

# Livingston Economic Development Council

Annual Report on Economic Development

January 31, 2008

LEDC is an economic development organization working to improve the quality of life for citizens of Livingston Parish

## Highlights of 2007

- Bass Pro Shops to open in February 2008
- 5.4% increase in population over previous year
- Tuscany Park defines 'new' neighborhoods
- Fortune 500 Shaw APP operating in its new facility
- LIGO reaches milestone
- New manufacturer in the Livingston Industrial Park
- Continental Kennel Club expands to handle growth
- Livingston Tomorrow five-year economic growth plan
- I-12 Corridor marketing initiative
- Residential housing and development boom
- Retail sales tax surge again
- Parish Economic Indicators
- 2007 LEDC Board

**Livingston Economic Development Council**  
1810 South Range Avenue  
Denham Springs, LA 70726  
Phone: (225) 665-5223  
Fax: (225) 665-8171  
Email: johnw@demco.org  
Web Site: www.ledc.net

## Top Economic Development Stories of 2007

Livingston Parish again proved its attractiveness as a community in which to live and operate a business. Indicators of this growth are apparent throughout the parish in many ways including increased residential and commercial construction, retail establishments, new and improved roads, and a higher traffic count. According to the Census estimate, there are an additional 5,847 residents living in the parish, an increase of 5.4% over the previous year.

"The top development projects for 2007 are diverse, which is what we want for Livingston Parish," said LEDC Executive Director, John Ware. "They include our soon-to-be largest retail destination, Bass Pro Shop, to the expansion of the Continental Kennel Club, which contribute not only to the economy, but to the quality of life of our residents. As a means for continued logical growth, we adopted the *Livingston Tomorrow* campaign that outlines our desire to attract businesses and developments suitable for the parish," Ware added.



additional 200,000 square feet of restaurants and retail shopping, and a hotel.

The company is planning its "Conservation Night" in February, a free event

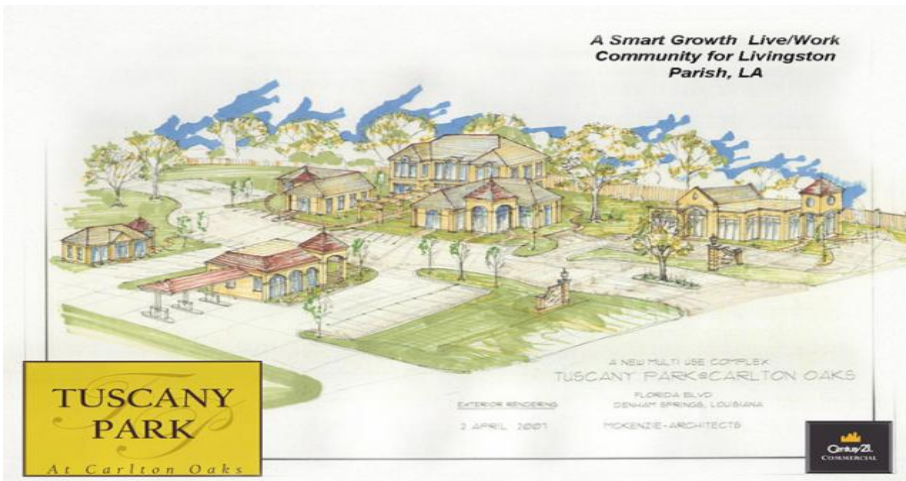


## Bass Pro Shop

The construction is nearly complete and the approximately 300 employees are trained and ready for the opening of Bass Pro Shop in early February 2008. The 163,000 square foot store in Denham Springs is the anchor retailer of a 75-acre development in the Denham Springs Economic Development District including an

open to the public with a formal opening the next day, which should top the 20,000 company attendance record.

Along with the development, the Denham Springs Economic Development District constructed access roads, drainage and utilities infrastructure. "This new infrastructure has positive implications on Denham Springs far beyond the Bass Pro Shop," said LEDC's Ware.



## Tuscany Park at Carlton Oaks

A truly unique 'neighborhood' is being planned for Livingston Parish that will allow residents to live and work within walking distance.

Developer Carlton Roberts and his wife, Dr. Gaynell Roberts, have a vision for Livingston Parish that came out of their personal living experience in an old Rome neighborhood. The couple believe that residents of Livingston Parish will enjoy the neighborhood environment being planned adjacent to the Carlton Oaks subdivision.

