



St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana

(Population 233,700)

When people think of Louisiana, they often think of boats and bayous, woods and wilderness, French food and the Big Easy. St. Tammany Parish has all of that but it is much, much more. Located on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, St. Tammany is a hidden jewel that the world is just beginning to discover. The population has grown over 200% during the past thirty years – due largely to its prime location, pleasant ambiance, and warm and friendly residents.

St. Tammany is the fifth largest parish (county) in Louisiana, and has a pleasant small town feel while offering ready access to the excitement of the big city. New Orleans lies 40 miles to the south, Baton Rouge 65 miles to the west, and Bay St. Louis, Gulfport and Biloxi 60 miles to the east. Together they offer major league sports, musical entertainment, theater, art galleries, museums, history-rich venues and casinos. Louis

Armstrong New Orleans International Airport is within 40 miles and Gulfport-Biloxi International is approximately 65 miles to the east. The nearby Port of New Orleans is America's gateway to the globe; a deepwater port that accommodates an average of 2,000 vessels a year and 8.6 million tons of cargo. It is projected that the Port will cater to over 400,000 cruise passengers in 2012.

With so much nearby, many people still find it hard to leave the Parish: it is simply a great place to live, work, and play. Housing is relatively inexpensive, crime is low, schools are good quality, and the cost of living is excellent at 87.7 (against the national average of 100). Its communities are unique and inviting. In Mandeville, St. Tammany's "jewel on the lake," every sunset looks like a postcard picture. Dining opportunities abound, such as Lacombe's Annual Crab Festival. Next, visit Folsom with its horse farms, plant nurseries, and the Global Wildlife

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Center where 4,000 animals grace 900 acres. Abita Springs hosts Beechwood Gardens, the Abita Spring Opry and the Abita Brewing Company. Continue on to Madisonville and attend its Annual Wooden Boat Festival, and Covington with a charming downtown district. The opportunities continue with parks, marinas and boat ramps, as well as eight public and private golf courses, tennis courts, and swimming pools. Finally, the Parish is home to over 90,000 acres of protected lands including the Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, the Bogue Chitto National Wildlife Refuge, the Pearl River Wildlife Management Area and the Lake Ramsey Savannah Wildlife Management Area.

More than anything else, what makes St. Tammany special is the small town feel. Although it is barely 40 miles north of New Orleans (via the causeway bridge), in terms of lifestyle, it could be a million miles away from the hustle and bustle of the Big Easy.

History

St. Tammany Parish has a long and rich history. Before French Explorers arrived in the 1600s, various Native American tribes inhabited the area including: the Colapissas, Bayou Goulas, Chickasaw, Biloxi, Choctaw and Pensacola nations. St. Tammany Parish was created and named after the Delaware Indian Chief Tamanend, who was known for his goodness. The first European to visit the area was the French explorer, Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville. While exploring lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas he wrote, "The place where I am is one of the prettiest I have seen".

In 1830 the only two towns in St. Tammany were Madisonville (a shipbuilding and sawmill town) and Covington (a retreat with summer homes and hotels). In 1834, Mandeville was founded and developed as a health resort for wealthy New Orleanians. With regular ferry service commencing across Lake Pontchartrain, Abita Springs was



founded. A railroad was constructed connecting Covington, Abita Springs, and Mandeville to New Orleans which promoted further growth. The early French influence remained, and by 1918, the majority of Mandeville's residents were still French-speaking.

With the completion of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway and the I-10 Twin Span from New Orleans to St. Tammany, the Parish began to develop as a bedroom community. By the 1950's, St. Tammany was sparsely populated and rural, but by 2004, the population had grown to 200,000. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina passed through the

greater New Orleans area and, as a result, a number of businesses and residents relocated from New Orleans to the Parish. Chevron, for example, moved its regional headquarters from New Orleans to an office park outside Covington in 2008. That move was one of several that have helped the Parish begin to transition from a bedroom community of commuters to a more vibrant, diverse and independent economy.

