



**Response to Senate Resolution 192 of the 2021 Regular Legislative Session
and
LEDA's Plans and Recommendations on North Lafayette Economic Revitalization**

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By way of Senate Resolution 192 (SR 192) of the 2021 Regular Legislative Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the Louisiana Senate requested the Lafayette Economic Development Authority (LEDA) to develop and implement a comprehensive economic development strategic plan for the northern part of the City of Lafayette.

Herein is the response to SR 192 submitted by the Lafayette Economic Development Authority. This document also seeks to provide a preliminary set of recommendations and plans on economic revitalization for North Lafayette. Further studies will be done in consultation with city leadership, Lafayette legislators, partner organizations, and North Lafayette community leaders to conduct an in-depth comprehensive analysis to include a SWOT analysis, stakeholder engagement sessions, exploration of national best practices that may be replicable in North Lafayette, and ideal target sectors given the infrastructure, sites, workforce availability, and other resources in North Lafayette.

Communities across the country have successfully implemented redevelopment and revitalization strategies by partnering with local, state, federal, and private entities—and this preliminary plan will assist LEDA in exploring those endeavors.

Introduction

LEDA's parish-wide mission is to catalyze job growth and capital investments that will lead to a strong and diversified economy, equitable access to economic opportunity, and an excellent quality of life in Lafayette Parish.

In North Lafayette this includes building business parks, attracting prospects, helping the existing business community, working with organizations devoted to the revitalization of this area, and supporting and promoting the development of infrastructure. LEDA's new President & CEO has also included in her strategic plan, an intentional focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to include tactics such as building and strengthening relationships with diverse business groups and associations, building capacity and raising awareness among minority-, women-, and veteran-owned small business owners of available programs and resources, increasing access to capital for diverse businesses, and encouraging private and public entities to launch supplier diversity programs.



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LEDA's commitment to North Lafayette is demonstrated by our plan for future activity and our past efforts in the area. LEDA's Strategic and Business Plans will outline the CEO's overarching goals as approved by LEDA's Board of Commissioners. **The key objectives that most directly impact businesses and create equitable opportunities in North Lafayette are included below.** This report also includes results achieved in previous years related to these objectives in North Lafayette. **With a concerted team effort from LEDA and community stakeholders, these results can be magnified to impact even more citizens of North Lafayette.**

Business Retention and Expansion

LEDA is a full-service economic development organization that is consistently recognized as a best practice leader. The clients who utilize LEDA's services report their satisfaction with the assistance they receive and often become repeat customers. Through meetings with minority business leaders and organizations, our staff identified a disconnect between many minority business owners and the organizations that provide business assistance and resources such as LEDA, Opportunity Machine, One Acadiana, the Louisiana Small Business Development Center, and others. **LEDA will use this opportunity to build awareness of LEDA's services and establish deeper relationships with North Lafayette's business community through our Business Visitation Program, education seminars hosted by LEDA and the Opportunity Machine, participation in minority business groups, and other avenues as identified by community leaders.**

LEDA's Business Visitation Program works to facilitate retention and expansion of existing businesses. The program is designed to encourage an ongoing dialogue which helps to identify development barriers and address urgent business needs so companies can remain competitive and profitable in the marketplace and in our community. Together we identify common issues and address unique business needs and make quick connections to resources and information. Ultimately, the goal of the program is to build a better business community by acting on the information we receive from our local business leaders. This data will help LEDA and our allies to better understand North Lafayette's business environment and guide us as we work together to offer the most comprehensive selection of business services possible. **As part of the Program, for example, in 2021 LEDA scheduled meetings or met with the 39 companies that are certified in the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program (DBE) in Lafayette Parish. We will continue to meet with local DBEs on an annual basis to gain valuable insights and actionable intelligence on how we may better serve this segment of the business community.**

LEDA will offer informational opportunities and workshops for businesses in North Lafayette. In 2021, more than 700 people attended free seminars and training hosted by LEDA and Opportunity Machine. Topics included: Business Models, Online Marketing and Developing Marketing Plans, Branding, Protecting Assets, Developing Sales Strategies, Business Taxes, and Workforce Training Programs. **LEDA will seek out alternative avenues to market these seminars to businesses in North Lafayette, as our traditional marketing methods may not reach some of these businesses. Additionally, LEDA will partner with and support programs such as the UL Lafayette Louisiana Entrepreneurship & Economic Development (LEED) Center's Accelerate Northside program.**



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Business Recruitment and Attraction

Our Business Recruitment department works closely with commercial real estate agents to provide accurate and up-to-date information about available properties. Whether it is a 1,000-square-foot office space or a 20,000-square-foot warehouse, LEDA collaborates with our real estate allies to find the property that best fits a company's needs. **LEDA will work with commercial realtors and developers to help businesses identify potential sites for development in North Lafayette. LEDA will also support LCG's efforts to identify vacant public properties and vacant or abandoned commercial properties that can be targeted for redevelopment, reuse, and repurposing. To maximize visibility, commercial realtors and property owners in North Lafayette should notify LEDA as soon as new properties become available. These properties will be added to LEDA's sites database.**

LEDA will work with community stakeholders to identify prospective companies for the areas that align with the Parish's target industries—energy, manufacturing, technology, healthcare, aviation, logistics/transportation/warehousing, and retail/family entertainment—and North Lafayette labor and available sites. According to a Merchant Void Analysis completed by Stirling Properties, within a three-mile radius of University Avenue and W. Willow Street, most of the national brands for auto parts stores, banks, convenience stores, and drug stores have a presence in the area. However, the area lacks options for bookstores, apparel and footwear stores, discount department stores, furniture/household stores, hotels, and casual restaurants. These brands could be potential attraction prospects if the area meets the retailers' minimum household income standards, population density, and customer draw thresholds. The report also notes a variety of healthcare providers in the target area, but there exists opportunities to grow this sector in North Lafayette. LEDA will seek out local entrepreneurs who could fill these voids, in addition to national brands.

Leverage Opportunity Zones and Other Financial Incentives

Opportunity Zones is a federal incentive program which seeks to attract private investment into designated economically distressed areas by delaying or reducing capital gains tax liability. Leveraging the Opportunity Zones within North Lafayette could be a great way of increasing economic growth through recruiting and attracting new businesses into the area. Opportunity Zones can be a tool to attract mission-driven businesses, which are business that are founded on the principle that it is possible to have a positive social impact while also committing to the company's own profitability. Opportunity Zones are most effective when paired with other financial incentives. When contemplating incentive offerings, it is important that community leaders recognize the economic benefits that non-mission-driven businesses bring to North Lafayette (i.e. employment opportunities) as well as the economic and social benefits of mission-driven companies.

Pairing Opportunity Zones with other financial incentives can better allow businesses to maximize their profits while providing larger social impacts. Examples of such incentives include: HUD 221(d)(4), SBA 504 loan guarantee, Restoration Tax Abatement, Enterprise Zones, Quality Jobs, Historic Tax Credits, New Markets Tax Credits, Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System, Community Development Block Grants



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(CDBG), Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), and the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program. Combining these programs with Opportunity Zones will likely attract more mission-driven businesses and provide them with adequate returns.

