

A REPORT ON THE CAMPAIGN FOR A GREATER BATON ROUGE

CATALYST

Q1 & Q2, 2006

WEST FELICIANA EAST FELICIANA ST. HELENA
POINTE COUPE
WEST BATON ROUGE EAST BATON ROUGE LIVINGSTON
IBERVILLE ASCENSION

THINKING BEYOND THE LINES

How a regional approach
is shaping our future

BIGGER AND BETTER

An update on the Baton Rouge
area economy

MAKING PROGRESS

A report on BRAC's activities
in Q1 & Q2

cat-a-lyst (kat'l ist) n. —

1. Something that initiates or causes an important event to happen
2. A person or thing that precipitates an event or change
3. See also energy, momentum, trailblazer, Baton Rouge Area Chamber

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From the Desk of Stephen Moret

I am thrilled to share with you the inaugural issue of *Catalyst*—a quarterly progress report on *The Campaign for a Greater Baton Rouge*.

In this and subsequent issues, we will detail regional economic development progress that is being made possible by the generous support of leading organizations like yours throughout the Baton Rouge metropolitan area. We also will provide a CEO-level update on our regional economy and where it is headed in the months ahead.

Why did we choose the name *Catalyst*? Because BRAC's mission is to lead economic development in the Baton Rouge area by recruiting new businesses to our region and by working to improve the business climate. Like the slogan of a familiar industrial giant, we don't *make* the Baton Rouge area economy—we make the Baton Rouge area economy *better*.

In the last three months, every parish-level economic development organization in the Capital Region has signed on as an official economic development partner with BRAC. Each of these organizations recognizes the value of our new program and the benefits of working together to promote the development of the region as a whole.

In this issue, we describe the rationale for our regional approach to economic development. Our business plan is based not on theory but rather on the advice of people who have an enormous influence on where companies decide to invest: site-selection consultants. In our feature story, we share a few perspectives from Mark Sweeney, one of the top site-selection consultants in the business.

We are rapidly moving forward with implementing our five-year (2006-2010) regional economic development program. Lots of exciting things are in the works. In the pages ahead, we will share some of our recent activities and provide you with an insider look into what's next.

Thank you for your support of our important work!

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Moret".

Stephen Moret
President and CEO
Baton Rouge Area Chamber

“Our goal is to become one of the top 25 regional economic development organizations in the country within the next three years ... Our ultimate success will be judged by job creation and major public policy successes.” — Stephen Moret

AWARDS + RECOGNITION

Baton Rouge Area Chamber Receives National Recognition From Four Organizations

Six months into launching its new regional economic development program, the Baton Rouge Area Chamber has just received awards and recognition from four separate national organizations.

BRAC's post-Katrina economic outlook for the Baton Rouge area (Baton Rouge Area Economic Forum 2006: Insights for Action), including population and job forecasts and an analysis of each major industry sector, received the **Applied Community & Economic Research Award** from ACCRA – the national council for community and economic research – for the category of “support for collaborative community/regional initiatives.” In addition to winning its category, BRAC's economic outlook was the highest rated submission nationally from any organization, including universities and larger economic development organizations. BRAC's economic research was developed in partnership with The Stanford Group and the Greater Baton Rouge Business Report.

BRAC earned an **American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) Merit Award** for its 2005 rebranding campaign, the centerpiece of which was a new logo conveying BRAC's increased regional focus and its aspiration to work with all nine parishes in the region to promote economic development in the metropolitan area. BRAC's rebranding effort was developed with the support of local communications firm, Object 9.

BRAC received a **Telly Award** for the documentary film *Revolution*, produced for its annual event BRAC Impact 2006: Revolution. Chronicling BRAC's transformation into a regional economic development organization, *Revolution* stars local actor Jamie Wax and features many Baton Rouge area community leaders. The film was produced by GreenScreenTV, directed by John Darling Haynes, and featured musical performances by the LSU Gospel Choir. Founded in 1978, the Telly Awards is one of the nation's premier awards honoring outstanding local, regional, and cable TV commercials and programs, as well as video and film production. The Telly Awards receive over 12,000 submissions annually, and the awards are based on overall production quality and achievement. Some of last year's winners were Discovery Health Channel, Walt Disney Studios, Sony BMG, and The Weather Channel.

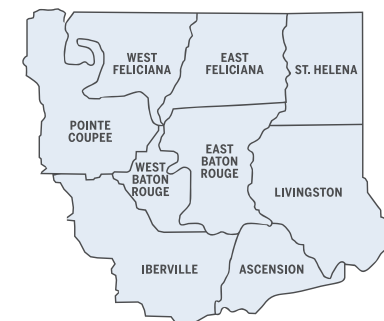
Finally, BRAC's President and CEO, Stephen Moret, was one of 30 individuals nationally selected to complete a **Ford Foundation Regionalism and Sustainable Development Fellowship**. The Fellowship is an 18-month educational experience for regional leaders working to develop and sustain economic prosperity through regional strategies. Moret's selection was in large part a recognition of BRAC's success in developing *The Campaign for a Greater Baton Rouge*, a five-year regional economic development program being funded by leading businesses throughout the region.



UPDATE & OUTLOOK

ON THE BATON ROUGE AREA ECONOMY

The Baton Rouge area economy is humming. It weathered the storm, stepped up to the challenge, and was ushered into the national spotlight. The Baton Rouge area has changed in unique and exciting ways over the last year as the community has responded to the challenges brought about by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Hurricane-related recovery, new consumer demand, and powerful new incentives have resulted in new jobs, lower unemployment, and increased wages. Investment from projects announced recently and already under construction could bring \$10-15 billion to both traditional and non-traditional industry sectors. In the near future, displaced residents and rebuild workers may decide to remain in the region long-term, attracted by the unique assets and opportunities offered by the Baton Rouge area.