Commerce

St. Tammany Parish is strategically located for business and industry, and is now coming into its

Table I: St. Tammany Parish's Principal Employers, 2010

Rank	Employer	Staff	Business Type
1	St. Tammany Parish School Board	5,687	Education
2	Local Public Schools (K-12)	1,679	Acute Care Hospital
3	Wal-Mart	1,125	Retail
4	Slidell Memorial Hospital	1,100	Acute Care Hospital
5	Hombeck Offshore Servcies, Ins.	1,025	Marine Transportation
6	Lakeview Regional Medical Center	788	Acute Care Hospital
7	St. Tammany Parish Government	720	Government
8	St. Tammany Parish Sheriff Office	693	Law Enforcement
9	Southeast Louisiana Hospital	667	Phsyiatric Hospital
10	Ochsner Medical Center-North Shore	622	Acute Care Hospital
11	Textron Marine & Land Systems	610	Mfg. Light Armored Vehicles
12	Chevron, USA	550	Petroleum Exploration
13	Home Depot	500	Retail
14	City of Slidell	375	Government
15	Trinity Marine	350	Ship Building / Repair
16	F.A. Richard and Associates	348	Insurance Services
17	LA Medical Center & Heart Hospital	329	Acute Care Hospital
18	Ochsner Clinic Foundation Northshore	302	Health Care
19	Tulane Regional Primate Research Ctr.	275	Biomedical Research
20	Gilsbar, Inc	275	Insurance Consultant

own as a commercial center. Many businesses are realizing the Parish is an attractive alternative to New Orleans (such as Chevron). In many ways, the Parish is ripe for development. Business costs are low, the labor supply is good, and land is relatively inexpensive and abundant. Transportation is readily available via the Causeway (i.e., the Greater New Orleans Expressway) and the I-10 Twin Span to New Orleans. The Parish is also connected for commerce through three interstate freeway systems: I-12 (east-west), I-59 (southwest-northeast), and I-55 (north-south). The Parish also includes The Norfolk and Southern Railroad lines through Slidell, as well as two general aviation airports: Slidell Municipal and St. Tammany Regional.

In terms of employment, many residents work outside the Parish, commuting to New Orleans or the NASA facility just over the border in Mississippi. The Parish’s principal employers are included in Table 1.

Unemployment is 6.4%. New business start-ups, single family home building permits and retail sales are all slightly above comparable periods from last year. The Parish’s economy is quite strong, and is slated to improve. In the past year, the New Orleans metro area has achieved top rankings for business climate: “#2 of Best Cities for Jobs” by Forbes and “Co-Major Market of the Year” by Southern Business and Development”.

Demographics

St. Tammany Parish has an overall population of 233,700 and as such, is the fifth largest in the state per 2010 Census data. Its population was approximately 30,000 in 1956 when the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway was opened, connecting it to New Orleans. Over the next five decades the Parish’s population grew by an average of 45% per decade.

The age distribution is very healthy, contributing to a strong community. 26% of the Parish’s residents are under 18 years of age, 19% are between ages 18 and 34, 21% between 35 and 49, 21% between 50 and 64 and the remaining 13% are over 65. The two largest racial groups are whites and African Americans which make up 84% and 11% of the population respectively. Hispanics of all races compose just fewer than 5%. The median household income was \$55,871 and the median family income was \$65,285. 89% of the population has at least a high school degree and 30% have at least a Bachelor’s degree.

Geography and Climate

St. Tammany Parish is located in southeastern Louisiana approximately 40 miles north of New Orleans across the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway. It is bounded on the east by the State of Mississippi, on the south by Lake Pontchartrain

Table II: Climate Data for St. Tammany Parish													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average High °F	61.8	65.3	72.1	78.0	84.8	89.4	91.0	91.0	87.1	79.7	71.0	64.5	78.0
Average Low °F	43.4	46.1	52.7	58.4	66.4	72.0	74.2	73.9	70.6	60.2	51.8	45.6	59.6
Precipitation in Inches	5.9	5.5	5.2	5.0	4.6	6.8	6.2	6.2	5.5	3.0	5.1	5.1	64.2
Sunshine Hours	152	164	220	252	279	273	257	251	228	242	171	158	2,647

Source: NOAA

and Jefferson Parishes, on the west by Tangipahoa Parish, and on the north by Washington Parish. Overall, it covers 1,124 square miles (854 square miles of which is land and 270 of which is water) and is the 11th largest parish in the state. The land is predominantly flat and much is undeveloped and/or covered with timber.