Business Intelligence Services

Market research is critical to understanding the viability of any business venture. **Whether evaluating customers' preferences or analyzing the competition, LEDA's Business Intelligence team has the resources to help.** With access to data points ranging from taxable (retail) sales to employment figures, our staff can assist with customized market research for existing and prospective Lafayette Parish businesses. We understand positioning a business involves perception, feasibility, efficiency, and many other factors that differ across industries. We take the time to learn about those variables and use that knowledge to produce an accurate analysis of a target market or location of interest. Our researchers answered more than 220 inquiries for information in 2021. These inquiries can be as simple as the population of Lafayette Parish or as in depth as a highly specific, tailored economic impact analysis.

Transportation Infrastructure

North Lafayette is centered at the intersection of I-10 and I-49 and is ripe for development; however, the uncertainty of the I-49 Connector has been the biggest hindrance to our business attraction efforts. The delay in action on the Record of Decision (ROD) has precipitated a required update to the document—continuing to make long-term planning along the Evangeline Thruway difficult. Businesses need certainty. Businesses need to know if there will be an exit at their location in five years or if their business can even remain in the selected location. Once the Supplemental Record of Decision is approved, the State should expedite the construction of the northern most segment of the I-49 Connector.

While waiting for the 2020 ROD to be released, there are other options available for road construction that can impact the area. **Establishing overlay districts, with incentives if applicable, at the gateways where none are in place has been a long-time recommendation of LEDA.**

One of the most important things a community can do for economic development is build a road. The same is true in North Lafayette—building functional, yet attractive, service roads can stimulate development opportunities. **Service roads have the potential to be among the most transformational investments for Lafayette's gateways.**

LEDA will work with LCG to identify areas for improvement in existing infrastructure and multi-modal transportation within neighborhoods to increase access to resources, enhance pedestrian safety, and counterbalance sprawl.

Workforce Development & Related Issues

Workforce is a hot issue, and we work directly with businesses to address their skilled and professional labor force needs. **LEDA's Workforce Development staff provides advisory services regarding funding**



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to offset employee training expenses. We actively promote workforce training programs such as the Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP), the Small Business Employee Training Program (SBET), and the On-the-Job-Training Program that can help businesses obtain the skilled workforce necessary for their operation and growth. **These programs for professional development and training are also available for minority-owned businesses and LEDA will make certain that diverse businesses are made aware of these critical resources.**

LEDA has hosted the annual LEDA Job Fair for twenty-seven years. **As needs arise, LEDA pledges to coordinate additional specialty job fairs to help connect willing workers with quality employment opportunities.** For example, LEDA coordinated and hosted a job fair to assist displaced employees from the closed Walmart on Evangeline Thruway.

LEDA will advocate for equitable education and enhanced workforce training opportunities for residents in North Lafayette. Improving the quality and resilience of North Lafayette's workforce will require short-term and long-term strategies. In the short-term, increasing access to workforce-specific training and education will prepare more workers for jobs whose eligibility requirements they may have otherwise not met. Connecting these workers to programs at the local level, along with regional programs, is necessary to rapidly improve the quality and resilience of the area's working population. Increasing access to local programs, such as workforce training programs through South Louisiana Community College (SLCC) or through regional programs promoted by the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) should be an immediate priority. LWC offers workforce development programs through local American Job Centers and through their online platform, Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE). **LEDA will promote career readiness education at the W.D. & Mary Baker Smith Career Center. LEDA will also promote adult education opportunities through SLCC's Corporate College—which offers short-term, job specific training, often at no cost to the student. Lastly, LEDA will collaborate with LPSS leaders to promote UL Lafayette and SLCC degree and certificate programs that align with growing industry sectors for which there will be local job opportunities for trained professionals.**

In the long-term, prioritizing the education (ranging from K-12 through advanced degrees) of North Lafayette's residents should be an area of focus. As of 2021, roughly 18% of North Lafayette residents (25 and older) have not graduated high school or attained their GED or equivalent and only 21% of residents have graduated from college and/or attained a graduate or professional degree. Research indicates that increased college graduation rates are associated with higher average household incomes. Moreover, as the landscapes of many jobs are shifting due to Covid-19, higher-skilled workers are at a greater advantage of being able to work from home, further highlighting the job security that is associated with higher-education. It is important to note that looking for ways to improve the quality of our K-12 education will be the most important factor in increasing college graduation rates. **Providing students within North Lafayette access to larger course selections, tutoring, after-school programs, and increasing the funding of public schools in the area will be the best long-term solutions toward**



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improving the area's future workforce and civic leaders. LEDA will collaborate with LPSS leaders on these fronts, and we will advocate for continued improvements of K-12 schools in North Lafayette.

In addition to training and workforce preparation, **connecting North Lafayette residents to existing jobs and opportunities across the city and parish is of the utmost importance.** Based upon best practices in other communities that rely more heavily on public transportation, there are a few enhancements that may be made to Lafayette's public transportation system which would benefit disadvantaged individuals parish-wide. Ideally, there should be one bus route map that shows all the bus routes together, displayed at each bus stop. This is particularly important for people without internet access who need to navigate routes to and from destinations across the city. Many local bus stops do not include a physical map of bus routes, and the Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG) website only shows PDFs of each individual bus line. Recommended updates include establishment of an interactive version of the map(s)—ideally with a paired app that can be accessible by phone or through QR codes shown at each stop—to help citizens navigate and plan routes between different bus lines. Additionally, it is recommended that LCG's website be enhanced to show greater detail of bus schedules, showing the daily operating hours of each bus line and how often they depart their initial stops. Adding bus trackers would allow riders to plan their trips with more ease and could result in decreased wait times. Increasing promotion and advertising for Lafayette's transit system could expand its reach, encourage greater utilization, and allow more citizens to benefit from its usage.

As the Lafayette transportation system continues to undergo enhancements, it is important to ensure that North Lafayette is adequately connected to all districts, but particularly districts that have higher daytime populations, of which a high percentage include workers traveling in to take advantage of currently available job opportunities. All City Council Districts have higher daytime populations than general populations—with District 4 having the largest influx of workers from outside of the district during the daytime. Evaluating the reach and efficacy of current bus routes could aid in connecting citizens that are reliant on public transportation towards more jobs and opportunities, especially in these districts.

Small Business & Entrepreneurial Development

Since 2009 LEDA's Opportunity Machine, also known as the OM, has served Lafayette's entrepreneurial community. Originally designed as a tech incubation program, the OM has expanded its focus and is dedicated to becoming the entrepreneurial center of the Gulf Coast. The OM offers professional workspace with amenities at its new downtown Lafayette office for its members, in addition to dozens of free training classes for the public. **In 2020, the OM brought its seven-week Small Business Boot Camp to the Chenier Center—three people attended in person and 57 people attended via Zoom.** The OM also reached out to the Northgate Mall's management several times to offer our expertise to mall tenants but were not successful at receiving a response. With new leadership, LEDA will enhance its outreach efforts to all businesses in North Lafayette through creative and targeted means.