A surge in population and new business activity have fueled new jobs and higher wages.

A simple look at the employment levels in the area reveals the current status of business post-Katrina and the ascendance of the Baton Rouge area as a growing economic center of the South. Regional payrolls have increased by approximately 15,000 workers since the third quarter of 2005, an increase

in employment unprecedented in our community. Hurricane-recovery and business-expansion-related job creation has been most prevalent in the construction, manufacturing, business services, and transportation/warehousing sectors.

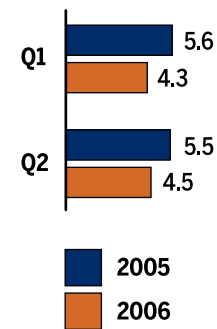
Unemployment in the region has diminished at the same time, falling below the five-year average as displaced residents found either new employment in the Baton Rouge area or returned home and existing residents returned to regular work schedules. In June, the unemployment rate for the Baton Rouge area was 5.3%, compared to 5.8% for the state, and 4.8% nationally. Workers seeking employment in our region seem to find jobs more easily than before, as unemployment rates in 2006 remain consistently below the same quarter last year.

Healthy employment is only one of the factors drawing workers to the region. Average monthly wages in the Baton Rouge area in the fourth quarter 2005 increased by approximately 4% since December 2004, led by large wage rate increases in the construction and retail industries. A private wage survey and a recently released quarterly report from the Department of Labor both reported a 21% average increase in construction wages from pre-Katrina levels. Construction wages are likely to continue to be a major uncertainty in regional expansion efforts as projects come on line in New Orleans and other parts of the Gulf Coast.

Construction Occupations with the Highest Hourly Wage Increases Post-Katrina			
Occupation	Pre-Katrina	Post-Katrina	%Ch
Boiler Technician	\$19.50	\$25.68	32%
Boilermaker	\$18.60	\$23.58	27%
Instrumentation Fitter	\$17.62	\$22.20	26%
Concrete Finisher	\$14.82	\$18.50	25%
Electrician, Industrial	\$17.62	\$22.00	25%
Electrician, Commercial	\$15.75	\$19.75	25%
Form Carpenter	\$16.00	\$20.00	25%

Source: Loren C. Scott and Associates, 2006

BR Area Unemployment
Civilian Labor Force
Unemployment Rates (percent)



The increased population in the Baton Rouge area is one major driver of economic activity in industry sectors such as retail, real estate, and dining/entertainment. BRAC projected that the Baton Rouge area population increase over pre-Katrina levels would settle at 25,000-50,000 by the end of the year 2006, as reported in our economic outlook event Baton Rouge Area Economic Forum 2006: Insights for Action. These new residents include both hurricane evacuees and new workers attracted to the area's growing economy. A recent Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals study, which estimated population based on school enrollments, indicates that our region's population growth was 53,000 residents as of February 2006. Similarly, water customer counts in the parishes of East Baton Rouge and Ascension suggest approximately 30,000 new residents have moved to the 9-parish region since July 2005.

Powered by new Federal incentives, significant investments are being made in our region.

Growth in the Baton Rouge area today is characterized by an influx of economic activity that is as rich and diverse as the region's topographical and demographic makeup. Driven in large part by the petrochemical industry, the regional economy is experiencing a surge in vitality through numerous major project announcements representing a

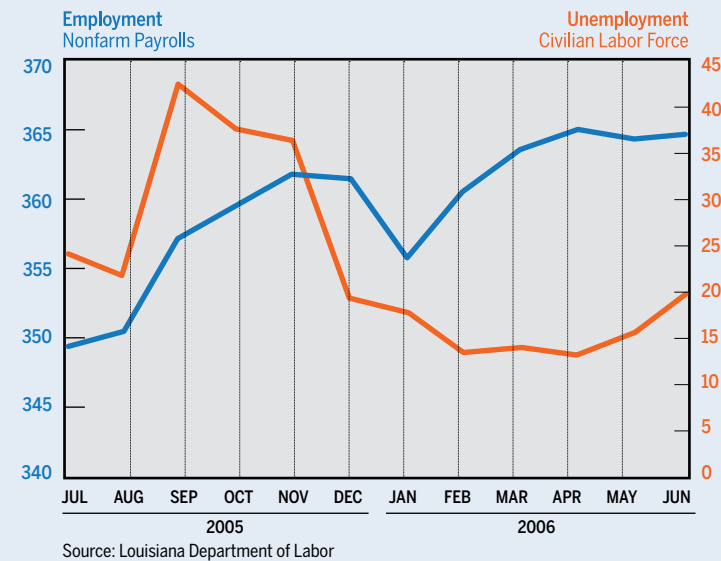
total investment of approximately \$10-15 billion. Industrial, commercial, and infrastructure projects from a range of industry sectors are popping up throughout the region.

Federal G.O. Zone incentives have attracted additional interest in the region through tax-exempt bond financing and bonus depreciation options for qualifying projects. Local banking offices are reporting hundreds of G.O. Zone-related inquiries each week. Six projects in the Baton Rouge area totaling \$367.5 million are in approval stages for G.O. Zone bond issues:

- II City Plaza (Baton Rouge)
- Bluebonnet Hotel Ventures (Baton Rouge)
- Celtic Media Centre (Baton Rouge)
- Duplessis Automotive Group (Baton Rouge)
- Pipeline Technology (Plaquemine)
- International Matex Tank (Geismar)

The complex and costly bond application process has so far been a deterrent to small businesses. However, local financial institutions are trying to alleviate this problem through the development of small business pools. Many businesses that are anxious to initiate their capital projects have instead chosen to apply the 50% bonus depreciation, a G.O. Zone incentive available through the end of 2008.

