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Metropolitan Report – August 2008

Division of Business and Economic Research, College of Business Administration, University of New Orleans

METROPOLITAN REPORT

Economic Indicators for the New Orleans Area

Division of Business and Economic Research, University of New Orleans

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HIGHLIGHTS

- With tropical storms threatening the Louisiana coast, this report provides a snapshot of the local economy three years after Hurricane Katrina.

- Although job growth preceded the population return in the months following Katrina, both employment and population are currently about 87% of pre-Katrina values. Population and jobs have recently been recovering at similar rates.

- New Orleans has lower unemployment and proportionally lower levels of unemployment claims than the nation. However, levels of unemployment claims increased in the last quarter.

- With Katrina, New Orleans lost about 30 years of population growth. The population is still recovering, but the rate has slowed from the speedy rate of return right after the storm. Population for the metropolitan area is estimated to be 1,142,000. A slow increase is expected for the next few years. However, population is not expected to reach pre-Katrina levels during that time.

- Recent construction contracts for roads, bridges and flood control have dwarfed the substantial amounts being spent on residential and commercial building construction. Residential construction has started slowing overall. Residential construction in St. Tammany has dropped to about 40% of pre-Katrina levels, while residential construction in Orleans and St. Bernard is very active.

- 16, 300 jobs were added to New Orleans area employment since last July, bringing the current total number of jobs to 527,900. In total, 102,000 jobs have been recovered in the New Orleans area since the lowest point in the economy in the autumn of 2005. However, there are still 81,700 jobs to go before the pre-Katrina level would be reached. Gradual job growth is expected to continue in the next 2 years, particularly while recovery spending continues.

- Recovery has not been evenly experienced throughout the different sectors of the job market. In a broad sense, those economic sectors that either had a heavy capital investment such as manufacturing facilities, or those industries supporting the recovery are at the highest levels relative to pre-Katrina figures. In contrast, those sectors supporting population – such as retail services, hospitals and schools have lagged population return. Tourism, being completely dependent on perception of people who live elsewhere, was the most damaged but has recently shown signs of recovery equal to the overall economy.

- Showing growth particularly in the last year are construction, accommodation and legal jobs.

THE NEW ORLEANS AREA ECONOMY
OVERVIEW

It has been three years since Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent floods damaged the New Orleans landscape and threw her economy into disarray. Much has changed in that time. The overall recovery of jobs and population both stand at about 87% of their pre-Katrina levels since their dips to 70% and 51%, respectively (Figure 1). Just after Katrina, jobs recovered faster than the population which was limited due to a shortage of undamaged housing. This caused a tight labor market and a large increase in area wages.

Though New Orleans as a metropolitan area has 87% of its pre-Katrina jobs, the recovery hasn't been even throughout the different sectors of the job market. In a broad sense, those economic sectors that either had a heavy capital investment such as manufacturing facilities or those industries supporting the recovery are at the highest levels. In contrast, those sectors supporting population – such as retail services, hospitals and schools have lagged population return. Tourism, being completely dependent on perception of people who live elsewhere, was the most damaged but has recently shown signs of catching up.

On the following pages are details of the variance in recovery rates. Statistics for the metro area, unless otherwise noted, contain information for the 7-parish area defined as the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area. This area includes Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist and St. Tammany parishes. Information on the individual parishes is at the back of the report.

Looking at Figure 2, opposite, winners and losers in the job market can be seen. It can also be seen the spurts of growth that have occurred in the last year are construction, accommodation and legal services. Construction has especially shown growth in the heavy and civil engineering sector.

In terms of recovery, ahead of all sectors are natural resources and construction. These industries have passed up their pre-Katrina levels. Natural resources in the New Orleans area essentially mean oil and natural gas. Oil prices in July 2008 stood at 247% of pre-Katrina price and natural gas prices are also up, though less dramatically. The stimulus of these price increases was enough to cause a quick recovery in that sector.

Construction employment currently stands at 117% of its old pre-Katrina count. Growth in construction is directly related to the recovery from the storm. In the last 6 months, there has been a sudden shift in volume of construction contracts as government contracts for roads, bridges and flood control structures are finally awarded. The value of contracts in this "non-building" category awarded in the last 6 months has dwarfed the amount of contract dollars being spent on commercial and residential construction. Still the dollar value of commercial construction exceeds its pre-Katrina levels.

Also doing well at 96% or 97% recovered are several of the most capital intensive industries – transportation equipment manufacturing (here shipbuilding and Textron military vehicles) and chemical manufacturing.

