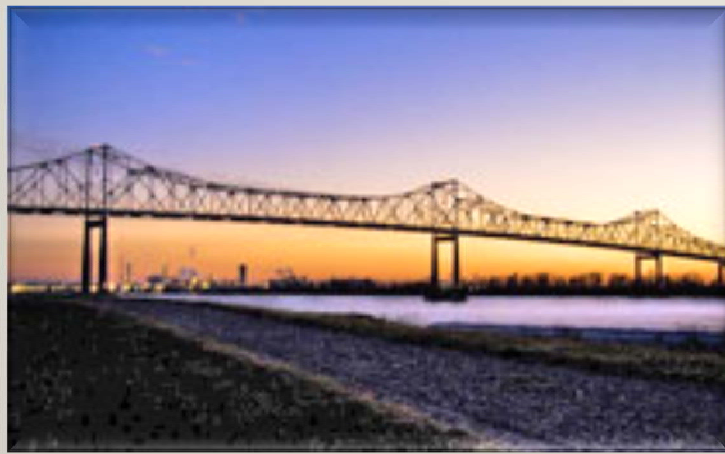
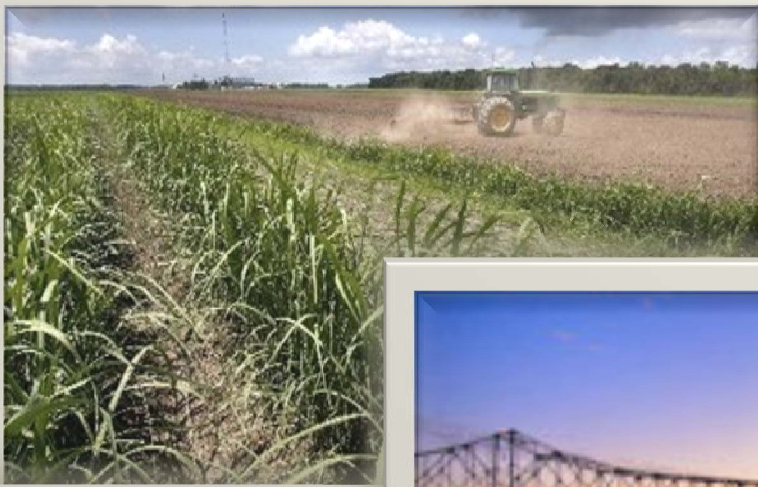


2010

St. James Parish Comprehensive Plan Briefing Booklet



South Central Planning and
Development Commission
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ST. JAMES AT A GLANCE – QUICK FACTS

Unless otherwise noted the following data was collected from the U.S. Census State and County Quick Facts 2008 estimates

Population

- 21,410 (LSU 2010 estimated populated projection)
- 21,216 (2000 US Census)
- 21,231 (U.S. Census 2008 estimate)

Age and Gender

- 7.2% persons under 5 years old
- 25.6% persons under 18 years old
- 12.6% persons 65 years of age and older
- 51.8% Female

Race

- 49.8% White
- 49.6% Black
- 0.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native
- 0.1% Asian
- 0.5% Other Race

Education and Economy

- 73.9% High school graduate
- 10.1% Bachelor's degree or higher
- 15.8% Families below the poverty level
- \$45,303 Median household income
- 32.4% Women owned firms
- 10.5 Unemployment rate (LA Works—Civilian Labor Force December 2009)

DATA SOURCE

It should be noted that the data utilized in this report was obtained primarily from the U.S. Census. While the census is the most reliable and comprehensive source of data, it does not adequately reveal the impacts of recent events such as the national housing crisis and the major storms of 2005 and 2008 that devastated the Gulf Coast region. That level of detail will not be available until the 2010 Census counts are released. Therefore, the census data utilized in this report is a snapshot of population and housing trends from 1900 to 2000 and may slightly contrast with real time activity.

INTRODUCTION

St. James Parish, a “river parish” is located in southeastern Louisiana approximately midway between Baton Rouge (the State Capitol) and New Orleans. The Mississippi River flows through the central area of St. James Parish and divides the parish into two segments known, locally, as the east bank and the west bank. The only incorporated municipalities, within St. James Parish, are Lutcher and Gramercy which are located on the east bank. Historically, the agricultural industry and the service related employment that it spawned was the primary employer within the Parish. However, St. James Parish is in the petro-chemical and industrial corridor, which has resulted in numerous oil refineries, petroleum facilities, and agricultural industries locating in the Parish.



Demographics



St. James Parish is a rural parish (county) situated on both sides of the Mississippi River, with small population centers in Gramercy, Lutcher, St. James, Vacherie, Convent, Hester, Paulina, and Uncle Sam. Previously part of the New Orleans MSA, St. James Parish is now one of Louisiana’s non-MSA parishes. The population, affected by the out-migration typical of small, rural communities, has hovered around 21,000 since the mid-1980s. Ethnically, St. James Parish is approximately 50% white and 50% African-American. The 2000 U.S. Census showed 10,606 or 50% of residents White and 10,476 or

49.4% African-American. In 2006, the ethnic makeup was 49.9% white and 49.9% African-American. In both years, the balance of the population was Native American and Asian. The 2008 Louisiana Technical University population estimate of 21,358, issued just before Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, represented a gain of approximately 300 over the pre-Katrina 2004 population. While some evacuees who relocated to the Parish after the 2005 storms had moved on, others had chosen to stay.

