

2019 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SOUTH LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT



REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
10 VETERANS BLVD
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70124
WWW.NORPC.ORG



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction.....	1
A. Purpose of the CEDS	
B. Regional Overview	
II. Process and Approach to Developing the CEDS.....	3
III. Summary Background of the Regional Economy.....	5
A. Demographic and Economic Analysis	
B. Regional Cluster Analysis	
IV. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) for the Region.....	27
V. Economic Resilience.....	28
VI. Strategic Direction.....	29
A. Vision	
B. Goals and Objectives	
C. Action Steps	



I. INTRODUCTION

A. THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) PURPOSE

The CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of an area or region. The planning process is designed to engage private and public sector community leaders¹ to create a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration and prosperity.

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires that all federally designated Economic Development Districts across the U.S. develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) every five years in order to qualify for EDA assistance under its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. The New Orleans Regional Planning Commission (RPC) is designated by EDA as the Southeast Louisiana Economic Development District, which includes the five parishes of Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany.



The RPC facilitated the development of the five-parish CEDS for 2019-2023 over a seven-month time period. Extensive engagement and input from a broad group of stakeholders was fundamental to the process. Participants had the knowledge-base and foresight to shape the priorities for enhancing economic growth opportunities with consideration for global competitiveness, economic diversification and job creation, resilience and economic equity.



The region has benefited from a strong relationship with the EDA, which has funded many projects that have had a significant impact on the growth, diversification, and competitiveness of the economy, helping to build capacity for the region's industry clusters in innovation, health sciences, energy, arts and culture, and entrepreneurship.

Some example projects include the New Orleans BioInnovation Center Wet Lab Incubator, Claiborne Corridor Cultural Innovation District, Ochsner Center for Innovation, JEDCO Churchill Technology and Business Park, the World War II Museum, the NIMS Film Studio and Tulane University Sustainable Energy Center.



¹ U.S. EDA's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Content Guidelines: Recommendations for Creating an Impactful CEDS, page 2, March 9, 2016.

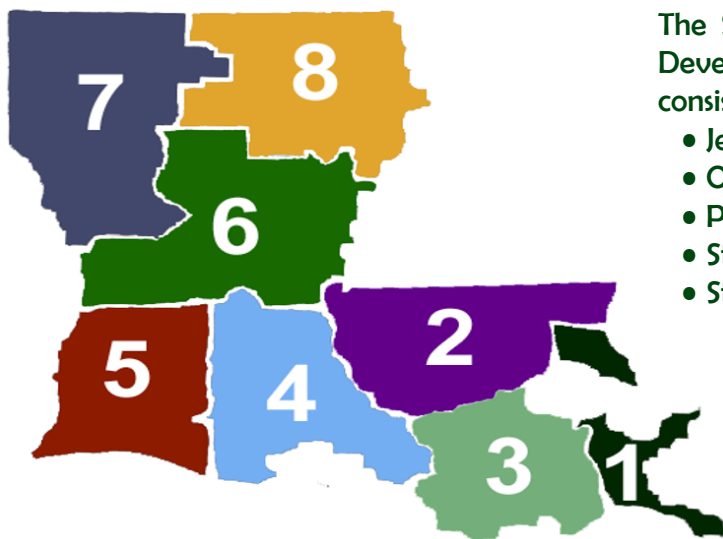
B. REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The Greater New Orleans Region, distinctively shaped by the largest river system in North America, offers a rich, unique and diverse mosaic of economic, cultural and ecological assets that are important to the nation and the world. It is this interconnection of land, place and people that has lifted the region to an international scale with promising potential for sustainable growth, economic opportunity and livability. The future potential of the region to diversify its economy, raise its standard of living and ensure economic opportunity for its residents will be determined by its ability to invest in and balance its greatest assets.

The report's research and stakeholder feedback point to significant economic momentum underway in the region. The port system, the largest in the world, is unleashing new promise with its strategic planning and game-changing proposed port expansion projects. Energy is rebounding. Tourism and hospitality are setting records.

Additionally, new sectors of the economy are growing. The new DXC Digital Transformation Center was recently opened which plans to hire 2,000 employees, adding to the growing number of digital and technology firms to locate or expand in the region. Health Sciences is posting the largest percentage increase in jobs in the U.S. with over \$2 billion in investment made and a growing number of biosciences firms emerging from university research. And the investment of over \$50 billion in planned coastal restoration and water management projects, creates the opportunity to build a new economic driver in the environmental management sector that bolsters the regional economy, provides good jobs for residents, and increases resiliency.

While the area's assets and economic opportunities are significant, the ability of the region to achieve its full potential is tied to the forging of partnerships that successfully address critical cross-cutting issues including infrastructure, regional transportation, affordable housing, workforce development, economic equity and entrepreneurship. The 2019- 2023 CEDS provides a roadmap for the region's leadership to leverage its assets and build its capacity to achieve its vision as a competitive and thriving, diverse, resilient and equitable regional economy that provides a high standard of living for its residents as a global business hub of technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.



The South Louisiana Economic Development District (Region 1) consists of the following parishes:

- Jefferson
- Orleans
- Plaquemines
- St. Bernard
- St. Tammany

II. PROCESS AND APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE CEDS

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) views the CEDS as “a regionally-owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resilience of an area or region” It is used as a tool to focus on growing the economy based on cross-cutting issues as determined from the region’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Following EDA guidelines, the overall approach taken for the development of the CEDS was engagement with a broad-based, diverse group of public and private sector stakeholders who could provide insight into the many facets of the five-parish region. These included professionals representing parish economic development organizations, workforce development, entrepreneurship, industry clusters, transportation, non-profit community, education, and others.

In order to understand top priorities moving forward, it was important to review data, trends and changes since 2010. This information helped inform discussion about necessary strategic direction for the next five years.

A multi-level methodology was used to gain input from a broad group who would be able to drive the formation of the plan. The methodology is as follows:

1. STRATEGY COMMITTEE FACILITATION THROUGH CEDS PROCESS:

Following EDA guidelines, the RPC assembled a diverse group of members based on key aspects of the economy (workforce, transportation, entrepreneurship, etc.); one that was a manageable size to guide through the CEDS planning process. The Strategy Committee’s role was to provide input on the various aspects of the New Orleans regional economy and the CEDS components to drive the formation of the plan’s top priorities, and opportunities for economic growth, equity, and resilience.

Five meetings including two half-day workshops were held from November 2017 through May 2018. Topics covered included: (1) CEDS Purpose and Process; (2) Successes and Setbacks; (3) Demographic and Cluster Analysis; (4) SWOT Analysis; (5) Vision, Strategies, Goals and Action Plan; (7) Resilience, and (8) Metrics and Performance Measures.

A list of Strategy Committee members can be found in the 2019 CEDS Appendix on the RPC website here: www.norpc.org/comprehensive_economic_development_strategy.html.



2. REVIEW OF PARISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND RELEVANT STUDIES:

Economic development plans and studies were reviewed from local, regional and statewide economic development organizations for data and information that could be used to inform and enhance the 2019-2023 CEDS. Research data and findings that were utilized for the CEDS report included: (1) identification and analysis of regional industry clusters; (2) regional economic forecasts; (3) Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis, and, (4) regional workforce skills analyses.



3. INTERVIEWS WITH KEY COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS:

Ten (10) personal interviews with civic leaders and executives in the region's key industries were held to garner feedback on: (1) the region's strengths and assets; (2) challenges and potential solutions; (3) opportunities to be leveraged; and, (4) industry strategies and priorities for growth and diversification of the regional economy.

4. FOCUS GROUPS WITH KEY COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS:

Two focus groups were held to gain input from industry representatives and a broader base of stakeholders who could provide additional insight into the regional economy's SWOT, existing and potential initiatives, challenges and priorities for economic growth and diversification. The participants were business, civic, government, non-profit and industry leaders, including those operating firms in target industry clusters or implementing key initiatives impacting the competitiveness of the regional economy.

III. SUMMARY BACKGROUND OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

Since the last 2014-2018 CEDS was completed, the New Orleans region posted positive growth on several key economic indicators. The percentage of adults earning higher education degrees reached 34.4% versus 28.4% for Louisiana, and median household income increased by 4.6% to \$48,289, 5.8% higher than the state.

Some of the region's major industry sectors experienced decline over the past five years. One of the largest sectors, oil and gas, posted a significant decrease in jobs and investment as a result of the drastic reduction in the price of crude oil globally. Providing some relief, on the downstream side of the energy business, major industry investments were made in the expansion of petrochemical plants and liquid natural gas (LNG) facilities. Significant job losses also occurred in the advanced manufacturing sector with the consolidation of Avondale Shipyard operations to Mississippi.

The health sciences cluster increased employment by 12%, setting a record for the fastest growing healthcare sector in the U.S. Over \$2 billion in public and private investments in the region's health sciences sector resulted in new and/or expanded facilities including the University Medical Center, Veterans Administration Hospital, Ochsner Health Systems, New Orleans East Hospital, East Jefferson Hospital, West Jefferson Hospital and Children's Hospital.

The construction and completion of a new airport terminal, a significant increase in domestic and international flights at the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport and investments in the region's ports system increased the number of jobs in the international trade, logistics, and distribution cluster by 14%. However, significant decreases in cargo and jobs are possible as a result of the recent levying of federal tariffs on aluminum and steel imports. Maritime leaders are concerned about the economic impact for the international trade, logistics and distribution sector, if tariffs remain in place, based on similar policies implemented by the federal government in 2002.



Photo by Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport

Expansion of the WWII Museum and the addition of new hotels and restaurants boosted the tourism, arts, music and entertainment cluster growth with an additional 13,427 jobs. The New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau reported nearly 18 million visitors to the region in 2017, an increase of 5.7% over the previous year. Direct visitor spending contributed \$8.7 billion to the economy, an increase of 6% since 2016.

New project announcements in the digital media cluster such as DXC Technologies will boost the number of technology jobs in the region as it adds 2,000 new jobs over six years. The investment of \$25 million in state funds to higher education institutions to address the talent needs of DCX Technologies and the digital media sector in science, technology, engineering and math education should have a transformative impact on addressing the skills needs of this sector in the future.

WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

Based on the demographic and cluster analysis projections, the regional economy will continue to experience modest growth in population (4%) and jobs. This CEDS draws upon the area's numerous assets and resources to position the region as a competitor in the global marketplace.

Steady, modest job growth is projected in the foundational clusters over the next five years including petrochemical and LNG within the energy sector. Job growth in the advanced manufacturing cluster is anticipated, influenced by several major projects. Aerospace giants at the NASA/Michoud, including Boeing and Lockheed Martin will continue to manufacture the next generation of U.S. spacecraft– the Space Launch System- with future missions to Mars and beyond. The first unmanned space flight of the Space Launch System is scheduled for 2020. Other companies that have been successfully recruited more recently to lease space and operate at the NASA/Michoud facility include: (1) Blade Dynamics, a subsidiary of General Electric that manufactures wind turbine blades; (2) Sinter Metal, a global supplier of ceramic parts with headquarters in Liechtenstein; and (3) Advanced Cutting Solutions that serves the wind energy and maritime sectors and specializes in cutting tough material like fiberglass.



Photo by NASA Michoud Assembly Facility

Continued growth in the international, trade, and logistics cluster is anticipated as a result of planned investment by both the private and public sectors in value-added manufacturing, cargo, cruise lines, and logistics jobs impacting other clusters, including a proposed multi-modal facilities operation at the former Avondale site and possible Port of New Orleans expansion in St. Bernard Parish.



Photo by The National WWII Museum

Growth is projected in the tourism, arts, music and entertainment cluster. This expansion will be fueled by planned investments in new hotels, the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, and new tourism experiences located throughout the region. New tourism market opportunities include the expansion of authentic, experiential visitor attractions that celebrate the ecology, food, music history and cultures of one of the most distinctive regions in the world.

The diversifying clusters also present significant opportunities for growth. The digital media boom that took place over the past five years (42% increase in jobs) should continue as the region's reputation for competitiveness, talent pipeline and innovation improves. New market opportunities and expansion of existing businesses in the food and agriculture sector will drive steady job growth. Building on the culinary arts, local expertise and a growing market demand for locally sourced products, a significant increase in small entrepreneurial firms is projected in the food and agricultural cluster.

A more detailed economic assessment is presented in the Regional Cluster Analysis section of this report (page 17). The section outlines opportunities for growth in foundational and diversifying clusters, as well as the current weaknesses that could hinder further economic growth.

A. DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The demographic and economic analysis contained in this section allowed the CEDS Strategy Committee to understand past trends, but also future projections to assist with building capacity to support the top priorities moving forward over the next five-years. The analysis allows for a clear and relevant connection to the SWOT analysis and strategic direction.

Highlights of the analysis are below:

1. POPULATION

- Total population in the 5-parish region is anticipated to grow 4% to 1.2 million
- The 5-parish region will experience minimal growth in the working age population (20-64).

2. EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

- 28% of the region's population has a high school diploma or equivalent, 6% lower than Louisiana.
- 34.4% of the region's population has an associate's degree or higher, 6% higher than Louisiana.
- The largest percentage increases in education attainment are in higher education degrees.

3. EMPLOYMENT

- The 5-parish regional employment of 57.9% is 2.5% and unemployment of 7.9% is 0.2% higher than the state of Louisiana.
- Employment and Unemployment by Race indicates racial disparities in the 5-parish region and a slight difference by gender.

