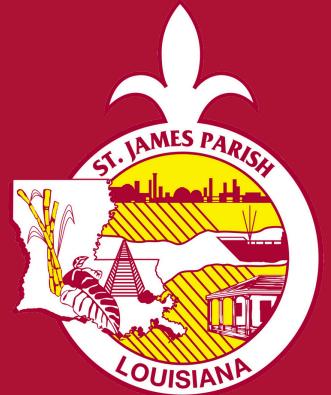




2023 STATE OF THE PARISH



PARISH PRESIDENT PETER A. DUFRESNE



LETTER FROM THE PARISH PRESIDENT

St. James Parish,

I am very humbled and honored to serve as your Parish President. I'd like to thank everyone who voted in favor of allowing me to serve a second term, and for those of you who didn't, I will continue to work hard to earn your trust and confidence over the next four years.

The work we have accomplished over the last four years is unprecedented. We've refurbished 220 parish roads through our road rehab program, and are continuing to make progress on revitalizing our roadway system. We have improved our natural gas systems, including the West Bank natural gas purchase point in South Vacherie. We brought our systems up to date through replacing infrastructure and upgrading regulator stations to better serve our existing residents and providing adequate infrastructure for new growth. The Citizen Service Center, which allows residents to call in work orders and track progress online, has fielded over 18,000 requests since we opened it in 2021. YOU can take an active role in shaping our community. Our new Department of Human Resources building in Lutcher will greatly increase our ability to serve our citizens, and we also opened the new Recreation Center in Gramercy, expanding our abilities to provide recreational services to residents of all ages.

In 2024, we will be beginning construction on the Vacherie Senior Center, and the West Bank Recreation Facility and 5th District Open-Air Basketball Arena should follow soon after. An Archive Center will soon begin construction, which will preserve our historical records and create a space for families to access their pasts through genealogical research.

The last four years have brought major progress to St. James Parish, but the work is not done yet. Together, we can and we will continue to make a positive impact that will last for generations to come. I am very proud of the work our team has accomplished, and I hope that this State of the Parish Report highlights the significant progress we have made together over the past year.

Sincerely,



Pete Dufresne

ADMINISTRATION



PETER A. DUFRESNE
Parish President



INGRID BERGERON
Director of Human Resources



FELIX BOUGHTON
Director of Finance



RICK WEBRE
Director of Operations



ERIC DEROCHE
Director of Emergency Operations



JAJUAN HICKERSON
Personnel Manager



COURTNEY TOMLINSON
Executive Assistant



VICTORIA ROCQUIN HENRY
Public Information Officer



2024 PARISH COUNCIL

*Todd A. Poche - District 1
Courtney Long - District 2
Ryan Louque - District 3, Council Chair
Neal T. Poche II - District 4
Anthony Jasmin, Sr. - District 5
Vondra Etienne-Steib - District 6
Donald Nash - District 7*

2024 Millage - April 27, 2024 Ballot

St. James Parish is experiencing financial challenges in sales tax. When Shell Convent closed, it caused revenues to decrease. With no changes, the solid waste fund will be bankrupt at the end of 2025. It's necessary to **restructure how fees are collected for garbage, either by replacing the fee with a millage, or passing the entire cost of garbage collection to residents by increasing current fees.**

To solve this problem, implementing a millage, and removing the current fees being charged on utility bills, is on the April 27th ballot. **Instead of the current fees on utility bills**, the millage will be used to pay for services. Specifically, 4 mills will cover **garbage collection**, and 2 mills will add support to **recreation, animal control, and roads and bridges**.

Without the millage, the fees required would go from \$5.30 to \$25 per month, an increase of \$19.70 per month or \$236.40 annually, just to cover garbage collection costs. **With the millage, St. James Parish can offer more services at a lower cost to almost all residents.**

The **average homeowner will just pay \$3.58 a month/\$43 annually**, based on 2023 home values.

Because industry pays most of this tax, it's good news for the majority of our citizens.



Visit our website for more details on the proposed millage appearing on the April 27, 2024 Ballot

Department of Human Resources



Community Engagement Highlights

- Developed partnerships with industry, churches, and other community partners
- Hosted two Pastor Breakfasts to discuss solutions for community concerns
- Hosted DHR's first youth summer camps parish-wide through a partnership with local churches, partnering with King David Baptist Church, King Solomon Baptist Church, Highway Baptist Church, & New Horizon Baptist Church.
- Partnered with Salute First male mentoring & character-building program and sponsored 100 young men from St. James High School
- Provided 150 Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to families in need and elderly residents
- Served 330 children through Annual Toy and Coat Drive
- 17 clients served through St. James Parish ARC



Transit Services

2,449 passengers,
4,463 total trips
10 new busses
Increased service hours
parish-wide

Elderly Services

3,036 home bound
meals served
900 congregate meals
8 Parish-wide activities
4 senior centers, many
local activities

Partnership Summer Camps

158 children, 4 camps



Since 1974, The Department of Human Resources, Community Action Agency has stood by its mission to empower individuals and families towards self-sufficiency.

