
ASCENSION PARISH, LOUISIANA

ECONOMIC TRENDS ANALYSIS

Ascension Economic Development Corp.

May 2007

Highlights

This report analyzes the economic trends that have occurred within the last decade in Ascension Parish in comparison to the Baton Rouge MSA, Louisiana and the U.S. Ascension Parish is the **fastest growing** parish in Louisiana, and along with the population expansion, growth in income, employment, retail sales and much more as the economy continues to move forward. Highlights of this section include:

- ❖ Population has increased by 27.5%, the largest growth in Louisiana (2000-2006 Census)
- ❖ 61% of the population is working age (20 to 64), slightly higher than the Baton Rouge MSA and state of Louisiana (2000)
- ❖ Median household income of \$44,288 as compared to the U.S. of \$41,994
- ❖ 80% of residents have a high school or higher education; however, far fewer have associate or higher degrees than the BR MSA, Louisiana and U.S.
- ❖ Total job growth occurred in utilities, education, wholesale trade, arts/entertainment, and administrative & waste, typical of a growing suburban community
- ❖ Average annual wages in the parish grew by 28% and is 108% of the Louisiana wage
- ❖ Retail sales grew by 20% percent from 1997 to 2002

Demographic Trends

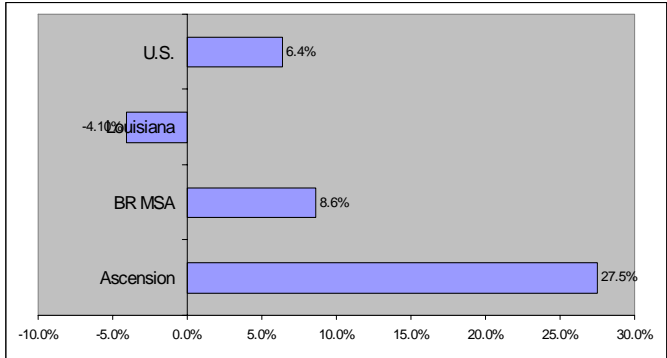
Population

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Ascension Parish has the **largest growth rate** in Louisiana, and it far surpasses the growth in the Baton Rouge MSA, state of Louisiana and the United States.

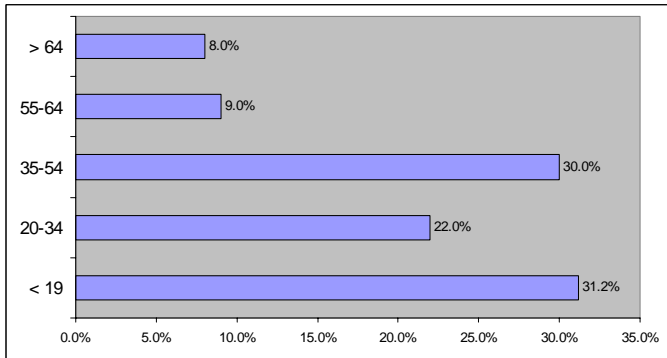
An important consideration for growth in a community is the age of its population. As Ascension Parish grows as a thriving, suburban community so has its working age population. 61% of the population is age 20 to 64, just slight higher than Louisiana and U.S.

SOURCE: U.S. Census, Population 2000-2006. Experian/Applied Geographic Solutions, 2006 Population Estimate by Age.

2000 - 2006 Population Growth



2006 Population by Age



	Ascension Parish	BR MSA	Louisiana	U.S.
Population by Age (2000)				
Median Age	32.0	31.9	34.0	35.3
< 19	33.2%	31.3%	30.6%	28.6%
20-34	21.8%	23.0%	20.8%	20.9%
35-54	30.1%	28.5%	28.6%	29.4%
55-64	7.3%	7.7%	8.5%	8.6%
> 64	7.6%	9.4%	11.5%	12.4%

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Income

Per capita income in Ascension Parish has increased significantly over the last decade (27.5%), outpacing growth in the Baton Rouge MSA. Ascension Parish per capita income ranks 10th out of Louisiana's 64 parishes in 2004, and the Baton Rouge MSA ranks 103rd in the U.S. At \$27,462, per capita income in Ascension Parish is 83 percent of the U.S. (\$33,050).