Figure 1. Total Metro Employment

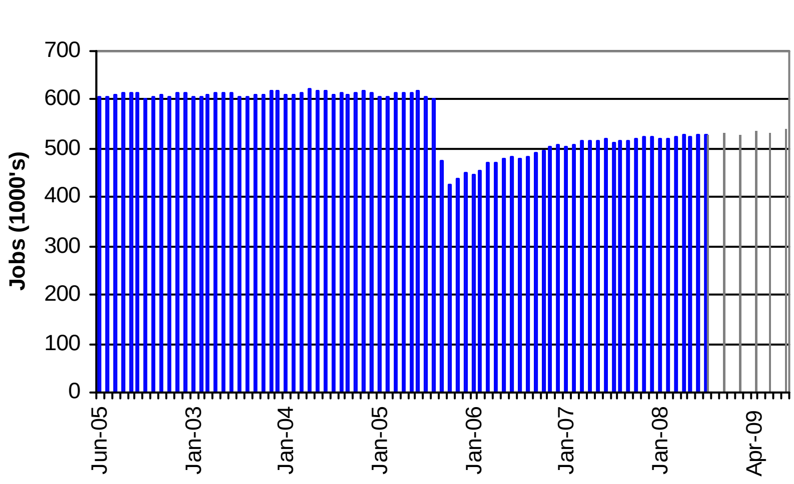


Figure 2. New Orleans Jobs by Industry - % pre-Katrina

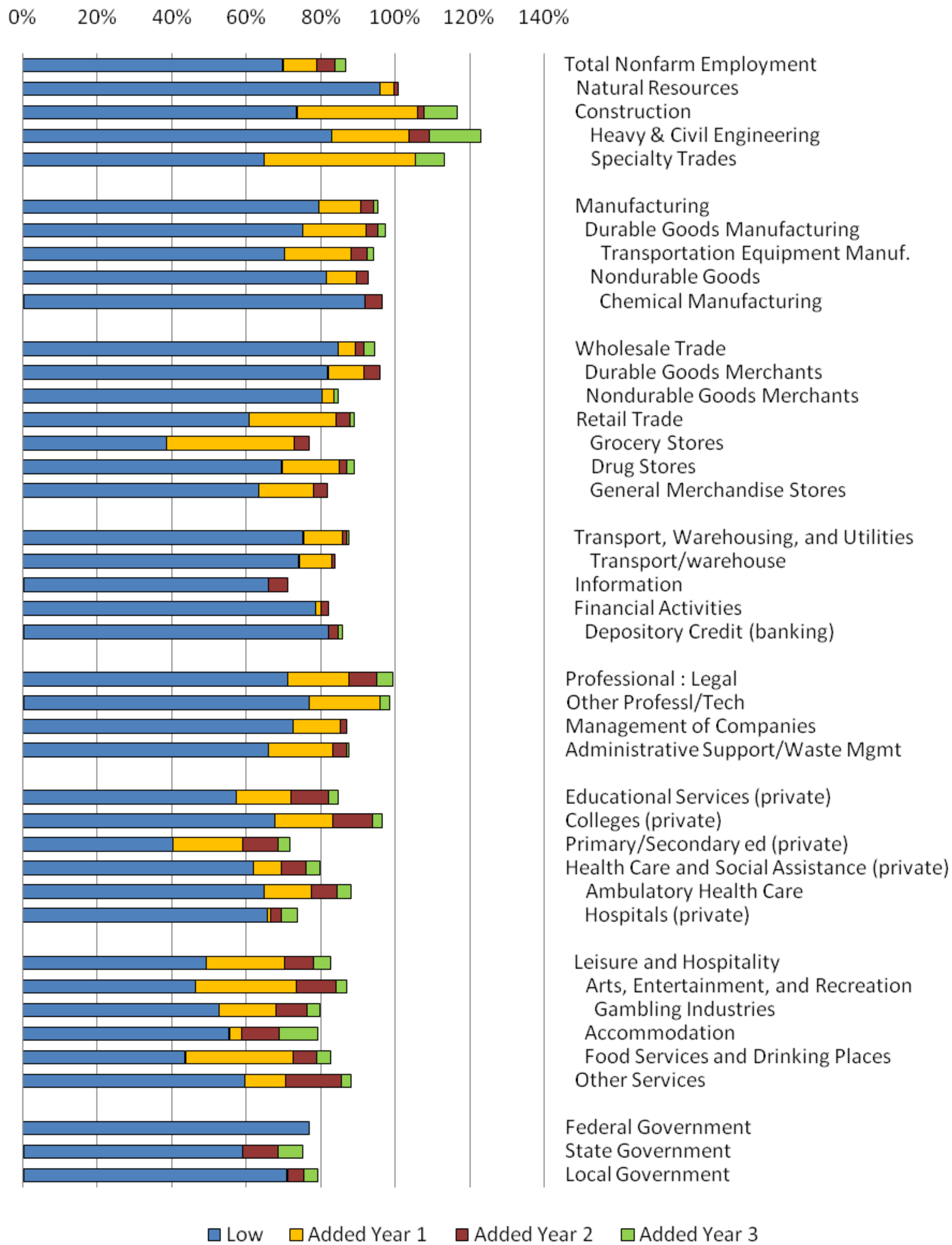
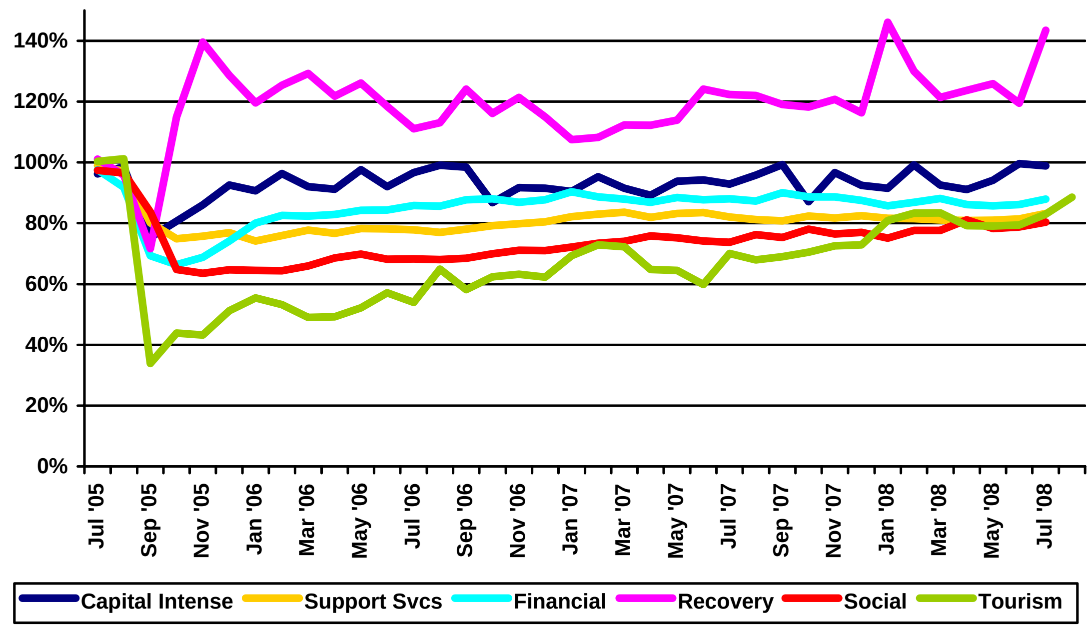


Figure 3. Comparison of Economic Sectors Recovery Since Katrina



Specific areas lagging in recovery are information (71%), which consists of media, publishing and related jobs; primary and secondary private education (72%) and private hospitals (74%). Low levels of education and hospital employment are a direct consequence of Katrina's flood damage. There are many parochial schools and hospitals in damaged areas such as New Orleans East, St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes that were destroyed and have not yet even begun to be rebuilt even though the population has started to return. Still, their population return (of 72%) is somewhat low relative to the general metro population of 87%.

The graph in Figure 3, above, combines economic indicators into groups in an index format. It is interesting to see the contrast in the recovery curves in the different groups. Recovery from the storm put several areas into high gear. Indicators related to recovery – construction and auto sales are two examples – show activity above 100%. Capital-intensive industries did not abandon their investments in chemical plants, port facilities and shipyards. As a group, they worked very quickly to get employees back and by the early winter of 2005-2006 were functioning at somewhere between 90% and 100% of pre-Katrina levels and have hovered there since. Financial businesses (indicators like banking jobs, retail taxable sales) and general support services have, as a group, stayed around 80%-85%. The recent trend in this sector is flat, showing no particular growth. Social services, education and health care have been slow to respond and have lagged population return. Tourism, the most vulnerable to outside perception and discretionary decisions, was the most damaged industry during the first two years. However, tourism has showed steady improvement to catch up in recovery terms with the index values for health care and general services.

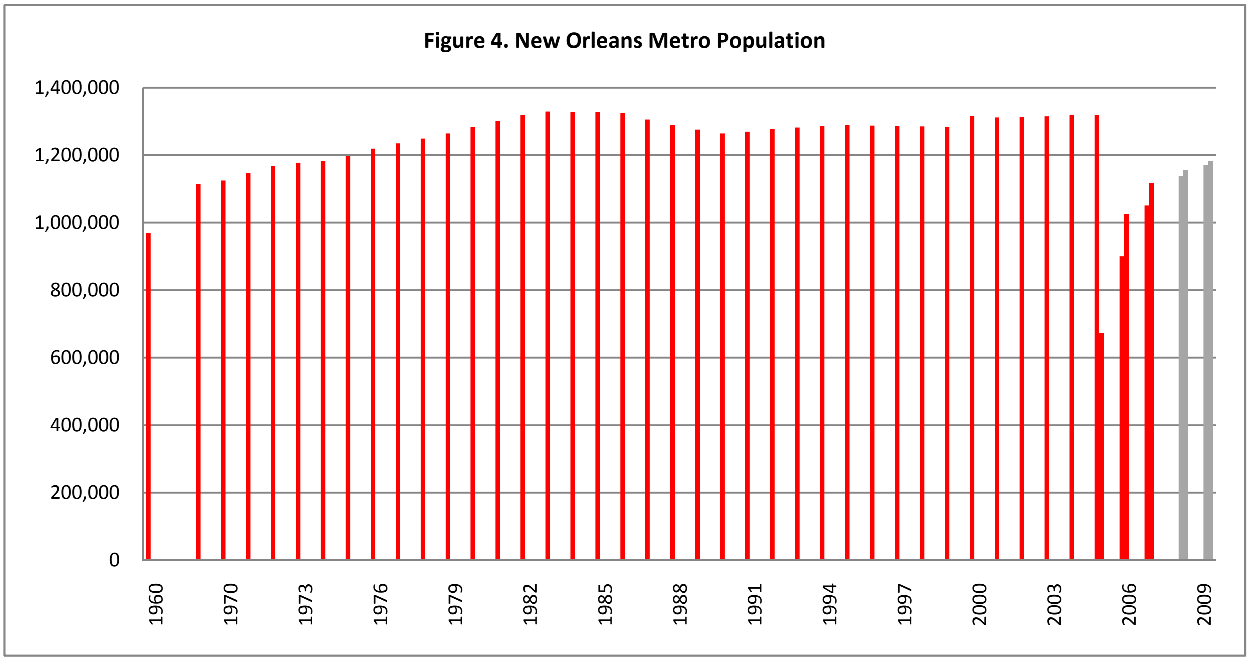
16,300 jobs were added to New Orleans area employment since last July, bringing the current total number of jobs to 527,900 (Table 1). This means that 102,000 jobs have been recovered in the New Orleans area since the lowest point in the economy in the autumn of 2005. However, there are still 81,700 jobs to go before the pre-Katrina level would be reached. Slower but steady job growth is expected to continue in the next 2 years, particularly while recovery spending continues. 8,000 jobs are forecast to be added during calendar year 2008, followed by an additional 6,000 jobs during 2009.