Housing



St. James Parish has 8,174 housing units¹, 92.1% of them occupied and 7.9% vacant (2005-2007 American Community Survey Estimates. U.S. Census Bureau). The 6,030 owner-occupied units represent 80.1% of the occupied units, while the 1,498 renter-occupied units represent 19.9%. The Parish has 646 vacant housing units. Median home value was \$104,200. Median household income was \$48,254 and median family income was \$53,776. Per capita income was \$20,187. After the 2005 hurricanes, St. James Parish, like much of the rest of south Louisiana, experienced an upturn in residential development sparked by dispersion of

population out of New Orleans. The Parish, which prior to the storms had experienced little or no growth, had 77 applications for new municipal addresses in 2007. The relatively affordable cost of land in the Parish has played a significant part in driving the new growth. New Orleans Association of Realtors' 2007 data indicate that activity on the more populated east bank appeared to have stabilized, with the price of single family homes about 20% higher than the pre-storm level. The west bank had less activity in number of units, but saw a greater increase in a lower base price per unit. It is anticipated that much future growth will occur on the west bank, which has both available land and recent access to the Interstate highway system via improved access to a Mississippi River bridge crossing. As in other parts of south Louisiana, the end result of increased activity in the housing market is likely to be a higher cost of living for local residents. Some of the additional residents commute to work outside the Parish, with St. James Parish serving as a bedroom community.



¹ The U.S. Census defines a housing unit as a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters, or if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other individuals in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall. For vacant units, the criteria of separateness and direct access are applied to the intended occupants whenever possible.

Economy



Economically, the Parish depends heavily on agriculture and the processing and manufacturing of petro-chemicals. Like other, similarly structured rural economies, St. James Parish has lagged in adding jobs. Much local employment remains farm-based, seasonal, temporary, and low-wage. Both primary industries are subject to price pressures from increased global competition. The result is historically high unemployment rates and relatively low per capita income levels. These are exacerbated by repetitive severe weather events. Unemployment spiked to 16.9% post-Katrina and Rita and to 10.5% post-

Gustav and Ike. The chemical industry has also been impacted by the rising cost of natural gas used in production and the drop in demand from key automotive and construction sector customers severely impacted by the economic downturn.

In the current economic downturn, St. James Parish's May 2009 unemployment was 8.8%, a full 2.5 points higher than the statewide rate and only about a third of a point below the national rate. The Bureau of Economic Analysis reported a 2006 PCI of \$25,094, which represented a 17% increase over 2003, but was still just 79% of statewide and 68% of national PCI. In third quarter 2008, weekly average wages in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting were \$581, a 73% drop from the 2006 and 2007 average. Third quarter 2008 average weekly manufacturing wages remained high, dropping about 1% from the 2007 average. However, data indicates that the percentage of the workforce employed in this sector may be shrinking as major chemical companies have closed plants, trimmed workforces or moved parts of their operations overseas. In 2006, 37% of employment was in the manufacturing industry (LA Works. 2007). By 2007, the percentage had dropped to 33% and by the third quarter of 2008, it had dropped again to 31%.

COMPARATIVE GROWTH ANALYSIS FOR SELECTED AREAS

1900 -2000 Historical Population Trends

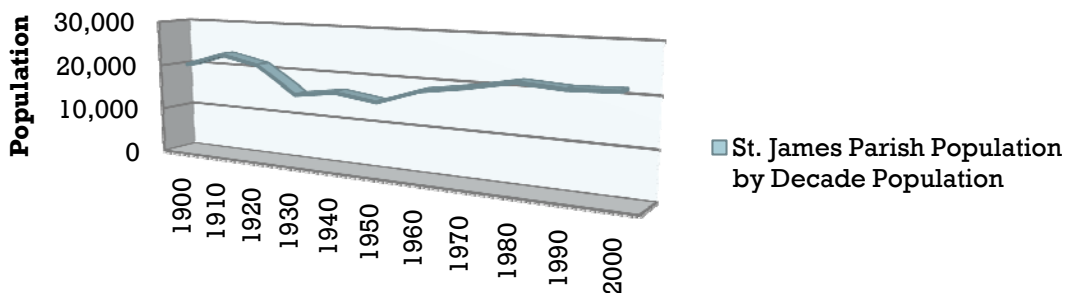
In 1900, St. James Parish had a population of 20,197 persons. The 2000 Census reported a population of 21,216 persons, an increase of 1,019 persons during this 100-year period. Table 1 illustrates the population changes in St. James Parish over the past century. The historical census data reveals that the population peaked in St. James Parish during the year 1910 at 23,009 persons. There began a decline in population during the 1920s with an out migration of -8.39%; Moreover, a significant population decrease of -38.40% occurred during the 1930s a loss of 5,890 persons. From 1930 to 2000 the Parish has never again reached that peak population of 1910.