Baton Rouge Area Employment and Unemployment (thousands)

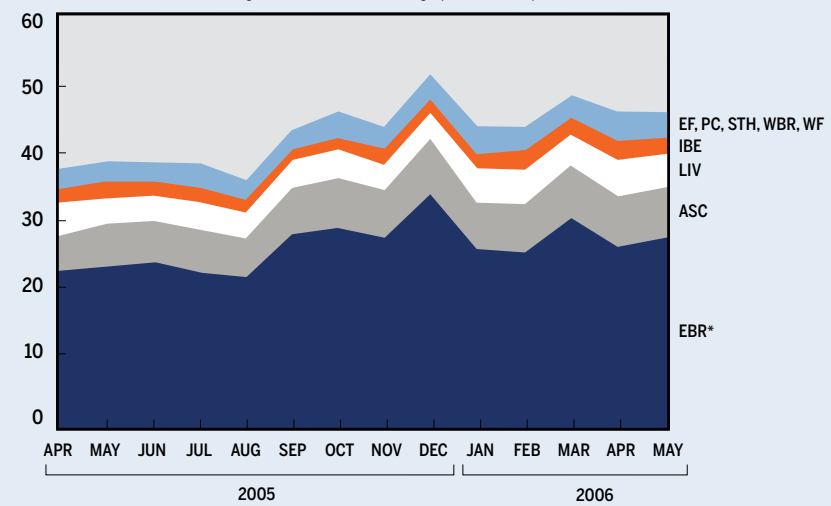


{ EMPLOYMENT }

Baton Rouge Area Employment and Unemployment

- The Baton Rouge area has added 15,000 new jobs since last hurricane season.
- Area unemployment dipped significantly in Q4 and Q1; rising modestly in Q2 to 20,000.

Baton Rouge Area Sales Tax Collections
Sales Tax Collected by Local Tax Authority (\$ millions)



*Estimate of 4% sales tax derived from 2% general revenue tax collected and reported by City-Parish Finance Dept.

{ SALES TAXES }

Baton Rouge Area Sales Tax Collection

- In May 2006, the region's sales tax collections had risen by 19% over May 2005 levels.
- All parishes have seen double-digit increases in sales tax collections.

Selected Baton Rouge Area Projects and Status, Q2 2006			
Project	Value	Parish	Status
Synfuel Coal Gasification	\$5 billion	Ascension	Announced June. Early planning
Shaw Biodiesel Plant	\$1.5 billion*	Ascension	Pre-development env. testing
BASF Port Expansion	\$264 million	Ascension	Construction
Shintech PVC Complex	\$1 billion	Iberville	Construction
Dow Plant, Alkanolamines	Not Available	Iberville	Construction. Planned finish '07
Big Cajun II Conversion	\$1.3 billion	Pointe Coupee	Announced. Planned finish '09
Criterion Catalysts & Technologies	\$150 million	West Baton Rouge	Planning, Phase I
Shaw Biodiesel Plant	\$1.5 billion*	West Baton Rouge	Pre-development env. testing
Mississippi River Bridge	\$337 million	West Feliciana	Construction. Planned finish '09

*Project value announced together, combined value is \$1.5 billion
Source: BRAC research and analysis

{ NEW PROJECTS }

Selected Baton Rouge Area Projects and Status

- Petrochemical and energy projects will continue to fuel capital investment in the Baton Rouge area.
- Major projects are happening throughout the Capital Region.



MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

Though demand for space has risen, commercial real estate has not seen the price jump experienced in the housing market.

Housing prices in the second quarter reflect a sustained strength of demand throughout the region. Prices are up an average of 24% in Ascension, Livingston, and East Baton Rouge Parishes. But higher prices haven't discouraged buyers in the market, as home sales in the area are up 20%, driven in part by a 55% increase in sales over the first half of 2005 in the budding bedroom communities in West Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, Iberville, and Pointe Coupee parishes. Sales volume is still up for Ascension, Livingston, and East Baton Rouge at 29%, 23%, and 14% respectively. In the multifamily market, the region has seen an 8-12% increase in rental rates since the hurricanes with vacancy rates as low as 0.2%.

Rental rates for commercial/office space, conversely, have increased less than 1% since the second quarter 2005. In East Baton Rouge, 5.5% of space sat vacant in March 2006, down from 14.5% in the same month 2005. Class A space remains scarce for those in the market to buy; however, sublease space is becoming available as many displaced businesses forced into long-term leases are looking to release space. The relocation of several businesses and state government operations is expected to expand Class B vacancy from 94% today to 80% in two years, likely leading to lower Class B rental rates. Looking forward, a substantial increase in new office supply is unlikely in the short-run. Additionally, a gradual increase in demand from national and regional companies looking to expand in the Baton Rouge area is anticipated to keep vacancies relatively low.

A growing population, strong employment, active capital investment, and rising interest from outside the region signal a healthy, growing Baton Rouge area economy. Undoubtedly, the area has experienced an economic boom, and may well become the "boomtown" hyped in the national media. However, today's growth is rooted across the entire nine-parish Capital Region, not just in the City of Baton Rouge. If indicators such as population, housing, construction activity and wages, the state budget, and the petrochemical market tell us anything, this growth appears likely to continue in the near future. We will closely monitor these indicators over the coming months for any signal of change.