The neighborhood concept for Tuscany Park at Carlton Oaks also insures that open spaces and the natural beauty of the environment are retained. Other principles of development include:

- ◆ Neighborhood Livability;
- ◆ Range of Housing Opportunities & Choices;
- ◆ Walkable Neighborhoods;
- ◆ Community & Stakeholder Collaboration; and a
- ◆ Distinctive, Attractive with a Strong Sense of Place.

Development of Tuscany Park at Carlton Oaks is ongoing and will take into consideration the needs of residents. For more information, visit [www.TuscanyParkLA.com](http://www.TuscanyParkLA.com)



## Shaw APP

Livingston Parish's Fortune 500 company expanded in 2007 with a new 65,000 square foot building in the Livingston Parish Industrial Park. They invested \$1.7 million in the building and \$500,000 in equipment with state-of-the-art technology, including a pipe induction bender machine that can create curves in pipes up to 48 inches across using induction heating. This expansion is anticipated to create 100 new jobs, bringing Shaw Corporation's workforce to 650 employees in Livingston Parish.

## LIGO Researchers Reach Milestone

Researchers at the two sister LIGO facilities in Livingston and Richland, WA assisted astrophysicists in narrowing the cause of a massively bright explosion that occurred February 1, 2007. The identification of the explosion, called a short gamma ray burst, was considered a milestone for LIGO.

The identification was not only a breakthrough in connecting observations in the electromagnetic spectrum to gravitational-wave searches, but also the constructive integration of teams of complementary expertise. This project opens the doors for further collaboration for LIGO's researchers and scientists.

LIGO also announced it will be sharing gravitational wave data with an Italian facility that will increase its likelihood of detecting gravitational-wave events from about once in 100 years to 40 times per year.



## New Manufacturer in the Livingston Industrial Park

A new manufacturer announced plans to build a facility in the Livingston Parish Industrial Park to construct industrial compressors used in the offshore petrochemical industry. Compressor Engineering Corporation (CECO) of Houston, TX, purchased a 7-acre tract adjacent to Shaw APP on Hwy. 190.

The facility, scheduled to begin construction in early Spring, is a \$4.3 million investment creating an estimated 25 jobs with a payroll of \$1.375 million annually.

## Continental Kennel Club

The Continental Kennel Club announced its purchase of the truck stop off the Livingston I-12 exit on LA Hwy. 63 to build a facility to better accommodate its rapid growth. CKC purchased the 35-acre site in May and will renovate a 15,000 square foot facility to accommodate operations for registrations and record-keeping, promotions, publications, training, exhibitions and competitions, and a pro shop. The site is more visible than their existing location and will help to promote and attract visitors.





**Parish President  
Mike Grimmer**

Livingston Parish has certainly come a long way in the past four years. Our motto coming in was, "If we want to be successful, the number one thing we have to do in Livingston Parish is change our image." We are proud to say we have succeeded. Our Parish is noted as being one of the fastest growing parishes in Louisiana. It stands to reason that everyone wants to be in on the ground floor.

Here are just a few of the community accomplishments that have and will greatly add to our quality of life. Greystone and Carter Plantation Golf communities offer recreational and residential accommodations. Along the historic Tickfaw River, water front properties on the Diversion Canal and Bruce's Harbor offer the finest waterway developments in the parish. Bass Pro Shop will open February 2008, this will offer a new kind of shopping experience never before seen in Livingston Parish. Many other retail outlets will also open later this year on the surrounding property. Juban Crossing is currently under development with five hundred acres of prime retail area and over 1.2 million square feet of shopping space presenting a new style of living that offers a place to live, shop, play, dine and relax all in the same complex. Also announced in 2007, was Our Lady of the Lake and North Oaks Hospital both coming to Livingston Parish. These developments not only bring in sales tax revenue which helps our school

system stay one of the best in Louisiana but allows for tourist to see what Livingston Parish has to offer.

As you can see, with us noted as one of the fastest growing parishes, all developments look here first. The surrounding areas have found out that we work together. They have realized that we stick together, pull together, and taking a project from Livingston Parish has almost become impossible. Many other developments will be revealed in 2008 and I can promise you that it will not only shock Louisiana but the entire South. I thank you for your confidence, your understanding, for thinking outside the box, but most of all I want to thank you for your team effort to making Livingston Parish the number one topic in Louisiana.



### Livingston Tomorrow

A united effort between the public and private sectors announced in November 2007 will assist in the continued economic growth of Livingston Parish.

*Livingston Tomorrow* is the economic development plan outlining the strategies and goals that will create at least 12,000 jobs with significantly higher wages over the next five years; stable and growing tax base; new market opportunities for existing business; protection of existing business investments; individual engagement in the community growth; and unparalleled quality of life.