4. INCOME AND EARNINGS

- Median Household Income (MHHI) for the 5-parish region increased by 4.6% to \$48,289, which is 5.8% higher than Louisiana, but 12.7% below the U.S.
- Racial disparity exists in MHHI with gaps between white and all other races as wide as \$26,338 or 45%.
- Median Earnings by Gender indicate there is a major gap between male and female earning in every parish of the 5-parish region
- 17.8% of the 5-parish region's population lives in poverty.

5. HOUSING

- Median value of owner occupied housing in the region is 15.7% higher than Louisiana, and 7% less than the U.S.
- Median gross rent for the region is 17.5% higher than for Louisiana and the same as the U.S. median gross rent of \$949.
- The percent of rental households spending 30% or more of income for rent is 51.7%.
- 17.8% of the region's residents are in poverty, 5.1% more than the U.S.

The jobs, earnings and businesses are discussed within the context of the Regional Cluster Analysis in the next section. Demographic and economic summary bookmarks of each CEDS parish can be found in the 2019 CEDS Appendix on the RPC website at www.norpc.org/comprehensive_economic_development_strategy.html.

1. POPULATION 2017-2023

The Total Population in the 5-parish CEDS region is anticipated to grow 4%, mainly in Orleans and St Tammany parishes. This is twice the growth rate of Louisiana and one percent above the U.S.

Top Population Growth by Race in the 5-parish CEDS Region:

2+ races, Hispanic	15%
Black, Hispanic	14%
2+ races, non-Hispanic	14%
Asian, Hispanic	12%
White, Hispanic	11%
Hispanic	11%
White	11%
Asian	8%
Black	6%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific	6%
Am Ind/Alaskan	4%

State of Louisiana:

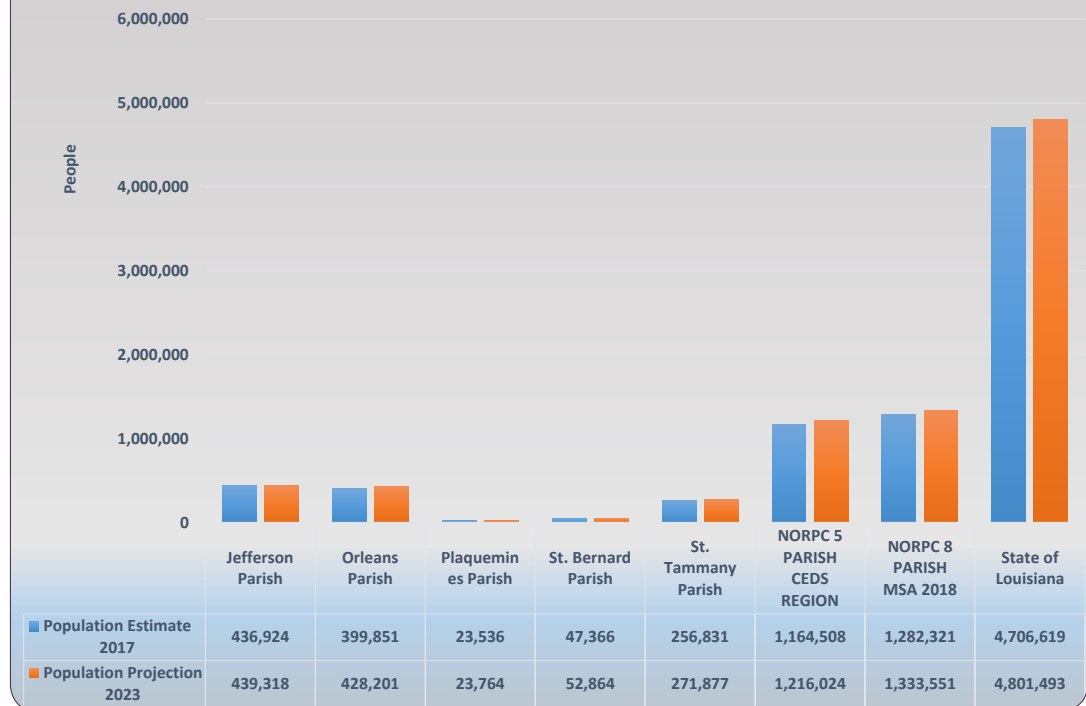
White	30%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific	15%
Hispanic	12%
Asian	10%
Am Ind/Alaskan	4%
Black	2%

Population Growth by Age in the 5-parish CEDS Region & LA:

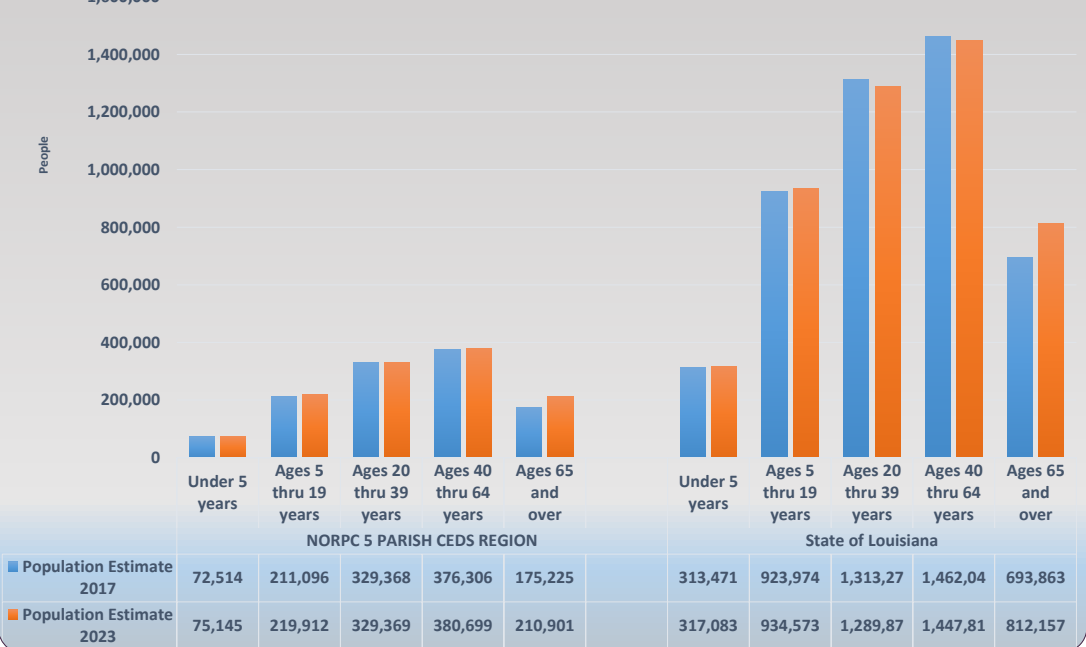
	5-Parish	LA
Under 5	4%	1%
5 – 19	4%	1%
20 – 39	0%	(2%)
40 – 64	1%	(1%)
65 and over	20%	17%

The region will experience minimal growth in the working age population (20-64) and a significant increase in the 65+ age category.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2017 TO 2023 NEW ORLEANS 5 PARISH CEDS REGION, 8 PARISH MSA REGION, AND THE STATE OF LOUISIANA



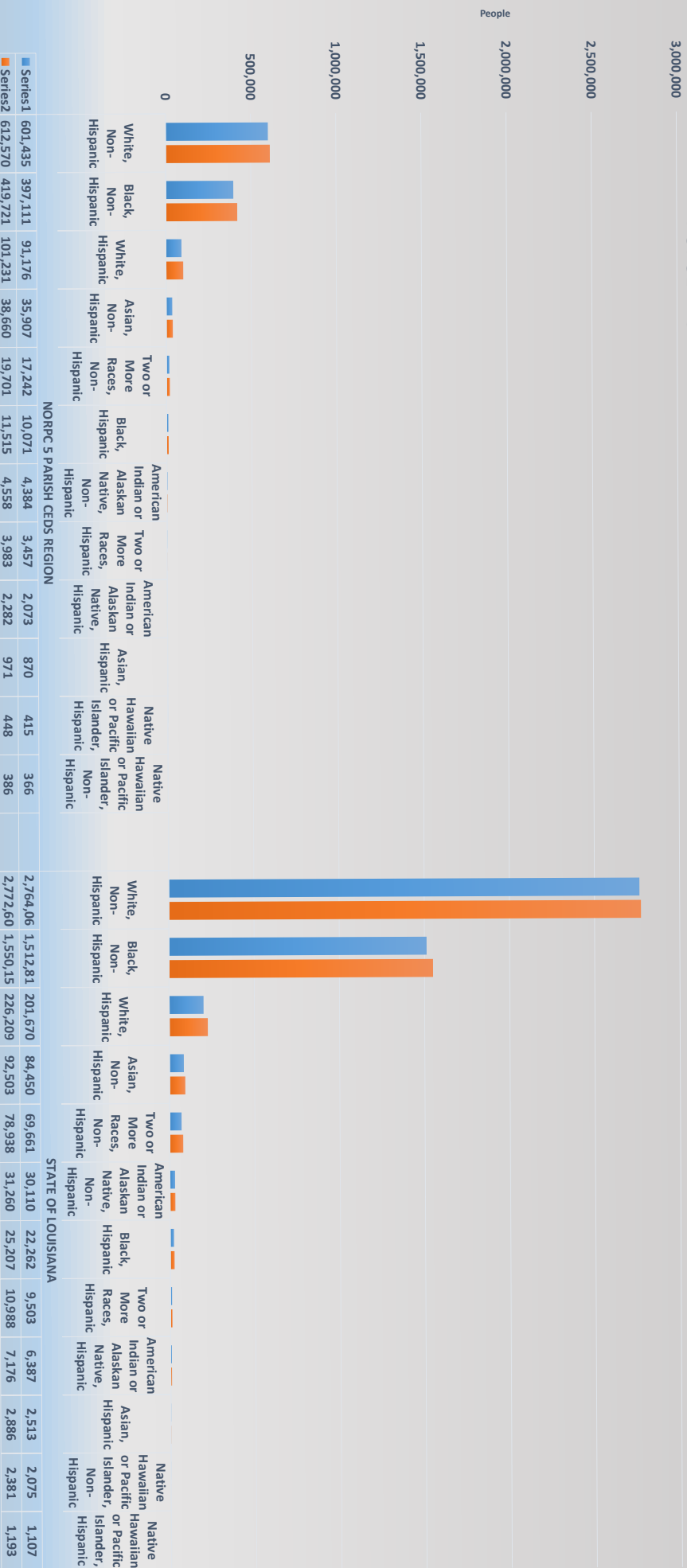
POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2017 TO 2023 BY AGE GROUP NEW ORLEANS 5 PARISH CEDS REGION AND THE STATE OF LOUISIANA



Data Source: The demographic data in this report is compiled from several sources using a specialized process. Sources include annual population estimates and population projections from the US Census Bureau, and birth and mortality rates from the US Health Department. This report uses state data from the following agencies: Louisiana Department of Labor.

POPULATION 2017-2023 (CONT.)

POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2017 TO 2023 BY RACE NEW ORLEANS 5 PARISH CEDS REGION AND THE STATE OF LOUISIANA



Data Source: The demographic data in this report is compiled from several sources using a specialized process. Sources include annual population estimates and population projections from the US Census Bureau, and birth and mortality rates from the US Health Department. This report uses state data from the following agencies: Louisiana Department of Labor.

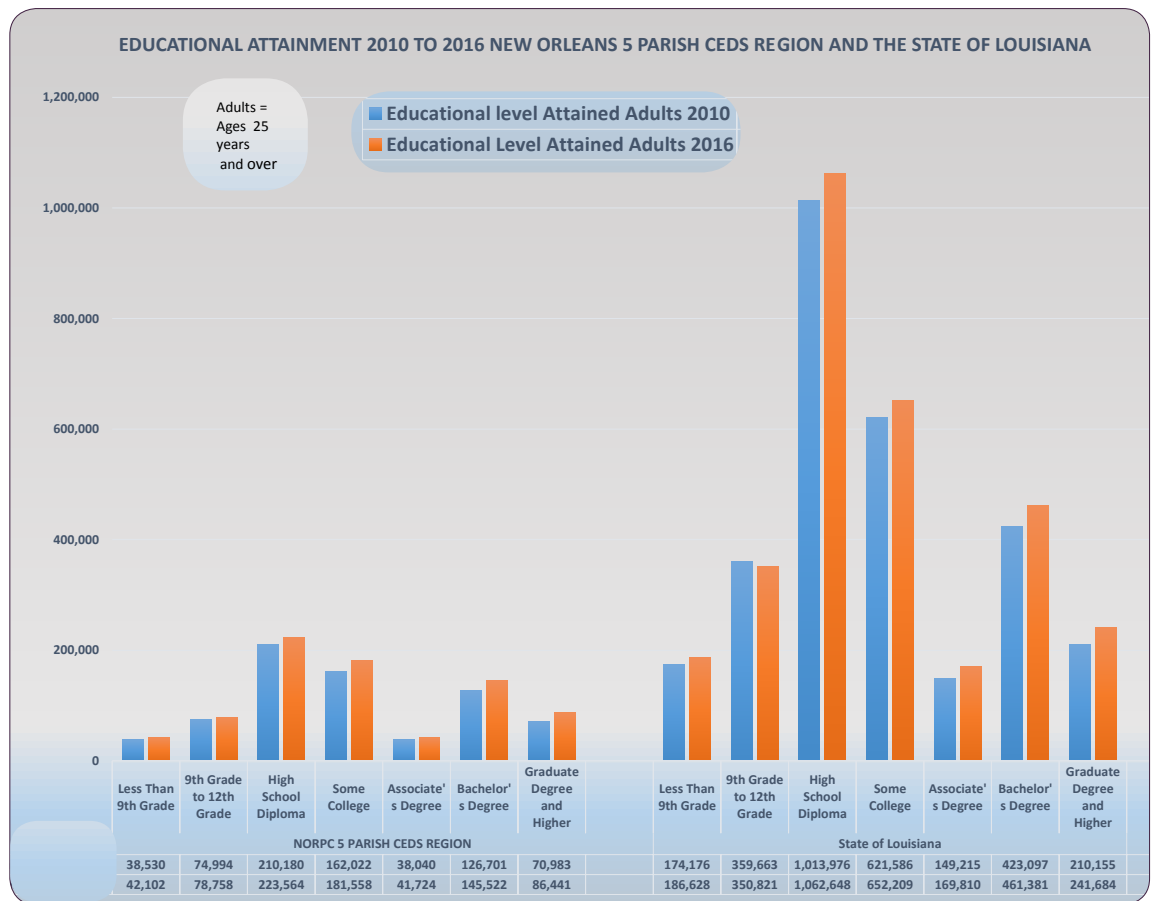
2. EDUCATION ATTAINMENT 2010-2016

The Education Attainment of the 5-parish region and that of Louisiana are quite similar with a few exceptions.