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The Campaign for a Greater Baton Rouge includes seven strategies that work together to drive economic development in the Baton Rouge area. Each issue of *Catalyst* will feature an update on our progress on each of these seven strategies as well as preview upcoming goals and activities.

ATTRACT NEW BUSINESSES TO OUR REGION

A core function of any effective regional economic development program is to aggressively sell the region's assets to high-potential business prospects. BRAC has retained the Competitive Strategies Group (CSG) to develop a target industry plan to assess market trends, highlight our area's strengths and weaknesses, and identify five key industry sectors most likely to provide business recruitment opportunities. As part of this analysis, nationally recognized site consultant Mark Sweeney, of McCallum, Sweeney Consulting, recently spent time in each of our region's nine parishes evaluating sites and industry potential. Additionally, a BRAC team visited with top industry-sector analysts with Goldman Sachs in New York City to better understand industry trends and prospect opportunities. The target industry plan will be concluded in September and will form the foundation for BRAC's business marketing and recruiting activities over the next several years.

1 RETAIN AND EXPAND EXISTING BUSINESSES

Recognizing that roughly 75% of future job growth in our area will come from existing businesses, BRAC has launched its first-ever regional business retention and expansion program. After a national search, we recently hired Steve Sparks, previously the Manager of Business Retention and Expansion for the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, to serve as BRAC's first Director of Business Retention and Expansion. Steve will be conducting ~60 company visits and surveys by year end with a focus on those companies in the area that have the highest likelihood of an expansion

opportunity or a retention issue. Michigan-based Applied Marketing Sciences (AMS), through its proprietary screening system, is helping BRAC develop the list of area businesses on which to focus its initial efforts.

Federal G.O. Zone incentives, passed in late 2005, provide our area an unprecedented opportunity for expansion and growth. In response to the passage of these incentives, BRAC organized a G.O. Zone Workshop in January that was attended by roughly 400 businesspeople from our region and around the country. At least a dozen area businesses now are contemplating expansion efforts based on insights provided at BRAC's G.O. Zone Workshop.

In conjunction with the target industry planning effort, BRAC hosted an Economic Development Summit in June. At this event, three nationally recognized site consultants educated government officials and economic development volunteers about the nuts-and-bolts of community and site selection and ways to enhance business recruitment efforts through a unified, regional strategy.

In April, Chad Cornett joined BRAC as Director of Business Recruitment from the Area Development Partnership in Hattiesburg, MS. Beginning with

a prospect case load of six potential recruitment prospects, BRAC's "Class A" project pipeline has now grown to 12, representing over 2,400 potential jobs, an annual payroll of \$101 million, and new capital investment of \$389 million.

BRAC successfully coordinated a four parish site visit for a nationally recognized Chicago site consultant representing a large plastics manufacturer, and placed the Baton Rouge area as a top-three finalist for a pending new facility with 400 potential high-wage jobs.

BRAC's "Class A" project pipeline has now grown to 12, representing over 2,400 potential jobs, an annual payroll of \$101 million, and new capital investment of \$389 million.

3 DEVELOP A NATIONAL MARKETING PROGRAM

It is of critical importance that we market our region nationally and internationally to decision-makers involved with business relocations. Because many site selectors conduct their initial evaluations of a community over the Internet, we launched our new economic development Web site, www.brac.org, in May with an initial focus on information

most relevant to site evaluation and selection. This resource provides efficient access to maps, state and local incentives, and vital statistics for each of the Baton Rouge area's nine parishes.

In conjunction with the launch of the new Web site, BRAC sent a direct mail piece detailing the benefits of the G.O. Zone to 2,500 national site selectors. This piece highlighted the Baton Rouge region as the premier Gulf-area location, providing low hurricane risk coupled with Gulf Coast transportation advantages and extraordinary G.O. Zone incentives.

In the next several months, we will begin to implement a targeted marketing program for two of the five key industry sectors identified in our target industry plan. BRAC will conduct a direct mail and phone follow-up campaign focused on specific companies in these two industry sectors. (The remaining three sectors will be pursued in 2007.)

BRAC also will aggressively attend trade and industry events through the remainder of the year, representing the Baton Rouge area at key

conferences including: SEMA Auto and Supplier Show in Las Vegas, Industrial Asset Management Council in Williamsburg, CoreNet Global in Orlando, and Consultants Roundtable in Tucson.

4 CREATE A ROBUST BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITY

Site-selection consultants, real estate executives, and other business decision makers depend on BRAC

to provide detailed information about our region and the regional economy. Kate MacArthur, from the Area Development Partnership in Hattiesburg, MS, and Rachel Veron, a recent top graduate from LSU, recently joined BRAC to bolster our ability to deliver timely, meaningful research for companies looking to relocate or expand in our area.

In January, BRAC, in partnership with The Stanford Group and the *Greater Baton Rouge Business Report*, conducted its award-winning economic

outlook for the Baton Rouge area (Baton Rouge Area Economic Forum 2006: Insights for Action), including population and job forecasts and an analysis of each major industry sector. BRAC also is publishing quarterly economic updates (see Economic Update & Outlook) to supplement its annual economic forum.

Our business intelligence team is now capable of responding to almost any site-selection information request in a comprehensive and professional manner within 24 hours.

5 CREATE A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY FUND

BRAC has leveraged its new Special Opportunity Fund for a significant business development project in early 2006.

The project was a three-month effort, closely coordinated with the Louisiana Department of Economic Development, that focused on retaining

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS



businesses in Louisiana post-Katrina and attracting businesses looking to capitalize on hurricane rebuild activity. BRAC retained the services of Lee Griffin, former Chairman and CEO of Louisiana operations for Bank One, and Jay Garner, principal with CSG, to lead the effort. BRAC was able to present the Baton Rouge area to hundreds of companies and identified several business recruitment prospects through the project.



