

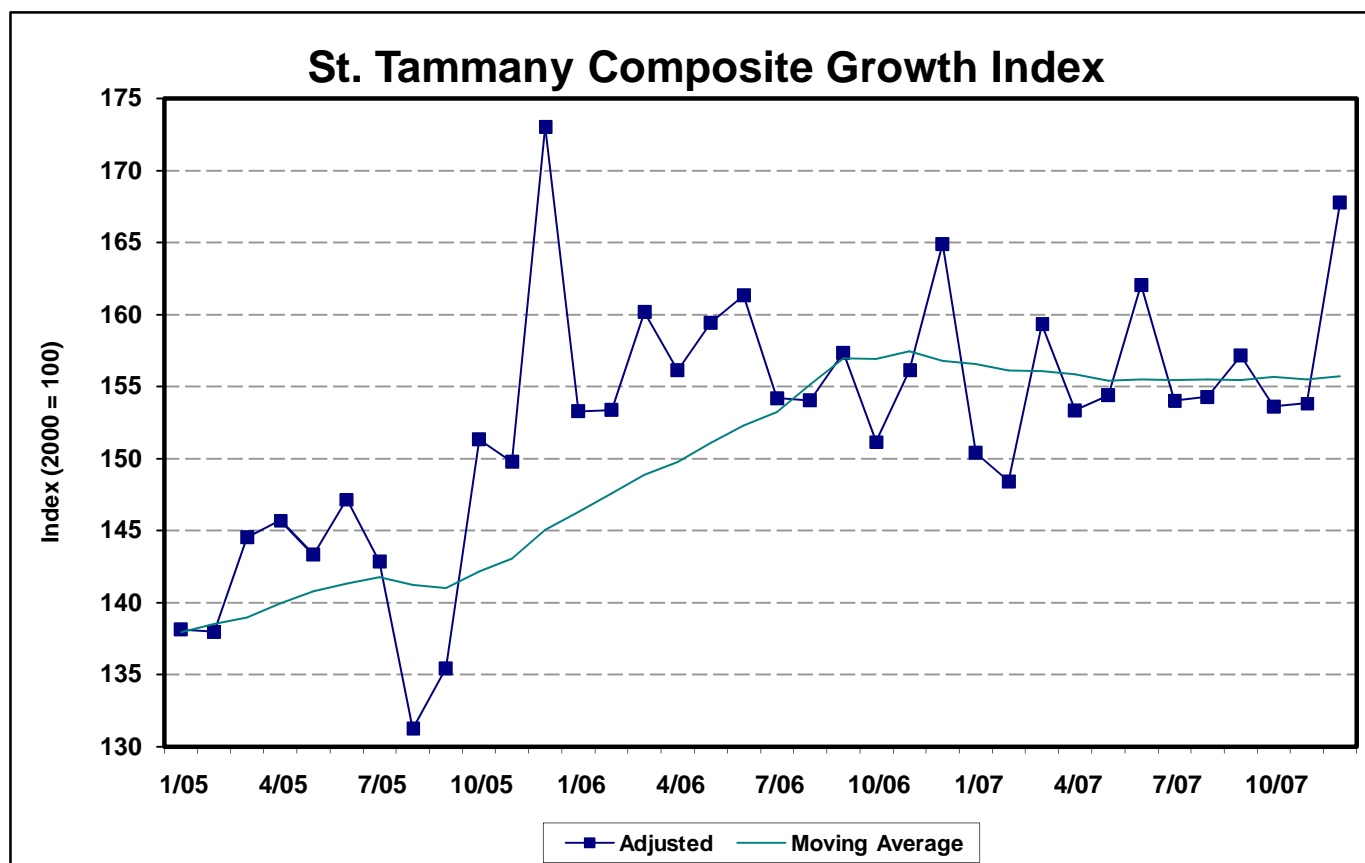
# St. Tammany Economic Growth Index

St. Tammany Economic Development Foundation

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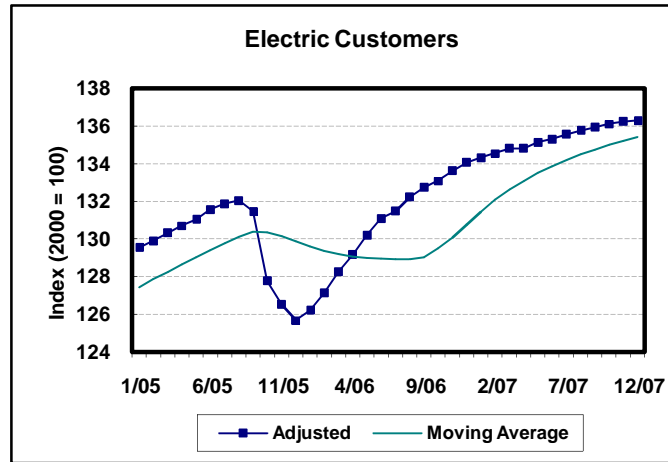
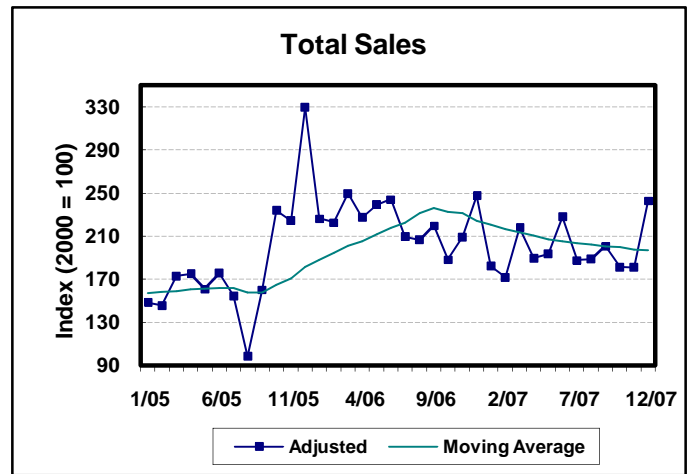
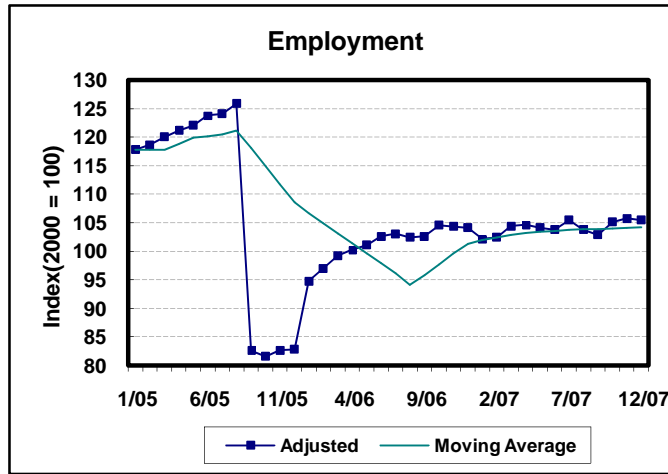
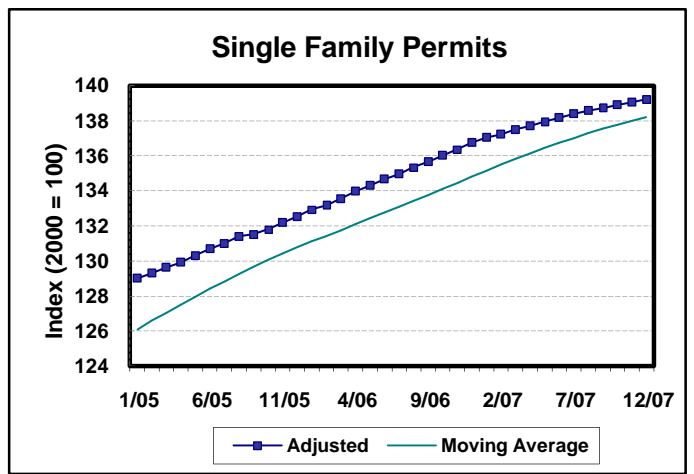
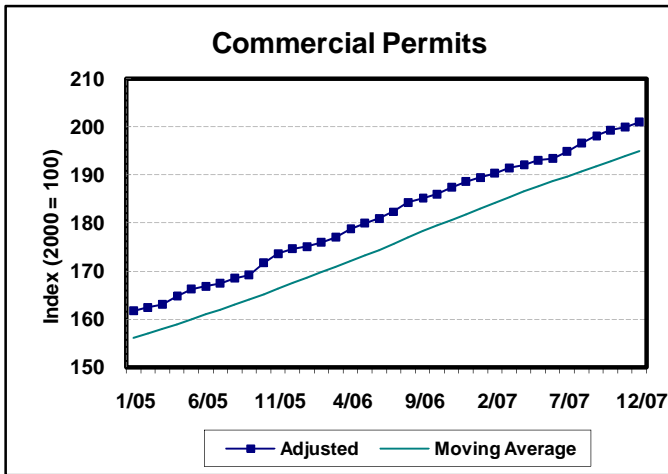
## Notes

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 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 continues to be strong with a near flat performance. Fourth quarter growth was 0.6% higher than fourth quarter 2006. In 2007, several economic indicators bounced along the break even line and, collectively, came in at -0.7%. Retail sales provided most of the sluggishness. Single family building permits growth has slowed perceptively as demand for new housing has slumped. Commercial building permits, after showing accelerated growth over the past several months appears to be heading into a period of sluggishness due to slowing demand for new commercial facilities. Employment growth is slow but steady as employers continue to look for qualified workers. Electric customer growth is steady but on a slower pace as it closely mirrors lower production in residential and commercial permit sectors. Retail sales (derived from sales tax collections) has moved to a higher plateau compared to pre-Katrina levels but recent fuel price hikes, high credit card balances and rising health care costs has likely put a damper on high ticket purchases. Many consumers are having to rethink their spending habits and priorities in light of rising costs causing pressure to be placed on purchase of necessities. The Parish's economic health will, to some degree, depend on how much confidence local consumers have in the national economy and how these events affect their ability to maintain current local spending level. For now, the economic picture for St. Tammany Parish is strong, albeit a flat pattern going forward.

## 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](http://www.stedf.org). Copyright 2004. All rights reserved.