Louisiana has 6% more persons with a High School Diploma than the 5-parish region. The region has a greater percentage of the population with higher education degrees including Associate's (2-year), Bachelor's (4-year) and Graduate & Higher ----- 34.4% versus 28.4%, a 6% difference.

The types of jobs in the New Orleans region in both its urban and suburban areas include industries requiring higher education degrees - advance manufacturing, energy, international trade, health sciences, environmental management and digital media. (NOTE: An analysis of these clusters is provided in the next section.) This population has also grown at a greater level than the state.

Many Louisiana businesses have jobs requiring associate's degrees, and those are growing regionally and statewide.

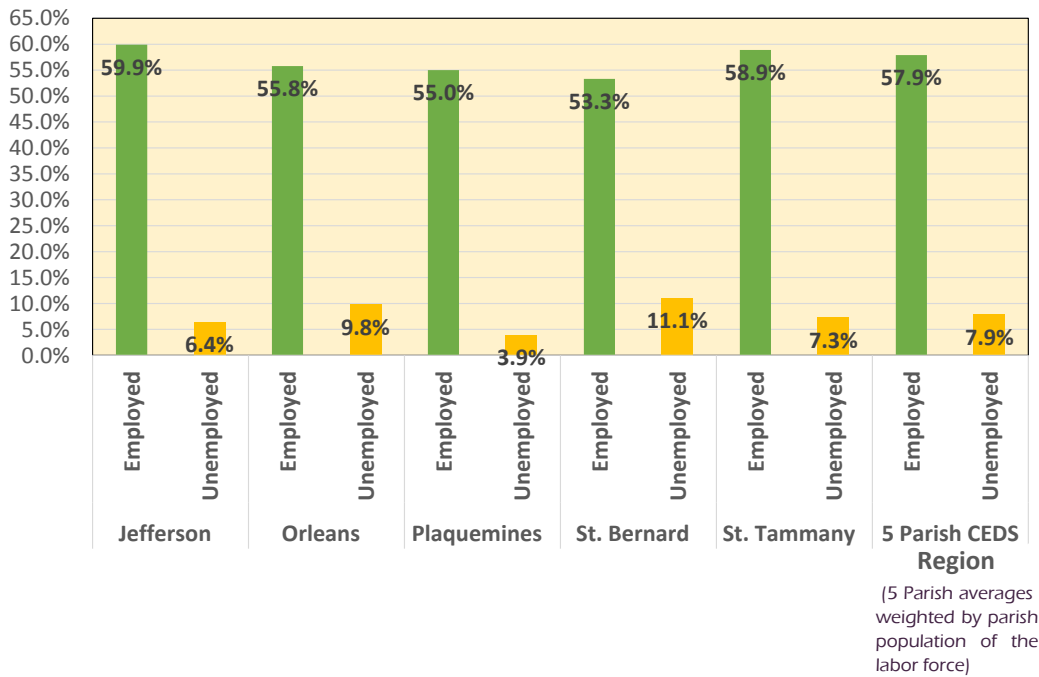


Education Attainment	Region 2016 (%)	2010-16 % Change	Louisiana 2016 (%)	2010-16 % Change
< 5 th Grade	5.3	9.3	6.0	7.2
5 th -12 th	10.0	5.0	11.2	(2.5)
HS Diploma	28.0	6.4	34.0	5.0
Some College	23.0	12.1	21.0	5.0
Associate's	5.2	10.0	5.4	14.0
Bachelor's	18.2	15.0	15.0	9.1
Graduate +	11.0	22.0	8.0	15.0

Data Sources: Emsi's educational attainment numbers are based on Emsi's demographic data and the American Community Survey. Educational attainment data cover only the population aged 25 years or more and indicate the highest level achieved..

PERCENT EMPLOYED/UNEMPLOYED IN LABOR FORCE 16 AND OVER POPULATION

Louisiana Employed % Over 16 in Labor Force = 55.4% Louisiana Unemployed % Over 16 in Labor Force = 7.7%
(2012 - 2016 Estimates)



3. EMPLOYMENT 2010-2016

The 5-parish regional employment of 57.9% is 2.5% and unemployment of 7.9% is 0.2% higher than the state of Louisiana.

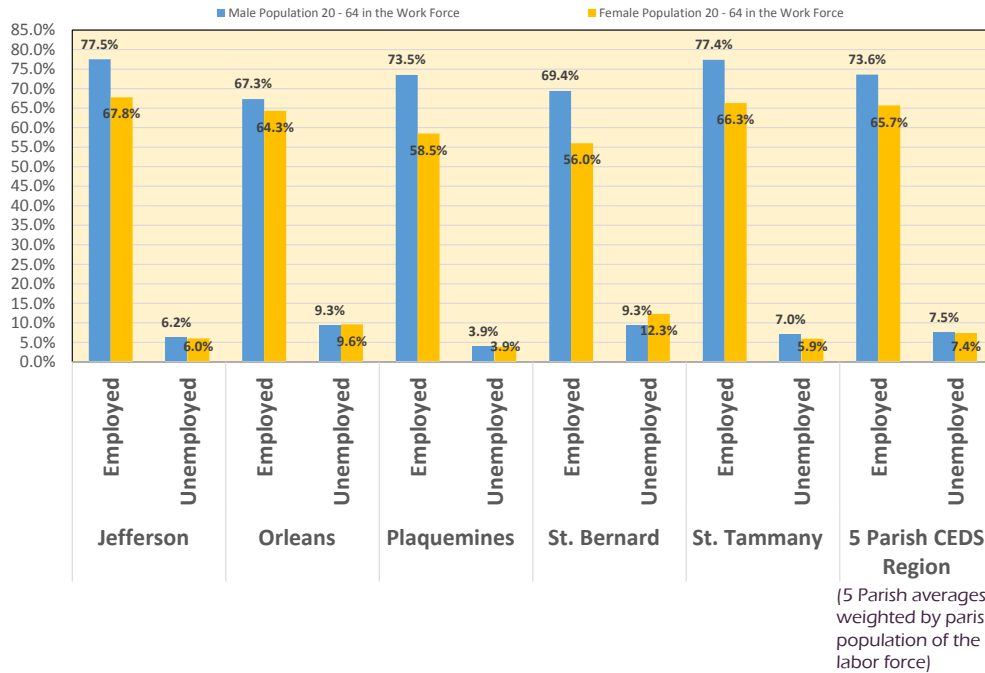
Employment and Unemployment by Race indicates racial disparities in the 5-parish region and a slight difference by gender.

	Unemployment	Employment
Total	7.9%	57.9%
Male	7.5%	73.6%
Female	7.4%	65.7%
White	5.7%	62.1%
Black	12.1%	53.5%
Am Indian	5.6%	56.9%
Asian	4.4%	59.3%
Pacific Islander	29.8%	38.0%
Other	7.0%	62.2%
Multi	7.7%	58.8%
Hispanic/Latino	8.7%	64.0%

MALE/FEMALE PERCENT EMPLOYED/UNEMPLOYED IN LABOR FORCE

AGE 20 - 64 POPULATION

Louisiana Males: Employed = 70% Unemployed = 7.4% Louisiana Females: Employed = 63.7% Unemployed = 7%
(2012 - 2016 Estimates)



Data Sources: The demographic data in this report is compiled from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the U.S. Census 5 Year Estimates (2012 - 2016).

PERCENT EMPLOYED/UNEMPLOYED IN LABOR FORCE 16 AND OVER POPULATION BY RACE (2012 - 2016 Estimates)



Data Sources: The demographic data in this report is compiled from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the U.S. Census Year Estimates (2012 - 2016).

5 Parish averages weighted by parish population of the labor force

4. INCOME AND EARNINGS 2010-2016

Median Household Income (MHHI) of \$48,289 is 5.8% higher than Louisiana and 12.7% below the U.S.

Racial disparity exists with MHH, with gaps between white and other races as wide as \$26,338 or 45%. In ascending order:

Other	\$31,934
Black	\$33,282
Hispanic	\$40,532
Am. Indian	\$42,252
Multi	\$43,972
Asian	\$51,854
White	\$58,272

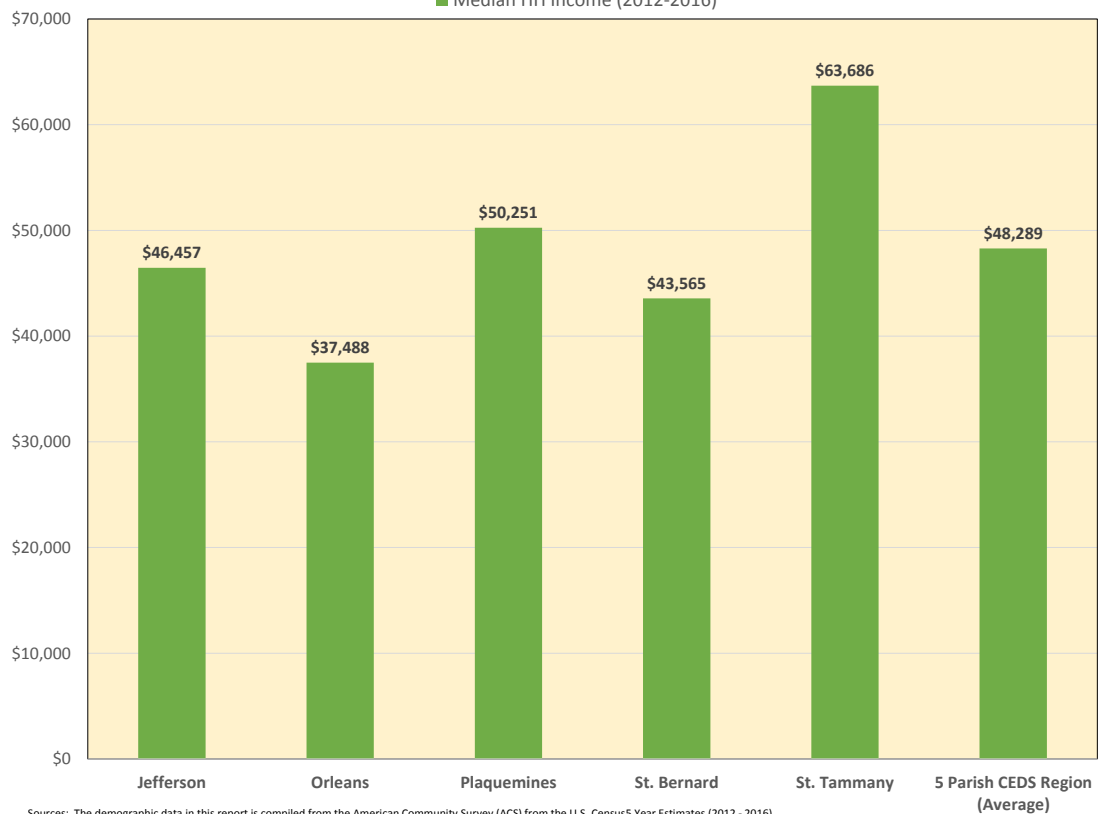
Median Earnings by Gender indicate there is a major gender income gap in the 5-parish region of 33% and in every parish, most notably in Plaquemines (43.6%) and St. Tammany (40.7%). The gender earnings differential was lowest in Orleans Parish at 19.5%. Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes have the lowest median earnings for both genders. In comparison, Louisiana's gender gap finds males earning 38.4% more than females, which is 5.4% greater than the region.



