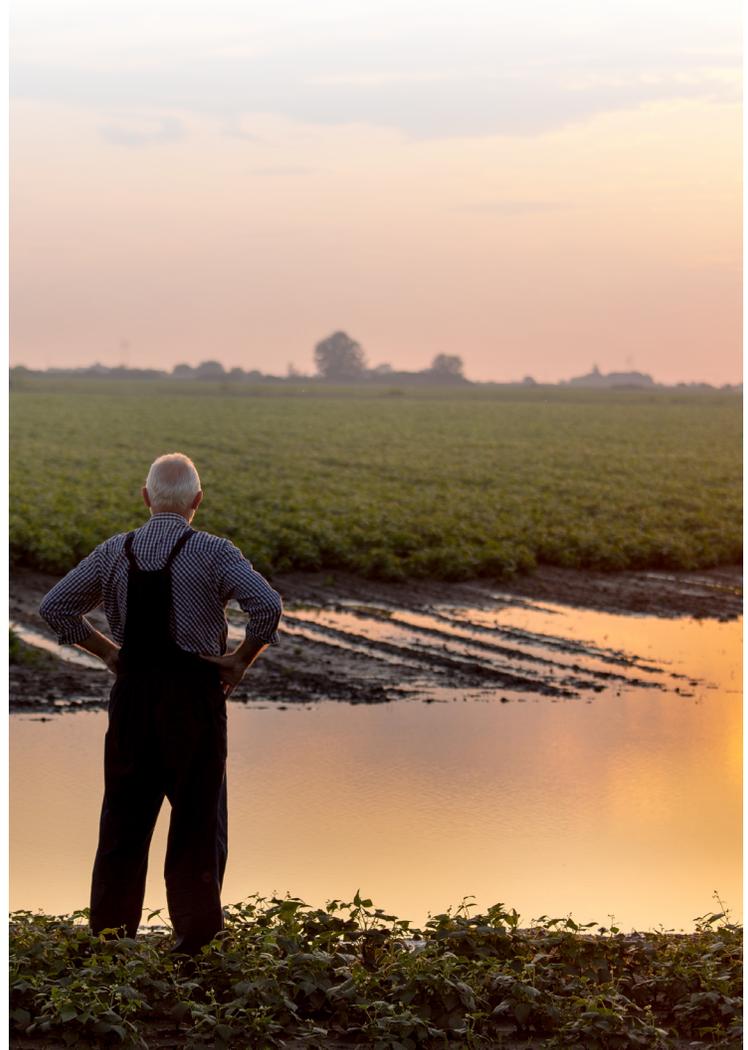
The universities in the region pose a great asset. Grambling State University, Louisiana Tech University, LSUS, Northwestern State University, and SUSLA-Shreveport are all in the region. Strategic partnerships with these universities could open some exciting opportunities.

Great Health Systems

Willis Knighton, Christus Schumpert, and Oschner lead the way in our region as far as name value goes. Although, regional hospitals like Minden Medical Center, Claiborne Memorial Medical Center, Springhill Medical, etc. have all done their part and more to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Beautiful Landscapes and Waterways

The Red River is a major river flowing through the heart of the region. There are several lakes that make up an impressive regional profile of fishing, boating, and camping destinations.



OPPORTUNITIES

Broadband Initiatives

State and local collaboration has been ongoing to reach solutions for the broadband issues that currently exist.

Flood Mitigation

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative's Region 1 covers much of the region and will continue to bolster the region's resilience through flood mitigation. Other state and federal programs aim to bolster resilience through flood planning as well.

Ideal Locations for New Industrial Sites

Because of a great network of highways, there are ideal locations for industrial sites across the 10-parish region. There are also several sites with great potential for LED certification.

Resiliency and Pandemic Planning

Building resiliency for any type of disaster will greatly benefit the region.

New Partnerships Due to New Sports Betting Laws

There have already been several key casinos that have partnered with local casinos to market sports betting in the region.

Further Bolster Strong Recreation in the Region

There are state programs in place to address outdoor recreation spaces. Having safe, clean outdoor spaces can encourage fitness and healthy practices.

AMTRAK Expansion

The Southern Rail Commission has been pushing for passenger rail expansion spanning the I-20 corridor across North Louisiana. This is a strong economic development opportunity.

LED Certified Sites

Louisiana Economic Development Certified Sites are meticulously reviewed development-ready industrial sites. Our ten-parish region currently has 13 LED-certified industrial sites. In an effort to increase the number of sites the state had allocated \$1 Million dollars to our region to improve sites to become certified.



MINIMIZING WEAKNESSES AND THREATS

WEAKNESSES

Poor Road Quality

Although I-20 is a major interstate system, driving your car on it everyday will result in a necessary front end realignment twice a year. The quality of roads in rural areas also require attention for the most part.

Workforce Lacking Skills

Although the size of the workforce is substantial, there are hardly enough workers with CDLs, trade certifications, or degrees. There are widespread efforts to help alleviate this issue.

High Percentage of Low-Income Households

The region is made up of a high percentage of low-income households. This can be improved through workforce training, and better opportunities within the region.

Lack of High Paying Jobs

There are new jobs being created every day to help with this. The region needs more professional careers that pay out high incomes.

Declining Quantity of Skilled Laborers

The number of workers getting certified in trades and obtaining proper licensure is declining.

Poor Infrastructure in Several Communities

Many communities, especially rural communities, have their fair share of issues with water system, sewer system, or road problems. There is only so many projects that get funded annually, so a larger number of communities suffer with certain issues for several years.

Very Few Development-Ready Certified Industrial Sites

While there are many sites that have the potential to be certified, there are very few LED-certified sites in the region.

THREATS

Public Health

COVID-19 continues to linger and infect certain populations. The post-COVID economic impact will continue to have a regional and global toll.

The Digital Divide Growing Larger

It has been established that broadband availability is an issue, and it must be addressed. The state and region must be successful in the efforts to bridge the digital divide, or the problem will only worsen.

Location in Reference to Neighboring States

The region faces risks of losing businesses or industry to neighboring States Texas and Arkansas.

Youth Leaving the Area

Young people have begun leaving NW Louisiana for a while. It will hurt the availability of skilled workforce and the regional economy.

Cultural and Wealth Disparities

This is a region-wide, state-wide, and nation-wide dilemma. Providing an equitable economy and community is a large goal within the region. Utilizing different programs to help in this effort is needed.