St. James Parish Population by Decade

Year	Population	Absolute Numerical Change	% Change
1900	20,197		
1910	23,009	2,812	12.22%
1920	21,228	-1,781	-8.39%
1930	15,338	-5,890	-38.40%
1940	16,596	1,258	7.58%
1950	15,334	-1,262	-8.23%
1960	18,369	3,035	16.52%
1970	19,733	1,364	6.91%
1980	21,495	1,762	8.20%
1990	20,879	-616	-2.95%
2000	21,216	337	1.59%

University of Virginia Library and US Census

Figure 1: St. James Parish Population by Decade Population



Population Measurement

The information provided in Table 1 takes a comparative look at the total population change for the Nation, the State, and the South Central Regional Planning District (SCRPD) of which St. James Parish is a part. The parishes that comprise the SCRPD are: Assumption Parish, Lafourche Parish, St. Charles Parish, St. James Parish, St. John the Baptist Parish and Terrebonne Parish. This area may interchangeably be referred to as the SCRPD or the “regional” area.

The population of all comparative areas showed growth increase between 1990 and 2000. Population growth in St. James Parish appears to be nominal as compared to the other parishes comprising the SCRPD. St. James Parish showed a slow growth ratio (-0.33). In 2000, the Nation showed an absolute numerical increase in population of 32,712,033 a percentage change of 13.15%. Louisiana had a population increase of 5.90% an absolute numerical increase of 249,003 persons. The absolute numerical growth rate for the SCRPD was 21,290 which is a population increase of 6.89% and St. James Parish experienced a growth increase of 337 persons a percentage change of 1.61%. The percentage change is the best measure of St. James Parish growth performance because it reflects the total growth ratio from 1990 to 2000. St. Charles Parish had the highest percentage change at 13.28%.

TABLE 1: Louisiana South Central Regional Planning District Measurement of Population Change

Comparative Area	1990 Total Population	2000 Total Population	Absolute Numerical Change	% Change	1990 Share of Population	2000 Share of Population	Change in Share
Nation	248,709,873	281,421,906	32,712,033	13.15%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Louisiana	4,219,973	4,468,976	249,003	5.90%	1.70%	1.59%	-0.11%
Regional Total	308,907	330,197	21,290	6.89%	0.12%	0.12%	-0.01%
Assumption Parish	22,753	23,388	635	2.79%	7.37%	7.08%	-0.28%
Lafourche Parish	85,860	89,974	4,114	4.79%	27.79%	27.25%	-0.55%
St. Charles Parish	42,437	48,072	5,635	13.28%	13.74%	14.56%	0.82%
St. James Parish	20,879	21,216	337	1.61%	6.76%	6.43%	-0.33%
St. John the Baptist Parish	39,996	43,044	3,048	7.62%	12.95%	13.04%	0.09%
Terrebonne Parish	96,982	104,503	7,521	7.76%	31.40%	31.65%	0.25%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau P001 Persons 1990 Summary Tape File 1 (STF 1)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau P1 Total Population [1] 2000 Census Summary File 1 (STF 1)

2010 -2030 Population Projections

The Louisiana Parish Population Projections Series, 2010-2030 are projections provided by the State of Louisiana and produced by Louisiana State University. The following methodology was used to determine future population estimates and was obtained from the www.louisiana.gov website.

“These are projections of the population by age (five year categories through age 85), race (white, African American/black, and other), and sex for Louisiana Parishes between 2010-2030. The race category 'other' includes Asian or Pacific Islanders and North American Indian or Eskimo

For these projections, the 2005 estimated population for each parish is projected forward in five-year intervals through 2030. The effects of hurricanes Katrina and Rita are taken into account.

The projections are designed to present three population scenarios. Rates of birth and death are based on vital statistics data from 2000-2004 and are held constant between 2010 and 2030 across all three scenarios; however, each scenario depicts a different assumption regarding migration patterns by age, race, and sex. These scenarios include:

- 1) Middle Series [2000-2005 Net Migration Scenario]: In this scenario, the observed rate of migration between 2000-2005 is assumed to remain constant through 2030.*
- 2) Low Migration Series [Half (.5) 2000-2005 Net Migration Scenario]: In this scenario, the rate of migration through 2030 is assumed to be one-half (.5) of the 2000-2005 migration rate.*
- 3) High Migration Series [One and One-Half (1.5) 2000-2005 Net Migration Scenario]: In this scenario, the rate of migration through 2030 is assumed to be one and one-half (1.5) times that of the 2000-2005 migration rate”.*