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 2016 DOLLARS

Louisiana Median HH Income = \$45,652 U.S. Median Household Income = \$55,322

■ Median HH Income (2012-2016)



MEDIAN EARNINGS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2016 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS) MALE/FEMALE FOR THE POPULATION 25 YEARS AND OVER

■ Median Male Earnings ■ Median Female Earnings

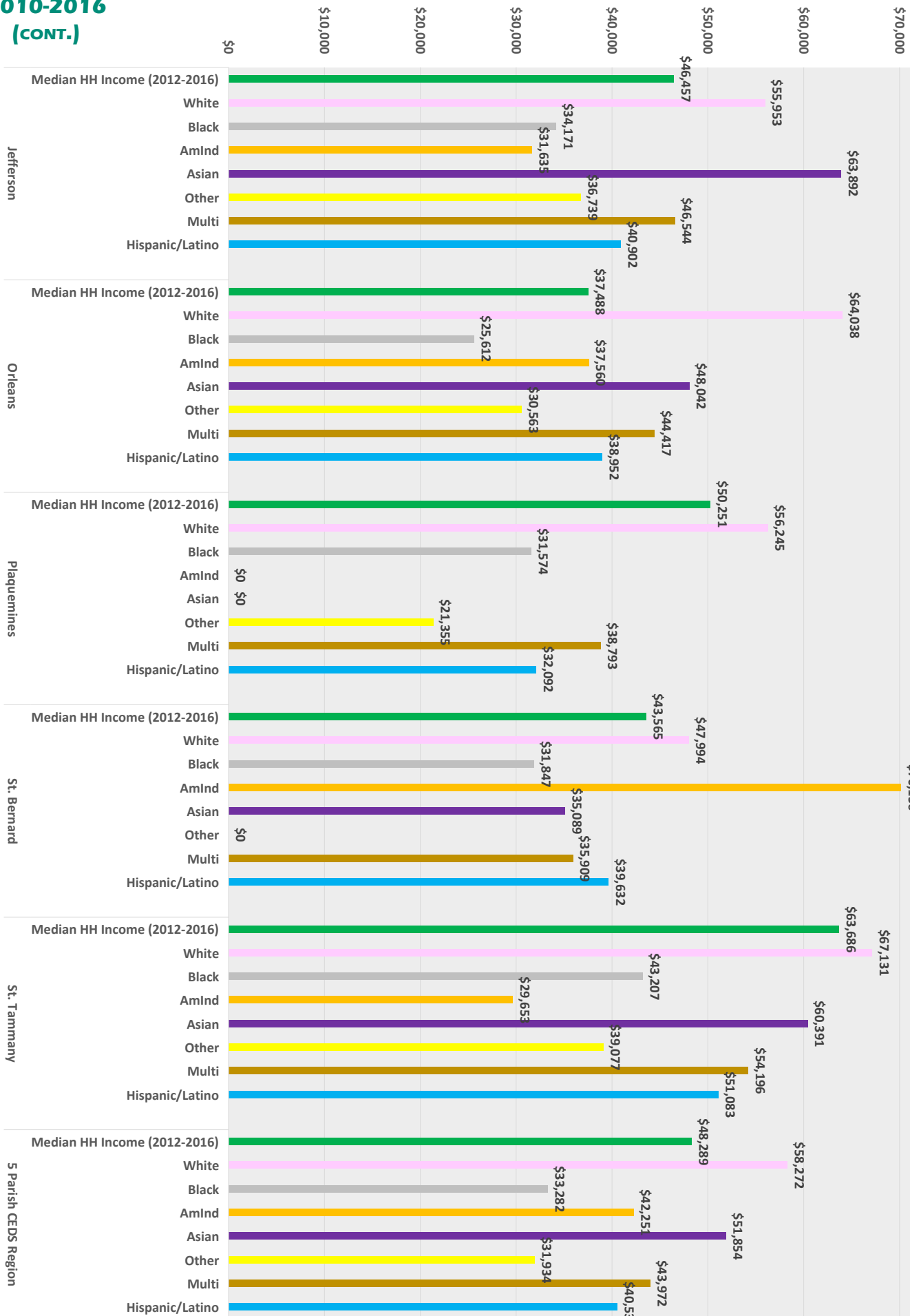
Louisiana: \$43,358 \$26,712



INCOME AND EARNINGS 2010-2016 (CONT.)

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY RACE IN 2016 DOLLARS (AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2012-2016)

LOUISIANA MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME = \$45,652
U.S. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME = \$55,322



Source: Demographic data in this report is compiled from the American Community Survey from the US Census 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016.

5. HOUSING 2010-2016

The regional housing market has continued to experience rising real estate values. As a result, current market rate housing is not affordable for low, moderate and middle-income families to rent or purchase homes, especially in popular areas. Availability lags demand to meet residents' needs and housing budgets based on income levels.

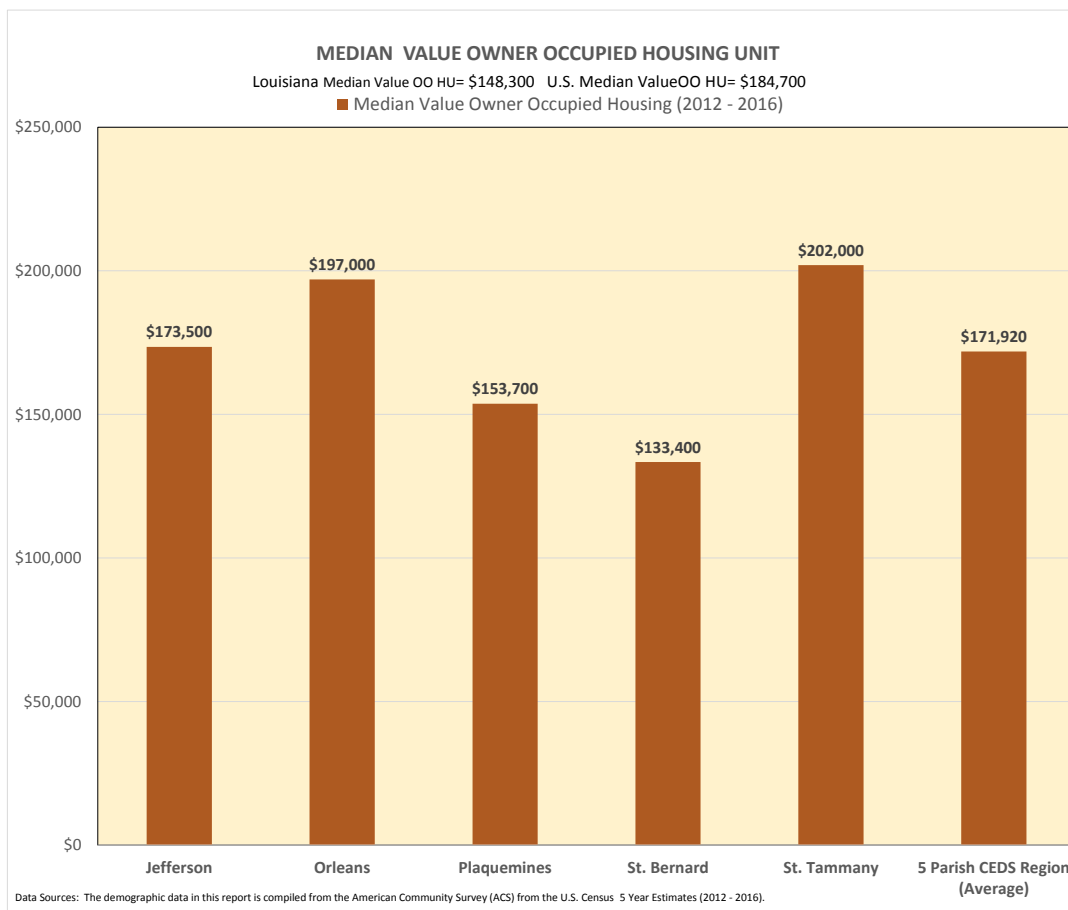
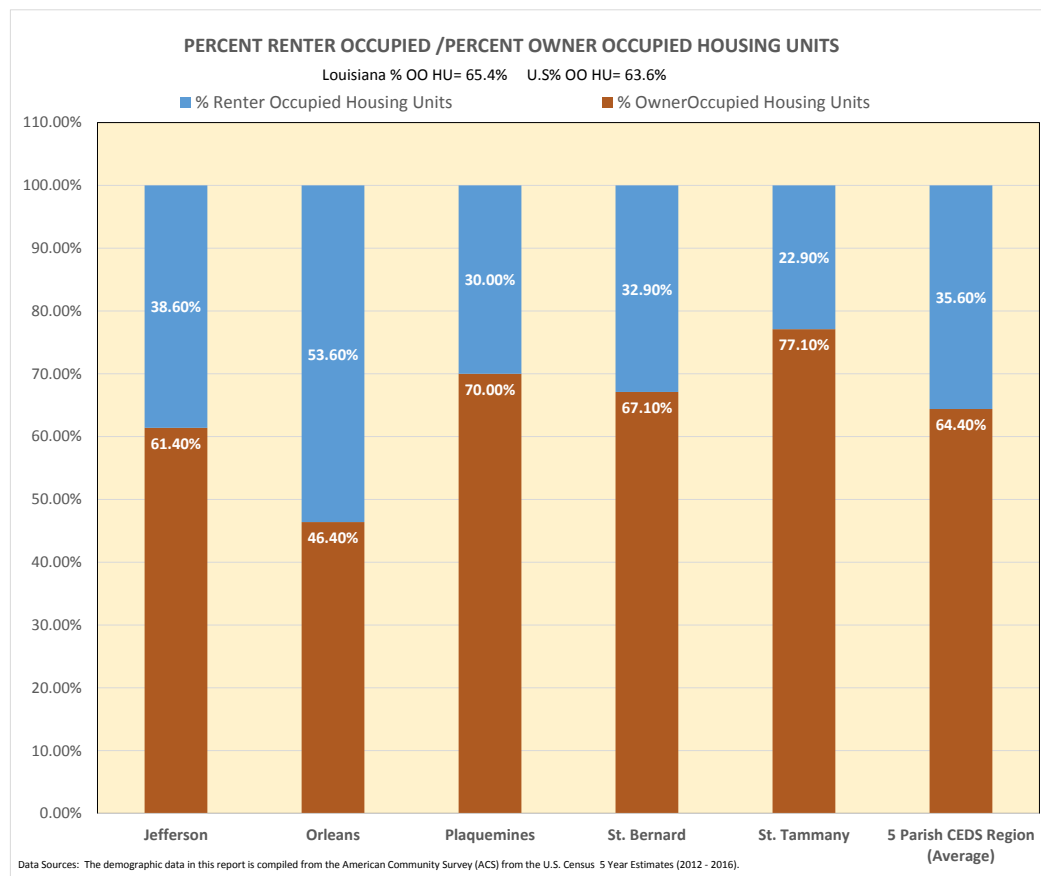
5-Parish Region Housing Summary:

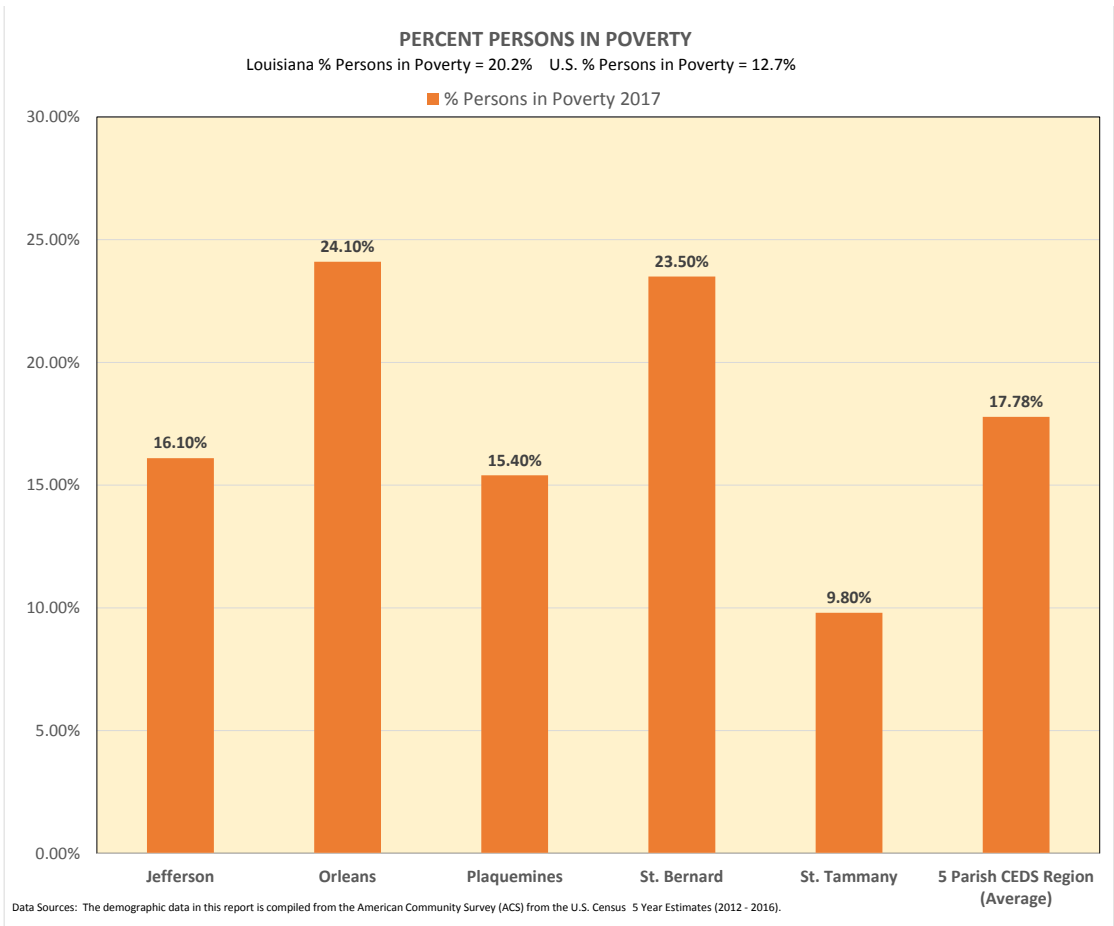
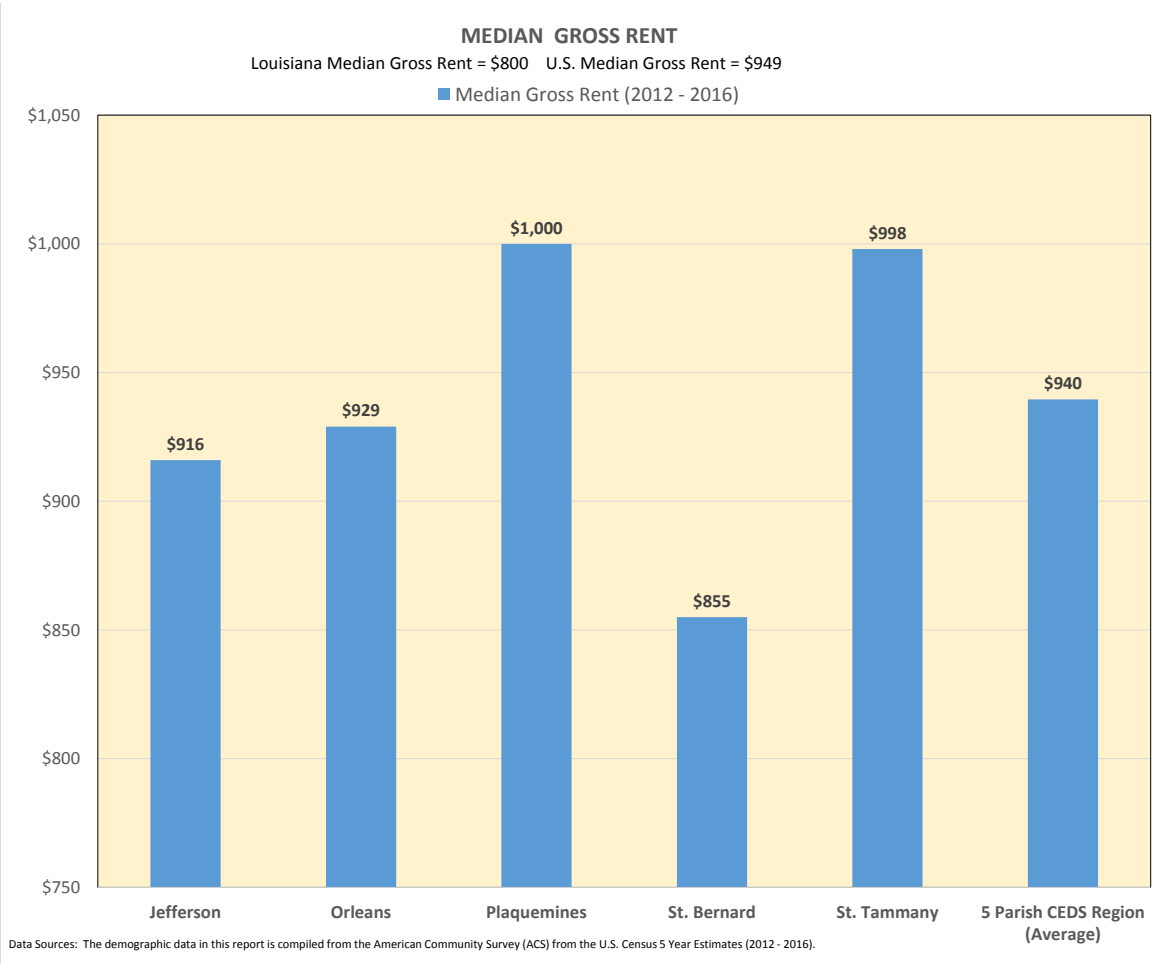
The region's housing units are 64.4% owner-occupied and 35.6% renter occupied.

Median value of owner occupied housing is \$171,920, 15.7% higher than the state value of \$148,300 and 7% below the U.S. value of \$184,700. Median gross rent of \$940 is 17.5% higher than the state's \$800 median gross rent and nearly equal to the U.S. median gross rent of \$949.

With a median household income of \$48,289, 12% lower than the U.S., it is difficult for regional residents to afford available market rate housing. 51.7% of rental households spend 30% or more of income for rent. 17.8% of the region's residents are in poverty, 5.1% greater than the U.S.

The NOLA Housing Alliance established a goal of adding 1500 affordable units per year, however estimated demand increases by 3300 households per year.





B. REGIONAL CLUSTER ANALYSIS

An analysis of the industry clusters driving and diversifying the New Orleans regional economy began with a review of existing economic development plans of local, regional and state economic development organizations working in the Greater New Orleans region. A presentation of demographic and cluster data along with regionally established targeted industry clusters was followed by an initial brainstorming session with the CEDS Strategy Committee. More in-depth analysis and dialogue followed at subsequent meetings. The regional cluster analysis examined industries by jobs, occupation, average annual earnings, business establishments, and jobs projections.

These industry clusters offer competitive strengths and assets in the global economy and can be positioned for increased investment and growth from within and outside of the region. Firms in these industry clusters share infrastructure, labor markets, suppliers and services that can result in synergies, efficiencies and capacity building. They also provide opportunities for economic diversification and job creation, which will increase the regional economy's ability to recover from economic downturns.

The following are the eight regional clusters identified for the New Orleans region. They have been divided into two categories - Foundational Clusters and Diversifying Clusters. Foundational Clusters include: (1) advanced manufacturing, (2) international trade, logistics, distribution, (3) energy, and (4) tourism, arts, music, entertainment. Diversifying Clusters include: (1) health sciences, (2) environmental management, (3) digital media, and (4) food and agriculture. These industry groups represent a total of 11,353 businesses, employing 196,480 people with average annual earnings ranging from \$34,329 (tourism, arts, music, entertainment) to \$156,641 (international trade, logistics, distribution).

FOUNDATIONAL CLUSTERS

Foundational clusters are a core set of industries that have historically driven the regional economy. They are groups of related industries that serve markets mainly beyond the region and provide quality jobs and opportunities for a broad citizenry.

1. **ADVANCED MANUFACTURING:** (117 industries) Ship and boat building, aerospace, oil and gas equipment, optical and lens, semi-conductor, welding, and food equipment manufacturing. These are the industries that are providing high-wage jobs for residents and products and services distributed to global markets.
2. **INTERNATIONAL TRADE, LOGISTICS, DISTRIBUTION:** (43 industries) Freight transportation, warehousing, packaging and crafting, and trucking. This cluster is a well-balanced, consistent group of industries that provide multi-modal (truck, ship, barge, rail, roadway) logistics services for transportation of goods throughout the U.S. and around the world.
3. **ENERGY:** (47 industries) Oil and gas, petrochemical extraction and refining, electric, natural gas, wind and pipelines. The U.S. and world depend upon these industries to provide energy resources to maintain daily living and major business operations.
4. **TOURISM, ARTS, MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT:** (39 industries) Performing arts, hotels, music, dance, theater, golf courses, nature parks, and food services/restaurants. These creative industries are the true heart and soul of the New Orleans region and Louisiana with opportunities to broaden their economic reach.



DIVERSIFYING CLUSTERS

Diversifying industry clusters are those that represent employment and economic impact yet also facilitate opportunities for economic diversification and have significant potential to become major economic drivers for the region. The future growth of these clusters will be fostered by the implementation of the capacity-building strategies and action steps contained in the CEDS report.

1. **HEALTH SCIENCES:** (37 industries) Biotechnology, medical institutions, medical labs and imaging centers, outpatient clinics, research & development, and assisted living facilities. The New Orleans Region is positioned to become a center of excellence in health sciences, geared towards specializations and research in cancer, diabetes and other chronic diseases, as well as a destination healthcare center for the southern U.S. region.
2. **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT:** (38 industries) Engineering, technical services, water supply and irrigation, scientific consulting services, and industrial construction. These industries specialize in water management, coastal restoration and sustainability, which are critical to Louisiana and communities across the globe negatively impacted by climate change and coastal land loss.
3. **DIGITAL MEDIA:** (14 industries) Software publishers, motion picture and video production, sound recording, data processing, and computer programming design. Louisiana and the New Orleans region have been recognized as a location for technology industries ecosystem including a strong talent pool, facilities, and generous business incentives.
4. **FOOD AND AGRICULTURE:** (25 industries) Seafood produce processing and packaging, hunting and fishing, sugar, confectionary, soft drink, condiments and spices, specialty food and grocery items, and seafood markets and wholesalers. The New Orleans area is known for its distinctive culinary expertise and delicious cuisine. Food manufacturing is supported by the region's proximity to goods moving through the world's largest port system to agricultural products grown in south Louisiana's fertile Delta soils including sugarcane, rice, peppers and sweet potatoes. Furthermore, the region's coastal wetlands have generated a major commercial seafood industry generating the second largest seafood catch in America.



1. ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

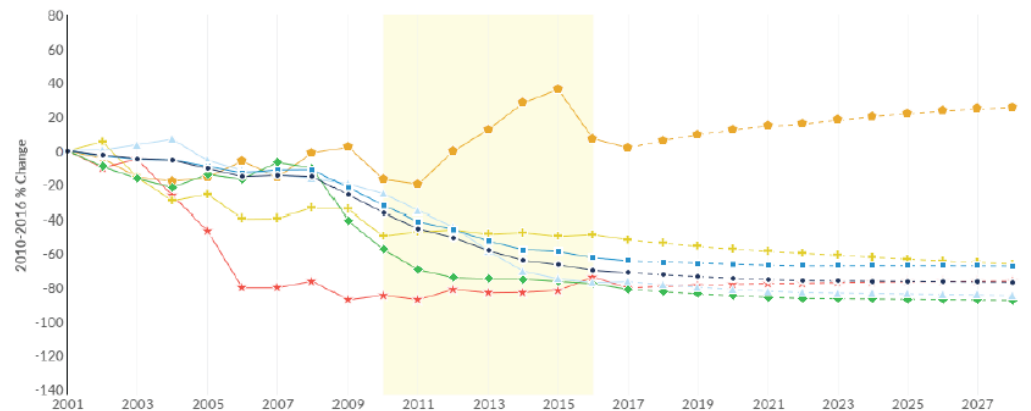
The Advanced Manufacturing cluster, consisting of 287 businesses, had a 53% decline in jobs from 2010 to 2016 due to the closure of several long-standing businesses that significantly impacted the region. Job losses occurred with the consolidation of Avondale Shipyard operations to Mississippi. The NASA Michoud Assembly Facility reduced its workforce as it transitioned to produce the next generation space craft for the U.S. Space program.

Average earnings in Advanced Manufacturing is one of the highest in the region at \$82,590.

Moving forward, job growth in the cluster through 2023 is projected to be level in the region, with moderate growth in two parishes.

The Avondale site is slated to become a multi-modal facilities operation. Aerospace giants at Michoud including Boeing and Lockheed Martin are manufacturing the next generation of space vehicle as part of the U.S. Space Launch System with future missions to Mars and beyond. These developments are anticipated to bring significant job growth and earnings to the region.

Industry Change Summary



Region	2010 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change	% Change	2017 Average Earnings	2017 Payrolled Business Locations
5 Parish Region	11,071	5,231	-5,840	-53%	\$82,590	287
New Orleans MSA	12,103	6,704	-5,399	-45%	\$84,804	318
Jefferson Parish, LA	7,443	2,292	-5,151	-69%	\$80,693	110
Orleans Parish, LA	2,133	1,125	-1,008	-47%	\$91,050	61
Plaquemines Parish, LA	471	479	8	2%	\$83,621	22
St. Bernard Parish, LA	40	67	27	68%	\$81,225	13
St. Tammany Parish, LA	985	1,268	283	29%	\$79,252	81

EMSI data uses OCEW, BEA, NIOEM, U.S. Census ACS and LA Department of Labor data for the years noted in the graphs.



2. INTERNATIONAL TRADE, LOGISTICS, DISTRIBUTION

The International Trade, Logistics, Distribution cluster, consisting of 979 businesses, had a 14% or 2,317 job increase from 2010 to 2016, due to the expansion of the region's three deep water port facilities and increased cargo volume, as well as investments in the energy sector and warehouse distribution centers.

Earnings in this cluster are significant with average annual earnings of \$70,014.