Losing Businesses to Larger Markets

The Western part of the region is a stone's throw away from East Texas, and more notably, Dallas. This region can be a threat when it comes to luring major businesses.

Inflated Real Estate Costs

The current circumstances of the real estate industry are unfortunate for low-income and first-time home buyers. Many people are priced out of homes right now, with many homes going far too quickly or far too expensive.



REGIONAL NEEDS

Economic Development Needs

- ▶ Improve the digital/technological landscape
- ▶ Increased economic diversification
- ▶ Improved entrepreneurial opportunities
- ▶ Bolster the region's economic resiliency
- ▶ Improve skilled and educated workforce
- ▶ Partner with our universities and colleges
- ▶ Encourage and build upon tourism
- ▶ Additional industrial parks and buildings
- ▶ Stop the rapid decline of manufacturing in the region

Community Development Needs

- ▶ Broadband availability
- ▶ Improved educational facilities
- ▶ Parks and public spaces
- ▶ Building community resilience throughout the region
- ▶ Lack of quality section 8 housing

Physical Infrastructure Needs

- ▶ Water and wastewater treatment facilities
- ▶ Highways and bridges
- ▶ Broadband infrastructure
- ▶ Waterways and port expansion
- ▶ Railroads
- ▶ Airports and landing strips

Workforce Development Needs

- ▶ Improved retention rates for high school students
- ▶ More and better job opportunities for our citizens
- ▶ Workforce development training programs that meet our businesses needs
- ▶ Improved interaction between employers
- ▶ Local educational facilities to address employer needs
- ▶ Improved "soft skills" and good attitudes among our workforce
- ▶ Better job opportunities to keep our youth in the region



PLAN OF ACTION

The Plan of Action, which begins below, is designed to address the regional needs identified as a result of the SWOT Analysis as well as to address EDA Investment Priorities, including: Equity, Recovery and Resilience, Workforce Development, and Technology-Based Economic Development.

Key: BEL (Broadband for Everyone in Louisiana), (LAPDD (Louisiana Association of Planning and Development Districts, DRA (Deltra Regional Authority), EDA (Economic Development Administration), DOTD (Department of Transportation and Development).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Vision: Create a more diverse economy with up-and-coming industries that could propel our regional economy forward and strengthen economic resilience.			
Strategic Action	Strategic Partners	Expected Results	Performance Measures
Goal: Build on our growing digital/tech landscape in the region.			
Continue to work with LAPDD to develop accurate statewide broadband data	ConnectLA, BEL Commission, LAPDD, DRA, EDA, DOTD	Determining the most under-served areas most fit for broadband funding opportunities	An accurate map with all collected data showing all areas of service or lack of service
Help bridge the digital divide for business development in rural areas	ConnectLA, BEL Commission, LAPDD, DRA, EDA	An expanded network of new fiber optic lines in under-served areas	# of businesses and households with new broadband service in a previously unserved/ under-served area
Continue to support technological upgrades at our universities and colleges	EDA, regional higher education campuses	Have a network of well-equipped higher educational facilities capable of pushing out capable and highly trained workers in technology fields	Percent of increase in technology majors or tech certifications
Support the SciPort plans of updating the technology of the renowned edutainment facility	EDA, SciPort	Obtain new laser-technology for the only IMAX dome theater in the state of Louisiana	# of Sci Port visitors increase due to new theater
Goal: Increased economic diversification			
Collaborate with local institutions to best assist new business	EDA, DRA, CofCs, municipal offices	More diverse business landscape	# of new startups
Support efforts to find and obtain new funding sources for new tech and green startup companies	EDA, DRA, CofCs, municipal offices	Creation of more high-paying attractive jobs in the region	# of new tech or green startup companies formed

Strategic Action	Strategic Partners	Expected Results	Performance Measures
Goal: Improved entrepreneurial opportunities			
Continue to support and promote the region's business incubators and entrepreneurial development programs	EDA, DRA, CofCs, municipal offices, SUSLA	Provide an equitable outlet for entrepreneurs from low-moderate income areas to succeed in opening businesses	# of successful startups
Provide technical assistance to help the Minority Suppliers Institute with teaming/joint venture activities for government contracting	MSI, SAC	Providing assistance in any way for MSI to be successful in growing minority businesses	# of minority firms successfully obtaining government contracts
Goal: Slowing the rapid decline of regional manufacturing			
Work with local Chambers of Commerce to assist in landing new manufacturing firms	CofCs	More manufacturing plants locating to the region	The net gain/loss of manufacturing companies
Work with local communities to help them identify properties to be promoted as industrial sites, parks, and buildings	NLEP, LED, municipalities, DRA, EDA	Promote more industrial sites to bring in companies	# of new industrial sites developed
Provide technical assistance for LED certification of current industrial sites	NLEP, LED, municipalities, DRA, EDA	Provide attractive sites for companies that are development ready	# of new LED certified sites



Strategic Action	Strategic Partners	Expected Results	Performance Measures
Goal: Improve skilled and educated workforce			
Support high school and adult education workplace readiness skills certification program	Universities, WIB, LWC, School Boards	Provide available and affordable workforce training	# of students receiving certificates
Support certified skills training programs through BPCC and the local Tech College (LTC) campuses	BPCC, LTC, LWC, WIOA	Supporting viable training programs that are widely accessible	# of graduates of certified skills training programs
Work with the LWC and state legislators to restore funding, facilities, and equipment for workforce development training programs such as mechanical, technical, and computer sciences	LWC, EDA, WIOA	Obtain computers, mobile workforce stations, and other necessary items to support the workforce development cause in the region	Any new facilities or equipment obtained through state funding for workforce development
Goal: Establish strategic partnerships with the region's higher education establishments			
Support the Manufacturing Center at Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) both through CDC and its WIB	EDA, BPCC, WIB	More skilled trade certifications with a focus on manufacturing	# of skilled trade certifications focusing on manufacturing
Provide support to SUSLA Business and Entrepreneur Development Center (BEDC)	EDA, SUSLA	Promotes entrepreneurship in the Shreveport-Bossier area through a well-established HBCU	# of successful startups supported by the BEDC
Support Grambling State University in its efforts for growth and campus improvements	EDA, GSU	Growth in enrollment and campus improvement for one of the premier HBCUs in the South	State or federal funded projects for the betterment of GSU
Support the Louisiana Tech WORC program and provide technical assistance for funding opportunities	EDA, LA Tech	Improves student and employee understanding and achievement, as well as increase the numbers and quality of skilled personnel in the workforce pipeline	Obtaining funds to reach the WORC program's goals through EDA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Vision: Improve the functionality and safety of communities in the region by ensuring that all residents have access to necessary information and improve facilities directly relating to community development.