Per Capita Income					
	1990	1995	2004	'95 – '04 Change	'95 – '04 % Change
Ascension Parish	\$15,132	\$19,902	\$27,462	\$7,560	27.5%
Baton Rouge MSA	\$16,197	\$20,260	\$27,577*	\$7,317	26.5%
Louisiana	\$15,173	\$19,077	\$27,297	\$8,220	30.1%
USA	\$19,477	\$23,076	\$33,050	\$9,974	30.2%
Ascension as % USA	77.7%	86.2%	83.1%		

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis
 *Ranks 103 in the U.S.

Household Income					
1999	Ascension Parish	Baton Rouge MSA	Louisiana	U.S.	
< \$15K	16.1%	19.3%	24.2%	15.8%	
\$15K - \$25K	10.5%	13.6%	15.0%	12.8%	
\$25K - \$35K	12.1%	12.8%	13.5%	12.8%	
\$35K - \$50K	16.3%	15.9%	15.7%	16.5%	
\$50K - \$75K	24.1%	18.7%	16.6%	19.5%	
\$75K - \$100K	12.7%	10.0%	7.6%	10.2%	
> \$100K	8.3%	9.8%	7.4%	12.3%	
Median HH Income	\$44,288	\$38,438	\$32,566	\$41,994	

Household income levels in the Parish are higher than those in the U.S. The Parish has a Median Household Income of \$44,288 versus the U.S. of \$41,994. It also has a larger percentage of households in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 income bracket (36.8% Ascension, 29.7% U.S.) and 2 percent lower percentage of low-income households (26.6% Ascension, 28.6% U.S. of less than \$25,000).

SOURCE: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Per Capita and Personal Income, 2000; U.S. Census Bureau, Demographic Profiles, Household Income, 2000.

Education

The education level in Ascension Parish lags behind the Baton Rouge MSA and U.S. with fewer residents attaining associate degrees or higher (17.7% Ascension; 28% BR MSA; 22.2% Louisiana; and 30.7% U.S).

Educational Attainment

1999

	Ascension	BR MSA	Louisiana	U.S.
Less than High School	20.4%	18.0%	25.2%	19.6%
High School Graduate or Higher	79.6%	81.9%	74.8%	80.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	14.5%	24.9%	18.7%	24.4%
Associate Degree	3.2%	2.9%	3.5%	6.3%
Bachelor's Degree	10.5%	16.2%	12.2%	15.5%
Graduate or Professional Degree	4.0%	8.8%	6.5%	8.9%

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Demographic Profile, Education Attainment

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Labor Force

Total jobs within Ascension Parish have grown by 5 percent with significant job growth in industries associated with a growing suburban community including utilities, education, wholesale trade, arts/entertainment, and administrative/waste.

Job Growth by Industry in Ascension Parish	2001	2002	2003	2004	Growth '01 - '04	Growth '01 - '04
Total (private)	50,171	50,913	51,830	52,584	2,413	4.8%
Forestry, fishing	225	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mining	329	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Utilities	103	131	160	173	70	68.0%
Construction	7,584	6,948	6,763	6,544	-1,040	-13.7%
Manufacturing	6,006	5,348	5,186	5,076	-930	-15.5%
Wholesale trade	1,466	1,670	1,744	1,931	465	31.7%
Retail trade	7,031	7,318	7,434	7,451	420	6.0%
Transp and warehousing	2,194	2,288	2,271	2,178	-16	-0.7%
Information	742	744	830	786	44	5.9%
Finance and insurance	2,389	2,521	2,565	2,607	218	9.1%
Real estate rental and leasing	3,762	3,858	4,111	4,342	580	15.4%
Professional/technical services	3,848	3,891	4,008	4,074	226	5.9%
Management of companies	181	202	167	159	-22	-12.2%
Admin and waste services	2,863	3,119	3,289	3,332	469	16.4%
Educational services	735	835	901	976	241	32.8%
Healthcare & social assistance	3,385	3,495	3,698	3,746	361	10.7%
Arts, entertainment, recreation	955	1,040	1,052	1,152	197	20.6%
Accommodation/food services	2,708	2,960	2,916	3,021	313	11.6%
Other services	3,665	3,950	4,125	4,324	659	18.0%