Table 1. New Orleans Metropolitan Employment

Thousands of Jobs	2005 PreK	Worst in 2005	1st Anniv 2006	2nd Anniv 2007	Most Current 2008	Percent of Pre-Katrina 2005 at: Worst in 2005	1st Anniv 2006	2nd Anniv 2007	Most Current 2008
Total Nonfarm Employment	609.6	425.8	480.8	511.6	527.9	70%	79%	84%	87%
Natural Resources	8.4	8.1	8.4	8.5	8.5	96	100	101	101
Construction	29.6	21.8	31.4	31.9	34.6	74	106	108	117
Heavy & Civil Engineering	7.2	6.0	7.5	7.9	8.9	83	104	109	123
Specialty Trades	16.5	10.7	17.4	17.3	18.6	65	105	105	113
Manufacturing	38.5	30.6	35.0	36.3	36.7	79	91	94	95
Durable Goods	20.8	15.6	19.1	19.8	20.2	75	92	95	97
Transportation Equipment	11.7	8.2	10.3	10.8	11.0	70	88	93	94
Nondurable Goods	17.8	14.5	15.9	16.5	16.5	82	89	93	93
Chemical Manufacturing	4.9	4.6	4.5	4.8	4.7	94	92	98	96
Wholesale Trade	25.8	21.8	23.0	23.6	24.3	85	89	92	94
Durable Goods Merchants	12.3	10.1	11.3	11.9	11.8	82	92	97	96
Nondurable Goods Merchants	9.6	7.7	8.0	8.0	8.1	80	84	84	85
Retail Trade	67.4	41.0	56.7	59.2	59.9	61	84	88	89
Grocery Stores	10.1	3.9	7.4	7.8	7.8	38	73	77	77
Drug Stores	5.2	3.6	4.4	4.5	4.6	70	85	87	89
General Merchandise Stores	14.1	8.9	11.0	11.5	11.5	63	78	82	82
Transport, Warehousing, & Utili	28.2	21.2	24.2	24.5	24.7	75	86	87	88
Transport/warehouse	26.3	19.5	21.8	22.2	21.9	74	83	84	83
Information	10.2	7.3	6.7	8.4	7.2	72	66	83	71
Financial Activities	33.0	25.9	26.4	27.4	27.0	79	80	83	82
Depository Credit (banking)	7.7	6.4	6.3	6.5	6.6	83	82	84	85
Professional and Business Svcs	74.6	54.0	65.6	67.4	68.4	72	88	90	92
Professional, Scientific, Techl	28.4	21.6	27.0	27.2	28.1	76	95	96	99
Legal	9.2	6.5	8.0	8.7	9.1	71	87	95	99
Other Prof (Arch, Adv, Engr)	19.3	14.8	19.0	18.5	19.0	77	99	96	99
Management of Companies	8.6	6.2	7.3	7.5	7.4	73	85	88	87
Admin Support/Waste Mgmt	37.6	24.8	31.3	32.7	32.9	66	83	87	87
Educational Services (private) *	19.5	11.2	14.0	16.0	16.6	57	72	82	85
Colleges *	10.3	7.0	8.6	9.7	10.0	68	83	94	96
Primary/Secondary ed *	9.2	3.7	5.4	6.3	6.6	40	59	69	72
Health Care and Social Assist	61.7	38.2	42.8	46.9	49.2	62	69	76	80
Ambulatory Health Care	21.8	14.1	16.9	18.4	19.2	65	78	84	88
Hospitals (private)	20.8	13.6	13.8	14.4	15.3	66	67	69	74
Leisure and Hospitality	85.8	42.2	60.2	66.9	70.9	49	70	78	83
Arts, Entertainment, and Rec	14.3	6.6	10.5	12.0	12.4	46	74	84	87
Gambling Industries	5.9	3.1	4.0	4.5	4.7	53	68	76	80
Accommodation	15.5	8.6	9.1	10.7	12.3	55	59	69	79
Food Svcs and Drinking Places	56.0	24.4	40.6	44.2	46.2	44	73	79	83
Other Services	22.4	13.3	15.8	19.1	19.7	60	71	85	88
Government	104.6	79.6	72.0	77.0	81.1	76	69	74	78
Federal Government	15.7	14.2	12.3	12.0	12.0	91	79	77	77
State Government	27.1	20.7	15.9	18.5	20.3	76	59	68	75
Local Government	61.8	44.5	43.8	46.5	48.8	72	71	75	79
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.8	8.6	5.6	4.2	4.1	178%	116%	87%	85%
Unemp Claims per week – Initial *	789	254	354	301	566	32%	45%	38%	72%
Unemp Claims per week – Continued *	7,941	5,003	6,590	2,534	3,836	63%	83%	32%	48%

Source: Louisiana Department of Labor

** Volatile series for which Year to date figures have been analyzed instead of most recent month*



Local population fell from 1.3 million people just before Katrina, to a low of about 700,000 (Figure 4). Now the population stands at about 1,142,000.

Both population and employment are at about 87% of pre-Katrina values. It is very interesting that population and jobs are recovering at the same rate. In Figure 5, it can be seen how the two rates of recovery have moved together. This is not completely surprising. For a job to be filled there needs to be a person living in town to fill it. Conversely, a person might not decide to come back to the area if there weren't a good job available. In any case, the labor market has been tight since Katrina. This has resulted in a low unemployment rate.

Demographic shifts can also be seen. These Changes are hinted at by public school enrollment. Enrollment remains substantially below its pre-Katrina level, lagging total population by about 10%.

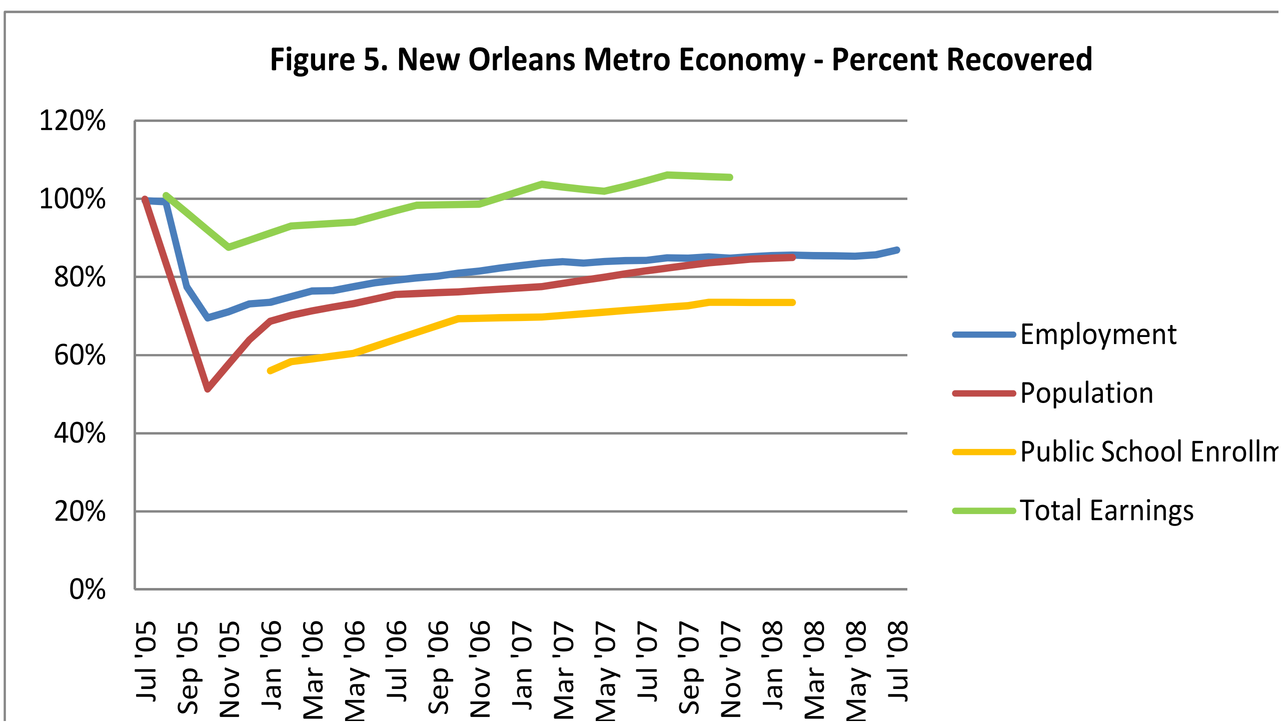
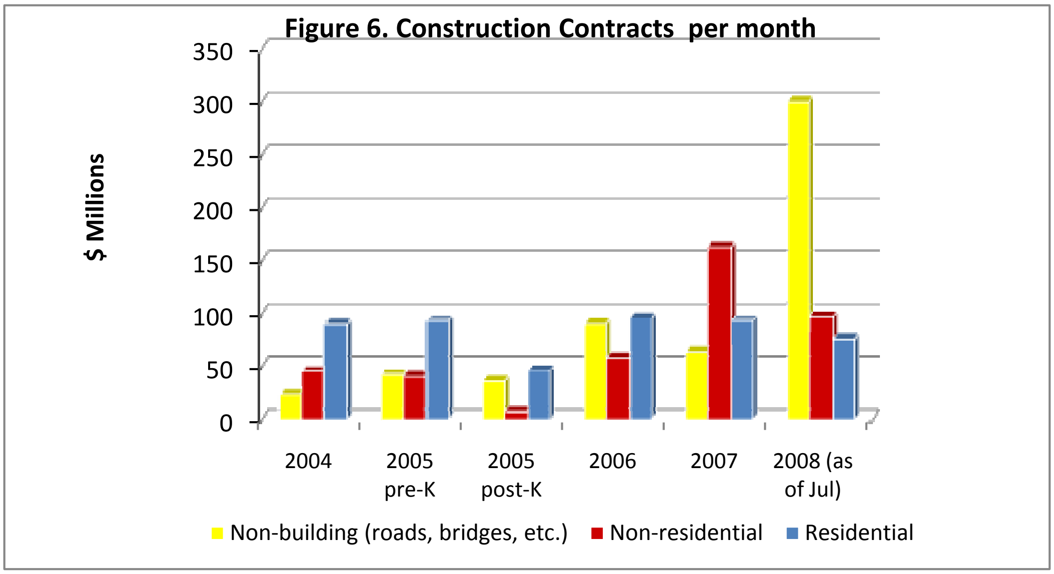