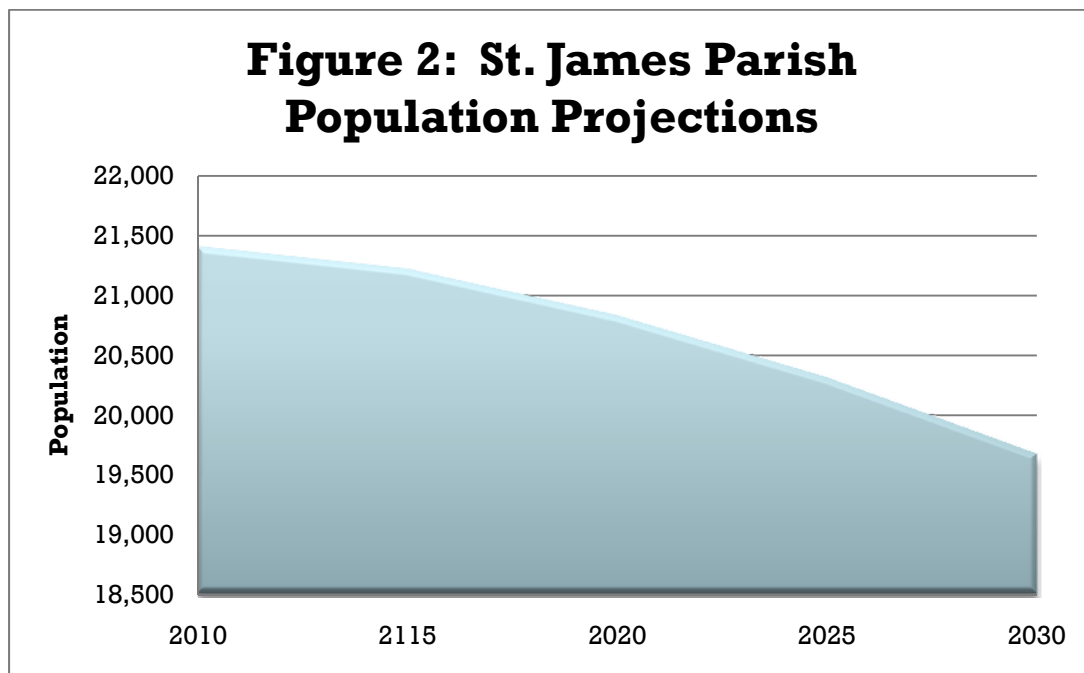
Without the ability to predict major future occurrences that would impact migration trends, this report utilizes the middle series of the migration scenario. However, a natural disaster or shifts in economic activity could increase or decrease population migration.

Population estimates for the years 2010 -2030 shows a steady decrease in the number of people residing in St. James Parish. Data suggest that between the years 2010 and 2030, St. James Parish will have lost 1,740 residents. As illustrated in the historic population figures of the past 100 years (Table 3), these future projections reveal a continuous decrease in population. Moreover, it appears that any population growth that may have occurred within the Parish post Hurricane Katrina has not been sustainable and will not reverse this trend. However, until the 2010 Census data is released, it will be difficult to analyze such impacts.

TABLE 3: St. James Parish Population Projections

Year	Population
2010	21,410
2115	21,220
2020	20,830
2025	20,310
2030	19,670

Source: Louisiana State University



Median Age

The mid-thirties appear to be the median age for all comparative areas. The median age in the U.S is approximately 35.3. While the state, SCPRD and St. James Parish all have a median age of 34 (Table 4).

**TABLE 4: 2000 South Central Regional Planning District
Median Age of Population**

Comparative Area	Median Age
Nation	35.3
Louisiana	34.0
Regional Total	34.0
Assumption Parish	34.2
Lafourche Parish	34.1
St. Charles Parish	34.2
St. James Parish	34.0
St. John the Baptist Parish	32.0
Terrebonne Parish	33.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau P13 Median Age By Sex. Data Set. Census 2000 SF1

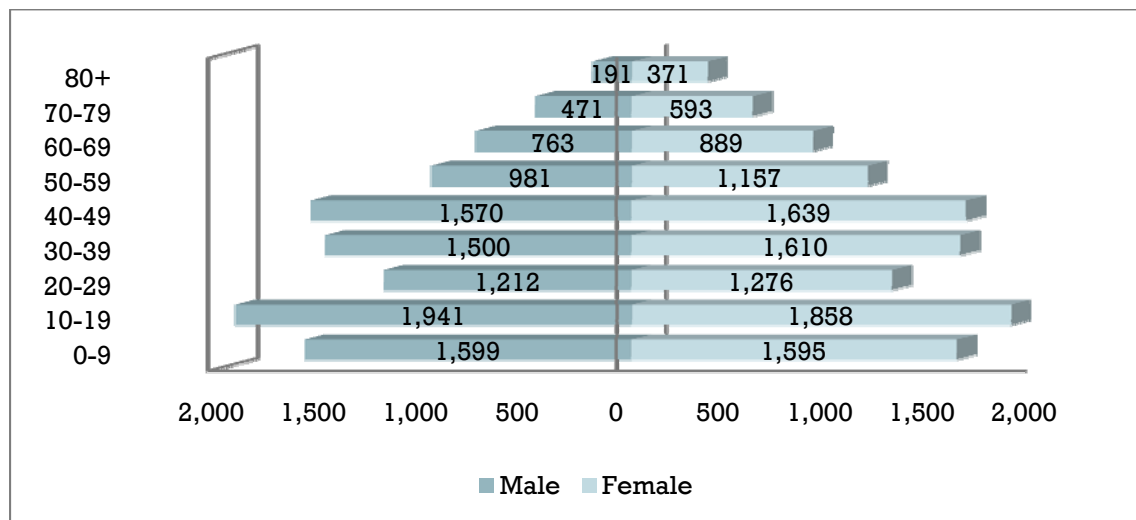
POPULATION AGE STRUCTURE

Table 5 reveals the age group comprising the largest share of the population for the region is individuals between the ages of 10-19 followed by the 30-39 age group. In St. James Parish, youth between the ages of 10-19 make up a 17.91% share of the population and individuals in the 40-49 age category embodies the second largest age group within the Parish at 15.13%. As can be seen in figure 3, men between the ages of 10-19 years of age outnumber all other age categories within the Parish (1,941).