Strategic Action	Strategic Partners	Expected Results	Performance Measures
Goal: Improve the residential broadband availability			
Continue to work with LAPDD to develop accurate statewide broadband data	ConnectLA, BEL Commission, LAPDD, DRA, EDA, DOTD	Determining the most under-served areas most fit for broadband funding opportunities	An accurate map with all collected data showing all areas of service or lack of service
Develop relationships with anchor institutions in the rural areas with access to broadband (hospitals, libraries, schools)	School Boards, Libraries, Health Offices, EDA, DRA	Establish locations where broadband can be accessed or where one can reach the internet in emergency situations	
Continue technical assistance and outreach to communities looking to start broadband related projects	Municipal offices, EDA, DRA, LAPDD, ConnectLA, BEL Commission	Put forth competitive applications through the GUMBO program that grants local providers the opportunity to expand sparse coverage in under-served communities	# of households with new high speed broadband connections
Goal: Improved educational facilities			
Work with school boards seeking tax increases to improve local school facilities	PSBs, LCTCS, BoR, BESE, local communities and businesses	Improved school facilities	# of contacts made
Work with local legislators to assure adequate funding is available for universities and community/ technical colleges	PSBs, LCTCS, BoR, BESE, local communities and businesses	Improved higher education facilities	# of contacts made

Strategic Action	Strategic Partners	Expected Results	Performance Measures
Goal: Improve recreational areas and facilities			
Work with LA CRT to assure adequate funding is available to maintain and keep open cultural/recreational/tourism sites in the region	CRT, local municipalities, owners of tourism-oriented businesses	Enhanced cultural/recreational/tourism facilities	# of Contact and report on results of contacts
Work with low/moderate income communities to assess needs for green areas and open space parks for safe recreational activities through the Love Louisiana Outdoors Program	LCDBG-CV, municipal offices, parish governments	The construction or rehabilitation of new parks and green spaces in low-moderate income areas	# of new parks constructed
Coordinate efforts to eliminate intrusive salvinia outbreaks in the region's lakes and reservoirs	EDA, DRA, municipal/parish governments	To eliminate a dangerous and expensive problem from some of the largest lakes in the region	Semiannual reports of salvinia coverage of particular lake(s)
Goal: Building community resilience throughout the region			
Promote flood mitigation projects to benefit areas of flooding along the Red River, around Lake Bistineau, etc.	LWI, EDA, DRA	To lessen the impact and scope a flooding event would have on the region	Annual flooding reports
Implement resilience training in local governments	EDA, municipal/parish governments	To supply the region with local leaders that can implement resiliency building in their communities	
Coordinate among local governments and emergency preparedness organizations to prepare for disasters	GOHSEP, EDA, municipal/parish governments	To prepare local leaders for natural disasters and pandemics	

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Vision: Improve the necessary infrastructure in the region to adequately serve existing residents and businesses as well as accommodate new residential and commercial growth.

Strategic Action	Strategic Partners	Expected Results	Performance Measures
Goal: Water system and wastewater system improvements			
Provide technical assistance through state and federal programs to address dilapidated water/wastewater plants	DRA, LCDBG, DOA-LA	Acquiring funds for distressed and/or low income communities to address problems within local water and wastewater treatment facilities	# of renovated water and wastewater treatment plants
Promote EDA and DRA funding programs when projects will result in job creation	EDA, DRA	Acquire funds to complete a project that helps a water system while also promoting economic development and job creation	# of businesses locating to an area because of improved water or wastewater systems
Provide technical assistance for municipalities and parishes for the Water Sector program released by DOA	DOA-LA, local municipalities	Several newly funded water/wastewater projects by the new Water Sector program	# of newly funded Water Sector projects
Goal: Highways and Bridges			
Provide technical assistance for LCDBG applications, as an emphasis will be placed on street projects in the coming funding cycles	LCDBG	A higher number of street projects funded through LCDBG funds	Quarterly performance reports on street projects
Support toll prospects when other sources for financing are not available for improvements	USDOT, LDOTD, DRA, LCDBG, Capital Outlay funds	Creating a source of revenue that could fund the improvements of major highways in the region	Revenue produced by toll system
Goal: Improve Waterways and Ports			
Support and promote the development of the Red River Waterway to the upper reaches of the river in Arkansas			
Support and promote the status quo of local operating hours and dredging/maintenance schedules on Red River			

Strategic Action	Strategic Partners	Expected Results	Performance Measures
Goal: Rail industry improvements			
Continue to support the major push for passenger rail (Amtrak) expansion through the I-20 corridor	USDOT, LDOTD, DRA, LCDBG, Capital Outlay funds, Amtrak, EDA	Amtrak expansion through Louisiana with stations strategically located through different municipalities located off the I-20 corridor	# of municipalities who sign petition for Amtrak expansion
Provide more assistance to short line railroads	USDOT, LDOTD, DRA, LCDBG, Capital Outlay funds, EDA	Improved Rail Service	
Work with state and federal officials to provide incentives to railroads for spurs and off line service to industrial parks and commercial users	SDOT, LDOTD, DRA, LCDBG, Capital Outlay funds, EDA	Better railroad access to the region's industrial parks	# of spurs constructed to industrial sites
Goal: Airports and landing strip development			
Market smaller airports with other community assets	FAA, Capital Outlay funds, local communities	Improved air service	# of contacts made and report on results of contacts
Work with appropriate officials to obtain support for lengthening runways at the region's General Aviation airports to accommodate corporate light, twin engine planes	FAA, Capital Outlay funds, local communities	Improved air service	# of contacts made and report on results of contacts

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Vision: Develop and support workforce development programs that assure a workforce that meets current employers' needs and are flexible and aggressive enough to train the workforce of the future.