Table 2. Other Economic Indicators – Monthly averages – New Orleans Metro Area

	2005 PreK	Worst in 2005	1st Anniv 2006	2nd Anniv 2007	Most Current 2008	Percent of Pre-Katrina 2005 at: Worst in 2005	1st Anniv 2006	2nd Anniv 2007	Most Current 2008
Crude Oil Price ($ per barrel)	$54.04	58.32	74.41	74.12	133.37	108	138	137	247
Natural Gas Price ($ per thou cf)	$6.93	8.88	5.92	6.19	10.62	128	85	89	153
Louisiana Rig Count	184	162	188	182	187	88	102	99	101
Louisiana Oil Production (Thou Bbls/Day)	1,416	290	1,346	1,279	1,327	20	95	90	94
Louisiana Natural Gas Production(bill cub ft)	112,501	85,544	119,683	119,869	119,867	76	106	107	107
Foreign Trade (Thou short tons)*	2,460	463	2,515	2,211	2,087	19	102	90	85
Imports (Thou short tons)	1,388	92	1,274	1,036	1,001	7	92	75	72
Exports (Thou short tons)	1,072	372	1,241	1,175	1,086	35	116	110	101
Air Freight Cargo (Tons)	7,424	1,862	4,304	4,184	4,184	25	58	56	56
Hotel/Motel Sales ($Mill) *[1]	71.0	17.3	34.1	59.9	72.8	24	48	84	103
Convention Roomnights *	128,000	15,670	40,000	89,000	108,000	12	31	70	84
Passenger Deplanements	429,580	18,966	287,363	319,301	359,787	4	67	74	84
Airport Capacity (Seats)	20,676	2,197	11,761	14,113	16,460	11	57	68	80
Hotel Room Capacity (rooms)	38,500	11,900	29,700	33,000	33,700	31	77	86	88
Hotel Room Rate ($)[2]	$117.93	97.06	115.64	108.69	126.92	82	98	92	108
Hotel Occupancy Rate (%) [2 *]	74.1	56.1	72.4	66.7	73.9	76	98	90	100
Total Gambling Revenues ($Mill)	53.6	0.0	61.4	59.8	57.5	0	115	112	107
Riverboat Casino Revenues($Mill)	24.5	0.0	29.8	24.6	24.9	0	121	100	102
Bally's AGR ($Mill)	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Boomtown AGR ($Mill)	10.2	0.0	17.8	14.9	15.0	0	174	146	147
Treasure Chest AGR ($Mill)	9.5	0.0	12.0	9.7	9.9	0	126	102	104
Harrah's Casino Revenues ($Mill)	29.0	0.0	31.6	35.2	32.5	0	109	121	112
Casino Revenue Mississippi Gulf Coast ($mill)	109.3	0.0	74.6	124.7	115.7	0	68	114	106
Construction Contracts Awarded ($Mill)[3 *]									
Residential per month ($Mill)	92.8	11.0	90.3	85.7	75.0	12	97	92	81
Non-Residential per month ($Mill)	39.5	0.0	61.9	222.4	97.1	0	157	563	246
Non-Building (Mill$)	41.7	4.4	67.0	76.4	300.4	11	161	183	721
Housing Starts	530	79	394	488	226	15	74	92	43
Population[4]	1,309,954	672,989	991,000	1,070,000	1,142,000	51	76	82	87
Taxable Sales excluding Motor Vehicle Sales (Mill$)	1,389.3	1,074.3	1,659.4	1,592.2	n/a	77	119	115	-
Motor Vehicle Sales (Mill$)	164.9	107.4	226.7	186.3	158.8	65	137	113	96
Total Earnings per month (Mill$)[5]	1,725	1,615	1,609	1,737	1,946	94	93	101	113
Weekly Wage $ per week (8 parish area)[5]	$680.82	856.84	856.84	858.00	881.00	126	126	126	129
Per Capita Personal Ann. Income $	31,611	19,926	39,230	40,211	n/a	63	124	127	-
Restaurants open - Tom Fitzmorris *	805	22	637	783	915	3	79	97	114

** Volatile series for which year to date figures have been analyzed instead of just most recent month*
1 – Hotel/motel sales include Orleans and Jefferson Parishes Only.
2 -- Occupancy rates and room rates supplied by PKF Consulting.
3 -- Construction figures are proprietary data supplied by F. W. Dodge Division, McGraw-Hill, Inc.
4 – Population figures are a combination of data produced by Dr. Ray Brady of System Solutions Consulting, US Department of Census, GCR & Associates, and the Greater New Orleans Community Data Center.
5 – Earnings and wages current only through December 2007



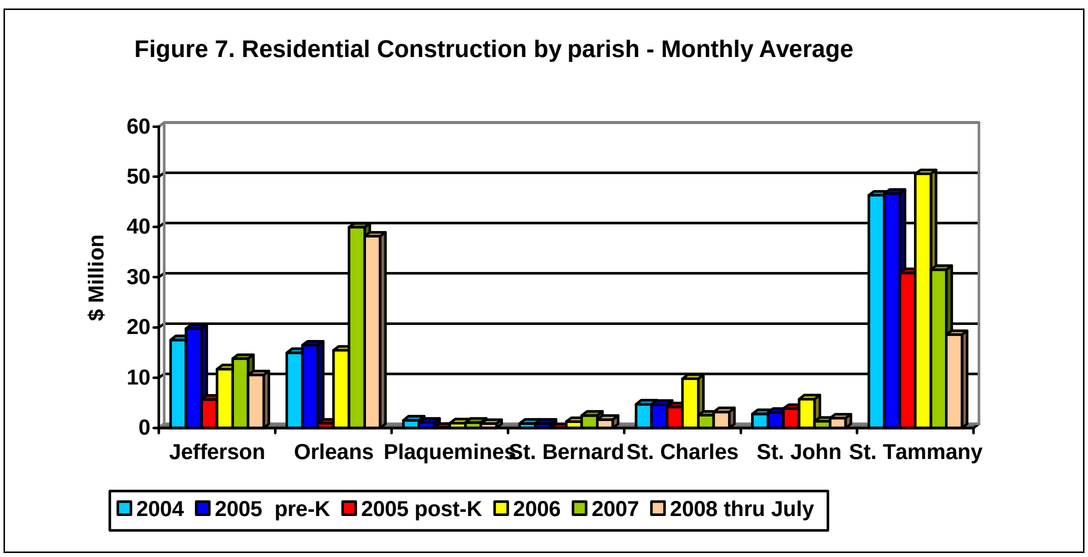
Proprietary data supplied by F. W. Dodge Division, McGraw-Hill, Inc.

