

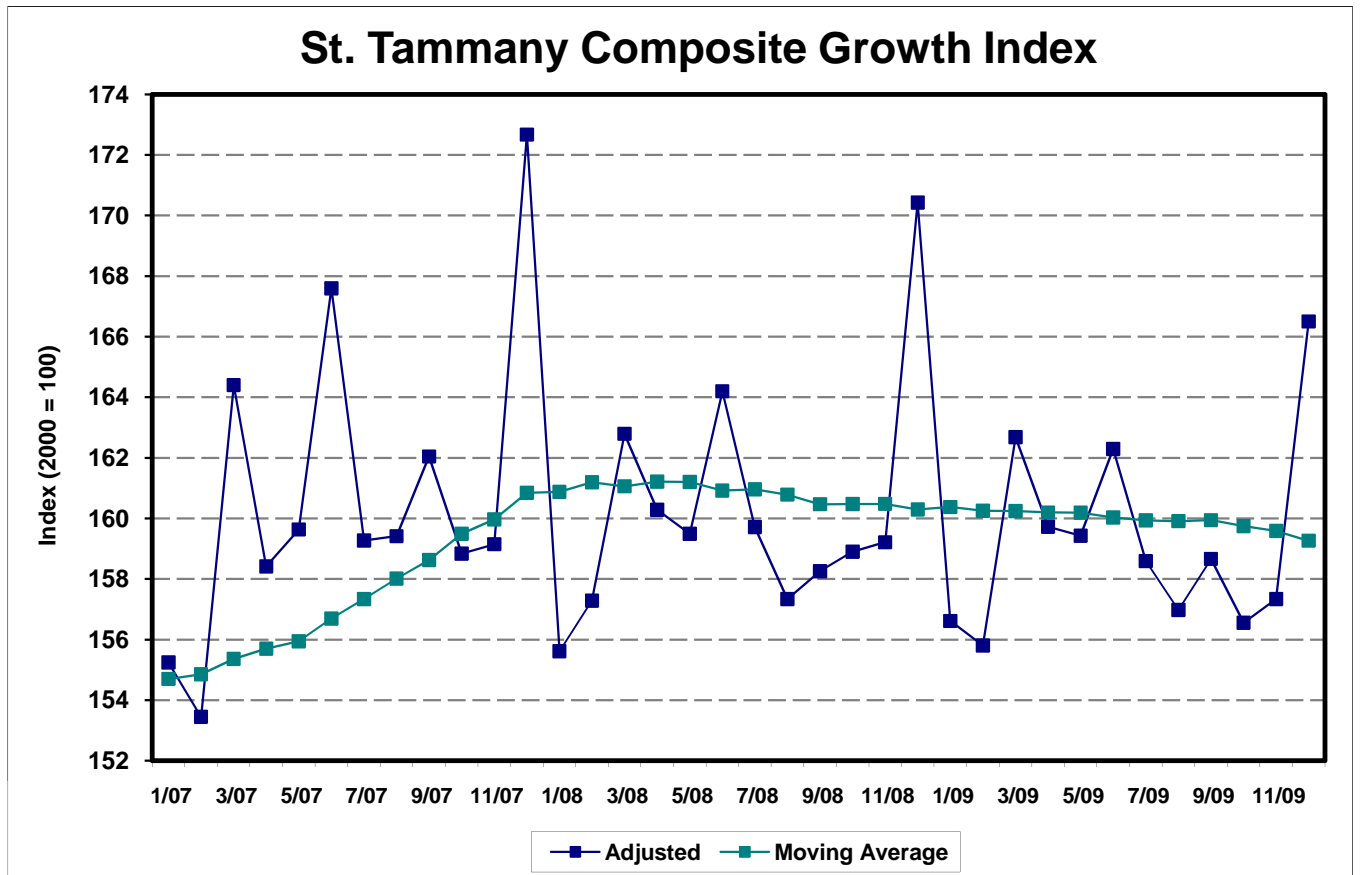
St. Tammany Economic Growth Index

St. Tammany Economic Development Foundation

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Notes

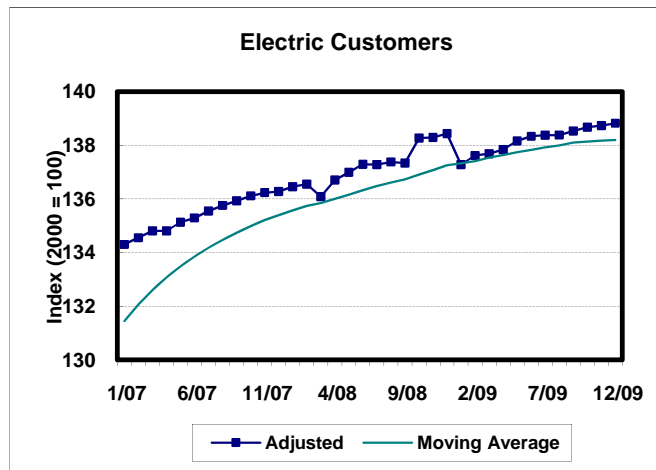
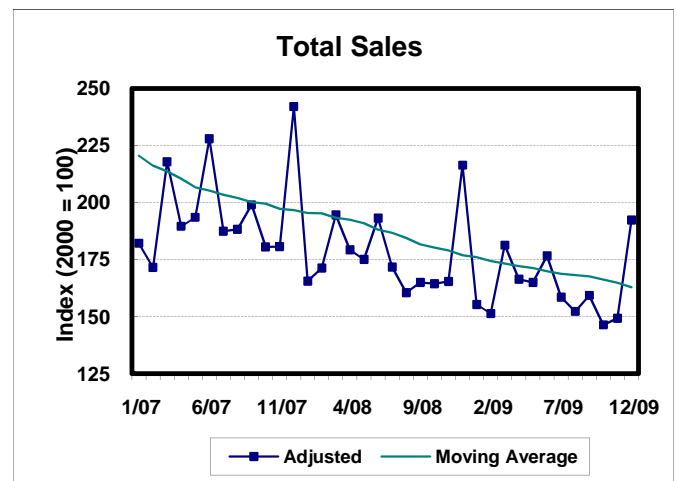
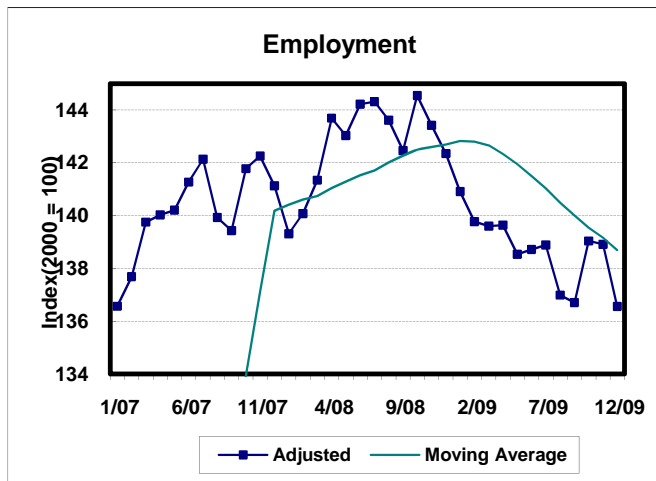
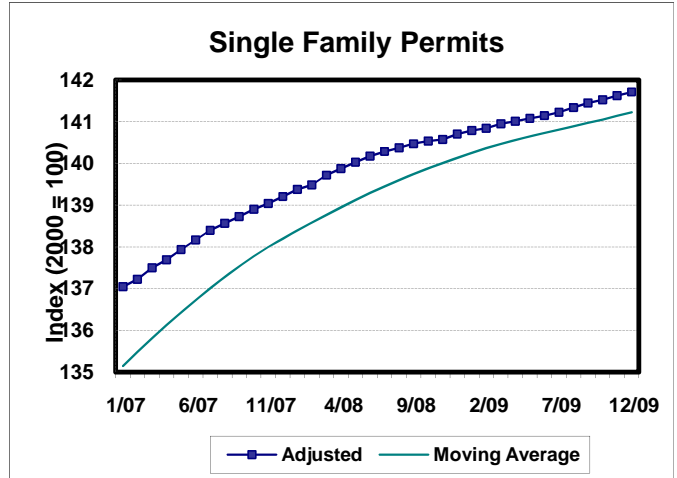
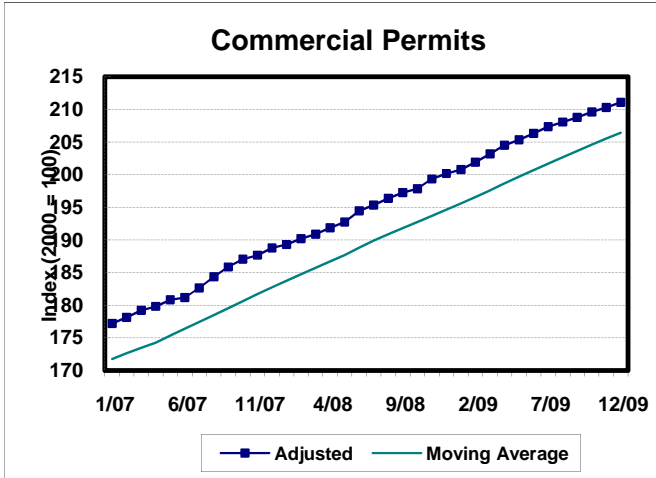
The St. Tammany Parish Economic Growth Index is a measure of economic expansion comparing changes in five economic components over time thus, collectively, tracking changes and growth of the St. Tammany economy. Components used to develop the composite economic index include employment, single family building permits, Parish total sales (computed from parish sales tax), electric customers, and commercial building permits. Weighted ratios of each component are totaled to produce a composite index. For a look at the components comprising the composite index, see the back of this page.