Strategic Action	Strategic Partners	Expected Results	Performance Measures
Goal: Improved retention rates for high school students			
Identify and work with existing groups who are attempting to improve retention rates in the region's K-12 school systems	WIBS, PSBs, PTAs, and community activists	Improved retention rates	Increase in % of students who graduate
Work with school systems to introduce more courses that provide some type of certification for students who do not plan to attend college	WIBS, PSBs, PTAs, and community activists	More qualified workforce right out of high school	# of certifications granted to high school students/graduates
Goal: More and better job opportunities for our citizens			
Provide technical assistance to high tech companies on tax incentives and SBIR/ STTR program	Business owners, WIBS, PSBs, Universities, LCTCS, LWC, WIOA	Encourage the development and growth of high-paying, high tech and gazelle companies	# of contacts # of new jobs created
Recruit workers that are eligible for the WIOA workforce program	Business owners, WIBS, PSBs, Universities, LCTCS, LWC, WIOA	Certifications and licenses for minority and low-income individuals	# of individuals that complete the program



Strategic Action	Strategic Partners	Expected Results	Performance Measures
Goal: Workforce development training programs that meet our businesses needs			
Evaluate education system and the relationship between vocational training and the skills required by local employers	Business owners, WIBS, PSBs, Universities, LCTCS, LWC, WIOA	More specialized trained workforce	Publish study results and the school systems' capacity to support employers' needs
Partner with school boards to assess educational systems for attainment improvement opportunities	Business owners, WIBS, PSBs, Universities, LCTCS, LWC, WIOA	Better trained workforce	# of school boards that participate
Identify state and federal programs and technical assistance for education, training, and technology transfer	Business owners, WIBS, PSBs, Universities, LCTCS, LWC, WIOA	More well-equipped workforce development partners	# of programs identified and shared with local school boards and institutions of higher learning
Goal: Improved "soft skills" and good attitudes among our workforce			
Support the development of soft skills training programs in high school and adult education classes	WIBS, PSBs, Universities, LCTCS, LWC	Enhanced workforce	# of programs offered # of students completing soft skills training
Support adult basic education programs at BPC and LTC campuses	WIBS, PSBs, Universities, LCTCS, LWC	Enhanced workforce	# of programs offered # of students completing soft skills training
Goal: Better job opportunities to keep our youth in the region			
Work with all private and public sectors to encourage the development of well-paying jobs for all citizens	Business owners, WIBS, PSBs, Universities, LCTCS, LWC	Enhanced job opportunities	# of contacts # number of new jobs



RESILIENCE BUILDING AND PLANNING

Before any response plan can be formed, a region needs to be prepared for a shock. Resilience is all about moving forward from a setback quickly and with a less significant negative impact. Resiliency is built through advanced preparation and planning at different levels of the community. In Northwest Louisiana, there are several areas that should be addressed to increase resiliency. In addition to conventional emergency planning, pandemic preparedness should be addressed through different improvements throughout the region.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Now more than ever, it is evident that community development projects are paramount.

Infrastructure improvement has become a more glaring need over the past two years, with our infrastructure's shortcomings being clear to see.

With the stay-at-home order, problems with water, sewer, cell connectivity, and broadband became amplified.

Louisiana Community Block Grant program and Capital Outlay both provide funding opportunities for street, water, and sewer projects. These types of projects that deal with basic public infrastructure are needed in many parts of the region. To reduce the impact of pandemics, reducing risks of infrastructure-related emergencies is important. When there is not any water left to buy at the store, the drinking water of a municipality needs to be up to health standards. When people are stuck in their homes, waste management needs to work as it should.

FUNDING PARTNERS

- ▶ Basic Public Infrastructure (LCDBG, Capital Outlay, DRA)
- ▶ Flood Mitigation (Louisiana Watershed Initiative, DRA)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local economies are extremely important to a region's resilience. A sign of a thriving economy is diversity, which is built through available resources, a strong workforce, and a strong entrepreneurial presence. From healthcare to entertainment to oil and gas, the region has a strong and diverse economy when everything is open. During the COVID-19 pandemic, several factors contributed to a smaller workforce, business closures, and crippled industries. It is important as a region to build up our economic resilience through planning for health events and natural disasters alike. A prepared community is the backbone to a resilient economy, which is much less likely to derail from a large shock. Basic public infrastructure needs can be addressed in economic development as well as community development. Better infrastructure tends to draw better and more business(es). The Delta Regional Authority is a great funding outlet for economic development in the region. Their reach excludes Bossier, Caddo, and Sabine Parishes. The DRA funds projects that can create jobs or improve communities for business creation. EDA has several funding opportunities for our region that include disaster recovery, resilience-building, and creating equity for under-served populations, etc.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

During the COVID-19 outbreak, workers left jobs because of fear of unsafe conditions, workers were laid off due to temporary closures, and workers were forced into unemployment because of stay-at-home orders. The region needs to address the safety concerns of employees to keep employment numbers as strong as possible. Having a large workforce is paramount to a strong economy. WIOA is a workforce program that prepares participants for entry or re-entry into the workforce through training and education, creating a more knowledgeable and skilled workforce.

BROADBAND

Access to broadband has become a notable issue in rural parts of the region. During a pandemic, stay-at-home orders can force schools to shift into online learning. During the COVID-19 pandemic, students without broadband access were either given a hotspot which lacks adequate download speeds or were forced to use the wireless internet at public locations like libraries and school. The same problem was faced by people who had to work from home. Broadband is also an important issue when it comes to economic development. Several industries in rural areas could be improved and become more competitive with access to reliable broadband. There are established and emerging initiatives through federal and state dollars to improve the availability and speed of broadband in the region.

► ConnectLA

The Office of Broadband and Connectivity is Louisiana's guide for any broadband resources. The office works to coordinate local, state, and federal objectives to target broadband accessibility, affordability, and digital literacy. The team put together by the Governor has made extensive efforts in reaching every corner of the state and our region.

► Bel Commission

The BEL Commission (Broadband for Everyone in Louisiana) was created by Governor Edwards in response to the digital divide growing in Louisiana. There are several communities without the access to high-speed internet. The BEL Commission will facilitate private sector providers, public entities, and other broadband stakeholders to:

"Improve both the adoption and availability of broadband service for Louisiana residents by providing universal access to broadband service with minimum committed speed of 25 Megabits per second (Mbps) download and 3 Mbps upload, scalable to up to 100 Mbps download and 100 Mbps upload, for all Louisianans by 2029."

gov.louisiana.gov/page/broadband-for-louisiana

► Planning District Role

All of Louisiana's planning districts are working together to increase the effectiveness and reach of the state's broadband office. A widespread effort is being made to produce accurate maps of broadband availability and the infrastructure landscape of broadband in the state.