CONSTRUCTION

Figure 6, above, shows the value of different types of construction activity in the metro area. An important caution is that cash construction dollars, most common in residential repairs, are unmeasured and not included in these figures.

A big change in recent months is that large road, bridge and flood control contracts are being awarded. Some are planned upgrades, like that of the Huey P Long Bridge improvements, which would have happened anyway. However, other large projects are related to repairing damage caused by Katrina to streets or to improving flood control for the future. It took a while for the government funding and contracting process to get rolling, but now the amount of money being spent there dwarfs the construction of commercial and residential buildings. In fact, residential construction shows a slow downward movement.

An interesting shift can be seen in Figure 7 below. Residential construction in outlying parishes spiked in 2006 but has slowed down. In particular, construction in St. Tammany which traditionally dominated the local new home construction market is down to about 40% of pre-Katrina values. Markets for new developments of homes could be affected by the national construction slowdown. In contrast, Orleans Parish was slow to get started after the storm but is seeing a large amount of residential building at this point.



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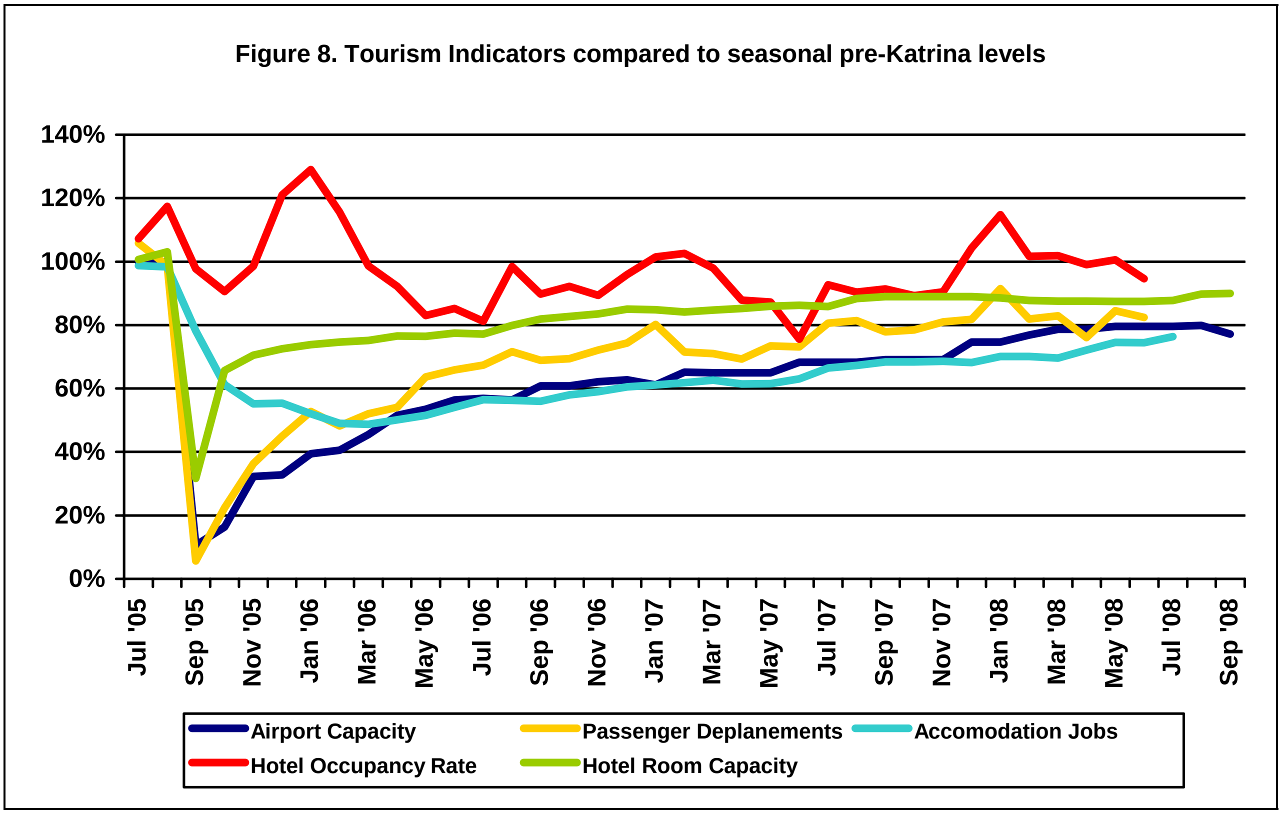


TOURISM

Tourism was one of the slowest segments of the economy to recover. Perceptions of damage post-Katrina slowed the tourism comeback. The lowest line in Figure 3 on page 4, shows a general upward trend as tourism indicators, when averaged together in an index, catch up with the rest of the economy. Figure 8, above, takes a look at a few of the details of tourism indicators since Katrina. Hotel capacity rebounded quickly since many of the largest hotels were in the downtown area, which did not flood, or in undamaged areas of the suburbs. Playing catch-up, but continuing to rise, are airport capacity and filled jobs in the accommodation sector. Both of these measures are nearing 80% recovered compared to the hotel capacity which currently stands about 88%.

The red hotel occupancy line has occasionally moved up above its old seasonal average meaning that for those hotels that are open, they were about as full or even more full than they would have been before the storm. Of course there are fewer guests overall because 12% of our hotel rooms have not been made available for guests.

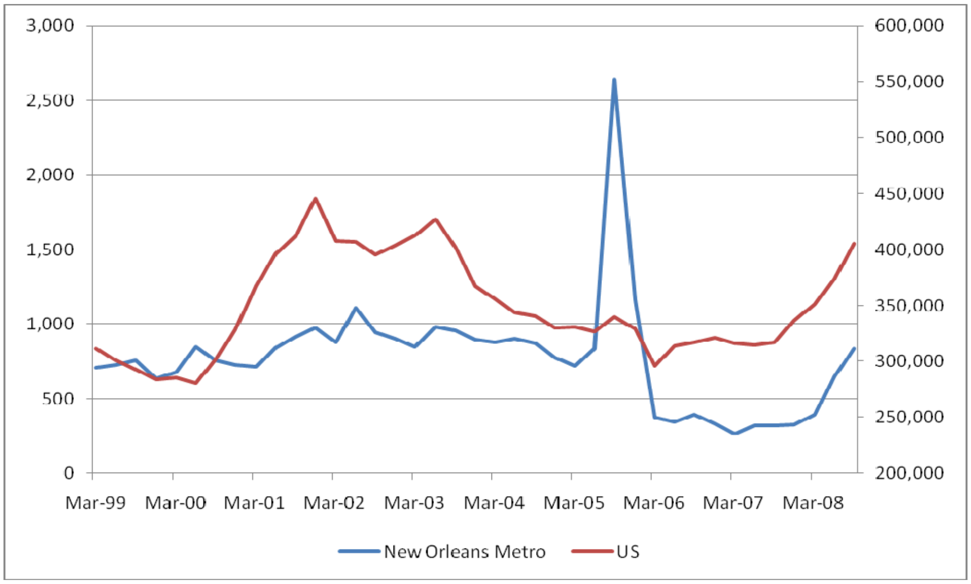
The yellow passenger deplanement line has often stayed above the level of the airport capacity line over the last 3 years. In other words, flights leaving Armstrong Airport have been more full than before the storm on average. The dip in the blue line coming up in September 2008 shows the effects of some flight cancellations brought on by airlines reacting to pressures such as the high cost of fuel.

There were some good times in tourism this year. The spike in January shows the effects of events such as the BCS championship. The NBA All-Star game, successful festivals and conventions all have contributed to a strong first half of 2008.

GAMING

Casino revenue is coming down to earth, starting after the storm at 115% of pre-Katrina and then settling down to 112% and 107% as time went on. It should also be noted that this revenue was earned by 3 casinos instead of 4. Casinos benefited from the cash economy of recovery workers and some displacement from Mississippi. Mississippi Casinos have done a good job of their own recovery, moving from 68% at the first anniversary to 114% and then 106% of pre-Katrina levels.

Figure 9. Initial Unemployment Claims per Week – New Orleans MSA vs. U.S.