Through strategic partnerships and a commitment to service, the Department of Human Resources has been able to improve the value of services we provide to the residents of St. James Parish.

BY THE NUMBERS

95 Households, 105 Individuals

Assisted by Quarterly Commodity Distribution

555 Households, 1,086 Individuals

Assisted by Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

202 Households, 381 Individuals

Served by Emergency Assistance

488 Households 933 Individuals

Assisted by Low-Income Water Assistance Program

196 Households 296 individuals

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

382 individuals

Assisted in recovering from Hurricane Ida

23 home repairs

and 4 ramps installed in 2023

17 clients

Served through St. James Parish Arc

Economic Development

MARKET DAY

This year marks our third year of conducting the St. James Parish Market Day. Each month brings new vendors and new guests, and it's quickly become a much-loved event.

2024 Dates

March 9
April 13
May 11
June 8
July 13
August 10
September 14
October 12-13
(Pumpkin Patch)
November 9



BY THE NUMBERS

21

Events hosted

2,557

Visitors to the Welcome Center

446

Businesses in St. James Parish



2023 GRAND OPENINGS



Asahi America, Inc.



Bead Bloom Boutique



Chow Time Food Truck



Mon Amour Apparel and Gifts



Pj's Coffee



Rejuvenate Health



Salad Station

Interested in hosting a grand opening for your small business?

Reach out to 225-562-2520 for resources and information.



Small Business Appreciation Dinner 2023

Help us help you: 72 on you

In the first 72 hours following a disaster, emergency responders are clearing access routes and responding to the most critical needs. A 72-Hour Disaster Survival Kit allows your family to have the basic necessities in case of a major storm or disaster.

Supply Checklist

- Food - Nonperishable, at least 3 days for each person
- Water - at least one gallon per day per person (3 gallons per person for a three day supply)
- Blankets/Pillows
- Cash
- Clothing - seasonal/rain gear/sturdy shoes
- First Aid Kit (including medicines and prescription drugs)
- Flashlight/Batteries
- Keys - extra set of home and car keys
- Radio - Battery operated and NOAA weather radio
- Important Documents (in a waterproof container)
- insurance, medical records, bank account numbers, Social Security card, etc.
- Tools - keep a set with you during the storm
- Toiletries (hygiene items/moisture wipes)
- Toys (books and games)
- Pet care items
- Proper identification/immunization records/medications
- Supply of pet food and water
- Carrier or cage, muzzle and leash
- Vehicle fuel tanks filled
- Special Items - for babies and the elderly
- Spare oxygen cylinders for individuals on oxygen machines

St. James Parish Dispatch

Faces behind the call

St. James Parish is one of a few parishes in the state to operate a unified dispatch between the Sheriff's Office and Emergency Services. Our dispatchers answer 911 calls and dispatch for fire, law enforcement, and other emergency services that are needed, providing the highest level of service and working alongside the Sheriff's Office and Fire Department. Our staff has a combined 40 years of experience, and answered 41,020 calls in 2023 alone.

HAVE YOU SIGNED UP YET?

St. James Parish Emergency Alerts

Receive texts, phone calls, and/or emails regarding important **safety** and **community alerts**. Signing up ensures you receive critical alerts from St. James Parish Government.

If you've moved or have a new number, make sure your information is up to date.



**ST. JAMES PARISH
EMERGENCY
ALERTS**
WWW.STJAMESLA.COM
SIGN UP TODAY





716 calls, 1 team

The **St. James Parish Volunteer Fire Department** responded to 716 calls in 2023 alone. Our unified department works together parish wide to protect and serve citizens.

Interested in volunteering?
Come join our team!

Call 225-562-2266 for more information.



"I joined the volunteer fire department because **I love to help people in my community.** I was raised around the fire services, going to the station with my father. Watching them fight fires and save lives put me on the path to becoming a fire fighter."

-Jamoine Picou,

St. James Parish Volunteer Firefighter



The St. James Parish Volunteer Fire Department purchased two new fire trucks, increasing their ability to protect and serve the citizens of St. James.