TABLE 5: St. James Parish Age Structure of Population

Age Group	SCRPD			St. James Parish		
	Male	Female	% of Population	Male	Female	% of Population
0-9	25,789	24,718	15.26%	1,599	1,595	15.05%
10-19	28,616	27,820	17.05%	1,941	1,858	17.91%
20-29	20,354	21,579	12.67%	1,212	1,276	11.73%
30-39	24,753	26,602	15.51%	1,500	1,610	14.66%
40-49	24,857	25,480	15.20%	1,570	1,639	15.13%
50-59	17,049	17,505	10.44%	981	1,157	10.08%
60-69	11,386	11,835	7.01%	763	889	7.79%
70-79	6,748	8,614	4.64%	471	593	5.02%
80+	2,439	4,928	2.23%	191	371	2.65%
Total Population		331,072	100.00%		21,216	100.00%

Source: US Census Bureau P12 Sex By Age. Data Set Census 2000 SF1

Figure 3: St. James Parish 2000 Age Structure Pyramid


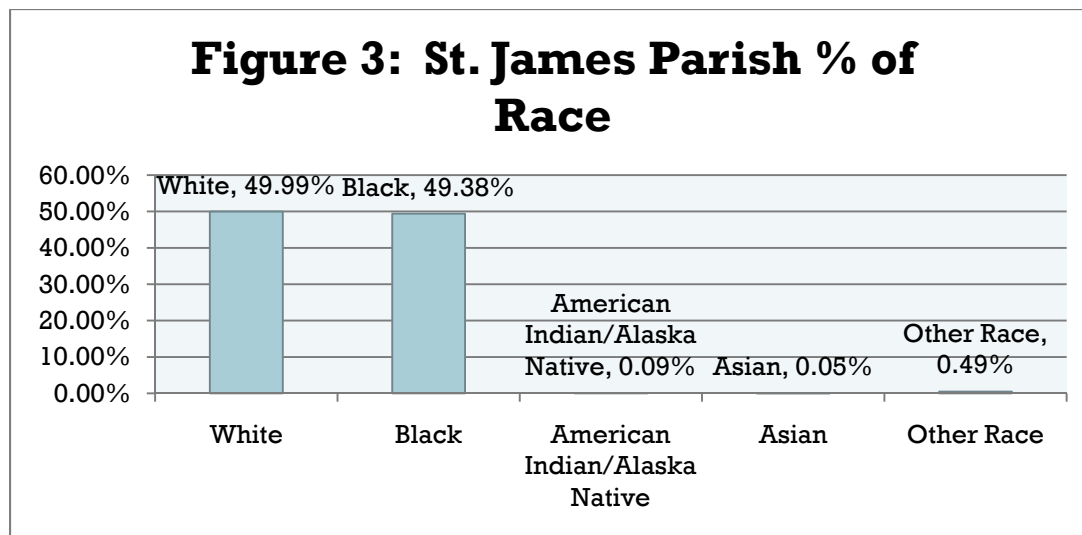
Ethnic Makeup of St. James Parish

Ethnically, St. James is approximately 50% white and 50% African-American. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 10,606 or 50% of residents were white and 10,476 or 49.4% were African-American (Census 2000 Demographic Profile Highlights. U.S. Census Bureau. American FactFinder). In 2006, the estimated population was 49.9% white and 49.9% African-American. In both years, the balance of the population was Native American and Asian or more than one race (U.S. Census Bureau, State and County Quick Facts).

TABLE 6: Louisiana South Central Regional Planning District Race Distribution

Race	SCRPD	% of Race	St. James Parish	% of Race
White	235,697	71.39%	10,606	49.99%
Black	79,188	23.99%	10,476	49.38%
American Indian/Alaska Native	7,925	2.40%	19	0.09%
Asian	2,003	0.61%	10	0.05%
Other Race	5,327	1.61%	105	0.49%
Total	330,140	100%	21,216	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau P3. Race [71]-Universe: Total population. Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau P3. Race [71]-Universe: Total population. Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1)

HOUSING TRENDS

Again it should be noted that this data is from the 1990 and 2000 Census. While it is the most reliable and comprehensive source of data, it does not adequately reveal the impacts of recent events that has significantly impacted housing trends such as the national housing crisis and the major storms of 2005 and 2008 that devastated the Gulf Coast region. Therefore, the data utilized in this table is a snapshot of housing activity during the years 1990 and 2000; however, real time housing activity may contrast slightly.



As can be observed in Table 7, the number of owner occupied housing units grew in all of the comparative parishes. U.S. Census data reveals that the housing tenure in the Nation grew by 14.72%, in the State by 10.46% and the regional area by 12.26% between 1990 and 2000. In the region, St.



James Parish housing tenure grew the least at 8.71%. Within the six parish regional area St. Charles Parish housing tenure grew the most at 14.57%. St. James Parish had a total housing tenure of 6,423. Between 1990 and 2000 home ownership in St. James Parish grew by 12.91%. Comparatively, St. James Parish has more home owners (85.58%) than any other parish in the regional area. Assumption Parish has the second highest percentage of home owners at 84.09%. Out of the parishes comprising the SCRPD area, Terrebonne had the smallest percentage of home owners at 75.54%. As a region, 78.98% of the residents living within the area are home owner.

TABLE 7: 1990-2000 Housing Tenure

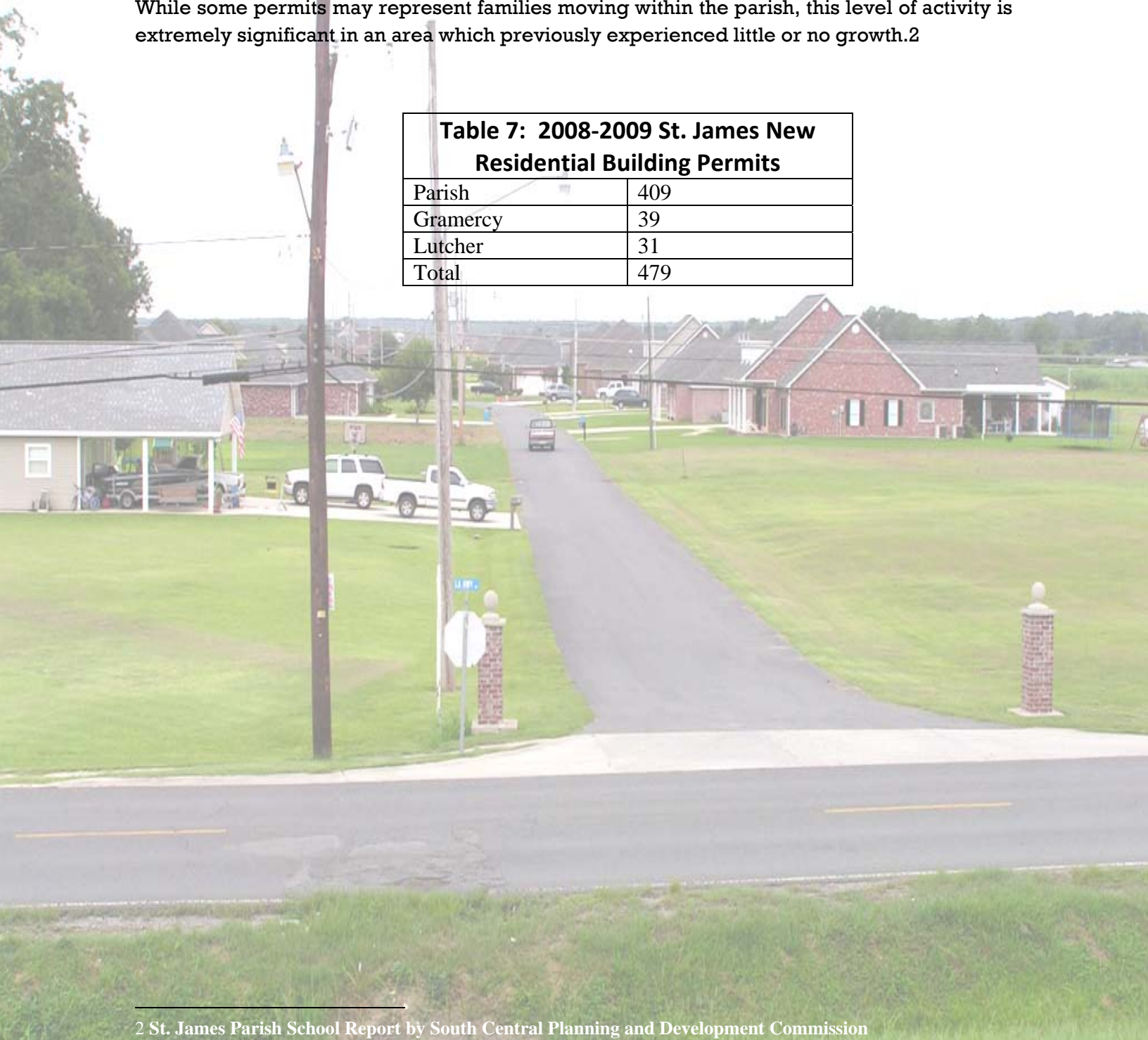
Comparative Area	1990 Housing Tenure		2000 Housing Tenure		Absolute Change	% Change	Absolute Change	% Change	% of Owner Occupied	
	Total Tenure	Owner Occupied	Total Tenure	Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied	Owner Occupied	of Tenure	of Tenure	1990	2000
Nation	91,947,410	59,031,378	105,480,101	69,816,513	10,785,135	18.27%	13,532,691	14.72%	64.20%	66.19%
Louisiana	1,499,269	988,012	1,656,053	1,124,995	136,983	13.86%	156,784	10.46%	65.90%	67.93%
Regional Total	101,544	77,957	113,990	90,032	12,075	15.49%	12,446	12.26%	76.77%	78.98%
Assumption Parish	7,397	6,101	8,239	6,928	827	13.56%	842	11.38%	82.48%	84.09%
Lafourche Parish	28,835	21,833	32,057	24,988	3,155	14.45%	3,222	11.17%	75.72%	77.95%
St. Charles Parish	14,333	11,302	16,422	13,370	2,068	18.30%	2,089	14.57%	78.85%	81.42%
St. James Parish	6,432	5,300	6,992	5,984	684	12.91%	560	8.71%	82.40%	85.58%
St. John the Baptist Parish	12,710	10,128	14,283	11,569	1,441	14.23%	1,573	12.38%	79.69%	81.00%
Terrebonne Parish	31,837	23,293	35,997	27,193	3,900	16.74%	4,160	13.07%	73.16%	75.54%

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

The parish participates in the South Central Construction Code Council, a regional code enforcement program administered by South Central Planning and Development Commission, the regional planning district. As a more current indicator of housing activity, the table below shows new residential building permits from early 2008 to late 2009, with information taken from the code council's permit tracking website, www.mypermitnow.org. While some permits may represent families moving within the parish, this level of activity is extremely significant in an area which previously experienced little or no growth.²

Table 7: 2008-2009 St. James New Residential Building Permits

Parish	409
Gramercy	39
Lutcher	31
Total	479



² St. James Parish School Report by South Central Planning and Development Commission

EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC TRNEDS

Information utilized in this section was obtained from the St. James Parish School Report written by South Central Planning and Development Commission.

Economic Prospects

St. James is affected by the same demographic factors that affect rural communities across the nation and around the world. Limited labor markets encourage out-migration. St. James has historically had the highest unemployment rate of all six parishes in the six-parish SCPDC district. Some parish residents lack the skills and education to qualify for skilled or even semi-skilled jobs. Many have access only to seasonal, temporary agricultural employment. Over the past decade, well-paid chemical industry employment in Louisiana has been shrinking, with a number of in-state plants closing as parent companies downsize or move production of highly price-sensitive basic chemicals out of the country.



Conditions in St. James are in line with those common to rural communities. . Many such communities have what have been described as “dual labor markets.” The primary labor market, like the chemical and other manufacturing industry, requires education and skills, pays higher wages, and offers stable employment, safer working conditions and opportunities for advancement. The secondary labor market



employs unskilled or semi-skilled workers, pays low wages, offers less safe working conditions and employment may be seasonal or short-term. In 1999, an estimated one in four wage and salary workers in rural areas had low-wage jobs. Many worked in the “informal” economy. Rural families are thus more likely to be employed and still poor. Very low rural wages have the greatest effect on those with high school or less. In 1999, 27% of rural workers over age 25 received wages that if earned full-time, year-round, would not lift a family above the poverty line.

High poverty rates among young adults (often parents) in rural areas mean high poverty rates among children. Single mothers have respective poverty rates of 40% (white), 49% (black) and 53% (Hispanic). Low wages and lack of daycare make it difficult to maintain employment. . Transportation problems are

also a factor. Many who do have their own cars drive old, unreliable gas guzzlers that add to the cost of working. Rural isolation requires driving considerable distances to get groceries and other necessities. Rural housing may often be cheap, but it is also frequently older and dilapidated. Housing costs may lock families into rural communities, since they can't afford to move for better employment in areas where housing costs are higher.



Strong public schools like those in St. James play an important role in building a local labor force that enhances the community's ability to attract and support new business enterprises. A strong local economy makes it possible for young people to stay in the community, rather than leaving in search of opportunity. The same workforce issues are recognized as critical factors in maintaining the United States' national competitiveness. Investment in human capital by the local community enables young people who might otherwise be limited to the "secondary economy," with little hope for advancement, to gain the skills they need to adequately provide for their own needs and those of their families. Strong public schools can



simultaneously create other local benefits like somewhat higher home values and per capita incomes. Smaller schools like those in St. James Parish can also be helpful in reducing youth violence, substance abuse and criminal activity that can result in felony convictions that further limit employability. In 1999, larger schools were found to **have 825% more violent crime; 270 % more vandalism; 378% more theft and larceny; 394% more physical fights or attacks; 3,200% more robberies; 1,000% more weapons incidents.**

Unemployment

Factors in St. James' historically high unemployment rate include the parish's rural, somewhat isolated location and the related, limited availability of jobs. The annual, seasonal increase in employment related to sugar cane harvesting is typically low-paying manual labor, temporary and of limited duration.

Table 9: Comparative Unemployment Rates: St. James, South Central Planning District Parishes, State and National Rates.

	January 2008	October 2008	December 2008	January 2009	September 2009	October 2009	November 2009	December 2009
St. James	6.8%	8.1%	8.7%	9.3%	9.9%	9.8%	9.2%	10.5%
Assumption	5.0%	6.3%	6.6%	7.1%	8.6%	9.7%	8.1%	9.7%
Lafourche	3.2%	3.9%	3.7%	3.6%	4.9%	4.8%	4.4%	5.0%
St. Charles	3.7%	4.9%	4.9%	5.0%	6.4%	6.1%	5.6%	6.2%
St. John the Baptist	5.0%	6.0%	6.6%	6.7%	8.3%	8.0%	7.5%	6.2%
Terrebonne	3.2%	4.2%	3.9%	3.8%	5.2%	5.3%	4.8%	5.3%
Louisiana	4.4%	5.3%	5.6%	5.7%	7.4%	7.1%	6.4%	7.2%
United States	5.4%	6.1%	7.1%	8.5%	9.5%	9.5%	9.4%	9.7%

Source: LA Works—Civilian Labor Force—Not seasonally adjusted.

Unemployment tends to have a more severe impact on some segments of the population than on others. In the current recession, as in the rest of the country, minority unemployment in St. James is significantly higher than the parish's general unemployment rate. In December 2008, the difference was a full four percentage points. In the current economic downturn, the *Washington Post* reported a shocking November 2009 national jobless rate for young black men aged 16 to 24 of 34.5%.

TABLE 10: St. James Minority Employment 2008

Total Labor Force	Minority Labor Force	Minority as % of Total Labor Force	Minority Unemployment	Minority Unemployment Rate
9,019	3,969	44.01%	503	12.7%
Black Labor Force Data	3,912	43.38%	501	12.8%

Source: *Louisiana Labor Force Diversity Data 2009*. Louisiana Workforce Commission. Distribution By Minority Population & Median Family Income—by Census Blocks

A key factor contributing to the high unemployment rate is the significant percentage of the parish population with limited education. While St. James has done better than Louisiana as a whole, it still lags the rest of the country in this critical factor.

TABLE 11: Educational Attainment of Adults 25 and older: St. James Parish, Louisiana, United States (American FactFinder; 2007-2008 District Composite; Calculations)

	Less than High School	High School But Less Than Bachelor's	Bachelor's and Higher
St. James	17.9%	68.1%	14.1%
Louisiana	20.1%	59.5%	20.4%
United States	15.5%	57.0%	27.5%

Less-educated men could once find entry-level, manual-labor jobs in manufacturing, but those opportunities have dwindled as the manufacturing sector continues to shrink and technology and globalization change labor markets. Wages for unskilled workers have fallen as the nature of work shifts from routine, assembly-line production to cooperative work teams. Employers increasingly demand computer, literacy, and problem-solving math skills, as well as communication skills critical to working as part of a team. Those who do not complete school typically lack informal networks and supports and have less access to the informal networks which have become employers' primary means of generating job applicants and trainees.

As it strives to build a solid future, St. James Parish's greatest need is for an educated, trained workforce with the capacity to meet changing labor market demands. In addition to public school system efforts, St. James has taken an innovative approach to training out-of-school and young adults. The St. James Department of Human Resources (SJDHR) applied for and was granted Community Development Block Grant funding to create a mobile classroom, equipped with computers, to take training programs to residents of low-income communities. The SJDHR also operates a bus system to help workers who lack their own transportation get to their jobs. In 2008-2009, the SJDHR has operated the pilot YouthBuild program, to assist under-educated youth early in their work lives, before discouragement and alienation takes hold. To date, the small, pilot program has helped over 30 young men enter employment or post-secondary education, obtain their GEDs and improve their literacy. The SJDHR is currently studying potential for creating satellite training centers in areas of the parish identified as "pockets of poverty."

Per Capita Income

Per Capita Income levels in St. James Parish continue to lag those in other SCPDC parishes and the state. PCI for St. James and the rest of the district continues to lag the rest of the nation. St. James has, however, made significant gains over the past decade to significantly narrow the income gap.

TABLE 12: Per Capita Income 2003 to 2006

	1996	2003	\$ and % Growth 1996 to 2003	2006	\$ and % Growth 2003 to 2006	2006 % of LA	2006 % of U.S.
St. James	\$16,822	\$21,487	\$4,665 28%	\$25,094	\$3,607 17%	79%	68%
Assumption	\$16,650	\$25,903	\$9,253 56%	\$29,329	\$3,426 13%	92%	80%
Lafourche	\$17,756	\$26,847	\$9,091 51%	\$32,395	\$5,548 21%	102%	88%
St. Charles	\$21,155	\$26,470	\$5,315 25%	\$29,640	\$3,170 12%	93%	81%
St. John the Baptist	\$17,121	\$22,592	\$5,471 32%	\$27,257	\$4,665 21%	86%	74%
Terrebonne	\$17,274	\$23,851	\$6,577 38%	\$30,848	\$6,997 29%	97%	84%
Louisiana				\$31,821			
United States				\$36,714			

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis. 1996 – 2006.

Other Income Data

Median household income in St. James is high relative to the state and nearly at the national level. However, nearly a quarter of children and over 15% of adults in St. James live in poverty. Although the parish's poverty rates are lower than for the rest of Louisiana, they are significantly higher than national poverty rates.

TABLE 13: Income and Poverty—St. James Parish 2007-2008

	St. James District Composite-Louisiana Dept. of Education	St. James American Community Survey (2006-2008 estimate)	Louisiana	United States
Median Household Income	\$39,524	\$47,102 (2008 inflation adjusted)	\$36,547	\$46,242
Persons Below Poverty	17.2%	16.0%	20.25	13.3%
Children Below Poverty	24.4%		29.2%	18.5%
Families Below Poverty		13.1%		9.6%