The July 2008 unemployment rate in the New Orleans area was 4.1%. This rate compared favorably to the unemployment rate for the US of 5.7%. The tighter labor market is also seen in the different curves in the filing of unemployment claims. In Figure 9, above, it can be seen that, though the New Orleans area is trending up like the national curve, it starts from a propotionally lower base.

The tight labor market can also be seen in the wages from December 2007 (Table 3). After the storm, wages per week jumped to an average of 126% of pre-Katrina levels. They have crept up another 3% since that time. Details on wages for individual pay rates for specific occupations are now available from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes-35380.htm).

Table 3. 8 Parish Region: Quarterly Average Weekly Wage ($ per week)

						Percentage Pre Katrina		
	2004	2005 PreK	Dec 05	Dec 06	Most Current Dec 07	Dec 05	Dec 06	Most Current Dec 07
All segments ($ per week)	$662	681	857	858	881	126%	126%	129%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	483	418	601	664	666	144%	159%	159%
Mining	1,439	1,684	1,614	1,860	1,871	96%	110%	111%
Utilities	1,019	1,204	1,181	1,115	1,159	98%	93%	96%
Construction	704	683	913	966	994	134%	141%	145%
Manufacturing	961	1,009	1,064	1,123	1,182	105%	111%	117%
Wholesale Trade	929	958	1,114	1,215	1,224	116%	127%	128%
Retail Trade	430	418	548	535	525	131%	128%	126%
Transportation and Warehousing	846	830	976	1,034	1,097	118%	125%	132%
Information	743	751	959	941	970	128%	125%	129%
Finance and Insurance	903	985	1,286	1,211	1,230	131%	123%	125%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	605	596	816	831	816	137%	139%	137%
Professional and Technical Services	1,069	941	1,274	1,441	1,502	135%	153%	160%
Mgmt. of Companies and Enterprises	1,028	1,232	1,201	1,105	1,224	98%	90%	99%
Administrative and Waste Services	468	473	737	640	655	156%	135%	139%
Educational Services	662	677	674	702	765	100%	104%	113%
Health Care and Social Assistance	713	678	812	864	855	120%	127%	126%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	610	598	969	745	905	162%	125%	151%
Accommodation and Food Services	285	290	349	358	373	120%	123%	129%
Other Services, except Public Admin	493	464	629	618	622	136%	133%	134%
Public Administration	772	784	892	931	994	114%	119%	127%

OTHER SECTORS

Employment has been fairly stable in transportation and warehousing at about 83%. However, the amount of cargo going through the port, which recovered right after the storm, has recently dropped. This is particularly caused by a drop in imports which are currently at about 72% of pre-Katrina levels year to date. These imports are more expensive as a result of the decline of the dollar.

The third year post-Katrina shows a distinct growth in the number of jobs in the legal sector to finally reach 99% of former levels. Other professional jobs such as architects, engineers and advertising personnel have also reached 99% of pre-Katrina levels to pull ahead of the overall job average recovery of 87%. The relative growth of these jobs is probably related to rebuilding efforts as support for construction.

THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

As a context for Katrina's economic effects on New Orleans, some measures of the national United States economy are shown below. It can be seen that the last 3 years have not been wonderful ones for the US economy. Employment has been slow to grow or flat. Sales of automobiles and the value of the dollar have dropped rapidly.

Some interesting contrasts are the lag in the Louisiana rig count compared to the national figure. Places where New Orleans seems to be "beating" the national economy are in unemployment and personal income. Interestingly, both New Orleans and the nation have housing starts equal to 43% of pre-Katrina values.

Table 4. Change in National Indicators over 3 years

					Percentage Change		
	2005 PreK	1st Anniv 2006	2nd Anniv 2007	Most Current 2008	1st Anniv 2006	2nd Anniv 2007	Most Current 2008
GDP – Nominal ($Bill) – Annual Rate*	12,226.45	13134.1	13737.5	14,256.50	107%	112%	117%
GDP – Real (2000$Bill) – Annual Rate*	10,910.95	11291.7	11491.4	11,700.60	103%	105%	107%
Personal Income ($Bill) – Annual Rate	10,195,961	10,787,100	11,451,855	12,002,122	106%	112%	118%
Total Non-farm Employment (Mill Jobs)	132,901	135,908	137,410	137,236	102%	103%	103%
Housing Starts (Thou) – Annual Rate	2.02	1.861	1.464	0.87	92%	72%	43%
Unit Sales of Automobiles (Mill) – Annual Rate	17.31	16.38	16.04	15.00	95%	93%	87%
Unemployment Rate (%)*	5.11	4.7	4.7	5.70	92%	92%	111%
CPI-U (1982-84=100)*	193.89	203.50	208.30	219.96	105%	107%	113%
Industrial Production Index (1997=100)	108.34	112.96	115.15	118.24	104%	106%	109%
Prime Interest Rate (%)	5.84	8.25	8.25	5.00	141%	141%	86%
Mortgage Interest Rate (%)	5.74	6.6	6.37	6.08	115%	111%	106%
Trade Weighted Value of $ (2000=100)	$ 82.99	81.94	77.51	70.91	99%	93%	85%
Crude Oil Price ($) per barrel	$ 54.04	74.41	74.12	133.37	138%	137%	247%
Natural Gas Price ($) per 1000 cub ft	$ 6.93	5.92	6.19	10.62	85%	89%	153%
Value of Imports ($Bill) – Annual Rate	908.6	1,022.4	1,116.8	1,329.0	113%	123%	146%
Value of Exports ($Bill) – Annual Rate	1,669.1	1,887.2	1,957.0	2,229.8	113%	117%	134%
Merchandise Trade Balance ($Bill) – Annual Rate	-760.5	-864.8	-840.2	-900.8	114%	110%	118%
Rig Count (year to date average)	1,339	1,592	1,750	1,832	119%	131%	137%
Initial Unemployment claims per week (year to date average)	327,556	309,366	319,580	369,106	94%	98%	113%

*seasonally adjusted

PARISH INDICATORS

Data for individual parishes start on the next page. Labor data available for individual parishes take longer to be released than the metropolitan area jobs statistics. Jobs and earnings data in the parish are from December 2007 and encompass employees subject to unemployment insurance taxation and is recorded by place of work. Other data at the bottom half of the tables are generally from July or June 2008 unless otherwise noted.

Population by parish can be found in Figure 10. The largest gain is in Orleans Parish. Population in St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes are also returning.

Some spikes in employment at the parish level have been experienced. For example, in St. Charles, St. John and St. Tammany, mining jobs are close to, or above, 150% of pre-Katrina levels. Construction and cleanup jobs in St. Bernard also stand above pre-Katrina levels at 156% and 139%, respectively.

There are also some big losses persisting three years later. For example, agriculture/fishing employment in Jefferson Parish stands at 50% of its pre-Katrina value. In St Bernard, jobs in retail, education, and health care are only partially recovered (37%, 24% and 17%, respectively). In addition, healthcare employment (which includes both private and public jobs) in Orleans Parish is at 59%, and education in Plaquemines Parish is at 58% of pre-Katrina values.

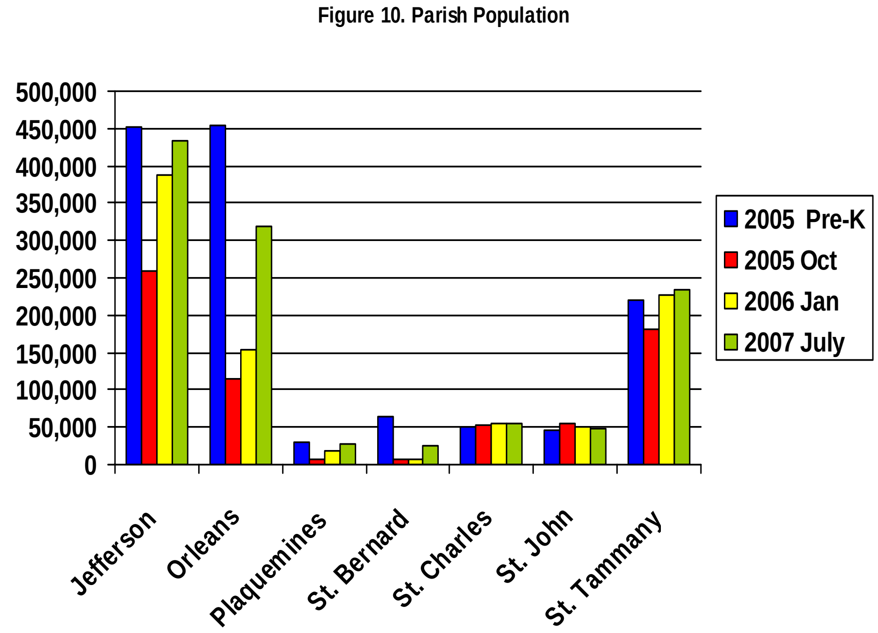
An enormous spike in non-residential construction is seen in St. John parish where an expensive refinery expansion has pushed up figures to over 30 times the normal work in progress for that parish. Orleans has a spike in residential and non-residential building. St. Bernard has a very busy residential construction sector as well.