The PDDs have worked with the state broadband office to host roadshows to assist in outreach for the available funds as well as teach common digital literacy to local stakeholders.

► Future Broadband Goals

The State's objective is to eliminate the digital divide by 2029. This will be accomplished through strategic partnerships among funding partners, state offices, and internet providers over the next decade. As a region, there are some activities that can be beneficial.





COOPERATION & INTEGRATION

WITH STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Numerous legislative changes have been made to programs offered through the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) in an effort to improve Louisiana's workforce readiness. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) has worked diligently to build a stronger, demand-driven workforce system that more effectively meets the needs of the region's employers. A major change is a more active involvement by business leaders in the design of the services and programs offered through the WIOA program since LWC believes that employer involvement is the ultimate key to the success of LWC's workforce development system.

The WIOA program is administered in Northwest Louisiana through the Region Seven District Consortium, comprised of two Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). CDC administers one of the WDBs, serving all of Northwest Louisiana with the exception of the City of Shreveport, which administers the second WDB. Business and industry drive this region's workforce training system from the highest strategic level to the service delivery level. Business and industry also make up the majority of each Workforce Development Board, ensuring the responsiveness of our network of Business and Career Solutions Centers (BCSC's), integrating strategy, and assisting with occupational forecasting.

In Louisiana, improving the competency of students, as well as the preparedness of the workforce, is especially challenging. A skills gap separates many of our residents from the demands of a modern workforce. Public schools have long underperformed, and job seekers and workers often lack the skills or training to perform the work employers need them to perform in order for their businesses to remain globally competitive. An additional problem is that due to the state's financial constraints, badly needed training programs are often not offered through our local Technical College system due to a lack of funding for instructors and equipment.

A further dilemma is created by the requirements for funding job-training skills through the WIOA program. A crucial example of this is that welders are in such demand that students who partially complete welding training are hired prior to graduation. Because of this situation, WDBs cannot approve welding training - the graduation rates for the courses do not meet the state's graduation threshold. The two WDBs in the Region Seven District Consortium are currently working with LWC project managers to affect some type of a satisfactory solution to this problem.



COOPERATING AND INTEGRATING (Lining up the CEDS with EDA Funding Priorities)

- ▶ Equity
- ▶ Recovery & Resilience
- ▶ Workforce Development
- ▶ Manufacturing
- ▶ Technology-Based Economic Development
- ▶ Environmentally Sustainable Development
- ▶ Exports and FDI

EDA.gov

Lining up the CEDS with Louisiana Department of Economic Development.

Mission:

Cultivate jobs and economic opportunity for the people of Louisiana.

Goals:

1. Lead efforts to retain and grow jobs and business opportunities for all Louisiana citizens:
 - a. through aggressive, professional business development and marketing efforts.
 - b. by cultivating Louisiana's top regional economic development assets.
 - c. by delivering turnkey workforce solutions for new and expanding businesses.
2. Reposition Louisiana as one of the best places in the country in which to start and grow a small business, as well as create a more vibrant entrepreneurial culture in our state.
3. Identify and implement policy and programmatic changes to improve Louisiana's tax, regulatory, and operating climate, thereby increasing the state's economic competitiveness.
4. Lead Louisiana's efforts to create a diversified, growing economy through the cultivation of high-potential industry sectors
5. Assist local and regional communities in their efforts to improve their economic competitiveness.
5. Assist local and regional communities in their efforts to improve their economic competitiveness.

Priorities:

1. Strategically improve state economic competitiveness.
2. Engage with local partners to enhance community competitiveness.
3. Forge partnerships to enhance regional economic development assets.
4. Expand and retain in-state businesses.
5. Execute a strong business recruitment program.
6. Cultivate small business, innovation, and entrepreneurship.
7. Enhance workforce development solutions.
8. Promote Louisiana's robust business advantages.
9. Attract foreign direct investment and grow international trade.

LED 5-yr Strategic Plan FY 2017/18 - 2021/22





DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY

Seven of the parishes within CDC's region also are included in the Delta Regional Authorities' (DRA's) service area. These parishes are Bienville, Claiborne, DeSoto, Lincoln, Natchitoches, Red River, and Webster. All, except Webster Parish, are classified as "distressed." The DRA, through its programs, including the State Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP) and its health-related initiatives, are consistent with EDA's goals to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of the citizens in the region. CDC serves as the Local Development District (LDD) for the DRA in Northwest Louisiana, and as such has incorporated and addressed DRA's priorities, as well as Federal and State of Louisiana DRA priorities, as this CEDS was developed. These priorities include:

GOAL 1 - IMPROVED WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS:

Advance the productivity and economic competitiveness of the Delta workforce.

GOAL 2 - STRENGTHENED INFRASTRUCTURE:

Strengthen the Delta's physical, digital, and capital connections to the global economy.