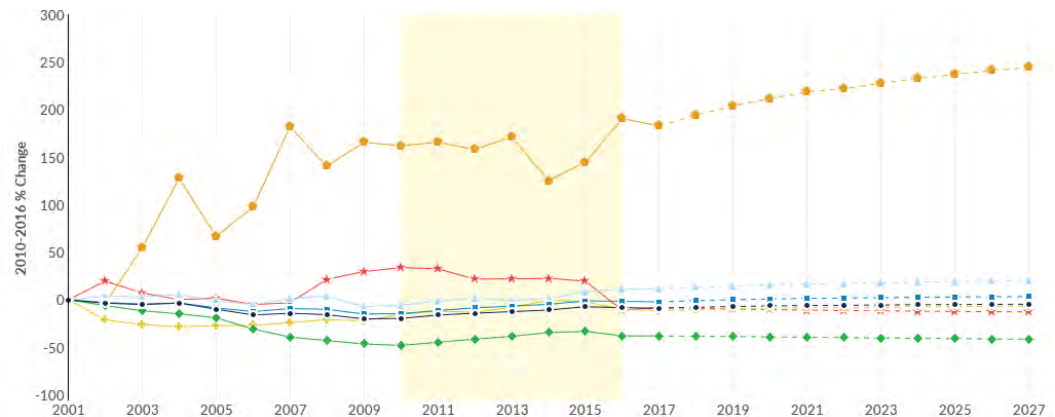
The strongest growth through 2023 is anticipated to be in St. Tammany Parish which has the third largest number of such businesses in the region. These include major retail distribution centers such as Rooms-to-Go with advantageous interstate access (I-10, I-12, and I-55).

Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport achieved a record-breaking peak of over 12 million in 2017, a 35% increase since 2010. The increased demand has attracted new international air service, additional non-stop destinations and increased frequencies to many markets. This improved global connectivity is an asset for growing jobs in the region.

Regional ports are seeing an uptick in cargo tonnage and container traffic, aided by public and private investments made in infrastructure projects including warehousing, docks, and other facilities. Port of New Orleans cruise passenger counts continue to increase and new, larger ships as well as new cruise lines have been added to serve the demand.



Industry Change Summary

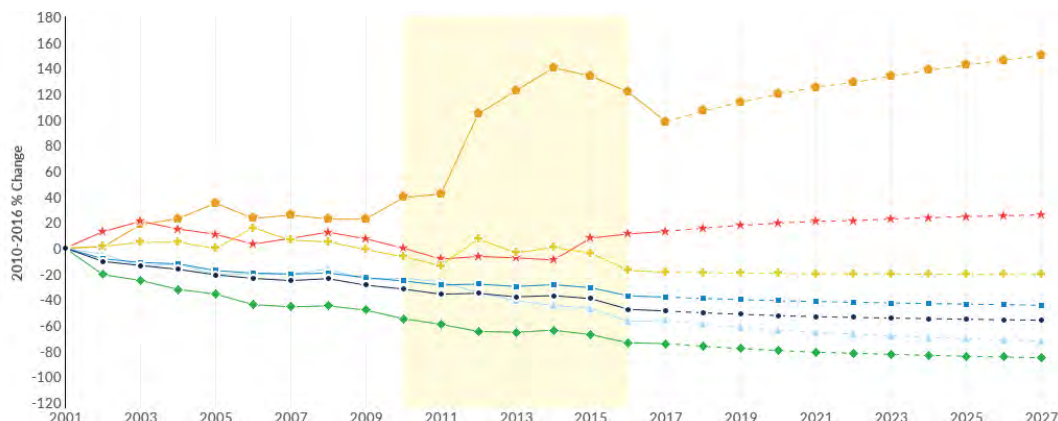


Region	2010 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change	% Change	2017 Average Earnings	2017 Payrolled Business Locations
5 Parish Region	16,569	18,886	2,317	14%	\$70,014	979
New Orleans MSA	18,970	21,855	2,885	15%	\$71,461	1,100
Jefferson Parish, LA	6,738	7,956	1,218	18%	\$65,215	447
Orleans Parish, LA	5,129	6,130	1,001	20%	\$64,903	240
Plaquemines Parish, LA	1,921	2,039	118	6%	\$80,802	88
St. Bernard Parish, LA	726	483	-243	-33%	\$64,343	31
St. Tammany Parish, LA	2,054	2,279	225	11%	\$92,761	174

EMSI data uses OCEW, BEA, NIOEM, U.S. Census ACS and LA Department of Labor data for the years noted in the graphs.

3. ENERGY

Industry Change Summary



Region	2010 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change	% Change	2017 Average Earnings	2017 Payrolled Business Locations
● 5 Parish Region	13,388	10,292	-3,096	-23%	\$156,641	417
■ New Orleans MSA	20,040	16,925	-3,115	-16%	\$158,249	493
▲ Jefferson Parish, LA	4,612	2,592	-2,020	-44%	\$111,684	149
◆ Orleans Parish, LA	4,168	2,434	-1,734	-42%	\$207,756	91
+ Plaquemines Parish, LA	2,292	2,032	-260	-11%	\$152,669	57
★ St. Bernard Parish, LA	925	1,027	102	11%	\$185,000	17
◆ St. Tammany Parish, LA	1,391	2,208	817	59%	\$144,046	104

EMS data uses QCEW, BEA, NIOEM, U.S. Census ACS and LA Department of Labor data for the years noted in the graphs.



The Energy cluster, consisting of 417 businesses and 10,292 jobs, had a significant drop in jobs (3,096 or 23%) from 2010 to 2016, as a result of the drastic reduction of crude oil production in the Gulf of Mexico.

Occupations in this sector run the gamut from Petroleum Engineers, Operators, Repairers, Oil and Gas Miners and Roundabouts with average annual earnings of \$156,641.

The New Orleans region is continuously impacted by the cyclical nature of the energy cluster – oil & gas, natural gas and petrochemical – with its vast array of drilling, refining, and large supplier network.

The petrochemical sector will help to lessen the impact of the declining oil and gas sector as numerous expansions are anticipated over the next five years. Some are already underway along the Mississippi River and a new methanol plant and possible LNG facility are planned in Plaquemines Parish. Farther upriver, Marathon, Shell Motiva, and Diamond Diesel expansions and new product lines will invest billions of dollars that will increase jobs and will thereby impact the New Orleans region's employment opportunities.

4. TOURSIM, ARTS, MUSIC, AND ENTERTAINMENT

The New Orleans region continues to be a destination for tourism and conventions, the arts, music and entertainment. The cluster is the largest employer with 66,437 jobs and 3,047 employers.

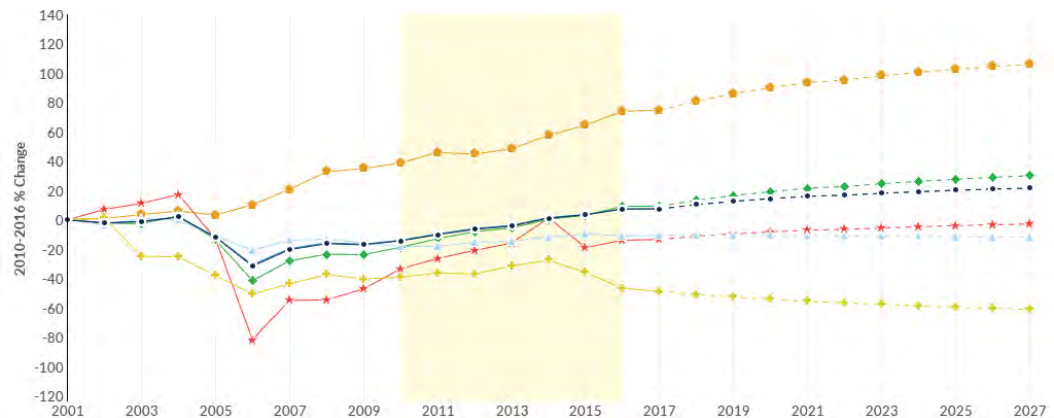
Growth is forecasted through 2023 due to growing visitor numbers each year, new hotel capacity, additional cruise ships, and increased air service, particularly international service.

Though the average annual earnings in the region is low at \$34,329, the cluster can offer a career pathway with upward mobility for a large segment of the region's underemployed and unemployed population. New market opportunities include the expansion of authentic visitor experiences throughout the area that celebrate the ecology, food, history, music and cultures of one of the most distinctive regions in the world.

The potential growth of businesses in the arts, architecture, film and music industries would also contribute to the increase in jobs and investments in this cluster.



Industry Change Summary

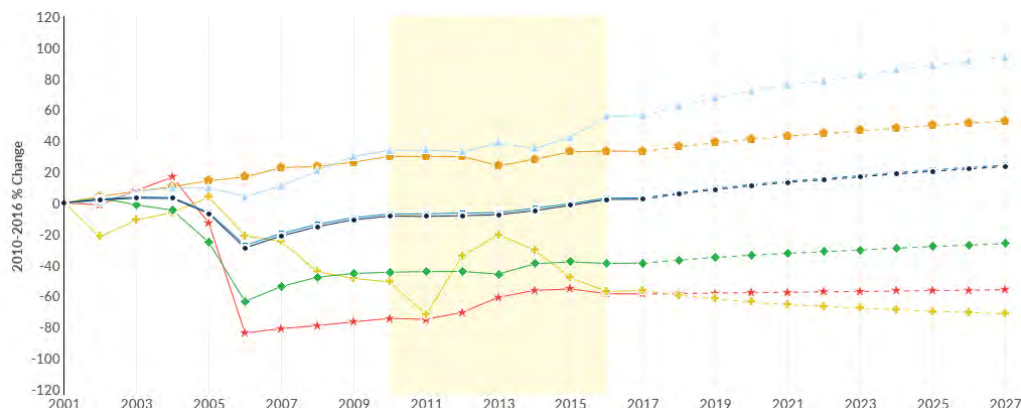


Region	2010 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change	% Change	2017 Average Earnings	2017 Payrolled Business Locations
● 5 Parish Region	53,010	66,437	13,427	25%	\$34,329	3,047
■ New Orleans MSA	54,374	67,854	13,480	25%	\$34,018	3,193
▲ Jefferson Parish, LA	15,348	16,753	1,405	9%	\$46,571	916
◆ Orleans Parish, LA	29,386	39,512	10,126	34%	\$32,535	1,502
+ Plaquemines Parish, LA	604	528	-76	-13%	\$29,805	50
★ St. Bernard Parish, LA	539	698	159	29%	\$20,829	73
◆ St. Tammany Parish, LA	7,132	8,946	1,814	25%	\$20,650	507

EMSI data uses OCEW, BEA, NIOEM, U.S. Census ACS and LA Department of Labor data for the years noted in the graphs.

1. HEALTH SCIENCES

Industry Change Summary



Region	2010 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change	% Change	2017 Average Earnings	2017 Payrolled Business Locations
● 5 Parish Region	59,476	66,443	6,967	12%	\$64,570	3,151
■ New Orleans MSA	61,911	68,804	6,893	11%	\$64,222	3,305
▲ Jefferson Parish, LA	28,295	32,941	4,646	16%	\$67,726	1,391
◆ Orleans Parish, LA	17,005	18,738	1,733	10%	\$61,023	859
+ Plaquemines Parish, LA	536	469	-67	-13%	\$63,358	19
★ St. Bernard Parish, LA	507	822	315	62%	\$48,024	64
⬢ St. Tammany Parish, LA	13,132	13,473	341	3%	\$62,838	819

EMSI data uses OCEW, BEA, NIOEM, U.S. Census ACS and LA Department of Labor data for the years noted in the graphs.



The Health Sciences cluster, which has emerged as an increasingly significant contributor to the regional economy, consists of 3,151 businesses and 66,443 jobs, reflecting a 12% increase in jobs since 2010. Average annual earnings are \$64,570.

Strong growth is forecasted due to a \$2 billion public investment in a new regional Veterans Administration Hospital and the University Medical Center (UMC) which serves as the academic teaching hospital for Tulane University and the LSU Medical School. Significant private sector investments contribute growth in this sector with major expansions underway at the Ochsner Healthcare System. Innovations in patient care, technology, destination healthcare, and elderly healthcare services are also drivers of industry expansion projected in the field.

The region has one of the fastest growing health sciences sectors in the country according to STAT website, which utilized U.S. Census data for its analysis. In a recent report by GNO Inc. on the state of the healthcare sector, job growth is predicted to be 19% through 2026.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

The Environmental Management cluster is a significant employer in the region with 18,399 jobs and 2,156 businesses, despite a 5% loss over a six-year period. The spike and decline were likely due to the completion of funded environmental clean-up work related to the 2008 Gulf Oil Spill.

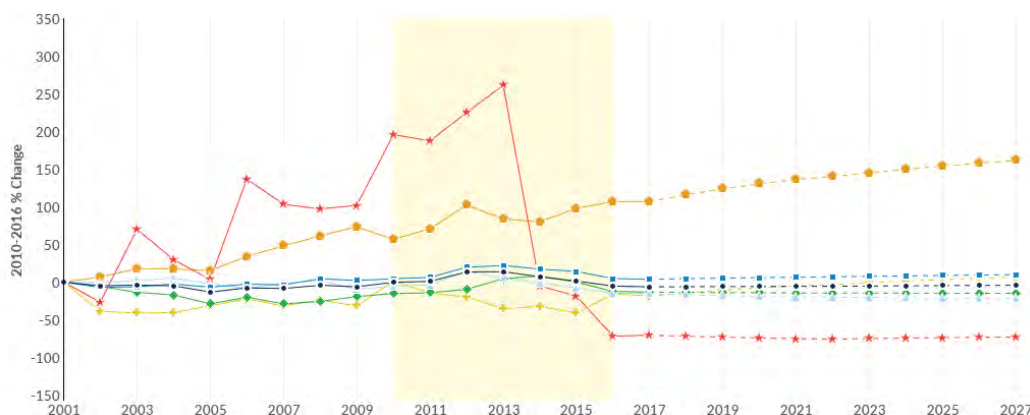
Employment opportunities range from higher skilled technical, operations and engineering jobs, to many support personnel positions. Average annual earnings in the region are \$85,192.