6

CREATE A ROBUST PUBLIC POLICY CAPABILITY

At the same time that BRAC is promoting the Baton Rouge area to businesses looking to relocate or expand, we are working with business and government leaders to address our area's weaknesses. Jason El Koubi, previously BRAC's Research Manager, was promoted to Policy Director in May to oversee all of our public policy research efforts. Over the first half of 2006, we were heavily engaged in policy issues at the state, regional, and local level.

State

BRAC participated heavily during the 2006 special and regular legislative sessions. Key economic development and governmental reform successes included: state funding for regional economic development assets (including an LED matching grant program and necessary funding for the Pennington Biomedical Research Center, the Louisiana Technology Park, and the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport), levee board consolidation, New Orleans government consolidation, and a state program to support the development of regional toll road projects.

BRAC also successfully advocated for State Bond Commission approval of G.O. Zone low-interest bond financing for Baton Rouge area projects, helping to break up a log jam that was in place at the time.

Regional/Local

At the local level, BRAC supported the formation of a task force to review and improve the process that the East Baton Rouge City/Parish uses to make architecture and engineering firm selections. The task force recommendations were fully accepted by the Metro Council and immediately put into practice.



A Commitment to Measurable Outcomes



BRAC is committed for *The Campaign for a Greater Baton Rouge* to be a program that generates measurable results. We have assembled a preliminary set of metrics that we will track, including jobs created, jobs retained, new capital investment, and over a dozen other factors. In the near future, we will assemble a Business Leadership Committee made up of some of our top investors to finalize this list and review our progress on a regular basis. Beginning in 2007, we will engage a reputable organization to conduct an annual third-party evaluation, which will include a return-on-investment "report card," as well as estimated new sales and accounts generated for each major industry group.

BRAC also successfully negotiated a compromise with the Metro Council and civic group A6 to create term limits for local boards and commissions, which is scheduled to be included on September's election ballot. Finally, BRAC issued a qualified endorsement of the use of at-large seats for the East Baton Rouge City/Parish Metro Council, still under consideration at the end of June. BRAC published issue briefs covering the architecture and engineering selection and at-large seats issues.

At the regional level, BRAC endorsed the use of Tax Increment Financing for the Bass Pro Shop and Cabela's projects - projects anticipated to draw many out-of-region customers whose spending will generate new jobs for the Baton Rouge area.

7 LAUNCH A REGIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Our economic development efforts rest on our ability to develop and sustain high-quality educational institutions and to train individuals capable of making a contribution to the community. Although BRAC will not fully launch its Learning Community initiative until early next year, BRAC has recently engaged on a number of high-impact education-related efforts.

Funding for LSU

BRAC was a key supporter of increased LSU funding during the 2006 regular legislative session. BRAC's active support helped LSU secure a 5% increase for

faculty compensation, over \$3 million for flagship initiatives, and funding for key capital projects. This Fall, LSU, BRAC, and other key stakeholders have agreed to work toward a comprehensive LSU tuition and funding policy that could generate millions in new support for the University.