Infrastructure Improvements

Major projects completed in 2023

- Cleared 15 miles of waterway through waterway debris removal program, helping prevent flooding
- Installed generators for two new emergency shelter locations
- Mitigated flooding along LA Highway 643 between Falgout St and Desire St
- Rehabbed 24 roads and 47 miles of roadway through the road rehab program in 2023. 220 roads have been preserved since 2020
- Finished mitigating David Plantation Subdivision
- Upgraded gas infrastructure by completing Romeville-Grandpoint Gas Loop.
- Insured government can operate consistently during inclement weather by installing new generators
- Expanded library services on the West Bank by building a new meeting room
- Constructed West Bank natural gas purchase point, increasing supply for North and South Vacherie during times of high demand

Major projects in 2024

- Road Rehab Program will refurbish 20 streets, totaling 23,560 feet of roadway
- The Vacherie Senior Center will begin construction in the fall
- Design for the West Bank Multipurpose/Recreation Building will be complete by Summer of 2024
- The piers at the St. James Boat Club docks will be renovated, adding kayak launches and a handicap fishing pier
- DHR Senior Meal Site is under construction, preparing and enhancing meals for homebound citizens
- Automated water and gas meters project will begin, and will be completed over the next 3 years
- Construction will begin mid-year on the Magnolia heights interior drainage project
- An Archive Center at the main library branch in Lutcher will begin construction, providing residents with access to genealogical and historical records
- Received Statewide Flood Control grant for drainage improvements on North and South Rosary Streets in South Vacherie
- 5th District Outdoor Basketball Arena currently being planned

BY THE NUMBERS

78 **6709**

Mobile Home Permits Work Orders Closed

70 **315**

New Residential Permits Code enforcement complaints closed

387 **20**

Residential Permits Commercial Permits



St. James Parish Call Center

225-562-2500

In 2021, the St. James Parish Call Center was opened, providing residents with a streamlined process for contacting St. James Parish Government. Our Work Order System was launched simultaneously, allowing anyone to call or go online to open a work order, track its process, and be notified when it is completed.



St James Parish Library Highlights



St. James Talented Art
made interactive murals



Seed Library for local
gardeners



Children and parents
enjoy a magic show



Students pet alligators
at a library event

BY THE NUMBERS

79
Programs hosted

1,502
People attended library
events

34, 365
Library Visitors

12,149
Library books checked out

2,484
Program Attendees

268
New cards issued

872
Uses of Meeting Room

1,405
E-books and audiobooks
checked out

Bringing back the book mobile

St. James Parish Library will be bringing back the mobile book services in 2024. Sign up to have books, magazines, cookbooks, books on CD, large print books, and more brought straight to your door. Learn more at stjamesla.com



St. James Parish Finance Information

Budget Expenses & Data

25% General Government

17% Public Safety

18% Public Utilities

11% Health & Welfare

8% Highways & Streets

13% Culture & Recreation

3% Sanitation

2% Public Transportation

2% Debt Services

1% Economic Development & Assistance

<1% Public Housing

Top 10 Industrial Property Taxpayers

Industry	Assesed Value	Percent of total assessed value
Equilon Enterprises LLC	158,120,125	22.19%
Americas Styrenics LLC	43,838,762	6.15%
Mosaic Fertilizer LLC - Uncle Sam	42,447,481	5.96%
Zen-Noh Grain Corporation	41,027,743	5.76%
Nustar Logistics, L.P.	40,522,319	5.69%
Mosaic Fertilizer LLC - Faustina	36,998,881	5.19%
Louisiana Sugar Refining, LLC	25,064,531	3.52%
Shell Trading US	22,282,669	3.13%
Exxon Mobil Oil Corporation	16,707,172	2.34%
Atalco Gramercy LLC	16,352,644	2.29%
Total	443,362,327	62.22%

Percentages of Actual Spending

*Audited Figures

2022 Revenues

- \$43,959,208

2022 Expenditures

- \$41,244,608

2022 Revenue from taxes - 63%

St. James Parish Recreation

St. James Parish Recreation provides a wide variety of services, sports, and classes, including:

Youth Baseball and Softball

Youth Soccer

Flag Football

Biddy Basketball

Youth and Adult Open-Play Pickleball

Men's Softball

Co-Ed Cabbage Ball

Line Dancing with Susie Q

Aerobics and Yoga/Pilates Classes

Fitness Center





St. James Parish
5800 LA-44
Convent, LA 70723

2023

STATE OF THE PARISH



PARISH PRESIDENT PETER A. DUFRESNE

Mission

We envision a thriving St. James Parish community in which economic and social gains prevail and all people grow, prosper, and live productive, healthy lives while preserving our culture and heritage.

Vision

St. James Parish Government works together with community, business, industry, and agriculture to provide resources and services to improve our quality of life.