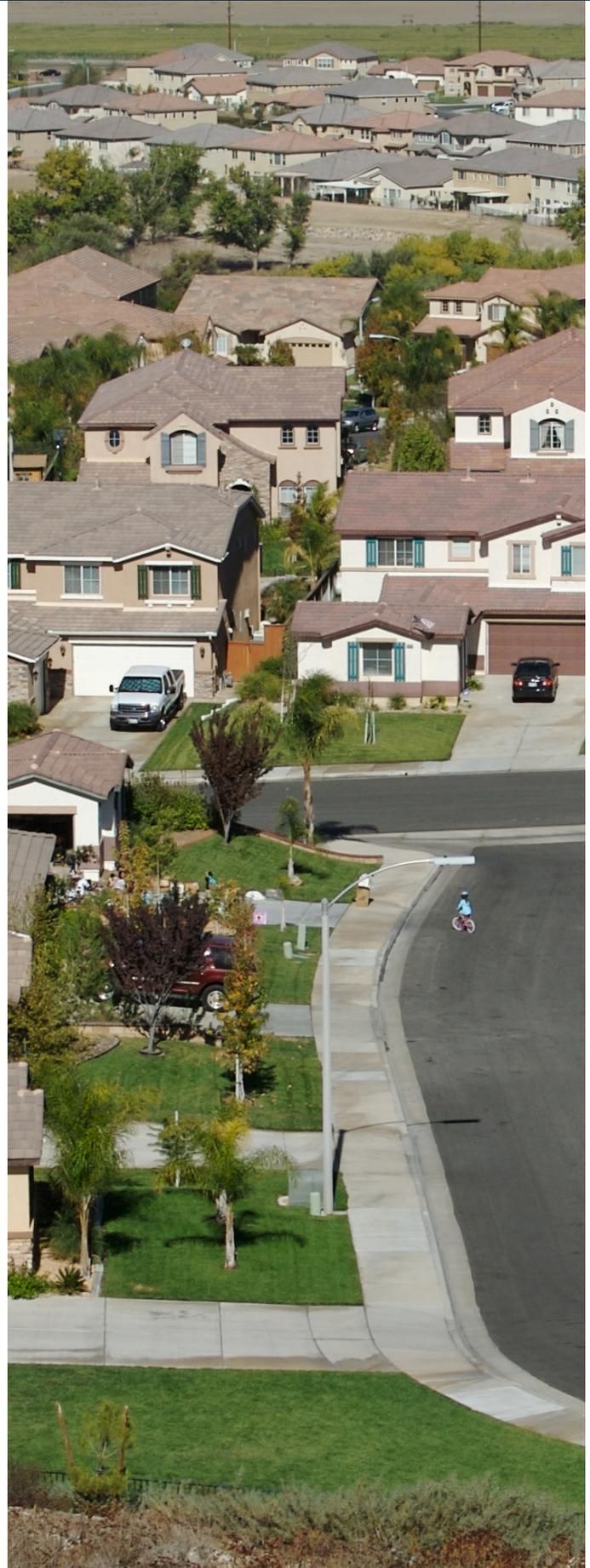
GOAL 3 - INCREASED COMMUNITY CAPACITY:

Facilitate local capacity building within Delta communities, organizations, businesses, and individuals.

Delta Regional Development Plan III, 2016

Past and Current Regional DRA Projects:

- ▶ 2018 - Grambling, Sibley
- ▶ 2019 - Lucky, North Webster Industrial Park, Dixie Inn
- ▶ 2020 - Dixie Inn, Springhill
- ▶ 2021 - Village of Simsboro, Sabine Parish Waterworks District 1, Village of Doyline





EDA REGIONAL INVESTMENTS

The Innovation Enterprise at Louisiana Tech University:

The Innovation Enterprise at Louisiana Tech University has been selected for a \$1.5 million award through the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Build to Scale Venture Challenge competition.

There were 50 award winners from 26 different states, and the Louisiana Tech award was among the largest in the country. EDA's Build to Scale Venture Challenge is a national competition designed to invest in leading edge institutions and programs that fuel innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology-based economic development around the country.

"The Innovation Enterprise at Louisiana Tech has been a national leader in developing best-practice programs and strategies for leveraging the immense assets of a university like ours to drive innovation and support entrepreneurial economic development in our region," said Dr Dave Norris, Chief Innovation Officer at Louisiana Tech and principal investigator on the project. "This award is recognition of that past success and expectation of more in the future. I'm especially excited about bringing in new talent to our team in Ruston to help us execute on these growing opportunities."

Tech was one of two Louisiana organizations receiving awards. The NOLA Business Alliance received a \$400,000 investment through the Capital Challenge portion of the competition. Louisiana Tech's award will be used to scale up a regional Innovation Ecosystem Hub along the Interstate 20 corridor, including adding team members to the Innovation Enterprise at Tech focused on working directly with entrepreneurs, corporate partners, and investors and engaging regional communities more fully in the economic development activities of the university.

"As Louisiana Tech continues to build its infrastructure to support companies and their growth through facilities like Tech Pointe and the Enterprise Campus, we also have the ability to empower our students with entrepreneurial skills and connections to internships and future careers," said Dr. Les Guice, Louisiana Tech President.

The Innovation Enterprise team at the university is planning a kickoff event to be held later this year to celebrate the award and launch the new Innovation Ecosystem Hub initiative.

The 2021 EDA Venture Challenge awardees will leverage an additional \$40 million in matching funds nationally from a variety of private and public sector sources to support their initiatives. These EDA investments support advanced manufacturing, software development, agricultural technology, blue economy, bio science, and health technology clusters in regions throughout the U.S. and will lead to stronger, more resilient economies across the country.

latech.edu





BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WINS

The following table represents the largest capital investment wins for the NW LA region. This information was provided by Northwest Louisiana Economic Partnership. The largest job creator is the new Amazon distribution center in Shreveport. It was a huge win for the region, creating numerous high-paying jobs. The Chambers of Commerce of the cities in the region have done outstanding work in tandem with Municipal/ Parish government in making these types of investments possible. This information was gathered by North Louisiana Economic Partnership (NLEP).