Quarterly Summary

The Parish economy in the fourth quarter has taken a negative dip. 4Q09 composite index change was -1.7% while the 12-month change was -0.6%. Two of the five indicators making up the composite index, retail sales and employment, were the reason for quarter and 12-month losses. For the quarter the employment index was down 3.7% while retail sales index was down 10.7%. The other three indices, commercial building permits, single family building permits and electric customers were up 5.6%, 0.7% and 0.3%, respectively. Expansion in these three indices, collectively, was not enough to pull the composite index into positive territory.

Nationally, consumers continue to be pessimistic with regards to income in the short-term and they have concerns about business conditions. With these two concerns in place any hope for increases in retail sales in the short-term are bleak. With concerns about short-term income, pessimism about labor/employment will also have a negative effect on the willingness of consumers to spend beyond household necessities. How long commercial building permit issuance can maintain its current growth pattern is somewhat questionable as need for additional retail space may be dampened largely because of weak retail sales. With all that has transpired over the last year, the St. Tammany Parish economy remains strong with weaknesses in areas where national conditions can have an effect. There are bright spots. The Parish's unemployment rate is far below both the State and the national rates. Improvement in employment could translate into improved consumer confidence which could likely mean more spending beyond household necessities. Negative current position the Parish economy is easily erased with a few economic changes.

St. Tammany Economy At A Glance



Sources: St. Tammany Sheriff's Office; St. Tammany Parish Permit Office, Washington-St. Tammany Electric Co-op, CLECO, Louisiana Department of Labor, and St. Tammany Parish Tourist and Convention Commission. The ST. TAMMANY ECONOMIC GROWTH INDEX is developed by John C. Borland, CCR, Director of Borland Econometrics and published quarterly by the St. Tammany Economic Development Foundation. Correspondence should be addressed to: 21489 Koop Drive, Suite 7, Mandeville, LA 70471. Telephone: (985) 809-7874. Web: www.stedf.org. Copyright 2004. All rights reserved.