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Within LEDA's 2020 State Capital Outlay submission, a request was made to cover costs of construction, equipment, and furniture for the new OM space at 314 Jefferson Street as well as a new small business development center proposed for North Lafayette. **The new center proposed for North Lafayette will provide services including outreach and business education and guidance to entrepreneurs and small businesses through training, mentorship, networking, and business boot camps.** Similar centers in other communities include training rooms, conference rooms, coworking spaces and shared individual workstations. Typical amenities include internet access, wi-fi, AV equipment, printing/copying, and mail service, which are valuable resources to business owners who are starting up with limited means and resources. To provide a full-service experience, LEDA and OM plan to partner with the following organizations (and more): Holy Rosary Institute, the Louisiana Entrepreneurship & Economic Development Center at UL Lafayette, the Louisiana SBDC at UL Lafayette, the Greater Southwest Louisiana Black Chamber of Commerce, the Louisiana PTAC, One Acadiana, and more. **LEDA staff and partners will create, curate, and host technical training sessions, which would be open to the public, that provide the basic building blocks and structure for launching and growing a business.**

The Small & Emerging Business Development (SEBD) certification program is designed to support small business owners. This program is funded by Louisiana Economic Development and administered by the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Obtaining SEBD certification can unlock funding support up to 50% of the cost of entrepreneurial and computer training as well as other technical assistance needs such as business planning, legal, marketing, accounting, human resources, and more. The State, through Louisiana Economic Development (LED), offers a number of other impactful small business programs, and **LEDA will promote the SEBD certification program (and other relevant LED small business programs) through various means of outreach to North Lafayette businesses.**

Current data estimates that property values will increase in North Lafayette during the next five years. There is considerable pressure to develop this area quickly in hopes of bringing more jobs to residents and more wealth to the community, which will likely further increase the rate at which property values appreciate. Small businesses must remain a priority in this revitalization process to ensure that community businesses leaders can maximize their equity within the local economy. **Increasing access to capital for small businesses could increase the likelihood that local businesses can operate in current and newly developed spaces as property values continue to rise.** This can best be achieved by holding community workshops with local businesses and through targeted information marketing programs aimed at relevant businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs in the area.

Examples of relevant programs, resources and available grants include the following: Grants.gov, Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Program, Minority Business Development Agency, National Minority Supplier Development Council, SBA 8(a) Business Development Program, KKR Small Business Builders Grant, FedEx Small Business Grant Contest, National Association for the Self-Employed, and the Operation Hope Small-Business Empowerment Program. Some of these grants and programs are only available to minority citizens which comprise of two-thirds of North Lafayette residents.



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Finding ways to connect citizens within North Lafayette, and particularly those that are minorities, to such grants will be a priority in the economic revitalization endeavor.

While the activities centered around planning and development, recreation, housing, and historic preservation are not within LEDA's jurisdictional responsibilities or authority, LEDA will engage, advocate and support efforts to improve in these areas as there exists a tangible impact on LEDA's ability to fulfill its mission as we compete with other domestic and international destinations for the creation of jobs, capital investment, and attraction of talent. As such, LEDA is submitting the following commentary and recommendations for further exploration with community partners.

Prioritize Mixed-Use Urban Development Space

Mixed-use urban development spaces should be prioritized in the further development of North Lafayette. Creating town centers within the North Lafayette area could be a great way of jumpstarting the local economy by providing jobs to residents. Research suggests that developments that have multiple functions draw in more people and increase total revenue. Diversifying these areas across industries and functions should be considered in the urban development process of new development spaces. One point of concern with large urban development areas or town centers is that their privatization can prevent them from being accessible to all members of the community. One strategy to address this issue is to provide easily accessible communal spaces (such as parks) within town centers. Another strategy is to allocate spaces within town centers for businesses that bring in diverse groups of people from varying socio-economic backgrounds. Lastly, implementing concepts such as themed streets, sections and open-air designs into new centers may be cost-effective ways of increasing foot traffic and revenue within those spaces.

Maintain Affordable Housing Spaces

According to a recent Esri Market Profile report pulled by LEDA, the average value of housing units in North Lafayette (within City Districts 1 and 5) is expected to increase by 33% from 2021 to 2026. The median value of housing units in the area is expected to increase by 18% from 2021 to 2026. However, the average and median household incomes are only expected to increase by 11% and 10%, respectively. Moreover, only about 50% of these houses are owner-occupied, indicating rent prices will likely rise substantially over the next five years. The discrepancy between growth of household incomes compared to household property values, coupled with a large renting population, is likely to displace many citizens currently living in North Lafayette.

To prevent the displacement of citizens during the next five years, efforts should be made to maintain affordable housing spaces. Locating affordable housing units within Opportunity Zones and pairing them with LIHTCs or allocated specialized funds (like the MAUI program in Chicago or the AHTF program in Santa Cruz) could be potential solutions. Adopting similar policies that can be used and adapted to meet Lafayette's needs should be a priority for local planners. Continued research and creative policymaking will likely be necessary to find the best solution. Additionally, it is imperative that as a community, we



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recognize and continue supporting the work of organizations like the Lafayette Housing Authority and Lafayette Habitat for Humanity.

Identify and Preserve Historic Sites

Historic spaces and sites hold cultural significance and connect citizens to their community's past. Identifying these spaces and returning them to their original state could provide several benefits to the local economy. First, this practice could provide a cost-effective way of identifying new mixed-use urban development spaces. Preserving buildings or sites with rich histories could increase tourism in the area, generating revenue from outside of the district. Finally, many older buildings are made of higher quality materials than those used today, and the money, time, and energy saved by constructing fewer new buildings could provide a more environmentally friendly, cost-effective way of jumpstarting the local economy.

Increase North Lafayette Population Density

Increasing the population density within North Lafayette will improve business attraction efforts and this would also improve the odds that the area's average household income will increase, as suggested by research published by economists at the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. Businesses in many sectors—especially retail—explore a variety of location factors, chief among them being population density and household income data. Increases in population density across larger metro areas are associated with higher aggregate household incomes across poorer neighborhood districts within the city. As Lafayette looks to grow, ensuring that its poorest areas are growing at a rate consistent with the greater metro area would improve the likelihood of achieving higher average household incomes within its least affluent districts. While local planning authorities should promote the development of all regions of Lafayette, creating development strategies to increase the population density within North Lafayette should remain a priority.

Community Development

Community Development is most successful when civic leaders, actively engaged citizens, and professionals work in unison to improve various aspects of communities—making our community stronger and more resilient. **LEDA will support the establishment of arts and educational programming led by LCG's Parks, Arts, Recreation, and Culture Department.** Successful programs in music, art, dance, and STEM have been established in other areas of Louisiana and can be used as best practice models. These low-cost programming options can generate modest revenue for the department; while, more importantly, increasing the quality of life for residents of North Lafayette.

Conclusion

By offering an array of services to local businesses, LEDA hopes to substantially contribute to North Lafayette's strategic growth and diversification. As our community maneuvers through economic challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, LEDA strives to lead the way through innovative collaborations, consensus building and actively engaged leadership.