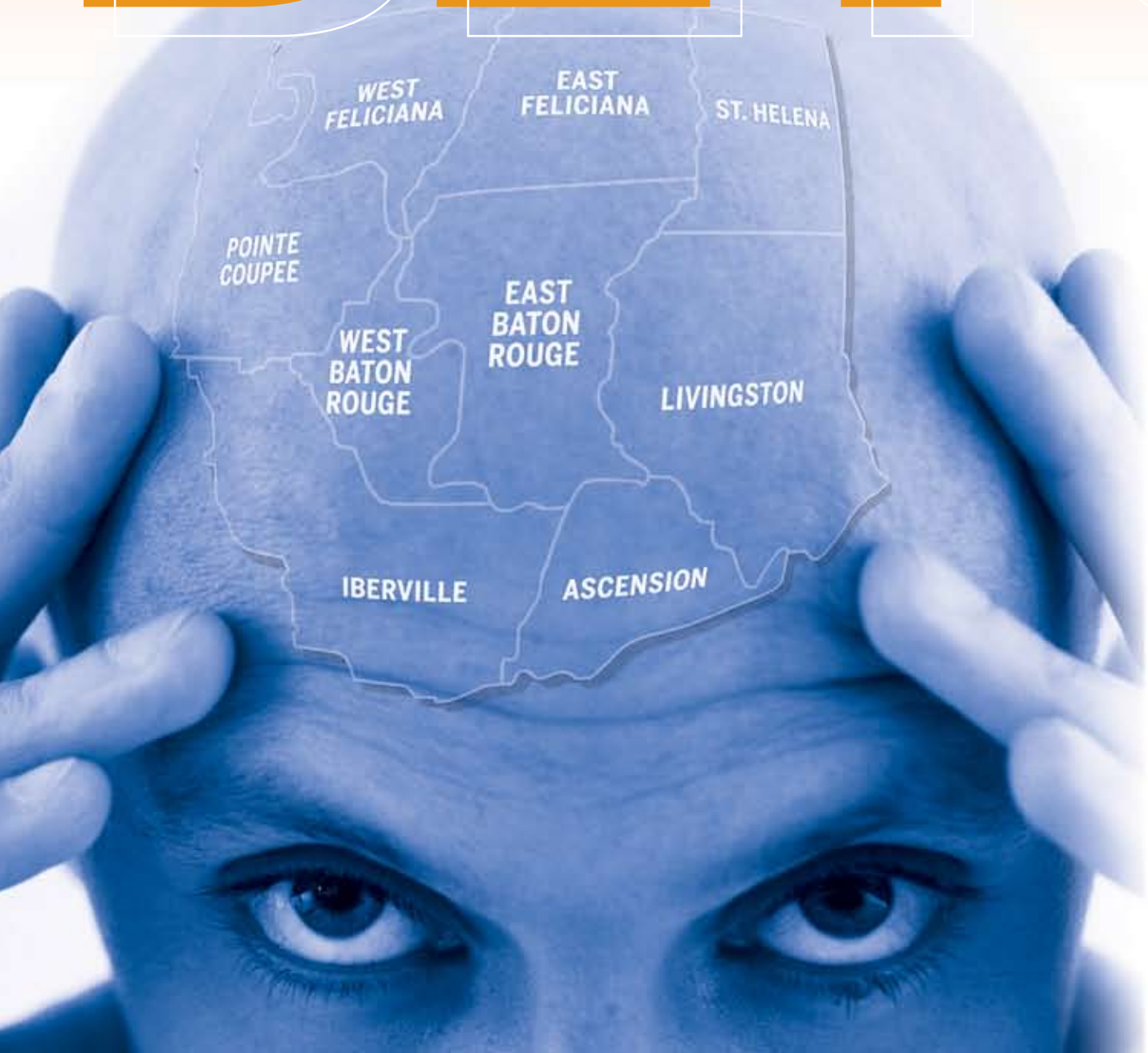
School Board Elections

With school board elections being held in early Fall, BRAC launched its public education initiative to ensure that strong candidates run for office and to help raise awareness in the community. Components of this initiative include a course on the basics of campaigning (the Political Training Institute held in July), a public opinion survey on public education in the nine-parish region, and a five-part research series on public education in the Capital Region.

Other Local Initiatives

BRAC supported three key property tax renewals for the East Baton Rouge School System that were successfully approved by voters in April. In partnership with the Baton Rouge Rotary Club and the East Baton Rouge City/Parish, BRAC established the Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition, a new nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing literacy in our community. ✨

THINKING BEYOND THE LINES



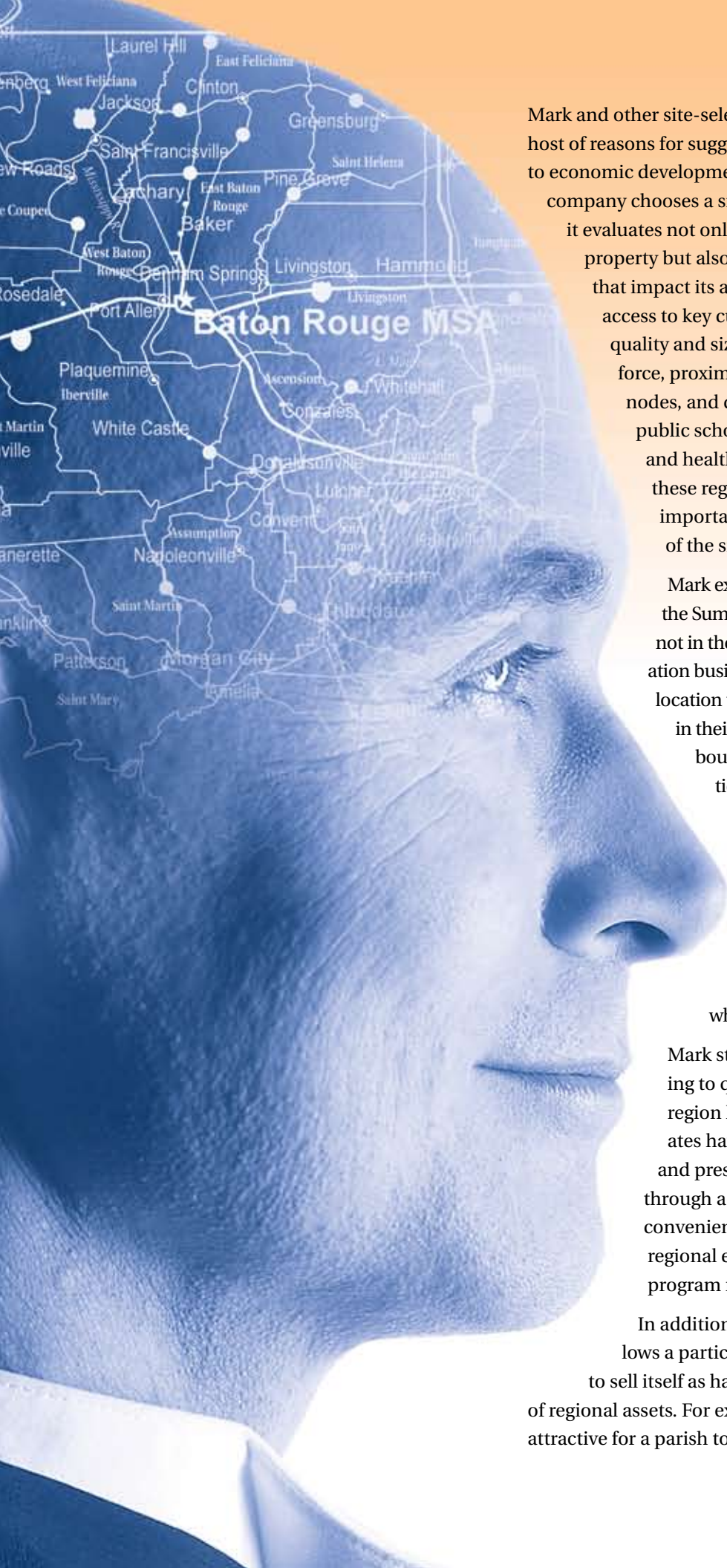
Regional Economic Development Approach Takes Hold In The Baton Rouge Area

Mark Sweeney is one of the gods of economic development – he is a site-selection consultant. Mark is part of a small, national cadre of specialized consultants who help companies sift through hundreds of potential locations to find the perfect site for their new headquarters, manufacturing plant, call center, or back-office operation. When Nissan was looking for a place to build a North American headquarters, they asked Mark to help them choose a site. When Boeing needed a manufacturing site for its new 787 Dreamliner, they called Mark.