The climate is considered to be humid subtropical with short, generally mild winters and hot, humid summers. See Table II for more information.

Although hurricanes pose a significant threat, those with a rating of Category 3 or greater passing within 100 miles of St. Tammany Parish occur only once every ten years (16 since 1852). The most significant damage is experienced in low lying areas and coastal regions. In the case of Hurricane Katrina, for example, the eye passed between the Cities of Slidell and Lacombe in the eastern portion of the Parish. Trees were toppled and some older homes were destroyed. The storm surge from Lake Pontchartrain traveled as far as 6 miles inland in low lying areas. Quite a few homes lost some or all of their roofs. In many cases, the most significant damage was caused by trees that fell on homes and automobiles/trucks. Even so, because of its higher elevation and greater distance from the coast, the Parish became a very desirable relocation point in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina for families fleeing St. Bernard, Plaquemines and Orleans Parishes.

Government

St. Tammany Parish operates under the President – Council (aka, strong mayor) form of government. The Parish President serves as the CEO for the Parish and is elected to a four year term. Further, the Parish President may not serve more than three and a half consecutive terms. The current Parish President is Patricia (Pat) Brister, who was elected to her first term in October 2011 and who

has taken office. She is the first woman to have served as Chair of the Louisiana Republican Party and served as Ambassador to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women from 2006 to 2008. She has also served two terms on the Parish Council beginning in 2000.

The Parish Council serves as the legislative branch and is composed of 14 members, each representing a single-member district and serving a four year term. All are elected at the same time, with the most recent election having been held in October 2011.

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) assists the Parish President with the day-to-day administration of the Parish, is a position created in the Parish Charter, and serves at the pleasure of the Parish President. The person selected to be CAO, however, must be approved by the Parish Council. The CAO's duties are, "subject to the direction of the president, supervise all departments, offices and agencies of the Parish government ... except the legal department, and perform such other functions as may be directed by the president, including but not limited to maintenance of the computer informational system, building maintenance, public access TV channel, building supervision, and personnel administration."

The Parish Charter created seven departments and defined their roles. These departments are: Legal, Finance, Public Works, Engineering, Development (includes the comprehensive plan, airport administration, solid waste disposal, economic growth planning and CDBG), Planning and Permits (oversees land use, building permits and enforcement of building codes and zoning ordinances) and Community Action (some limited health and welfare functions). In reality, the Parish does not precisely follow the previously described model. It has, for example, an Animal

Control Department, Emergency Preparedness Department, Environmental Services, Engineering, Facilities Management, Finance, Fire Services (although limited – for the most part, special districts provide this service), Cultural and Governmental Affairs, Permits and Regulatory, and Planning. In 2010, the Parish had 722 employees with the two largest functions being judicial (180 employees) and Public Works (226 employees). It should be noted that the Sheriff's Office is not part of the Parish government and has its own taxing authority. Interestingly, however, the Parish provides the jail and the Sheriff operates it.



Challenges

The Parish faces a number of challenges, including the following: financial, economic development, infrastructure, and community divides; drainage, emergency preparedness, and the Parish Charter. Addressing these challenges will be the major focus of the Parish Government.



First and foremost is the financial challenge. While the Parish has weathered the current downturn reasonably well, more resources could be used if funding was available. The Parish has one of the highest tax rates in the state, and so alternate ways of raising a budget will be necessary. Second, the Parish wants to focus on economic development. As noted, St. Tammany has a great deal to offer and will likely become the most populous parish in the state over the next thirty years. To do so requires investment and new business. The new Parish President is eager to bring those to the Parish and to the surrounding area. She views St. Tammany Parish as part of a triangle, with Baton Rouge and New Orleans as its other apexes. Anything that will benefit one of the apexes will benefit them all. Of course, the Parish prefers and will work for development to take place within its boundaries. The third pressing issue is infrastructure, a result of the rapid growth in the Parish. Roads and transportation, in particular, need to be upgraded



and expanded and money needs to be found to make these upgrades. State and federal funding will be critical. Fourth, the challenge of community divisions is currently present. The newer portions of the Parish (primarily the western portion) versus the older portions; those interested in preservation versus those who want development. To be a success, the government must balance these interconnected issues.