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LEDA works with businesses that run the gamut from single-employee start-ups to headquarter operations with hundreds of employees. LEDA has invested more resources in North Lafayette and Downtown than any other part of the Parish. **LEDA recognizes where the need is and will continue to focus resources on revitalizing these areas.** We recognize that each of our clients, no matter how big or small or where in town they are located, has contributed to the economic success that Lafayette has experienced. **For that success to fully extend into North Lafayette, community leaders and organizations must work together to establish and strengthen a dialogue that moves the area forward - speaking in a unified voice with each other and elected officials. LEDA stands ready to lead and assist in those efforts.**

SR 192 Response

Results of LEDA's 2021 (and prior) Program of Work impacting North Lafayette

Business Retention and Expansion: The success of our existing businesses is paramount to the success of Lafayette's overall economy.

- In 2020, LEDA worked with LCG to launch the Business Recovery Program in response to economic hardships experienced by small businesses resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. LEDA awarded \$200,000 in grants to 31 businesses, of which 10 are minority-owned and seven are in North Lafayette.
- Since 2015 LEDA has hosted minority and women-owned business seminars to help companies with incentives, business development programs and resources for achieving certifications.
- LEDA, 1A, and LCG worked with The Hamilton Experience to create a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to cultivate minority entrepreneurship in Lafayette and to connect minority-owned businesses to public infrastructure projects and other business opportunities in Lafayette. The project has not continued with the current LCG administration.

Real Estate/Infrastructure/Site Development Projects: North Lafayette has a slate of high-profile real estate and infrastructure projects in the planning stages or that have already started construction.

- LEDA has been very involved in the University Avenue/Gateway Redevelopment including many hours of property research, inventory, and promotion of the project for grant funds. LEDA staff has done similar research for the Simcoe Redevelopment Project.
- LEDA purchased 314 Jefferson Street which is home to the Opportunity Machine's new offices.
- LEDA owns two business parks in the northern part of the Parish around the intersection of I-10 and I-49 serving as the home to many businesses that collectively employ almost 2,000 people.
 - LEDA worked with One Acadiana and Louisiana Economic Development to create Lafayette's first Certified Site in Northpark—making it one of the most marketable, development-ready sites in Louisiana.
- Four of the five Opportunity Zones in Lafayette are in North Lafayette: North Lafayette Corridor Opportunity Zone, the University Cultural Gateway Opportunity Zone, Evangeline Gateway Opportunity Zone, Le Centre (Downtown) Opportunity Zone. LEDA representatives helped to



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create on the Lafayette Prospectus and continue our participation in the OZ Working Group with LCG, One Acadiana, Acadiana Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority, and the Community Foundation of Acadiana.

Business Recruitment and Attraction: Areas of North Lafayette have seen an influx of business recruitment and attraction activity; however, the perception of “corporate abandonment” on the Evangeline Thruway has been exacerbated with the unknown future of I-49 South.

- LEDA staff submitted the Walmart building for two RFPs since its closure and met with Walmart real estate representatives at the International Council of Shopping Centers conference to discuss the importance of putting this building back into commerce.
 - In June 2021, Completeful purchased the Walmart building. Completeful, a drop shipping fulfillment service, will consolidate operations from three Lafayette Parish facilities to the building. The company currently has 100 full time employees with plans to fill an additional 100 positions this year. During peak production periods, the company may have as many as 500 employees with the addition of seasonal hires.
- LEDA's former President was heavily involved, through his role with the Industrial Development Board, on the Stirling Lafayette Shopping Center on Louisiana Avenue (Target, Academy, JC Penney, etc.). Countless volunteer hours were spent on this project which included \$8 million in TIF bonds and \$40 million in Go Zone bonds. Between 2007-2013 the total economic impact on Lafayette Parish was \$552.9 million. This development created almost 1,000 jobs.
- LEDA continues to work with realtors and city government leaders on the development of Louisiana Ave at I-10. Substantial time and resources have been spent recruiting a highly sought-after company for that intersection, including engineering fees for Brown Park.
- Lafayette's property submission for Amazon's headquarters in 2017 highlighted the Northgate Mall as the best site in Lafayette for the project.
- Technology companies recruited by LEDA established locations in Downtown Lafayette: CGI, Perficient and WAITR. These companies have invested millions of their own money toward improvements as well.
- LEDA worked with LNEDEC on the redevelopment project for the Evangeline Hotel in Downtown Lafayette before it was paused.
- Although these stores have been open awhile, it is worth noting that LEDA spent three years recruiting Lowe's to build a new store in North Lafayette. Once the store opened, they doubled their projected sales and won corporate sales awards. When Home Depot saw those numbers and realized the customer base they could attract near the intersection of two interstates, they contacted LEDA about opening a facility in the area. LEDA worked very closely with Home Depot representatives and their real estate firm in the initial site search, providing demographics, statistics and site information. Once they chose the Northgate Mall site, LEDA provided a project manager to assist Home Depot with the project. Major coordination was needed with DOTD, Atmos Energy and LCG to make this project a reality.



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- In August 2006, LEDA landed its largest prospect to date for Lafayette Parish. After a global search, NuComm International (later Transcom) committed to create 1,000 jobs in Lafayette. With the assistance of LEDA, NuComm chose the Northgate Mall, where it invested \$3.5-4 million for renovations and updates. The opening of NuComm's largest customer care center was a win for residents of the area looking for quality jobs with benefits and a positive for businesses servicing the employees. Once LEDA became aware of workforce issues at the facility, we engaged our Workforce Department and partner agencies, legislators, the council, and the Lafayette Police Department to assist. LEDA spent a few years working with them to rectify the problems. Unfortunately, the Lafayette location was closed by January 2012.

Workforce Development: One of the top concerns facing businesses is finding enough qualified workers for their operation and growth.

- The 2021 LEDA Job Fair had 97 employers participate and more than 700 job seekers attended.
- The 2021 Acadiana Diversity Job Fair had 45 employers and three resource providers participate and 170 job seekers attended.
- The 2021 Professional Career Reception was held virtually as part of Innovate South. Thirteen employers participated and 115 job seekers participated in 205 direct chats.
- LEDA hosted four specialty job fairs in 2021: Technology Career Fair (virtual), Stuller Job Fair, Hospitality Job Fair, and Industrial Trades Career Fair.
- The 2020 Re-Entry Job Fair was held virtually due to COVID restrictions. Ten employers and 110 job seekers participated. Employers reported plans to call back 12 job seekers for interviews. Another 28 were added to the companies' screening processes.
- In 2019, LEDA coordinated and hosted a job fair to assist displaced employees from the closed Walmart on Evangeline Thruway. Fifteen employers and resource providers participated. Sixty job seekers attended, 13 of which were displaced Walmart employees.
- The 2019 Re-Entry Job Fair took place at the MLK Center. Eighteen companies and nine resource providers participated in the event. There were 200 job seekers. Companies reported that eight job offers were made at the event and 60 interviews would be scheduled.
- The 2019 Industrial Trades Job Fair was hosted by LEDA, SLCC's Corporate College, and Lemoine Manhattan, the prime contractor for the airport's new passenger terminal. Forty-three employers and resource providers registered to participate in the event. More than 215 job seekers attended.