SOURCE: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System; Regional Employment by Industry

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Employment by Major Industry Sector 2005 Annual			
	Ascension Parish	Baton Rouge MSA	Louisiana
Agriculture	0.5%	0.3%	0.6%
Mining	0.9%	0.4%	2.3%
Utilities	0.6%	0.9%	0.8%
Construction	15.4%	10.8%	6.9%
Manufacturing	15.5%	7.5%	8.2%
Wholesale Trade	4.3%	3.7%	4.0%
Retail Trade	14.5%	11.4%	12.0%
Trans/Wrhouse	4.8%	3.3%	4.2%
Information	1.5%	1.9%	1.7%
Fin. & Insurance	2.3%	3.8%	3.3%
Real Estate	2.2%	1.5%	1.9%
Prof/Tech Services	2.7%	4.7%	4.1%
Management of co.	0.4%	1.2%	1.2%
Admin & Waste	4.5%	5.7%	5.1%
Education Services	NA	10.2%	9.4%
Healthcare/Social	7.0%	11.9%	14.4%
Arts/Ent/Recreation	0.6%	1.4%	2.4%
Accomd/Food	8.2%	7.8%	8.9%
Other Services	3.2%	3.2%	2.7%
Public Admin.	2.2%	8.4%	5.5%

SOURCE: LA DEPT. OF LABOR, EMPLOYMENT & TOTAL WAGES PAID BY EMPLOYERS SUBJECT TO THE LA EMPLOYMENT SECURITY LAW, 2005 ANNUAL

Wages

In 2005, workers in Ascension Parish earned 108% of the average annual wage in Louisiana, though 11% less than a decade ago. However, the parish wage, which grew 28% over the decade, remains above the MSA and state.

Average Annual Wage				
Area	1990	1995	2005	'95 – '05 Growth
Ascension Parish	\$23,993	\$27,762	\$35,573	28.1%
Baton Rouge MSA	\$21,225	\$24,696	\$33,881	37.2%
Louisiana	\$20,014	\$23,303	\$33,046	41.8%
% Louisiana	120%	119%	108%	

SOURCE: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System

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Retail Trade

Ascension Parish has seen its retail trade activity grow since the 1997 Census of Retailing but at a slower rate than the Baton Rouge MSA. As a fast growing suburban area of Baton Rouge, Ascension Parish will most likely continue to see consistent growth in the retail sector as the population grows.

Retail Sales	1997 Sales (\$000)	2002 Sales (\$000)	Growth
Ascension	\$577,961	\$691,599	19.7%
BR MSA	\$5,539,981	\$6,830,954	23.3%
Louisiana	\$35,807,894	\$41,885,192	17%

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Economic Census of Retail Trade, 1997 and 2002.

Retail Trade Sales (\$000)

2002	Ascension	BR MSA	Louisiana
Motor vehicle	\$137,831	\$1,852,687	\$11,001,040
Furniture and home	\$16,334	\$213,936	\$1,074,712
Electronics & appliance	\$4,367	\$165,589	\$838,339
Building material	\$58,338	\$503,997	\$3,327,052
Food and beverage	\$103,589	\$836,158	\$5,456,134
Health & personal care	\$31,118	\$381,384	\$2,749,260
Gasoline	\$80,564	\$709,658	\$4,319,836
Clothing and accessories	\$57,966	\$369,381	\$2,117,588
Sporting goods	*	\$148,504	\$778,446
General merchandise	*	\$1,333,392	\$7,823,049