With roughly 18,000 municipalities in the U.S. competing for only 200 major site-selection projects (*i.e.*, those offering at least 100 new jobs) each year, the competition is fierce. Industry estimates suggest that roughly 50% of these site-selection decisions are heavily influenced by a site-selection consultant.

Because of the huge influence they wield in the site-selection process, consultants like Mark have a substantial impact on the economic development success of any city, county/parish, or region. With that in mind, any successful economic development program must be designed to satisfy their needs and preferences.

Mark recently visited Baton Rouge as part of BRAC's 2006 Economic Development Summit where he shared an insider perspective on how site selection really works. Among his recommendations was a strong suggestion that we market ourselves not as a city, not as a parish, but as a nine-parish metropolitan area – as a region.



Mark and other site-selection consultants offer a host of reasons for suggesting a regional approach to economic development. For example, when a company chooses a site for a new investment, it evaluates not only a particular piece of property but also all of the regional features that impact its attractiveness – things like access to key customers and suppliers, quality and size of the available workforce, proximity to major transportation nodes, and quality-of-life factors like public schools, cultural amenities, and healthcare institutions. Often these regional features are more important than the characteristics of the site itself.

Mark expounded on this point at the Summit, saying “Our clients are not in the employment or job-creation business. We’re looking for a location that allows them to succeed in their business ... The political boundaries between municipalities and counties often are important to public officials, but they mean nothing to company executives deciding where to locate a project. What matters are the site and the characteristics of the region in which it is located.”

Mark stressed that a company trying to quickly understand what a region has to offer greatly appreciates having information packaged and presented at the regional level through a single contact, both for convenience and confidentiality. A regional economic development program meets this need.

In addition, a regional approach allows a particular municipality or parish to sell itself as having access to a larger pool of regional assets. For example, it is much more attractive for a parish to say that it offers access

“The political boundaries between municipalities and counties often are important to public officials, but they mean nothing to company executives deciding where to locate a project.”

to a regional workforce featuring 75,000 college graduates versus only 5,000 at the parish level.

With so many communities across the country fighting for a limited number of deals, name recognition becomes an important asset in trying to distinguish the Baton Rouge area from other locations. Smaller locales are less likely to be known to prospective businesses, so it becomes advantageous for them to leverage their more widely known neighbors. “Regional identity is a little easier to develop because you’re building on a [more well-known] name,” says Sweeney. That existing identity could make a difference in landing the next big deal. This is similar to the anchor-tenant concept used in the retail industry, which leverages the name recognition of a major retailer to promote the accompanying businesses.

From its inception, *The Campaign for a Greater Baton Rouge* was designed to be a regional economic development program focused on promoting economic growth throughout the entire nine-parish Baton Rouge metropolitan area. BRAC’s board of directors unanimously adopted a regional approach not only because it would be more effective but also because many of BRAC’s top investors (e.g., All Star Automotive Group,

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana, Capital One, Dow, EATEL, Entergy, ExxonMobil, LUBA Workers’ Comp, McDonald’s of Baton Rouge, and Mockler Beverage Company) have employees, sales, offices, and/or invested capital in multiple parishes throughout the region.

A regional approach is not just important to specific business relocation and expansion projects – it also is critically important to fostering a healthy business environment. Most pressing concerns tied to economic growth are regional in nature (e.g., traffic congestion, air quality, tax and regulatory policies, public education, workforce development). For example, BRAC’s regional ozone nonattainment initiative is saving regional industrial facilities nearly \$100MM per year in fees and has saved the average household at least \$250-375 in avoided gasoline costs in the parishes of Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, and West Baton Rouge. BRAC also successfully supported a key state transportation bill in the last legislative session that could provide interesting opportunities for matching funds on regional toll road projects.

No regional economic development program is without its challenges. Several economic development practitioners in our region initially were

BRAC's Economic Development Partners

- Ascension Economic Development Corporation
- Office of the Mayor-President, City of Baton Rouge/Parish of East Baton Rouge
- East Feliciana Economic Development District
- Iberville Chamber of Commerce
- Livingston Economic Development Council
- Greater Pointe Coupee Chamber of Commerce
- St. Helena Parish Overall Economic Development Committee
- West Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce
- West Feliciana Community Development Foundation

skeptical about BRAC's regional economic development program. While most business-people intuitively embrace the concept of regional economic development, public officials and economic development professionals represent-

ing smaller communities often fear that their interests will be neglected by their larger neighbors.

BRAC is working to alleviate these concerns in several ways. First, BRAC will act as an impar-

tial broker for economic-development prospects. BRAC will spearhead regional marketing activities and generate new project leads. Once a potential location has been identified by a company, BRAC will act as a partner with the economic development representative in the appropriate parish.

Second and equally important, BRAC "regional-ized" its board of directors in early 2005 to ensure that every parish in the Capital Region has business representation at a high level in the organization. Recognizing the natural concerns associated with any regional economic development program, BRAC continually will strive to champion

the idea that "the only line that matters is the line around the region".