Project Name	Account Name	Industry	Product/Service	Year	Parish	Max Capex	Max Jobs
Rail Expansion	DeVal Realty Group (DVR-Shreveport)	Manufacturing	Automobile 3PL	2018	Caddo	\$2,000,000	0
Duckwater	Houghton Environmental	Energy	Tank Wash Service	2018	Bossier	\$4,000,000	12
Inferno	Inferno Manufacturing	Energy	Gage Valves & Glasses	2018	Caddo	\$480,000	3
Safe Place	Young Williams Child Support Services	Call Center/ Back Office	Customer Service Call Center	2018	Bossier	\$1,500,000	84
Ice	Super ATV	Distribution	Warehouse & ATV parts	2019	Caddo	\$4,350,000	75
Wishbone	House of Raeford	Manufacturing	New feed mill for chicken proc. facility	2019	Bienville	\$30,000,000	300
Pony	E.I. Williams Industry	Manufacturing	Industrial components	2020	Webster	\$1,900,000	100
Ignite	Frymaster (Welbilt)	Manufacturing	Industrial Fryers	2020	Caddo	\$6,000,000	0
Vaso	Tömakk Glass Partners	Manufacturing	Glass Manufacturing	2020	Caddo	\$1,950,000	50
Inferno 2	Inferno Manufacturing	Manufacturing	New machining centers	2021	Caddo	\$256,900	2
IP Mill	International Paper - Mansfield Mill	Manufacturing	Paperboard	2021	DeSoto	\$18,755,000	5
Cosmeaux	Amazon	Distribution	Robotics distribution facility	2021	Caddo	\$200,000,000	1,000
Weyerhaeuser Expansion/Itep	Weyerhaeuser Natchitoches	Manufacturing	Upgrades to control system and presses	2021	Natchitoches	\$16,100,000	20
Smoker II	Hunt Forest Products, Inc.	Manufacturing	Sawmill	2021	Bienville	\$240,000,000	130
High Noon	Bia Energy	Energy	Methanol Plant	2021	Caddo	\$550,000,000	75
Horntail	Teal Jones	Manufacturing	Sawmill	2021	Bossier	\$110,500,000	125
Leonardo (Jorel)	Ternium USA	Manufacturing	Galvanized Steel	2021	Caddo	\$98,000,000	35
Blue Cat (fka Jaguar)	AEP Swepeco	Energy	Transmission Operation Center	2022	Caddo	\$100,000,000	20
Grace	Advanced Call Center Technologies	Call Center/ Back Office	Third Party Call Center	2022	Caddo	\$1,500,000	600
Rougaroo	Alliance Compressors	Manufacturing	Processor product for air conditioner industry	2022	Natchitoches	\$45,000,000	78
TOTAL						\$1,436,792,325	2,948

PROPOSED PROJECTS IN HB2 ACT 498

Activity	Parish	Implementing Govt. or Group	Cost	Funding Source
Town Hall Civic Center Planning and Construction	Bienville	Town of Ringgold	\$705,000	Capital Outlay
Replacement of Air Conditioners, Planning and Construction	Bossier	NW Louisiana War Veterans Home	\$600,000	Capital Outlay
Jimmie Davis Bridge Rehabilitation and Lighting, or Design, Engineering, Planning and Construction	Bossier	Department of Transportation and Development	\$23,982,400	Capital Outlay
LA 3227 - LA 157 Intersection Realignment, Planning and Construction	Bossier	Department of Transportation and Development	\$4,500,000	Capital Outlay
Red River Deepening	Bossier, Natt., Caddo, Red River	Department of Transportation and Development	\$1,500,000	Capital Outlay
Swan Lake Rd. Reconstruction and Extension	Bossier	Bossier Parish	\$191,270	Capital Outlay
Improvements to LA Hwy 3 & I-220 Interchange	Bossier	Bossier Parish	\$3,500,000	Capital Outlay
South Bossier Park - New Pavilions	Bossier	Bossier Parish	\$150,000	Capital Outlay
Louisiana Technology Research Institute	Bossier	Bossier City	\$7,500,000	Capital Outlay
Additional Water Supply Wells and Additional Tank	Bossier	Haughton	\$1,107,000	Capital Outlay
Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvement	Bossier	Plain Dealing	\$277,900	Capital Outlay
Center for Medical Educational and Wellness	Caddo	LSU Health Science Center	\$36,673,200	Capital Outlay
Gross Anatomy Lab Expansion and Modernization	Caddo	LSU Health Science Center	\$2,500,000	Capital Outlay
Medical School B-Building HVAC Replacement	Caddo	LSU Health Science Center	\$4,785,710	Capital Outlay
Capital Improvement Projects	Caddo	LSU Health Science Center	\$2,067,400	Capital Outlay
Inpatient Critical Care Renovation	Caddo	LSU Health Science Center	\$143,900	Capital Outlay
Comprehensive Emergency Water Supply Improvements	Caddo	LSU Health Science Center	\$9,401,650	Capital Outlay
Building Exterior Walls and Bridge Repair	Caddo	LSUS	\$3,100,000	Capital Outlay
Business Continuity Disaster Recovery Equipment	Caddo	LSUS	\$1,350,000	Capital Outlay
Student Success Health and Wellness Center	Caddo	LSUS	\$16,000,000	Capital Outlay
Lewis Collier Hall Science Building Renovation	Caddo	SUSLA	\$4,005,000	Capital Outlay
New Workforce Training and Technology Center	Caddo	SUSLA	\$676,000	Capital Outlay
Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Center	Caddo	Caddo Parish	\$50,000	Capital Outlay
Water System Improvements, Water Wells, Tanks, and Booster Station Construction	Caddo	Ida	\$800,000	Capital Outlay
Parking Lot, Driveway and Sidewalks, and Walking Track	Caddo	Mooringsport	\$750,000	Capital Outlay
Water Distribution System Improvements	Caddo	Oil City	\$676,000	Capital Outlay
Water Treatment Plant, Transmission Main, and Distribution System Improvements	Caddo	Oil City	\$2,273,500	Capital Outlay
C.C. Antoine Museum and Arts Center	Caddo	Shreveport	\$525,000	Capital Outlay
C.C. Antoine Park	Caddo	Shreveport	\$2,254,060	Capital Outlay
District 3 Road Rehabilitation	Caddo	Shreveport	\$500,000	Capital Outlay
Greenwood Road Extension	Caddo	Shreveport	\$2,280,000	Capital Outlay
Valencia Park Spray Park	Caddo	Shreveport	\$270,000	Capital Outlay
Water and Wastewater System Improvements and Extension	Caddo	Vivian	\$303,530	Capital Outlay
Hirsch Memorial Coliseum and Louisiana State and Fairgrounds Improvements Project	Caddo	State Fair of Louisiana	\$3,780,000	Capital Outlay
Repair and Renovation to the Strand Theatre of Shreveport	Caddo	The Strand Theatre of Shreveport Corporation	\$1,484,000	Capital Outlay
African American Museum	Caddo	NW Louisiana Community Development Corporation	\$157,059	Capital Outlay
Town of Haynesville Street Improvements	Claiborne	Haynesville	\$500,000	Capital Outlay