The core mission of *Livingston Tomorrow* is based on the concept of "economic vitality" and the need to have a strong, healthy, local economy aimed at improving the economic quality of life for residents and businesses.

The success of this initiative is contingent upon raising \$2.1 million to fund the plan's implementation.



### I-12 Corridor Initiative

Livingston Parish has an additional means of marketing its advantages through a regional partnership with other parishes located near Interstate-12. The parishes of Livingston, Tangipahoa, St. Tammany, St. Helena and Washington formed the organization and received funding from the Louisiana Economic Development marketing grant program to develop a marketing plan, logo, and a web site to market the highly traveled corridor.

The partnership, which will replace the region's former economic development partnership, the Florida Parishes Economic Council, believes the I-12 corridor is an economic engine to which other business will be attracted. A marketing plan targeting four industries – transportation logistics, energy, material suppliers and aerospace manufacturing, will be implemented by member parishes and managed by Southeastern Louisiana University's Small Business Development Center.

### Retail Surge

It's probably safe to assume by the 8.2% increase in retail sales collections since last year that residents have been making purchases in the parish instead of outside. Last year, new retailers such as Office Depot, Raising Cane's, and Carter's Supermarket entered the market to offer new products and services to residents. Still others such as 30-year operator, Sport-N-Center, have maintained their longevity because of the strong market.

The same level of growth is anticipated for this year. The opening of the Bass Pro Shop and additional retail developments, Juban Crossing, as well as tenant leaseings will make a significant impact.

## Residential Development

Residential development continues at a strong pace with the expansions occurring at Greystone Golf Community and Carter Plantation. Greystone is developing a “clubhouse complex” designed by Labarre Associates, and Carter Plantation of its complex with a new 18-hole golf course, 85-slip marina, 51 new residential lots, and a new preferred resort hotel.

Livingston Parish permitting and planning offices reported that 1,381 new home permits, 930 new lots, and 25 new subdivisions were approved in 2007.

The parish anticipates this to continue as people learn about the quality of life advantages in Livingston. The new Tuscany Park at Carlton Oaks will have an impact as it attracts a varied market seeking living and working alternatives.

## Dixie Business Center

The Dixie Business Center had an excellent year in 2007 and is now home to twelve firms. Two new firms signed lease agreements—Sumit Credits, LLC, a credit and incentive consulting service and Metro Mortgage, a mortgage origination company. Both firms are newly incorporated businesses that have found joining a business incubator offers many benefits for start-up enterprises.

Dixie Business Center has helped many firms find their way to professional business counseling, government procurement programs and other forms of management assistance.

The Dixie Business Center will turn 15 years old in 2008 and has grown from about 8,000 square feet in 1996 to nearly 50,000 square feet today.

## Parish Economic Growth Indicators

The parish continues to be at the forefront of growth in the Baton Rouge MSA and the parishes affiliated with the I-12 Initiative. The following is a summary of the growth from January 2004 through November 2007. A full report is available from LEDC.

Economic Indicator	2004-2007 % Growth
Employment in Parish	+24.1%
No. of New Businesses	+18.4%
Quarterly Wages Paid	+56.3%
Sales Tax Collections	+46.9%



**LEDC President  
Jeff Woods**

Our secret is out of the bag. In the history of Livingston Parish, there has never been a more exciting time to be resident, business owner, and leader. Businesses and residents of the outlying parishes continue to re-locate in our parish because they recognize our quality of life is second to none.

This upcoming year we will see the opening of Bass Pro, construction of the Comar Industrial Park, expansions to Carter Plantation, construction of Compressor Engineering, and the construction Juban Crossing just to name a few. We continue to reap the benefits of two world class golf courses located on opposite sides of the parish, which not only provides a place for entertainment but a setting that is conducive for business.

This past year the LEDC took a bold step and began the *Livingston Tomorrow* campaign which is the first of its kind for our parish. Our business leaders and decision makers continue to see the need to attract new businesses and maintain and grow existing businesses, and the *Livingston Tomorrow* campaign will insure that we have sufficient funding for these endeavors.

I pray that God continues to bless our parish.



2007 LEDC Board Members, left to right:

**Front Row** Luther “Buddy” Wells, Jeff Woods (Chairman), Mildred Cowsar, and John Ware (LEDC Executive Director)

**Back Row** Lloyd “Bee” Martin, Alvin “Al” Callais, Parish President Mike Grimmer, Mark Bonner, Jay Labarre, Fernand “Ferdie” Genre, Sen. Dale Erdey, Mr. Robert Easterly and Mr. Ken Holland