As for wages, the highest paid workers are those who work in St. Charles and Plaquemine parishes, where the average weekly wage exceeds $1,000 per week.

NOTES

Statistics for the metro area, unless otherwise noted, contain information for the 7-parish area defined as the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area. This includes Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist and St. Tammany parishes. St. James used to be considered part of the New Orleans MSA. However, in 2003, due to changes in commuting patterns, St. James Parish was removed from the New Orleans MSA by the federal Office of Management and Budget. However, St. James is included in the average wage data.

Employment predictions are based upon forecasts of national macroeconomic variables provided by the Economic Forecasting Center at Georgia State University.



** The number of jobs and corresponding wages for establishments subject to unemployment insurance taxation. Notable exclusions are employees of very small businesses (under 4 employees), self-employed persons and salespersons on commission-only bases.*
*** Proprietary data provided by F. W. Dodge Division, McGraw-Hill, Inc.*

Table 5: Quarterly Jefferson Parish's Concurrent Economic Indicators

	Jefferson					
	2005 PreK	2005 PostK	2 yr anniv	Most Current	Pct of PreK last year	Curr Pct of PreK
Total Employment*	214,213	168,205	198,078	202,888	92%	95%
Agriculture/Fishing	82	63	59	41	72%	50%
Mining	1,991	1,961	2,001	2,368	101%	119%
Utilities	1,379	1,495	1,469	1,469	107%	107%
Construction	13,795	12,050	14,977	15,420	109%	112%
Manufacturing	17,488	13,901	15,725	15,535	90%	89%
Wholesale Trade	12,950	11,280	11,922	12,028	92%	93%
Retail Trade	30,857	22,928	31,766	32,698	103%	106%
Transport & Warehousing	8,896	7,251	8,169	8,345	92%	94%
Information	3,466	2,842	2,808	3,062	81%	88%
Finance and Insurance	9,393	8,842	8,266	8,190	88%	87%
Real Estate and Rental	4,896	3,669	4,320	4,510	88%	92%
Professional & Tech Services	10,286	8,414	10,173	10,441	99%	102%
Mgmt. of Enterprises	2,579	2,271	2,619	2,680	102%	104%
Admin. & Waste Services	16,342	11,678	14,553	14,812	89%	91%
Educational Services	10,321					
Health Care & Soc.Assist.	28,523	21,777	26,294	27,466	92%	96%
Arts/Entertainment	4,967	3,602	3,902	4,430	79%	89%
Accommodation and Food	22,689	13,607	18,655	18,301	82%	81%
Other Services	6,370	4,387	5,672	5,867	89%	92%
Public Administration	6,597	6,155	5,875	6,243	89%	95%
Total Earnings ($Mill) per qtr	1,724.0	1,810.1	2,092.3	2,206.3	121%	128%
Avg Weekly Wage	637.99	811.86	817	845.00	128%	132%
Population	449,640	306,233	434,000	434,000	97%	97%
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.45	15.98	3.4	3.6	76%	81%
Unemploy Claims per week (Initial)	261	746	90	330	34%	126%
Unemploy Claims per week (Continued)	2,654	7,042	782	2,216	29%	84%
Construction Contracts per month: ($Mill)**						
Residential	19.8	5.7	10.0	7.4	51%	37%
Residential in Progress	169.2	139.4	101.1	121.5	60%	72%
Non-Residential	9.2	4.2	24.7	8.6	268%	93%
Non-Residential in Progress	177.4	157.4	231.4	339.4	130%	191%
Taxable Sales ($Mill) per month	525.0	695.6	844.0	n/a	161%	
Motor Vehicle Sales ($) per month	62.5	104.9	74.5	63.8	119%	102%

Table 6: Quarterly Orleans, Plaquemine, and St. Bernard Parishes' Concurrent Economic Indicators

	Orleans						Plaquemines						St. Bernard					
	2005 Pre K	2005 Post K	2 yr anniv	Most Current	Pct of PreK last year	Curr Pct of PreK	2005 Pre K	2005 Post K	2 yr anniv	Most Current	Pct of PreK last year	Curr Pct of PreK	2005 Pre K	2005 Post K	2 yr anniv	Most Current	Pct of PreK last year	Curr Pct of PreK
Total Employment*	242,933	153,672	162,514	171,966	67%	71%	15,329	13,568	14,548	14,673	95%	96%	17,497	7,153	8,498	9,456	49%	54%
Agriculture/Fishing	55	45	56	59	102%	108%	52	40	42	47	80%	90%						
Mining	4,163	4,122	3,653	3,621	88%	87%	1,707	1,771	1,928	1,602	113%	94%	65	63	65	73	100%	112%
Utilities	1,905	1,870	1,068	1,145	56%	60%							133	108	80	79	60%	59%
Construction	5,978	4,825	5,927	5,209	99%	87%	1,505	1,521	1,403	1,339	93%	89%	1,449	776	1,896	2,264	131%	156%
Manufacturing	8,422	6,316	7,375	7,819	88%	93%	1,996	1,690	2,142	2,258	107%	113%	1,771	1,218	1,365	1,351	77%	76%
Wholesale Trade	6,001	4,458	4,565	4,614	76%	77%	711	582	793	1,014	112%	143%	509	293	392	431	77%	85%
Retail Trade	19,086	7,898	11,192	12,487	59%	65%	658	336	445	627	68%	95%	2,727	635	864	1,017	32%	37%
Transport & Warehousing	13,263	9,621	9,822	8,640	74%	65%	1,884	1,969	1,880	1,935	100%	103%	750	529	589	571	79%	76%
Information	5,455	4,182	3,118	2,975	57%	55%				13			91	62	44	30	49%	33%
Finance and Insurance	8,453	6,355	6,071	6,157	72%	73%	129	97	102	105	79%	81%	378	185	81	97	21%	26%
Real Estate and Rental	4,021	2,483	2,314	2,367	58%	59%	610	521	522	521	86%	85%	232	104	49	36	21%	16%
Professional & Tech Services	14,581	12,267	13,459	13,662	92%	94%	342	306	492	450	144%	132%	327	117	175	192	53%	59%
Mgmt. of Enterprises	4,628	3,050	3,520	3,381	76%	73%	108	91					111	65	62	78	56%	70%
Admin. & Waste Services	15,917	8,933	10,435	11,097	66%	70%	596	648	693	551	116%	93%	293	217	321	408	110%	139%
Educational Services	29,484	18,692	17,733	19,226	60%	65%	1,658	1,287	973	960	59%	58%	2,103	361	490	514	23%	24%
Health Care & Soc.Assist.	32,096	20,307	15,993	18,866	50%	59%	625	424	726	703	116%	113%	2,710	789	497	461	18%	17%
Arts/Entertainment	8,669	5,571	6,619	6,785	76%	78%	38	8	31	67	81%	176%	399	73	97	101	24%	25%
Accommodation and Food	36,231	15,661	22,677	25,491	63%	70%	839	527	639	646	76%	77%	1,826	277	561	772	31%	42%
Other Services	7,230	3,667	4,936	5,585	68%	77%	308	242	219	188	71%	61%	777	196	203	240	26%	31%
Public Administration	16,803	13,085	11,477	11,901	68%	71%	1,430	1,371	1,254	1,356	88%	95%	979	738	641	675	66%	69%
Total Earnings ($Mill) per qtr	2,214.7	1,837.8	1,958.5	2,122.8	88%	96%	158.6	168.1	190.8	199.1	120%	126%	123.0	72.7	106.3	111.6	86%	91%
Avg Weekly Wage	723.36	971.51	941	957.00	130%	132%	813.73	927.70	1003	1,047.00	123%	129%	567.73	933.91	966	906.00	170%	160%
Population	453,726	126,761	265,000	318,000	58%	70%	28,588	10,889	21,500	28,000	75%	98%	64,683	6,554	23,000	26,000	36%	40%
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.7	7.8	4.9	6.1	86%	107%	4.96	12.70	3.5	3.4	71%	69%	5.03	5.15	4.5	5.3	90%	105%
Unemploy Claims per week (Initial)	310	384	110	792	35%	255%	12	70	5	11	40%	88%	49	69	0	0	0%	0%
Unemploy Claims per week (Continued)	3,219	3,438	793	2,160	25%	67%	131	630	41	67	31%	51%	423	549	0	4	0%	1%
Construction Contracts per month: ($Mill)**																		
Residential	16.5	0.9	68.2	38.8	414%	235%	1.1	0.1	0.9	1.1	79%	97%	0.9	0.0	5.3	1.4	581%	153%
Residential in Progress	179.9	97.3	189.3	474.6	105%	264%	10.3	8.3	12.8	8.7	124%	84%	7.0	6.0	17.7	16.8	253%	240%
Non-Residential	18.9	0.0	24.5	88.6	130%	468%	0.3	0.1	0.0	8.3	0%	2554%	2.2	0.5	1.5	0.7	69%	32%
Non-Residential in Progress	372.9	281.1	488.4	541.7	131%	145%	5.3	4.9	7.1	55.3	134%	1043%	30.3	32.5	53.5	102.4	177%	339%
Taxable Sales ($Mill) per month***	444.5	142.9	376.2	428.8	85%	96%	40.4	47.6	60.3	n/a	149%		52.6	32.2	44.8	50.6	85%	96%
Motor Vehicle Sales ($) per month	37.0	46.3	35.4	29.0	96%	78%	5.3	10.1	6.4	6.0	122%	113%	6.7	17.5	4.9	3.6	74%	54%