Community Development is most successful when civic leaders, activists, involved citizens, and professionals work in unison to improve various aspects of communities— making our community stronger and more resilient.

- LEDA has worked with the Upper Lafayette Economic Development Foundation since its inception.



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- LEDA funds and supports ArtSpark, an artist stipend program of the Acadiana Center for the Arts. Many of the projects have ties to North Lafayette, either through the artist or the performance/exhibit location. Mark St. Cyr was awarded funds for a collaborative music and art performance at the Martin Luther King Center that was free to public. Another North Lafayette artist painted a public mural (named Deep Rooted) on the building at the corner of E. Cypress and Johnston Streets. Alex PoeticSoul' Johnson, is another North Lafayette artist who leverage a LEDA-funded ArtSpark grant to publish her first poetry book and host workshops teach community members to use poetry and art to express their emotions.
- LEDA has supported the Fathers of the Year banquet hosted by 100 Black Men of Greater Lafayette.
- LEDA representatives participate in meetings and activities for the Holy Rosary Institute preservation, McComb-Veazey Coterie, and Freetown-Port Rico Coterie.
- LEDA has met with the Pastoral Alliance to discuss new commercial development in North Lafayette. Pastor Ken Lazard attended a regional International Council of Shopping Centers event with LEDA's Director of Business Retention and Expansion.

Additional Requested Information

The following information is provide as requested in SR 192.

- (1) *(a) How many properties are owned by LEDA in the parish of Lafayette?*
(b) Identify those properties by address and list the usage of each property.
- (2) *(a) How many properties are owned by LEDA in the northern part of the city of Lafayette?*

In addition to LEDA's main office building at 211 East Devalcourt Street, Lafayette, LA 70501, LEDA owns one other building in Lafayette Parish located at 314 Jefferson Street, Lafayette, LA 70501, which is home to Opportunity Machine, Inc. (OM). The OM's mission is to grow business and entrepreneurship and to create quality jobs, economic diversity, and regional prosperity. The OM provides business education, guidance, and risk reduction to startup founders and small business owners through training, mentorship, networking, and affordable workspace. In addition to these services, OM assists with technology prospects.

The following vacant properties are owned by LEDA. This property is available for sale with employment guarantees from the purchaser. LEDA's business parks were established to encourage development and the creation and retention of jobs and to strengthen the Lafayette Parish economy.

- 40.65 acres in Northpark Industrial Park identified as Lot 4 (3.304 acres), Lot 19 (1.94 acres) and Lot 28 (35.404 acres) located on Laser Lane and Matrix Loop off of W. Pont des Mouton, 70507.
- 7.14 acres in Interstate Park identified as Lot 5 (1.63 acres), Lot 6 (1.38 acres), Lot 7 (1.38 acres), Lot 8 (1.38 acres), and Lot 9 (1.37 acres) located on Distribution Drive, 70507.
- 4 acres in Southpark identified as Lots 6A Ext (1.50 acres) and Lot 7B Ext. (2.5 acres) on Commission Boulevard, 70508.



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- 2.957 acres in LEDA Industrial Park identified as Lot 6A on Commercial Parkway, 70518.

- (3) (a) *How many businesses have been recruited, within the last five years, by LEDA for economic development projects within the parish of Lafayette?*
 (b) *List the names and purposes of each business.*
 (c) *How much money was spent on the recruiting of these businesses?*
 (d) *List the month(s) and years(s) of the recruiting of each business.*

- (4) (a) – (d) *How many businesses have been recruited, within the last five years, by LEDA for economic development projects within the city of Lafayette and same subsequent questions as in section (3) above?*

- (5) (a) – (d) *How many businesses are currently being recruited by LEDA and to what areas of the parish are these businesses being recruited to locate and same subsequent questions as in section 3 above?*

Lafayette Parish has experienced noteworthy business growth in the past five years. Recruiting new businesses to Lafayette is done in various ways. It may involve traveling outside of the market to meet with site selection consultants or participating in industry-specific tradeshows to market Lafayette Parish to prospective companies. LEDA also uses business intelligence software to target companies in specific industries and business sectors. Since 2020, LEDA has implemented an email marketing platform to contact target companies and sectors. We have directly contacted more than 4,200 companies and are working on several potential projects that have been generated through that effort. Louisiana Economic Development has a robust business development program and regularly issues RFPs to local economic development organizations to identify which communities may be a good fit for their prospects. LEDA also gets recruitment leads from the local real estate and development community. Finally, some companies contact LEDA directly to discuss a possible move to Lafayette Parish.

Business recruitment involves a considerable amount of staff time for industry research, data collection and analysis, and follow up with the prospects. No two recruitment projects are the same. Businesses looking to relocate or expand their operations typically request data from LEDA to determine if the community, workforce, amenities, and available locations (land and/or buildings) are aligned with their company requirements, financial ability, and goals for the future. Business leaders compare that data to narrow down the list of potential communities, and then may do a site visit to view the area. The list continues to be pared down following site visits and direct comparison of sites, incentives, and other financial considerations. The entire process can take months or years depending on the company. Some companies may stop mid-process to reevaluate based on any number of economic factors—often the search resumes, but sometimes it does not. Through the entire process, LEDA relies on multiple departments to collect data for each unique prospective business and works with local, regional, and statewide partners in this process. Economic development is a team effort and could not be accomplished without people working together towards a common goal.



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As evident in the process described above, many LEDA staff members are involved in the recruitment process in addition to other job responsibilities; therefore, it is challenging to quantify an exact amount of money spent on business recruitment alone. Including direct costs of trade shows, lead generation software, site certification and other expenses associated with recruitment, LEDA spent approximately \$100,000 on recruitment efforts in 2019—the last “normal” year pre-pandemic. This does not include staff salaries and benefits.

During the past five years, LEDA worked with the following companies in some capacity leading up to their announcement to locate or expand their business in Lafayette Parish. *Located in North Lafayette.

- (January 2022) Gov. John Bel Edwards and CALLS PLUS President Barbara Lamont announced the expansion of the company's multilingual call center in Lafayette. The expansion will retain 37 jobs and create 50 new direct jobs; Louisiana Economic Development estimates the project will result in 27 indirect jobs for a total of 77 new jobs in the Acadiana region. CALLS PLUS is a call center company that specializes in safety, healthcare, and counseling hotline services.
- * (May 2021) Local officials announced **Completeful**, a drop shipping fulfillment service, purchased the former Walmart building on Evangeline Thruway and will consolidate operations from three Lafayette Parish facilities to the building. The company currently has 100 full time employees with plans to fill an additional 100 positions this year. During peak production periods, the company may have as many as 500 employees with the addition of seasonal hires.
- (May 2021) Gov. Edwards joined Ochsner Health President and CEO Warner Thomas, **SafeSource** Direct CEO Justin Hollingsworth and other officials to announce the development of two manufacturing facilities for personal protective equipment in Broussard. The projects will create a combined 1,221 new direct jobs, and Louisiana Economic Development estimates the project will result in a combined 992 new indirect jobs, for a total of more than 2,200 new jobs. SafeSource is investing \$150 million to develop the facilities, with \$73 million to retrofit an 80,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in Lafayette Parish that will also house its headquarters, and \$77 million for the development of a new 400,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in St. Martin Parish.
- (January 2021) Local officials celebrated the expansion and grand opening of **Kibberia** in Lafayette Parish. Located in the former Discount Furniture building on Cameron Street, the commercial kitchen will provide prepared, fresh foods to regional grocery stores and supermarkets. The company, founded by Carole Antoun Iskandar, currently operates a commercial kitchen and restaurant in Danbury, Connecticut. This facility will operate as a sister location overseen by Iskandar. The company leveraged its experience in Connecticut to build a state-of-the-art facility near Scott, Louisiana. The building's design promotes an efficient flow that can be rapidly scaled to support production as needed. More than 30,000 square



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feet of the 60,000-square-foot facility will be utilized for the kitchen, with 11,000 square feet of refrigerated space. The company is completing USDA and SQF certification to ensure the highest level of food safety and quality.