All of the parish-level economic development organizations in the Baton Rouge area already have signed on as partners with BRAC to promote

the economic development of the Capital Region.

By taking a regional approach, the Baton Rouge Area Chamber is creating a program that is tailored to cus-

tomers (*i.e.*, business prospects) needs and preferences. This approach will allow us to use the name recognition of Baton Rouge for the entire region, as well as to leverage the resources that all of our parishes individually possess.

Next time Mark Sweeney and his counterparts start looking for a site for a major economic development project, the Capital Region will be ready. With a coordinated regional marketing strategy, we will have a much better shot of standing out in a crowded marketplace. ✨

From its inception, *The Campaign for a Greater Baton Rouge* was designed to be a regional economic development program focused on promoting economic growth throughout the entire nine-parish Baton Rouge metropolitan area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INVESTORS

The Campaign for a Greater Baton Rouge

CHAIRMAN'S COUNCIL
ANNUAL INVESTMENT OF \$100,000+
(Five-year total pledge of at least \$500,000)

All Star Automotive Group
Baton Rouge Area Foundation
Credit Bureau of Baton Rouge Foundation
ExxonMobil
Georgia Pacific
Louisiana State University System
Mortgage Finance Authority
Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
ANNUAL INVESTMENT OF \$50,000+
(Five-year total pledge of at least \$250,000)

Baton Rouge Business Report
Baton Rouge General Medical Center
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana
Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson, L.L.P.
Capital One
Clear Channel Communications
Entergy
Jones, Walker, Waechter, Pointevent, Carrère & Denégre, L.L.P.
JPMorgan Chase
Kean, Miller, Hawthorne, D'Armond, McCowan & Jarman L.L.P.
LUBA Workers' Comp
Phelps Dunbar, L.L.P.
Regions Bank
Taylor, Porter, Brooks & Phillips, L.L.P.
The Shaw Group, Inc.
Turner Industries Group, L.L.C.
Whitney National Bank

AMBASSADOR COUNCIL
ANNUAL INVESTMENT OF \$25,000+
(Five-year total pledge of at least \$125,000)

AmSouth Bank
Baton Rouge Coca-Cola Bottling Company
Baton Rouge Water Company
Brookwood Properties, L.L.C.
Casino Rouge
Community Coffee
Dow Chemical Company
EATEL/SunShine Pages
Greater Baton Rouge Association of REALTORS®
Hancock Bank
Lamar Advertising Company
Latter & Blum, Inc./C.J. Brown Realtors
MAPP Construction, L.L.C.
Mockler Beverage Company
Wampold Companies
Woman's Hospital

CORPORATE COUNCIL
ANNUAL INVESTMENT OF \$15,000+
(Five-year total pledge of at least \$75,000)

Adams & Reese Law Firm
Antares Technology Solutions
Area Wholesale Tire Company
Atmos Energy
Courtyard by Marriott
Cox Communications
Innovative Emergency Management, Inc.

CORPORATE COUNCIL (Continued)
ANNUAL INVESTMENT OF \$15,000+
(Five-year total pledge of at least \$75,000)

Irene W. & C.B. Pennington Foundation
Merrill Lynch
Womack Construction

POLICY COUNCIL
ANNUAL INVESTMENT OF \$7,500+
(Five-year total pledge of at least \$37,500)

Advanced Office Systems, Inc.
American Gateway Bank
Associated Grocers
The Baton Rouge Journal
Faulk & Winkler, L.L.C.
H&E Equipment Services L.L.C.
Kleinpeter Farms L.L.C.
Louisiana Network
Louisiana Technology Park
Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center
McDonald's of Baton Rouge
United Health Care Group, Inc.

SUPPORTING INVESTOR
ANNUAL INVESTMENT OF \$2,500+
(Five-year total pledge of at least \$12,500)

Acme Refrigeration of Baton Rouge, Inc.
Ascension Economic Development Corporation
Babcock Law Firm, L.L.C.
Baton Rouge Duplicating Products
Benny's Car Wash
Convergys
EMCO Technologies
Executone of Central Louisiana, Inc.
Felder's Collision Parts, Inc.
Grace & Hebert Architects
GreenScreenTV
Harmony Center
Holiday Inn Select Executive Center
Hollingsworth Richards Automotive Group
Iberia Bank
Jacobs Engineering
Kear's The Cleaner
Kurz & Hebert Commercial Real Estate, Inc.
Lee Griffin
Lee Michaels
Lipseys
MidSouth Bank
Object 9
OMNI Bank
Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers
Shell Gas & Power
SJB Group, Inc.
Southpoint Volkswagen
SSA Consultants
WETCO Restaurant Group
West Feliciana Community Development Foundation
Wright & Percy Insurance



BATON ROUGE AREA CHAMBER LOGO DEVELOPMENT

MISSION: CREATE A LOGO THAT ALIGNS WITH BRAC'S ROLE AS THE CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE NINE PARISH AREA.

BIG IDEA: SHOW OUR PUSH-PULL STRATEGY.



THE PUSH: HOW WE PROMOTE THE COMBINED ASSETS OF ALL NINE PARISHES TO PROSPECTS OUTSIDE OF THE AREA (NINE ARROWS MOVING OUTWARD FROM A CENTER)



THE PULL: HOW WE PULL NINE PARISHES TOGETHER TO PROMOTE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ADDRESS REGIONAL ISSUES (NINE ARROWS MOVING INWARD TO A CENTER)

NOW COMBINE THE TWO ELEMENTS AND...



Baton Rouge Area Chamber

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