** The number of jobs and corresponding wages for establishments subject to unemployment insurance taxation. Notable exclusions are employees of very small businesses (under 4 employees), self-employed persons and salespersons on commission-only bases. Data current only though September 2007.*
*** Proprietary data provided by F. W. Dodge Division, McGraw-Hill, Inc.*

Table 7: Quarterly St. Charles, St. John , and St. Tammany Parishes' Concurrent Economic Indicators

	St. Charles						St. John the Baptist						St. Tammany					
	2005 Pre K	2005 Post K	2 yr anniv	Most Current	Pct of PreK last year	Curr Pct of PreK	2005 Pre K	2005 Post K	2 yr anniv	Most Current	Pct of PreK last year	Curr Pct of PreK	2005 Pre K	2005 Post K	2 yr anniv	Most Current	Pct of PreK last year	Curr Pct of PreK
Total Employment*	22,693	22,545	23,180	23,891	102%	105%	12,917	13,174	14,555	14,974	113%	116%	68,450	61,234	73,633	76,496	108%	112%
Agriculture/Fishing	15	9			0%	0%	48	64	46	41	96%	86%	148	133	138	136	93%	92%
Mining	66			97	0%	147%	259	273	384	430	148%	166%	188	202	285	305	152%	163%
Utilities	813	811	784	761	96%	94%	160	157	162	169	101%	106%	410	406	404	425	98%	104%
Construction	3,134	3,137	3,031	3,092	97%	99%	1,118	1,134	1,193	1,254	107%	112%	4,428	4,198	5,051	5,253	114%	119%
Manufacturing	4,601	4,470	4,477	4,600	97%	100%	2,166	2,170	2,473	2,773	114%	128%	2,111	1,932	2,448	2,211	116%	105%
Wholesale Trade	2,222	2,055	1,913	1,929	86%	87%	474	495	611	677	129%	143%	2,917	2,880	3,313	3,419	114%	117%
Retail Trade	1,449	1,390	1,582	1,712	109%	118%	1,654	1,736	1,864	1,800	113%	109%	11,506	10,816	13,629	13,763	118%	120%
Transport & Warehousing	1,305	1,227	1,814	1,924	139%	147%	991	971	1,056	1,095	107%	110%	1,825	1,543	1,937	2,359	106%	129%
Information	167	152	139	125	83%	75%	166	152	196	179	118%	108%	1,488	1,029	1,396	1,251	94%	84%
Finance and Insurance	285	283	288	308	101%	108%	240	231	249	282	104%	118%	2,410	2,425	2,661	2,635	110%	109%
Real Estate and Rental	343	308	289	251	84%	73%	187	186	206	210	110%	112%	1,154	1,004	1,197	1,169	104%	101%
Professional & Tech Services	596	552	770	781	129%	131%	238	213	286	303	120%	127%	3,285	3,098	3,842	3,904	117%	119%
Mgmt. of Enterprises	84	80	86	94	103%	112%	78	81	109	134	140%	172%	986	931	1,120	948	114%	96%
Admin. & Waste Services	1,940	2,583	2,263	2,260	117%	117%	827	1,012	1,080	923	131%	112%	1,996	1,811	2,741	3,053	137%	153%
Health Care & Soc.Assist.	1,410	1,377	1,507	1,453	107%	103%	1,192	1,158	1,271	1,308	107%	110%	12,383	11,132	12,501	13,249	101%	107%
Arts/Entertainment	212	144	172	161	81%	76%	227	163	192	210	85%	92%	1,211	840	1,117	1,265	92%	104%
Accommodation and Food	980	842	972	1,112	99%	114%	996	1,019	1,157	1,067	116%	107%	8,073	6,089	8,053	8,581	100%	106%
Other Services	288	280	264	252	92%	87%	256	255	266	243	104%	95%	1,795	1,460	1,942	1,992	108%	111%
Public Administration	724	715	700	750	97%	104%	507	495	516	601	102%	119%	2,816	2,647	2,747	3,038	98%	108%
Total Earnings ($Mill) per qtr	261.1	276.4	300.7	327.5	115%	125%	116.5	128.4	146.0	159.8	125%	137%	503.5	551.3	663.5	710.9	132%	141%
Avg Weekly Wage	884.19	948.36	1001	1,045	113%	118%	694.50	740.82	777	819.00	112%	118%	575.88	680.12	703	723.00	122%	126%
Population	50,164	52,315	51,200	54,000	102%	108%	45,602	52,326	47,100	48,000	103%	105%	217,551	200,582	227,500	234,000	105%	108%
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.74	21.50	3.8	3.6	80%	76%	5.80	24.83	4.8	4.7	83%	81%	3.91	15.78	3.1	3.2	79%	82%
Unemploy Claims per week (Initial)	31	339	29	28	94%	91%	38	368	35	45	91%	117%	87	504	83	121	95%	139%
Unemploy Claims per week (Continued)	303	3,308	226	261	75%	86%	382	3,580	308	349	81%	91%	829	4,529	612	898	74%	108%
Construction Contracts: per month ($Mill)**																		
Residential	4.7	4.2	2.4	5.9	51%	126%	3.1	3.9	1.4	5.1	45%	165%	46.7	30.9	28.7	21.4	61%	46%
Residential in Progress	41.8	40.1	83.6	28.2	200%	67%	22.9	31.6	42.1	10.5	184%	46%	426.5	361.5	363.7	154.7	85%	36%
Non-Residential	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	0%	0%	2.1	0.6	0.0	1.4	0%	67%	6.3	2.9	29.7	5.7	471%	90%
Non-Residential in Progress	18.3	14.9	26.9	27.5	147%	150%	29.3	24.6	1018.9	1048.1	3483%	3583%	157.5	119.9	340.0	399.3	216%	254%
Taxable Sales ($Mill) per month	70.4	117.7	91.6	74.1	130%	105%	47.3	85.3	61.2	111.0	129%	235%	235.4	344.7	301.5	296.1	128%	126%
Motor Vehicle Sales ($)	7.9	10.5	11.2	8.7	142%	110%	6.8	9.2	8.2	7.4	120%	109%	38.8	77.0	45.7	40.3	118%	104%

** The number of jobs and corresponding wages for establishments subject to unemployment insurance taxation. Notable exclusions are employees of very small businesses (under 4 employees), self-employed persons and salespersons on commission-only bases. Data current only though September 2007.*

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