Other challenges will take a different set of skills. The drainage needs to be improved, particularly in the Slidell area. Recent tropical storms have reinforced that need several times over. And though major tropical storms are not common, when they do come, the Parish needs to be prepared. Hence, Emergency Preparedness will be another key focus for the county. Last, although the Parish charter was updated in 1998, it does need revision. While it speaks very directly to some issues such as the seven departments and their respective roles, it is silent on others such as environmental concerns and public health and safety.

The new Parish President wants to address these challenges, and take the government to the next level. That will require a review of its operation and determinations made concerning where improvements can and should be made.

The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will need to be an experienced and exceptional manager. He/she will be achievement-oriented as well as straightforward, honest, proactive, creative and energetic. The individual will be comfortable making decisions and serving as an advisor to the Parish President. He/she will recognize, however, that direction will come from the President and that his/her primary function will be supporting the President in implementing the policies she puts forward. The President has a designated liaison to the

Parish Council, so while the CAO will have some interaction with the Council, it will be minimal and the CAO's focus will be primarily internal. Once the Parish President and the CAO establish a strong working relationship, the President intends to concentrate on the big picture and on external relationships while the CAO will oversee the day-to-day operations, always recognizing that the Parish President provides general direction.

We are looking for someone who will expect excellence and who is not afraid to ask, "Why" and "Why not?" The next CAO will be analytical and question practices, always looking for ways to improve them. "We have always done it that way" will not be an acceptable answer. The individual will be comfortable admitting when an idea she/he has championed is not working and to change course. She/he will understand the importance of process, but will always be looking for better, more efficient and effective ways to accomplish Parish goals. The Parish staff is good overall, but good is not what the new Parish President is looking for. She wants the best for her community and from her government. The next CAO will not be a micro-manager; instead he/she will be comfortable delegating and holding the staff accountable for results.

The CAO will have an understanding of a wide variety of functions and how to drive managers toward meeting their goals. Customer service will be very important to the next CAO and he/she will not settle for anything less than nimble, responsive, dedicated employees who are focused on meeting the needs of the Parish's residents and businesses. The customer is not always right but the individual deserves a fair hearing and to be treated with respect.

Outstanding communications skills will be critical and the manager will be a people person, someone who is comfortable meeting with and assisting all levels of society. He/she will be one

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of the more significant faces of the government in the community and will need to project an image everyone can be proud of. Diplomacy will be important and the manager will know when to hold her/his tongue and think before speaking.

The ideal candidate will have experience in a similar community, operations management and media and community relations. The individual will understand economic development and how to make it happen. Knowledge and experience utilizing modern information technologies to improve operations will be important. Intergovernmental experience will be extremely important, particularly at the local level. The Parish works closely with not just the local cities but also a number of special districts providing fire services and recreation. Demonstrated ability to work with state and federal agencies to solve problems and promote Parish's interests will be important as will experience obtaining grants and identifying other sources of funding to solve Parish problems. Experience with major storm events and the response to them is also very important.

Under the Parish Charter, the CAO must have "a Master's degree in public administration or a related field from an accredited college or university and at least three years experience as a chief administrative officer or head of a major department, or higher, in a governmental operation."

Compensation

The starting salary range is \$110,000 to \$180,000. While the Parish would prefer to pay in the lower half of the range, it also recognizes that good managers may seem expensive but can save you many times over the difference by making smart decisions. Benefits are very good.

Residency

Residency within the Parish boundaries is expected.

Confidentiality

We anticipate being able to maintain confidentiality throughout the recruitment process.

How to Apply

E-mail your resume to RecruitSix@cb-asso.com by **January 13, 2012**. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

The Process

Applications will be screened between January 13 and February 20, 2012. Finalists will then be selected and interviews held on March 1st and 2nd.

Other Important and Useful Information

St. Tammany Parish is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages minorities to apply. It values its small town/neighborhood feel and is committed to serving its residents and businesses.

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES
EXECUTIVE RECRUITING