- (January 2021) **ThinkGenetic**, Inc expanded operations to Lafayette after successfully participating in the Accelerate South program in 2020. The company pioneered an artificial intelligence, SymptomMatcher™, for genetic disorders and announced the successful close of its angel round of funding for \$1.5 million. ThinkGenetic, Inc has established its regional headquarters in The Oil Center and is hiring positions for software development and data engineers.
- (December 2020) Gov. John Bel Edwards and **Amazon** announced the company will open its first Louisiana fulfillment center in the Lafayette Parish city of Carencro. The company will make a \$100 million capital investment and create 500 direct jobs with an annual payroll of more than \$16 million. Louisiana Economic Development estimates the project also will result in 982 new indirect jobs, for a total of more than 1,400 jobs in Acadiana and surrounding regions. Located on the former Evangeline Downs site in Carencro, the fulfillment center will be near the junction of Interstates 10 and 49 and provide optimal access to Louisiana markets. In the new one million-square-foot fulfillment center, Amazon associates will pick, pack and ship bulky or larger-sized items, such as patio furniture, outdoor equipment, and rugs.
- * (September 2020) Gov. John Bel Edwards and Westfield Hydraulics CEO Robert A. Schacht announced the company's affiliate, **Westfield Fluid Controls**, will make a \$5.1 million capital investment to establish a manufacturing facility in Lafayette. Founded in 1974, Westfield Hydraulics is a leading provider of precision hydraulic and fluid control components for aerospace and defense applications. The company is relocating an existing manufacturing operation from San Fernando, California, to Lafayette. Westfield will create 67 new direct jobs with an average annual salary of \$49,797, plus benefits. Louisiana Economic Development estimates the project will result in 106 new indirect jobs, for a total of 173 new jobs in Lafayette Parish and the Acadiana Region.
- (September 2020) **LandTrust**, a startup company offering an online platform similar to Airbnb, expanded operations to Lafayette in the OM. LandTrust offers accommodations and travel experiences for those seeking hunting, fishing and outdoor activities in desirable locations and destinations across the U.S. The company was seeking investment with the local Acadiana Angels investment group and chose to locate in Lafayette due to the Louisiana Angel Investor Tax Credit program.
- (January 2020) Canadian-based company, **Northern Gauge**, expanded operations to the U.S. The company provides calibration and mechanical testing services to various industries. The company purchased a building in Broussard (202 Tideland). The company will make a \$1.0 million capital investment and projects to have up to five employees in the first year.
- *(July 2020) Gov. John Bel Edwards and **SchoolMint** CEO Bryan MacDonald announced the education software company will consolidate its U.S. operations in Lafayette, Louisiana,



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including transferring its headquarters from San Francisco. In the latest tech win for the Acadiana Region, the specialty software development company also will relocate corporate offices from New York and Miami to Lafayette and make a \$515,000 capital investment in new facilities. SchoolMint will create 178 new direct jobs with an average annual salary of more than \$74,200, plus benefits. Louisiana Economic Development estimates the project will result in another 219 new indirect jobs, for a total of 397 new jobs for Lafayette Parish and the Acadiana Region.

- (September 2019) **H&S Machine Tools** has made the decision to relocate from Harvey, LA to Broussard. LEDA provided H&S Machine Tools with incentive, workforce development and real estate information to assist in the process. They currently have 12 employees, half of which will relocate with the company. Other positions will be filled locally.
- (June 2019) **Viemed** announced the expansion of its headquarters and creation of 220 new direct jobs in Lafayette. A growing provider of in-home care for respiratory patients, Viemed operates in 27 states, with plans to expand to most of the United States. Viemed estimates it will add 70 professional, headquarters jobs at a new company complex on East Kaliste Saloom Road and 150 healthcare service jobs over the next five years. The 220 new direct jobs will have an average annual salary of more than \$42,800, plus benefits. In addition, Viemed is retaining 114 existing jobs in Lafayette.
- (March 2019) **LHC Group** broke ground on the company's \$46 million Lafayette home office expansion. With the groundbreaking, LHC Group will create 500 direct new jobs in Lafayette with an average salary of \$40,000, plus benefits. The expansion follows the April 2018 completion of its merger with Almost Family of Louisville, Kentucky. The company will retain 612 Lafayette-based jobs, bringing the total Lafayette workforce to more than 1,100 employees.
- * (February 2019) **Waitr** announced the firm will locate its Lafayette headquarters in the city's downtown district, where the company will deliver 200 new direct jobs. The 200 new direct jobs will provide an average salary of \$55,000 per year, plus benefits. Waitr will retain 315 existing full-time jobs in Louisiana, and it also employs thousands of delivery drivers.
- (January 2019) **Leonardo Helicopters** celebrated the grand opening of the company's Gulf of Mexico Support Center in Broussard, LA. Leonardo Helicopters is a global leader in the production of military and commercial rotorcraft with more than 100 years of operating in the aerospace industry. The company plans to have 15 employees in 2019 and increase to 30 employees by 2023.
- * (May 2018) **CGI** announced a significant expansion of its Lafayette IT Center of Excellence—the creation of 400 new direct jobs. CGI's Lafayette employment will rise to 800 at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Research Park and at a second Lafayette Parish site to be determined. Statewide, CGI's employment will reach 900. In March, CGI announced the Lafayette IT Center of Excellence had surpassed the original full-employment target of 400 professionals.



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- (November 2017) Lafayette home health care provider **LHC Group** announced an \$850 million acquisition of Louisville, Kentucky-based Almost Family, making it the second largest home health provider in the U.S. The all-stock deal nearly doubles the size of LHC to more than 780 locations in 36 states, and the firm expects to do about \$1.8 billion in revenue. The company will have more than 31,000 employees and will create 500 jobs at its Lafayette headquarters.
- (March 2016) **ATC Group Services**, an environmental consulting firm, announced the re-establishment of its corporate headquarters in Lafayette, La. In 2009, the company, formerly known as ATC Associates, relocated their headquarters office from Massachusetts to Lafayette. Cardno Limited, an Australia-based global contractor, purchased ATC in 2012 and relocated the company's headquarters to Denver, Co. In 2015, a group led by Bernhard Capital Partners (BCP) acquired ATC and re-established its headquarters in Lafayette, creating 50 jobs.