Activity	Parish	Implementing Govt. or Group	Cost	Funding Source
Homer Street Improvements Project	Claiborne	Homer	\$600,000	Capital Outlay
Town Hall Renovations	Claiborne	Homer	\$558,550	Capital Outlay
Recreational Improvements	Desoto	Logansport	\$1,300,000	Capital Outlay
LA 5 (Thomas Road to LA 3015)	Desoto	Department of Transportation and Development	\$8,000,000	Capital Outlay
Stonewall Street Improvements	Desoto	Stonewall	\$351,000	Capital Outlay
Campus Utility Infrastructure Assessment Emergency Repair/ Replacement	Lincoln	Grambling State University	\$10,000,000	Capital Outlay
Criminal Justice Building Renovation	Lincoln	Grambling State University	\$4,400,000	Capital Outlay
Library Replacement	Lincoln	Grambling State University	\$2,000,000	Capital Outlay
Comprehensive ADA Assessment/Remediation	Lincoln	Louisiana Tech University	\$478,400	Capital Outlay
Bridge Replacements on Mitchell and Shady Grove Roads	Lincoln	Lincoln Parish	\$380,000	Capital Outlay
New Town Hall	Lincoln	Choudrant	\$1,596,586	Capital Outlay
New Road from Highway 150 to I-20 South Frontage Road	Lincoln	Ruston	\$1,825,000	Capital Outlay
Renovations to Existing Facility and Additional Buildings	Lincoln	Lincoln Parish Fire Protection District No.1	\$885,000	Capital Outlay
Development of Alternative Water Supply from Lake D'Arbonne for Lincoln and Union Parishes	Lincoln/Union	The Union Lincoln Region Water Supply Initiative	\$3,797,200	Capital Outlay
LA 117 Widening	Natchitoches	Department of Transportation and Development	\$30,000,000	Capital Outlay
Replacement of John S. Kyser Hall	Natchitoches	Northwestern State University	\$37,308,170	Capital Outlay
Courthouse Security Improvements	Natchitoches	Natchitoches Parish	\$2,692,545	Capital Outlay
Resurfacing of Roads in Payne Subdivision	Natchitoches	Natchitoches Parish	\$155,168	Capital Outlay
Rehabilitation of Wastewater System	Natchitoches	Natchez	\$900,000	Capital Outlay
South Natchitoches Drainage Improvements	Natchitoches	Natchitoches	\$250,000	Capital Outlay
Texas Street Corridor Improvements	Natchitoches	Natchitoches	\$585,000	Capital Outlay
Interconnection with Sabine Water Works District 1	Sabine	South Toledo Bend Waterworks District	\$720,000	Capital Outlay
Vaco Road, Prospect Road, and Firesheets Lane	Sabine	South Toledo Bend Waterworks District	\$180,000	Capital Outlay
Plainview Road Rehabilitation	Sabine	Sabine Parish	\$4,336,300	Capital Outlay
Village of Florien Town Hall	Sabine	Florien	\$385,505	Capital Outlay
West Side Water System Expansion	Sabine/Vernon	Hornbeck	\$1,341,175	Capital Outlay
Water Plant Improvements, New Raw Water Intake Structure and Clearwell	Sabine	Many	\$475,000	Capital Outlay
Water System Improvements	Sabine	Belmont Waterworks, Inc.	\$705,595	Capital Outlay
Potable Water Ground Storage Tank	Webster	Minden	\$831,400	Capital Outlay
Camp Minden, Infrastructure, Rehabilitation, Phase 2	Webster	Department of Military Affairs	\$710,000	Capital Outlay
Sewerage System Improvements	Webster	Cotton Valley	\$1,269,000	Capital Outlay
Village of Doyline Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrades	Webster	Doyline	\$1,235,000	Capital Outlay
Wastewater Treatment Facilities Improvements	Webster	Sibley	\$303,800	Capital Outlay



REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

Bienville Parish Police Jury

- ▶ Town of Arcadia
- ▶ Town of Gibsland
- ▶ Town of Mount Lebanon
- ▶ Town of Ringgold
- ▶ Village of Bienville
- ▶ Village of Bryceland
- ▶ Village of Castor
- ▶ Village of Jamestown
- ▶ Village of Lucky
- ▶ Village of Saline

Bossier Parish Police Jury

- ▶ City of Bossier City
- ▶ Town of Benton
- ▶ Town of Haughton
- ▶ Town of Plain Dealing

Caddo Parish Commission

- ▶ City of Shreveport
- ▶ Town of Blanchard
- ▶ Town of Greenwood
- ▶ Town of Oil City
- ▶ Town of Vivian
- ▶ Village of Belcher
- ▶ Village of Gilliam
- ▶ Village of Hosston
- ▶ Village of Ida
- ▶ Village of Mooringsport
- ▶ Village of Rodessa

Claiborne Parish Police Jury

- ▶ Town of Haynesville
- ▶ Town of Homer
- ▶ Village of Athens
- ▶ Village of Junction City
- ▶ Village of Lisbon

DeSoto Parish Police Jury

- ▶ City of Mansfield
- ▶ Town of Keachi
- ▶ Town of Logansport
- ▶ Town of Stonewall
- ▶ Village of Grand Cane
- ▶ Village of Longstreet
- ▶ Village of South Mansfield
- ▶ Village of Stanley

Lincoln Parish Police Jury

- ▶ City of Grambling
- ▶ City of Ruston
- ▶ Town of Dubach
- ▶ Town of Vienna
- ▶ Village of Choudrant
- ▶ Village of Downsview
- ▶ Village of Simsboro

Natchitoches Parish Council

- ▶ City of Natchitoches
- ▶ Town of Campti
- ▶ Village of Ashland
- ▶ Village of Clarence
- ▶ Village of Goldonna
- ▶ Village of Natchez
- ▶ Village of Powhatan
- ▶ Village of Provencal
- ▶ Village of Robeline

Red River Parish Police Jury

- ▶ Town of Coushatta
- ▶ Village of Edgefield
- ▶ Village of Hall Summit
- ▶ Village of Martin

Sabine Parish Police Jury

- ▶ Town of Many
- ▶ Town of Zwolle
- ▶ Village of Converse
- ▶ Village of Fisher
- ▶ Village of Florian
- ▶ Village of Noble
- ▶ Village of Pleasant Hill

Webster Parish Police Jury

- ▶ City of Minden
- ▶ City of Springhill
- ▶ Town of Cotton Valley
- ▶ Town of Cullen
- ▶ Town of Sarepta
- ▶ Town of Sibley
- ▶ Village of Dixie Inn
- ▶ Village of Doyline
- ▶ Village of Dubberly
- ▶ Village of Heflin
- ▶ Village of Shongaloo



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NORTHWEST
Louisiana

COMPREHENSIVE
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2022-2026