Flat growth is forecasted through 2023 in the region except for St. Tammany Parish, which is projected to have the third largest number of businesses in this cluster.

Despite the forecast, opportunities in water management and coastal restoration are anticipated to increase as Louisiana continues to focus resources on innovative approaches and projects to manage water and coastal issues. A public-private investment of \$60 million has been made in a Water Campus, a collaborative research center in Baton Rouge devoted to studying coastal restoration and sustainability. The Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority's 2017 Master Plan outlines nearly \$1.2 billion in projects in Southeast Louisiana that have been completed, are now in construction, or are planned for construction.



Industry Change Summary

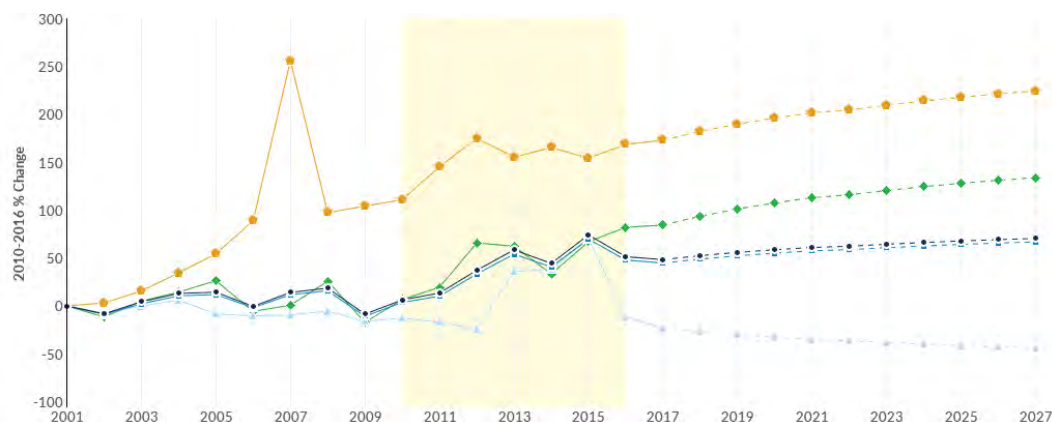


Region	2010 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change	% Change	2017 Average Earnings	2017 Payrolled Business Locations
● 5 Parish Region	19,392	18,399	-993	-5%	\$85,192	2,156
■ New Orleans MSA	21,951	21,984	33	0%	\$84,472	2,295
▲ Jefferson Parish, LA	8,168	7,401	-767	-9%	\$84,445	732
◆ Orleans Parish, LA	6,620	6,830	210	3%	\$86,041	803
+ Plaquemines Parish, LA	1,136	944	-192	-17%	\$80,403	74
★ St. Bernard Parish, LA	1,104	105	-999	-90%	\$74,763	25
◆ St. Tammany Parish, LA	2,364	3,117	753	32%	\$86,867	523

EMSI data uses QCEW, BEA, NIOEM, U.S. Census ACS and LA Department of Labor data for the years noted in the graphs.

3. DIGITAL MEDIA

Industry Change Summary



Region	2010 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change	% Change	2017 Average Earnings	2017 Payrolled Business Locations
5 Parish Region	4,665	6,646	1,981	42%	\$81,534	1,072
New Orleans MSA	4,696	6,699	2,003	43%	\$81,469	1,087
Jefferson Parish, LA	1,512	1,541	29	2%	\$78,864	273
Orleans Parish, LA	2,514	4,295	1,781	71%	\$80,261	551
Plaquemines Parish, LA	26	32	6	23%	\$133,558	6
St. Bernard Parish, LA	<10	<10	--	--	\$68,245	7
St. Tammany Parish, LA	604	770	166	27%	\$90,967	236

EMSI data uses QCEW, BEA, NIOEM, U.S. Census ACS and LA Department of Labor data for the years noted in the graphs.



Tax incentives, the creative culture and digital media boom, along with a burgeoning entrepreneurial community have contributed to the significant growth of this cluster. Industry partnerships with local universities for talent development has been a win-win by attracting and retaining companies while developing local workforce skills.

The 42% growth in jobs from 1,072 businesses at average annual earnings of \$81,534 is impressive and the sector has built a visible reputation for the New Orleans region.

Companies such as GE Digital, Turbo Squid, iSeatz and Susco Solutions, along with newer firms in software development, video game production, modeling and other innovative technologies are attracted to the available talent and state tax incentive programs.

Driving factors of growth in the digital media industry in the region will be the establishment of the new DXC Technology Digital Transformation Center and recently announced Accruent, along with the continued attraction of new, and expansion of existing technology companies.

The region will see continued growth through 2023 as the business ecosystem (workforce training, incentives, infrastructure, services) continues to provide support for this diversifying cluster.

4. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

The food and agriculture cluster in the region remained fairly steady with a 6% increase in jobs. It consists of 423 businesses with an average annual earnings of \$60,115.

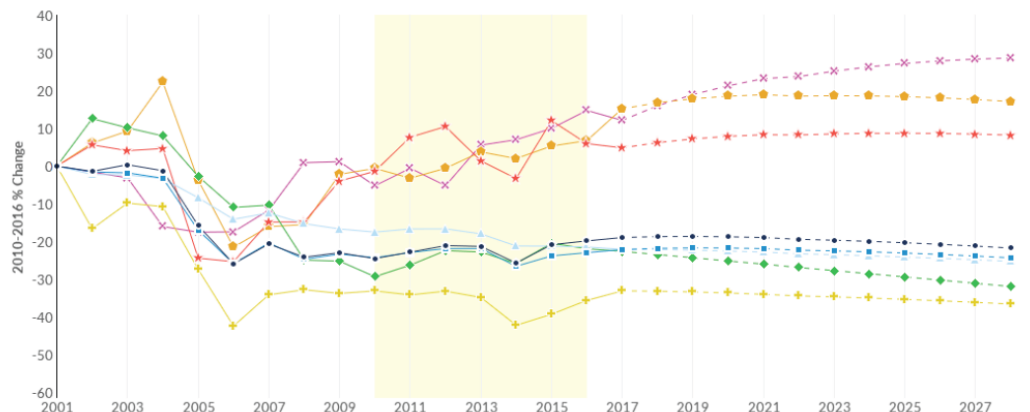
The New Orleans area is known for its distinctive culinary expertise and delicious cuisine. Food manufacturing is supported by the region's proximity to goods moving through the world's largest port system to agricultural products grown in south Louisiana's fertile Delta soils including sugarcane, rice, peppers and sweet potatoes. Furthermore, the region's waterways and coastal wetlands have supplied a major commercial seafood industry, generating the second largest seafood catch in America.

Some of the major food products processed by regional companies include coffee, spices, prepared food products, candies, sugar, seafood and other gourmet foods. Some of the largest companies include Reily Foods, Elmer's Candy Company, Dominos Sugar, J.M. Smucker Company (Folger's), Baumer Foods, Magic Seasoning and Domino Sugar.

New market opportunities, expansion of existing businesses, and growth of new businesses in the food and agriculture sector will drive steady job growth through 2023.



Industry Change Summary



Region	2010 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change	% Change	2017 Average Earnings	2017 Payrolled Business Locations
5 Parish Region	7,877	8,366	489	6%	\$60,115	423
New Orleans MSA	8,727	8,878	151	2%	\$59,796	450
Louisiana	43,978	41,881	-2,097	-5%	\$47,913	2,489
Jefferson Parish, LA	2,687	2,968	281	10%	\$58,559	145
Orleans Parish, LA	2,782	2,678	-104	-4%	\$68,710	123
Plaquemines Parish, LA	822	883	61	7%	\$49,917	40
St. Bernard Parish, LA	620	666	46	7%	\$68,653	13
St. Tammany Parish, LA	967	1,171	204	21%	\$45,634	102

EMSI data uses QCEW, BEA, NIOEM, U.S. Census ACS and LA Department of Labor data for the years noted in the graphs.

IV. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOT) OF THE REGION

The SWOT Analysis Summary is based upon economic and demographic data, cluster analysis, and expertise and insights from the Strategy Committee, industry interviews and focus groups. The SWOT defines the regional economic conditions that are the basis for development of the goals, objectives and specific actions to drive the growth of the regional economy. A more detailed SWOT analysis can be found in the 2019 CEDS Appendix on the RPC website at www.norpc.org/comprehensive_economic_development_strategy.html.

STRENGTHS

- Economic diversification is increasing
- Multi-modal transportation system
- Robust entrepreneurial ecosystem
- University, government and private centers of research (to support the business base)
- Number and diversity of higher education institutions
- Burgeoning health sciences cluster
- Effective post-secondary business training partnerships
- 100+ available sites for development, business and industrial parks
- History, culture, food, arts and entertainment

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of diverse business base
- Poor condition of basic infrastructure
- Threat of impact of severe weather
- Shortage of affordable housing
- Shortage of seed, debt and venture capital funding
- Weak early childhood and K-12 Education
- Lack of regional transportation system
- Economic inequalities in employment, income and housing
- Crime
- Concentrated poverty
- Shortage of skilled workers for major industry sectors

OPPORTUNITIES

- Growth in foundational and diversifying clusters: health sciences, food, environmental management, petrochemical, international trade, logistics and distribution
- Growth of research and commercialization that expands innovation and business
- Implementation of a regional water management and coastal restoration system
- Increased revenues and number of minority, disadvantaged and veteran businesses
- Diversified regional energy system
- Strengthened entrepreneurial ecosystem that increases existing, start-up and high growth
- Collaborative education and workforce training programs that create a talent pipeline attracting businesses to region
- Regional transit system that effectively serves the region

THREATS

- Uncertainty of state funding
- Increased cost of living
- Potential loss of young professionals
- High incarceration rate
- Potential loss of jobs due to technology automation
- Federal tariffs on imports/exports
- Massive flooding and coastal land loss from storms, subsidence and sea level rise

V. ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

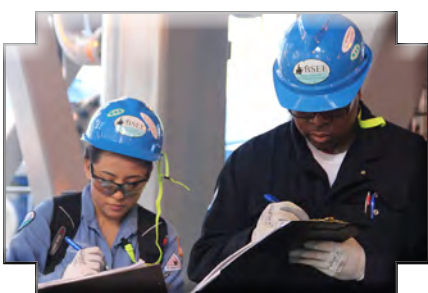
The New Orleans region, like most U.S. communities, is vulnerable to economic downturns, influenced by both internal weaknesses and external threats. While every region also faces its own set of difficult social and environmental challenges, the New Orleans region, in particular, is one of the most fragile ecologies in the world faced with an increase in weather-related natural disasters, coastal land loss, and sea level rise.

In few other regions is the issue of resilience and sustainability more critical, offering the greatest regional challenge, as well one of the greatest opportunities for economic growth and diversification. From the first RPC CEDS steering committee meeting, the CEDS process has stressed the importance of integrating research, discussion, strategies and action planning on economic resilience and sustainability.

The overall CEDS strategic planning framework places emphasis on the region adapting to ever-changing economic conditions through industry diversification. Strategies to improve diversification are focused on improving the competitiveness of foundational clusters of energy, tourism, arts, music and entertainment, food and agriculture and advanced manufacturing, while also expanding the diversifying industry clusters of health sciences, digital media, and environmental management. Other key action areas that will build a more vibrant, sustainable economy include the alignment of workforce skills and knowledge to meet market demand, connecting business opportunities and training to the underserved, strengthening the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem and investing in the region's infrastructure to bolster community resilience and upward mobility for residents.

Led by public, private and non-profit leadership, major local and regional initiatives are being implemented or planned to address the region's vulnerabilities and to mitigate risk by investing in physical and human capital to grow the capacity to sustain a healthy, resilient economy in the five-parish region. The following summary describes some of the major environmental and workforce development projects already in place and identified in the CEDS strategic planning process.

For a listing of resilience initiatives in the region and state, refer to the 2019 CEDS Appendix available on the RPC website at www.norpc.org/comprehensive_economic_development_strategy.html.



VI. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

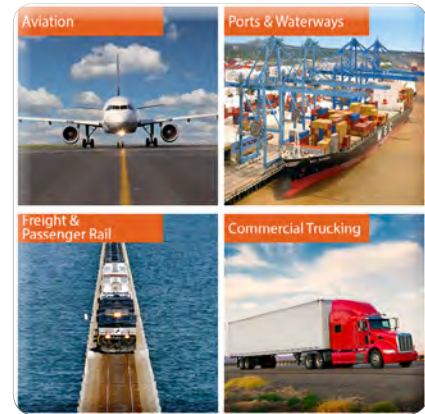
THE VISION

Greater New Orleans is a competitive and thriving, diverse, resilient and equitable regional economy that provides a high standard of living for its residents as a global business hub of technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Strong consensus among key stakeholders exists on the importance of infrastructure system improvements to support the region's capacity to grow jobs and businesses in the region, while at the same time generating employment opportunities for residents that enable them to move up the economic ladder. These infrastructure improvements are also critical to the safety, resilience and sustainability of the region.