Fifteen businesses have graduated from the OM in the past five years. *Located in North Lafayette.

- * (September 2020) **Digital Twin Studios** is a learning development company specializing in immersive and interactive simulations for multiple industries.
- * (September 2020) **Hawkeye** is a leading provider of civil and general commercial construction services in the Gulf region with a focus on operational excellence and superb customer service.
- (March 2020) **Southern Integrated Solutions & Consulting** is a system integration company that provides an extensive range of services, products, and customized systems to all sectors of the oil and gas, utilities, manufacturing, and mining industries.
- * (March 2020) Web design, web development, mobile/web applications and marketing are the core services at Lafayette-based **Accolades IT**.
- * (March 2020) **Bare Walls** is an art subscription service, operated through Basin Arts, which turns "bare" business walls into gallery space. The program objective is twofold: to provide an affordable way for businesses to have a creative and dynamic workspace and to provide residual income for working artists in our community.
- (August 2019) **Touchstone ABA** is a private facility dedicated to providing state-of-the-science Applied Behavior Analysis services to clients.
- (June 2019) **ExepronHealth** is a patient-centered system of care for healthcare administrators that tracks the duration of a patient's stay. The platform provides enhanced patient visibility and enables predictive tools to maximize resources.
- (June 2019) **NeuroRescue** provides prehospital medical professionals with a non-invasive medical device that utilizes standard equipment to effectively begin induced hypothermia protocol, decreasing the risk of neurological damage. This same device seamlessly allows for



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the transition to continued cooling at the hospital, again, utilizing standard equipment already existing at the facility.

- (June 2019) **ThinkGenetic** is a cutting-edge tool empowering patients who want to know about possible genetic causes for their medical issues or obtain real-life answers to their questions about the impact of living with a genetic disease. ThinkGenetic's accessible content, tools and data services help individuals reduce time to diagnosis and rates of diagnostic error.
- (April 2019) **Aerobotics** utilizes innovative Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) and payloads to include High-Definition optical zoom, FLIR/Thermal, 3D Modeling & Measurement, Orthomosaic Mapping, Interactive Live Streaming, and Custom Robotic attachments for precision applications.
- (December 2018) **Elevare** is focused on forming servant leaders to help them achieve long-term sustainable success.
- (May 2018) **FlyGuys** is a nationwide drone services company that acquires aerial imaging data so you can make more informed, accurate decisions.
- (March 2018) **Stonewall Ventures** is a hands-on investment group that helps service-providing businesses build their organizations by investing capital, implementation, and expertise.
- * (March 2018) **TIGA** is a systems integration and engineering services company strategically placed to meet the needs of the economy driven by energy, water, and data.
- * (May 2017) **Waitr** is a Louisiana-based online and mobile prepared food ordering and delivery company.

The following OM members are from/operate in North Lafayette:

- A.B. Ridgeway Wealth Management LLC
- CPR 2 Geaux, LLC
- Establish Hapir School Inc
- Gianni Logan, Professional Financial Consultant LLC
- Infascination
- Open Doors Louisiana Inc
- Shop Pavy
- Vested Marketing

LEDA is currently working with the following confidential prospects. *Potential location in North Lafayette.

- * **Project Patton** is a commercial development project at 3300 Louisiana Ave. and Shadow Bluff Road. A California-based real estate firm is developing the site and LEDA has been working with the developer on the project since late 2020. Plans are to develop the 27-acre site as a retail, office, and hotel project. The developer is in discussions with several clients.



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- **Prospect Elton** is seeking a location for a manufacturing facility for an aerospace product that is supported by a NASA grant program. LEDA has submitted several locations for consideration and is currently discussing incentives and other support for the project.
- **Prospect Wilbur** is seeking an expansion location for a manufacturing facility to support operations for high-precision machined metal and plastic parts. The company serves the Aerospace, Military and Defense, Automotive, Chemical and Tech sectors. LEDA is discussing possible locations and providing information for the company to consider.
- * **Prospect Maple Leaf** is an RFP from LED that LEDA submitted two sites for—one of which is in LEDA Northpark. This is a Canadian company that manufactures equipment and parts for the oil and gas, automotive, and aerospace industries. The project could result in approximately 200-285 jobs.
- **Prospect Icarus** is an LED RFP that LEDA submitted one site for in Lafayette Parish. The project is for an aerospace and defense related design and manufacturing facility. We are awaiting a response from the Site Consultant on the project.
- **Prospect Aerial** is a project brought to LEDA by LED. The prospect company is seeking to locate a 400-job operation, all software engineers, with a ramp up over two years. Average salary would be around \$75,000. LEDA partnered with UL to submit a proposal for the project and is waiting on a response from the company contact.
- **Prospect Tennis** is a startup company seeking to locate a manufacturing facility in Lafayette Parish. The company is seeking a 40,000 – 50,000 square foot facility to manufacture products that support the automotive, defense and aviation industries. The company is in the process of securing a \$200 million capital investment. LEDA has submitted several sites and toured a facility with the client. We are waiting for additional information from the company contact.
- * **Prospect Heritage** is seeking a retail, administrative and marketing location in Downtown Lafayette to support and market a regionally produced product. LEDA has submitted several properties for consideration. The company is moving forward and is currently adding staff for the operation and will contact LEDA when they are ready to secure the location.
- **Prospect Moving On 3.0** is an LED RFP that LEDA submitted one Lafayette Parish location for. The company manufactures and repairs helicopters and is seeking a location for maintenance, repair, and overhaul of those products. LED is waiting to hear from the consultant for the project.
- * **Prospect Brett** LEDA is working with a large retail client to locate a store (50,000+ square feet) in the North Lafayette area. The retailer generates approximately \$20 million in sales annually in existing locations. LEDA is working closely with LCG and has submitted a proposal for the project. Due diligence and other work are proceeding.



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Appendix

Demographics (map and full demographic report attached)

- The following chart presents demographic comparisons of Lafayette Parish and North Lafayette (City Districts 1 and 5)

2021	Lafayette Parish	North Lafayette
Total Population	247,147	48,831
Projected 2026 Population	259,896	49,918
Gender		
Male	48.9%	48.3%
Female	51.1%	51.7%
Race		
African American Alone	26.7%	63.3%
Caucasian Alone	67.1%	32.0%
Other*	6.1%	4.6%
Median Age	35.8	34.8
Average Household Size	2.5	2.5
Educational Attainment**	165,566	32,005
Less than High School	10.4%	18.0%
High School Graduate (or GED)	30.0%	36.6%
Some College, no degree	19.4%	19.3%
Associate or Bachelor’s degree	28.9%	20.2%
Master’s, Professional, or Doctorate degree	11.2%	5.7%
Median Household Income	\$59,298	\$32,481
Housing Units	93,656	20,792
Owner Occupied	60.3%	47.2%
Renter Occupied	31.1%	42.4%
Vacant	8.6%	10.4%
Average Owner-Occupied Home Value	\$253,562	\$180,614
Occupation Classification***	127,512	22,444
Blue Collar	21.7%	24.9%
White Collar	62.9%	47.4%
Services	15.4%	10.7%
*includes American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, two or more races, and other races		
for population age 25+ *for employed population +16		



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Median Household Income

- Through years of study and relationship building with site selectors, median household income has been identified as one of the primary indicators for retail location projects. For communities to be considered for a retail location, they must meet a certain dollar figure threshold in HH income set by the retailer. This indicator provides the necessary figures to calculate the overall purchasing power of the community that it is seeking to locate within. Based on the size of the retailer, the median HH income could be higher or lower dependent upon their ability to draw in markets outside of a certain district or radius.
- On the surface, one of the biggest limitations to development in North Lafayette is its economic make up. According to ESRI 2021 estimates, the median household incomes for the five council districts in the City of Lafayette range from \$28,842 in District 5 to \$77,588 in District 3. District 5 is the smallest district with only 8,877 households. North Lafayette is split across Districts 1 and 5. It will take more than 3,610 new households with a household income of \$100,000 to bring District 1’s median household income up to \$53,055, the citywide average median income. That number is 4,579 households for District 5.