GOAL: STRENGTHEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE REGION, INCLUDING SYSTEMS OF CYBER SECURITY, UTILITIES, ROADWAYS, PORTS, TRANSIT, RAIL, PROTECTION, COASTAL RESTORATION AND WATER MANAGEMENT TO ATTRACT, SUSTAIN AND EXPAND THE CAPACITY OF BUSINESSES IN THE REGION.



OBJECTIVE 1: BOLSTER UTILITIES IN THE REGION TO INCREASE RESILIENCE TO WITHSTAND CATASTROPHIC SHOCK.

Action A: Conduct local utility and water management planning aligned with regional plans, introducing a paradigm shift in infrastructure development in the region.

Action B: Work with the technology sector to develop and implement an action plan to strengthen cyber security in the region to withstand potential threats.

OBJECTIVE 2: UPGRADE AND IMPROVE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS INCLUDING AIRPORT, PORT, RAIL, ROAD, BRIDGE AND TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE TO BE GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE.

Action A: Increase investment in infrastructure improvements to elevate the importance of the region as a gateway for business to national and international markets.

Action B: Develop and implement a regional transit system that increases mobility and access to employment, training and economic opportunity.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPLEMENT PRIORITY WATER MANAGEMENT AND COASTAL RESTORATION PROJECTS IDENTIFIED IN ADOPTED AND/OR LEGISLATED PLANS (I.E. THE LOUISIANA COASTAL MASTER PLAN, THE GREATER NEW ORLEANS URBAN WATER PLAN AND LA SAFE PLAN) AND EXPAND ON THROUGH EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING.

Action A: Strengthen STEM education and career readiness for the environmental management sector.

Action B: Connect, support and maximize opportunities for local businesses to secure contract work on water and coastal restoration projects in the state.

Action C: Connect and support local businesses to export coastal restoration and water management technical expertise, products and services nationally and internationally.

OBJECTIVE 4: IMPLEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE WORKFORCE TRAINING TO DEVELOP A PIPELINE OF SKILLED WORKERS TO SUPPLY THE GROWING INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SECTOR BUSINESSES WITH TALENT.

WORKFORCE AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Business stakeholders who participated in the CEDS planning process identified workforce as the most important issue that must be addressed to achieve sustainable economic growth in the region. The presence of a highly skilled workforce is a critical component of a region's ability to compete on a national and international level. While significant progress and partnerships have been forged to address the issue in recent years, stakeholders expressed a sense of urgency in aligning career readiness, industry certification, education and training to meet business needs, increase employability and realize the economic growth potential of the region.

GOAL: DEVELOP SEAMLESS, MARKET-DRIVEN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS THAT ACCELERATE THE GROWTH AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS OF TARGET INDUSTRY CLUSTERS AND FOSTER ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS.

OBJECTIVE 1: DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS WITH EDUCATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS (EDOs) AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS TO PROMOTE CAREER LADDERS AND INDUSTRY-BASED CREDENTIALS TO RETAIN AND ATTRACT A QUALIFIED WORKFORCE IN TARGET INDUSTRY SECTORS.

Action A: Form collaboration w/EDOs and business to identify and promote career ladders and industry credentials in target industries.

Action B: Ensure that industry-validated credentials for target industry clusters are aligned with LA Department of Education's Jump Start pathways.

Action C: Align higher-education curriculum with career pathways and industry credentials to support the growth of the region's industry clusters.

OBJECTIVE 2: WORK COLLABORATIVELY WITH EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND EDOs TO INCREASE STUDENT CAREER READINESS THROUGH PROGRAMS SUCH AS DUAL ENROLLMENT, INTERNSHIPS AND CAREER EXPLORATION.

Action A: Align K-12 and college curriculum to facilitate transferring K-12 credits to higher education institutions.

Action B: Identify and secure funding and transportation to increase student participation in dual enrollment programs in the region.

OBJECTIVE 3: EXPAND HIGHER EDUCATION-INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS THAT ESTABLISH CURRICULUM-BASED WORK-PLACE LEARNING MODELS.

Action A: Support the New Orleans Regional Innovation Alliance's (RIA) efforts to increase internships and apprenticeships in target industry clusters, similar to the Software Apprenticeship Program (SWEAP) established for GE Digital at UNO and advanced manufacturing internships established at Laitram Corp with Southeastern Louisiana University.

OBJECTIVE 4: ADDRESS TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL NEEDS OF EMPLOYEES OF EXISTING COMPANIES IN TARGET INDUSTRY CLUSTERS TO FACILITATE UPWARD MOBILITY.

Action A: Utilize incumbent worker training and professional development resources in target industries.



COLLABORATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEM

New Orleans has been nationally recognized for the dramatic growth of entrepreneurship and an ecosystem of support for start-up and early stage businesses since Hurricane Katrina devastated the region in 2005. The region faces challenges and opportunities to better connect, leverage and expand the region's assets and stakeholders, and to expand entrepreneurship and innovation in the region. Key strategies focus on strengthening connectivity, financing, improving success of fledgling businesses with local corporations, higher education and international business.

GOAL: LEVERAGE EXISTING REGIONAL ECOSYSTEM COLLABORATION TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH STARTUPS AND EXISTING BUSINESS TO EXPAND ON A NATIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVEL.

OBJECTIVE 1: FOSTER AND MAINTAIN MEANINGFUL BUSINESS COLLABORATION BETWEEN LARGER CORPORATIONS AND STARTUPS.

Action A: Increase awareness of the importance of buying local.

OBJECTIVE 2: FACILITATE A COORDINATED REGIONAL SYSTEM TO EFFECTIVELY IDENTIFY AND CONNECT ENTREPRENEURS WITH INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.

OBJECTIVE 3: STRENGTHEN A REGIONAL SYSTEM OF COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION AMONG ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM STAKEHOLDERS TO LEVERAGE AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE TO BETTER SERVE THE ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITY AND REGION.

OBJECTIVE 4: ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMERCIALIZATION OF RESEARCH IN THE REGION, INCLUDING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN STARTUPS AND RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES AND PROGRAMS.

OBJECTIVE 5: ENCOURAGE PLACE-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN THE REGION THAT CREATE WALKABLE, MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOODS TO ATTRACT, GROW AND RETAIN BUSINESSES, IMPROVE ACCESS TO JOBS, AND TO INCREASE ECONOMIC EQUITY.

OBJECTIVE 6: PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO BUILD CAPACITY OF LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS, FARMERS, RANCHERS, AND FISHERMEN WHO ARE SERVING LOCAL MARKETS.

Action A: Support development of better scalable mechanisms for tracking local products and clearly labeling them to improve traceability and transparency.

Action B: Support Farm to School and Farm to Institution activities in the region.





Economic Equity

Significant disparities exist in the region between white and minority populations in wealth, business ownership, access to capital and business market share. Income disparity creates a workforce poorly equipped for the modern economy, dampens regional job growth, decreases worker productivity and diminishes the local and state tax base. The goal of emphasizing equity as a growth strategy is to develop generational wealth, which in turn creates economic growth, stability and resilience for all residents in the New Orleans region.

GOAL: DIVERSIFY AND STRENGTHEN THE REGIONAL ECONOMY BY BUILDING SYSTEMS THAT ENABLE SMALL AND DISADVANTAGED ENTERPRISES TO INCREASE AND SUSTAIN BUSINESS CONTRACTS, REVENUES AND WEALTH GENERATION.

OBJECTIVE 1: INCREASE CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (DBEs) WITH ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS WITHIN FOUNDATIONAL AND DIVERSIFYING CLUSTERS.

Action A: Support joint ventures among nonprofits and anchor institutions.

OBJECTIVE 2: BUILD CAPACITY AMONG DBEs BY ENSURING THEY HAVE ACCESS TO CAPITAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SCALE THEIR BUSINESSES FOR LARGER OPPORTUNITIES.

Action A: Foster awareness among private sector of the importance of creating contract opportunities for DBEs.

Action B: Encourage increased seed funding for minority businesses.

Action C: Support technical assistance for minority firms to grow their businesses and to access larger contracting opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPLEMENT A REGIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY THAT IMPROVES ACCESS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, UPWARD MOBILITY AND QUALITY HOUSING.

Action A: Facilitate the implementation of a regional affordable housing strategy.

Action B: Identify and create financing mechanisms to incentivize the creation of affordable housing throughout the region.

ACCESS TO CAPITAL

While the availability of capital for start-up and early stage companies has increased significantly over the past five years, a shortage of pre-seed and seed capital still restricts the region's ability to increase the number of businesses in its entrepreneurial pipeline. Strategies to connect and support disadvantaged businesses to capital, investors and technical support is a special focus and high priority given the opportunity and potential impact. Financing mechanisms that effectively spread, reduce and/or leverage risk tolerance among investors are encouraged. Venture capital for high growth companies is scarce but is projected to grow as the pipeline of early stage companies increases and a larger critical mass of venture capital investment opportunities expands.



GOAL: EXPAND ACCESS TO CAPITAL AT ALL STAGES OF BUSINESS (STARTUP TO ESTABLISHED) BY RECRUITING INVESTMENT LOCALLY, NATIONALLY, AND GLOBALLY FOR BUSINESSES IN THE GREATER NEW ORLEANS REGION.

OBJECTIVE 1: DEVELOP FINANCING PIPELINE TO CONNECT BUSINESSES WITH THE RELEVANT CAPITAL NEEDED FOR GROWTH.

Action 1: Increase the growth and availability of funding for start-up, early stage and next-stage companies in the region.

Action 2: Facilitate partnerships with local investors and national venture capital firms as the pipeline of investment opportunities in high growth companies expands in the region.

Action 3: Streamline and strengthen the Louisiana Angel Tax Credit Program to increase access to capital by early stage companies.

OBJECTIVE 2: ADDRESS ACCESS TO CAPITAL ISSUES TO INVESTORS.

Action A: Increase and/or leverage risk tolerance of local investors to increase scalability among businesses.

Action B: Educate potential investors to diversity and expand investor ecosystem.

Action C: Foster relationships among entrepreneurs and investors, especially minority entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs in diversifying industries.

OBJECTIVE 3: PROMOTE REGIONAL INVESTMENT.

Action A: Educate investors on regional investment opportunities.

Action B: Provide technical assistance to entrepreneurs to improve their business plans and pitches to attract more investment.

MILITARY AND FEDERAL FACILITIES

The Greater New Orleans Area benefits from significant federal and military assets. To fully leverage their impact in growing talent, entrepreneurship, innovation and business development in the region, a specific targeted strategy is needed. A coordinated regional approach to retain and maximize the substantial government investments in the region is recommended as a priority to increase the region's competitiveness, resilience and business growth.



GOAL: INCREASE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH FEDERAL AND MILITARY OPERATIONS THAT ENCOURAGE THE GROWTH OF JOBS, BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE REGION.

OBJECTIVE 1: ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACILITY LEADERS OF FEDERAL AND MILITARY OPERATIONS IN REGION.

Action A: Facilitate early introduction to new military leadership.

Action B: Maintain regular communication with civilian site contact.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SYSTEM OF HUMAN CAPITAL RETENTION.

Action A: Facilitate seamless transition of retiring military and federal personnel to local civilian employment.

OBJECTIVE 3: CONNECT PERSONNEL WITH REGIONAL ENTREPRENEURIAL AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

OBJECTIVE 4: FACILITATE COLLABORATION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND FEDERAL/MILITARY FACILITIES TO INCREASE RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES.

Action A: Convene EDOs, technical assistance and federal/military stakeholders to discuss entrepreneurial ecosystem resources and business opportunities.

KEY PARTNERS

INFRASTRUCTURE: Partners include: EDO's in region; port systems; airport; workforce training institutions; utilities; transit agencies; coastal restoration and water management organizations; technology sector; business/civic leadership in region; DOTD, parish/city governments.

WORKFORCE AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT: Partners include: EDO's in region; K-12 education; higher education; early childhood education; workforce development organizations, target industry firms.

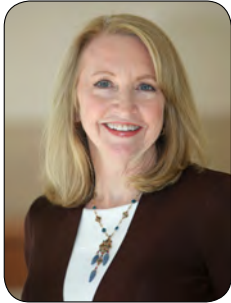
COLLABORATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP SYSTEM: Partners include: Entrepreneurial ecosystem stakeholders, incubators and accelerators; EDO's in region; international, minority and other start-up firms in target sectors; higher education research centers; parish/city governments.

ECONOMIC EQUITY: Partners include: Small and disadvantaged business programs; entrepreneurship technical assistance centers, business/civic leadership; anchor institutions; affordable housing advocate organizations; community development financial institutions, local foundations.

ACCESS TO CAPITAL: Partners include: local investors; early stage and venture capital companies; entrepreneurship technical providers; EDO's in region; community development financial institutions; and other financial institutions.

MILITARY AND FEDERAL FACILITIES: EDO's in region; regional military and federal facilities; entrepreneurship technical assistance providers; workforce development institutions; and university research centers.

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Sincerely,

Maggie Woodruff
Director of Economic Development
Regional Planning Commission

Note: To download the 2019 CEDS Document and Appendices, including the complete list of participants, detailed SWOT Analysis, and resilience initiatives throughout the region and state, please visit the RPC website at: www.norpc.org/comprehensive_economic_development_strategy.html.