Council District	# of HHs	Median HH Income	Number of New CD HHs with \$100,000 HH Income to Reach Council District Average Median HH Income
City 1	9,758	\$35,687	3,610
City 5	8,877	\$28,842	4,579
City Average	10,756	\$53,055	–

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 192

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Lafayette Economic Development Authority to develop and implement a comprehensive economic development strategic plan for the northern part of the city of Lafayette.

WHEREAS, the parish of Lafayette is set apart by its strategic location, a world-class workforce, a pro business climate, and an unmatched quality of life, which offers the essential elements to ensure the growth and development of its business community; and

WHEREAS, these attributes, complemented by a high tech infrastructure and quality real estate, make the parish of Lafayette a unique place to live, work, play, and do business; and

WHEREAS, there exists in the city of Lafayette areas which have become slums, blighted, and distressed because of the unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate, or overcrowded condition of the structures therein, or because of inadequate planning for the area; and

WHEREAS, the northern part of the city of Lafayette is integral to the overall economic health of the city and parish, however, this area has suffered from decades of disinvestment while other areas of the parish have enjoyed growth from public and private investments; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, the Legislature of Louisiana enacted Act 912 of the Regular Session, which created the "North Lafayette Redevelopment Authority", a political subdivision of the state, to address, in part, the general and economic welfare of the city through housing, commercial, office, hospitality, recreation, education, infrastructure and utility capacity, manufacturing, industrial, research, retail or other activities which will create or retain jobs, maintain or diversify industry, including new or emerging technologies, or maintain or increase the tax base; and

WHEREAS, since the enactment of Act 912 of the 2008 Regular Session, the northern part of the city of Lafayette still lacks the redevelopment that Act 912 sought to

address, while other areas of the city and parish continue to show a strong foundation for growth; and

WHEREAS, one reason the other areas of the city and parish show such a strong foundation for growth could be attributed to the strategic planning of the Lafayette Economic Development Authority (LEDA); and

WHEREAS, a political subdivision of the state, with its territorial limits and jurisdiction extending throughout the parish of Lafayette, LEDA was originally created in the 1970s as a harbor and terminal district, and became LEDA in the 1990s; and

WHEREAS, as written in statute, LEDA seeks to foster and support economic and industrial development and education in cooperation with private business enterprises, financial institutions, educational institutions, nonprofit institutions and organizations, state government and political subdivisions of the state, the federal government, and other organizations or persons concerned with research, development, education, commercial application, and economic or industrial development in ways which increase the economic base of the parish and region; and

WHEREAS, LEDA has the authority to enter into any cooperative endeavor in the form of economic development assistance between or among the district and the state, any of its local governmental subdivisions, political corporations, or public benefit corporations, the United States or its agencies, or any public or private association, corporation, or individual; and

WHEREAS, LEDA has the authority to enter into any cooperative financing for any method of financing and economic development project between or among the district and the state, any of its local governmental subdivisions, political corporations, or public benefit corporations, the United States or its agencies, or any public or private association, corporation, or individual; and

WHEREAS, LEDA has the authority to enter into any cooperative development project between or among the district and the state, any of its local governmental subdivisions, political corporations, or public benefit corporations, the United States or its agencies, or any public or private association, corporation, or individual; and

WHEREAS, most of LEDA's money comes from a parishwide property tax that was

set by the state legislature and never approved by voters and does not require a vote of the public; and

WHEREAS, LEDA's most recent financial report shows that at the end of 2019, it had a \$16 million net position; and

WHEREAS, although LEDA and North Lafayette Redevelopment Authority are located within the boundaries of the parish of Lafayette, the economic development, redevelopment, and monies allocated to those respective political subdivisions have not been proportionate; and

WHEREAS, other communities across the country have successfully implemented economic development and redevelopment strategies by partnering with local, state, federal, and private entities, including but not limited to Austin, TX; Nashville, TN; Greenville, SC; and Atlanta, GA's Beltline; and

WHEREAS, LEDA is encouraged to use its authority to enter into any cooperative endeavor, cooperative financing, cooperative development or any other form of cooperative economic development activity in the northern part of the city of Lafayette, given the fact that the parish of Lafayette is able to foster an economy that supports a growing population and diverse industry sectors where a quarter of the local workforce is employed in mining (energy), construction, manufacturing, and information.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Lafayette Economic Development Authority to develop a comprehensive economic development strategic plan that at a minimum includes the planning elements of SWOT analysis, strategic action plan, an evaluation framework, and a plan for economic resilience for the northern part of the city of Lafayette.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Lafayette Economic Development Authority assembles a professional, highly qualified economic development consulting team, reflecting diversity, equity, and inclusion for the purpose of assessing the feasibility of redeveloping the northern part of the city of Lafayette.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the plan developed by the consulting team shall address all of the following:

- (1)(a) How many properties are owned by LEDA in the parish of Lafayette?

(b) Identify those properties by address and list the usage of each property.

(2)(a) How many properties are owned by LEDA in the northern part of the city of Lafayette?

(b) Identify those properties by address and list the usage of each property.

(3)(a) How many businesses have been recruited, within the last five years, by LEDA for economic development projects within the parish of Lafayette?

(b) List the names and purposes of each business.

(c) How much money was spent on the recruiting of these businesses?

(d) List the month(s) and year(s) of the recruiting of each business.

(4)(a) How many businesses have been recruited, within the last five years, by LEDA for economic development projects in the northern part of the city of Lafayette?

(b) List the names and purposes of each business.

(c) How much money was spent on the recruiting of these businesses?

(d) List the month(s) and year(s) of the recruiting of each business.

(5)(a) How many businesses are currently being recruited by LEDA?

(b) List the names and purposes of each business.

(c) What areas of the parish are these businesses being recruited to locate?

(d) How much money was being spent on the recruitment of these businesses?

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the consulting team shall not be required to provide any confidential or sensitive information in the plan submitted pursuant to this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the consulting team shall submit the plan requested by this Resolution no later than December 31, 2021, to the Senate Committee on Local and Municipal Affairs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Gregg Gothreaux, President and CEO, Lafayette Economic Development Authority.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE