



2026-2030 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

PREPARED BY:

North Delta Regional Planning
and Development District, Inc.



North Delta Regional Planning and Development District, Inc.

North Delta represents Northeast Louisiana on matters of regional importance, including transportation and economic development.

Located at

3000 Kilpatrick Blvd.
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Louisiana Economic Planning District 8

Serving the parishes of:



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INTRODUCTION

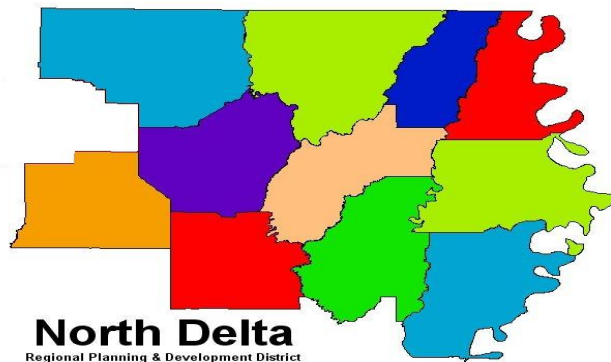
On April 11, 1968, in Monroe, Louisiana, the North Delta Economic District Council, Inc., representing Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union and West Carroll parishes, was established. It was on this date that the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation were approved by the Council's Board of Directors. The Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation and an Application for Grant were subsequently approved and accepted by the Economic Development Administration on June 13, 1968. The Region is in Northeastern Louisiana bounded on the east by the State of Mississippi, on the north by the State of Arkansas, on the west by parishes served by the Coordinating and Development District of Northwest Louisiana, and on the south by the Kisatchie-Delta Regional Planning District.

The North Delta Regional Planning and Development District, Inc., was created under Title IV, Part B, Section 403 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965. This ACT, as passed by Congress, authorized financial and technical assistance to multi-parish (district) organizations. The North Delta Regional Planning and Development District is specifically designed to overcome economic and social deficiencies by planned, coordinated, and unified local, state, and federal efforts. North Delta consists of eleven parishes: Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union and West Carroll.

North Delta is a nonprofit corporation and operates under its Board of Directors in cooperation with many state and federal agencies whose programs are designed to eliminate economic ills.

To develop a promising and successful economic development program a coordinated and cooperative effort among all agencies in the region is necessary. The North Delta Regional Planning and Development, Inc. staff functions to provide this "teaming" of all the region's communities in an effort to maximize assets and diminish liabilities.

The North Delta District completed the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in order to enhance the services provided to meet the needs of the region. It is believed the CEDs will provide the best vehicle to develop the cooperative effort required for economic success in this Northeast Louisiana Region.



BACKGROUND

The District is influenced by warm air currents from the Gulf of America formerly known as Gulf of Mexico creating a humid, sub-tropical climate with an average temperature of 65 degrees. There are approximately 225 days between the last freeze in the spring to the first freeze of the winter. This long period of time makes the region a very profitable place for many commercial agricultural crops.

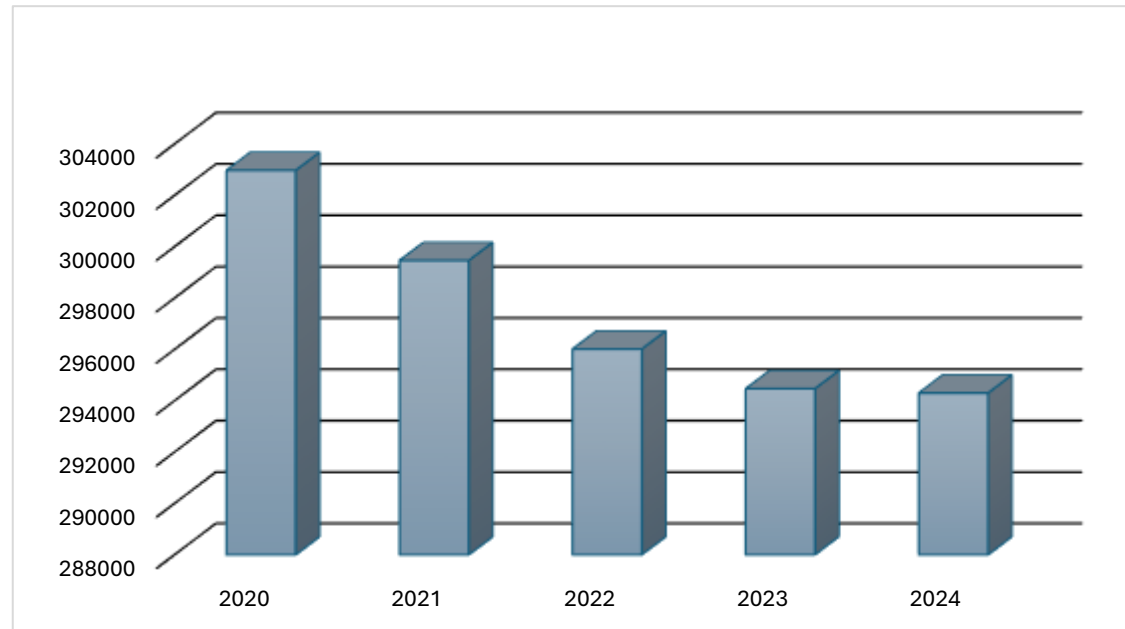
There are several waterways in the district. The main ones are the Mississippi, Tensas, Beouf and Ouachita Rivers. They all flow from north to south.

Lesser attention has been concentrated on water supply and interest in recharging the Sparta Aquifer, though some communities in the northeast portion of the region continue to loosely explore the concepts of constructing a reservoir to improve water supply. Lower water supply issues have occurred on occasion within a few municipal systems in the past and generates a question of the need to improve conservation of the water supply.

Existing land use of the North Delta District is predominately for agriculture and forest purposes. These two categories of land use classification account for 98.50 percent of the total area of the North Delta District.

- Population**

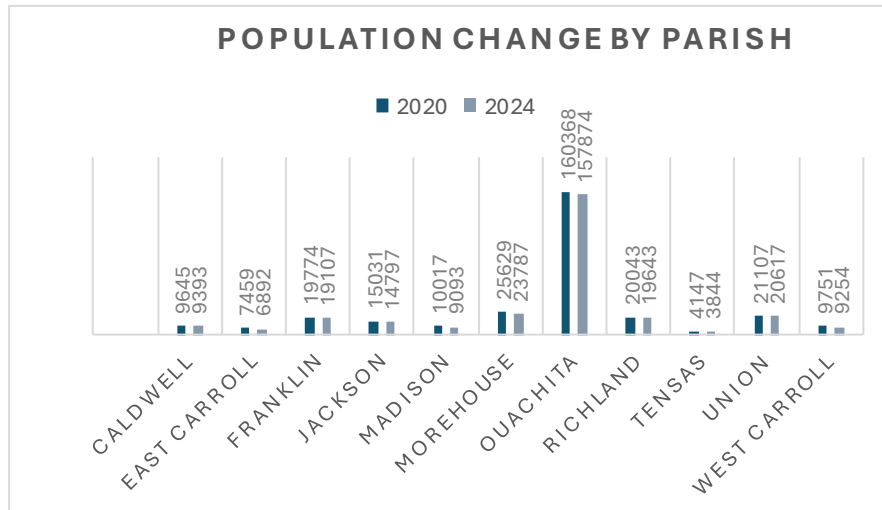
**Regional Population 2020-2024
Decennial and Estimates**



The annual population figures have remained basically constant throughout the region over the past five years, although the change has shown a small negative growth. The failure to increase has been the result of a lack of diversification of economy and a “regionalism” that holds firmly to a “crop production only” economy within the rural parishes. Diversification of the economy appears to be slowly developing, but such a greater rate would be beneficial.

POPULATION TRENDS

Based on the 2020 U.S. Census, the regional population for North Delta’s eleven parish District was 302,971 people. In 2024, the Region had a population of 294,301 people over the course of (5) years the District population declined 8670 people. The population decrease in Louisiana is largely attributed to a high number of residents moving out of the state, and a low number of residents moving to the state. The number one reason for residents leaving is lack of job opportunities. The region has experienced a gradual population decline over the past decade and rural areas are seeing more significant population decreases compared to urban areas. Educational opportunities and healthcare access impact the retention of the population.



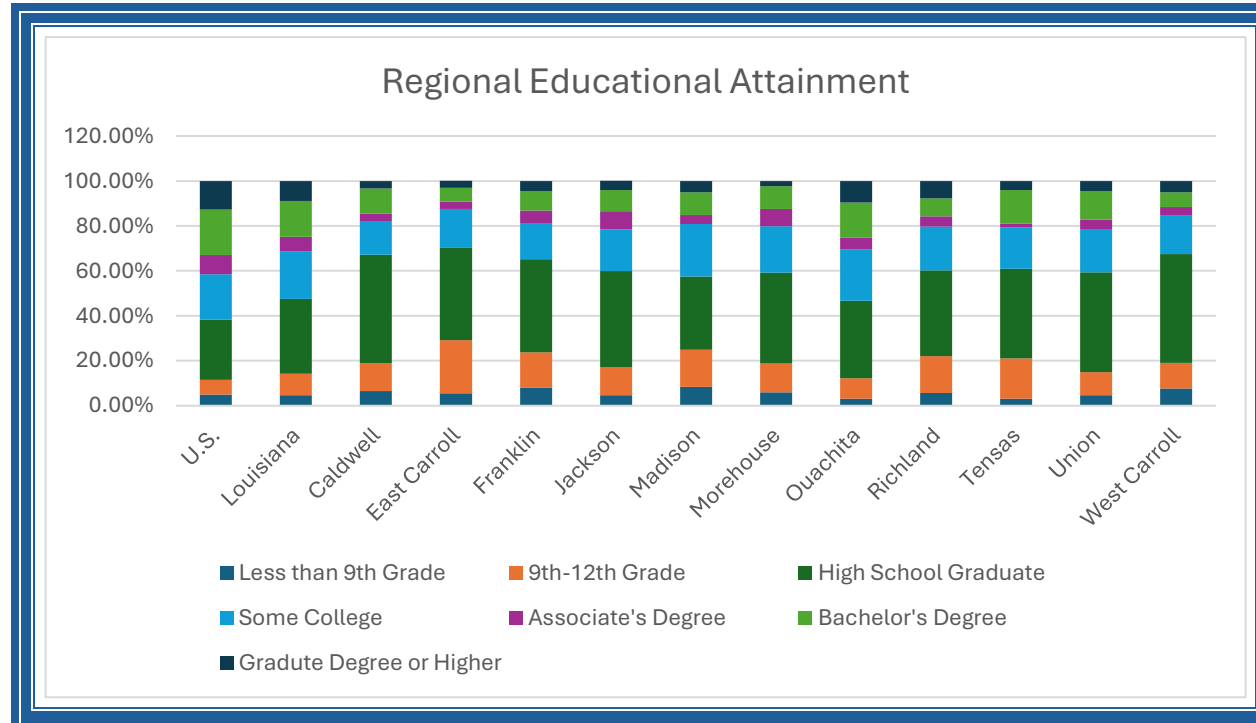
	2020	2024	%Change	Difference
CALDWELL	9645	9393	-2.6	252
EAST CARROLL	7459	6892	-7.6	567
FRANKLIN	19774	19107	-3.4	667
JACKSON	15031	14797	-1.6	234
MADISON	10017	9093	-9.1	924
MOREHOUSE	25629	23787	-7.2	1842
OUACHITA	160368	157874	-1.6	2494
RICHLAND	20043	19643	-2.0	400
TENSAS	4147	3844	-7.3	303
UNION	21107	20617	-2.3	490
WEST CARROLL	9751	9254	-5.1	497
TOTALS	302971	294301		

Education Opportunity

The citizens of the North Delta District have a plethora of education opportunities to prepare for a career. Serving the District are twelve (12) parish and city school districts, twenty-two (22) private, parochial, and charter schools, seven (7) community and technology colleges, three universities, and several proprietary schools.

The opportunity to pursue career training across a broad spectrum of choices is a major asset to the citizens of this region. The educational provisions within the District offer citizens of all ages with the opportunity to attain training from technical to academic levels. There is a strong collaboration among all educational providers, and there is a common goal to strengthen this coordination continuously.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

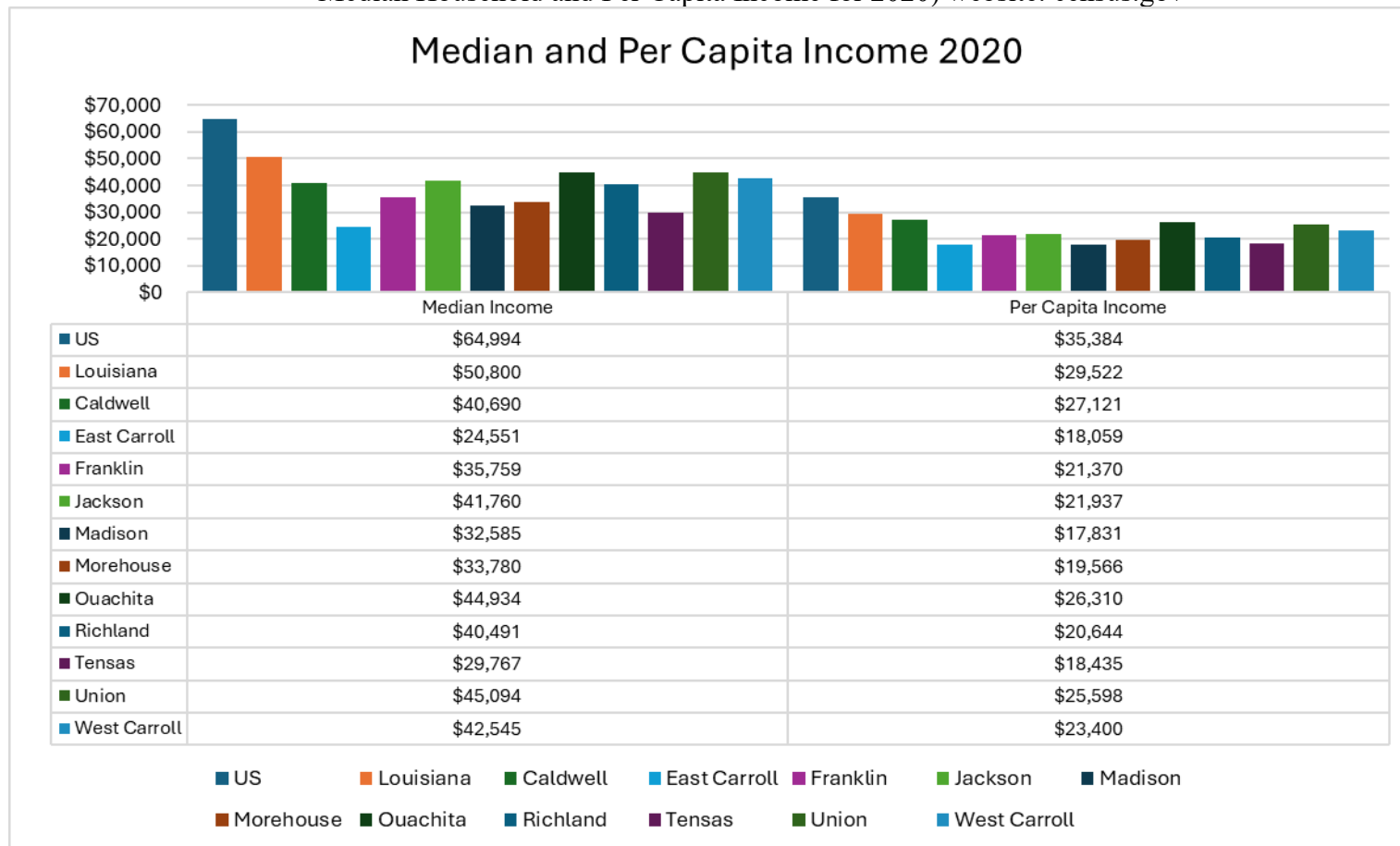


Per Capita and Median Income

Northeast Louisiana, the North Delta District, is situated completely in the Louisiana Delta. This is one of the poorest areas in the United States. Except for one parish, Ouachita, the region is largely supported by agriculture with limited employment opportunities.

As would be expected in an area of these demographics, total personal income is low. While there has been an increase in per capita personal income when compared to the United States Per Capita Personal Income in each parish, the increase has been relatively slow.

Median Household and Per Capita Income for 2020) website: census.gov



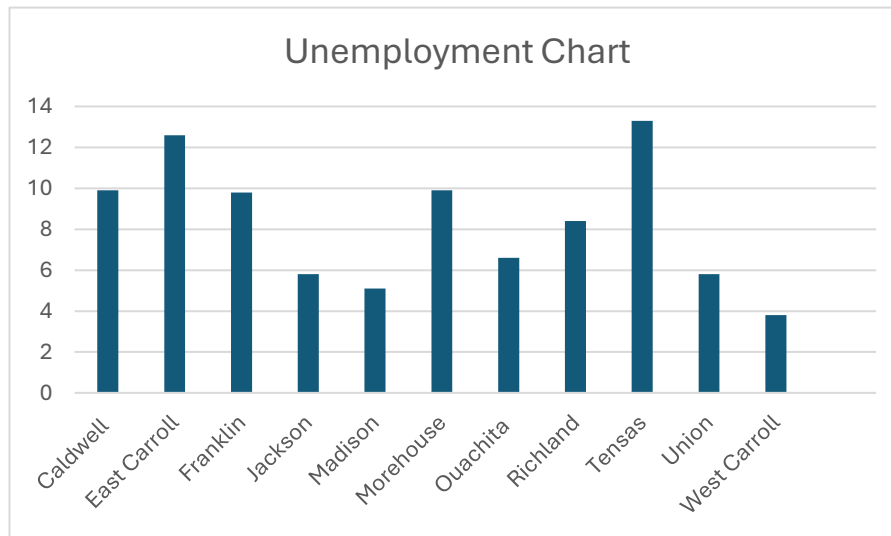
Transportation

Businesses and the overall economic well-being of this region benefit because the transportation modes to move materials and products are varied and numerous. The North Delta District businesses are served by four major highways, three traveling north and south, one interstate thoroughfare traveling east and west, two navigable rivers, with four functioning ports, that move products throughout the American and world markets, and two rail systems one traveling north and south and one east and west. In addition, there are several airports in the rural areas and one airport in Ouachita Parish. This region is blessed with access to many transportation modes ready to serve the businesses and citizens.

Employment

It is apparent that the District population suffers from lack of economic opportunity. The transition from a rural economic society has been slow and sometimes painful for District residents. Additional industrial development in the District should reverse population decline, out-migration, and unemployment, and should result in an increase in the family median income. Analysis of the potential indicates that one of the greatest possibilities for employment will come from value added agri-business initiatives, endeavors which by nature are labor intensive, and most recently the construction of a \$10B META AI facility in Richland parish.

Unemployment for Louisiana Parishes (Ages 16+ 2019-2023)



Parishes	Unemployment Percentages
Caldwell	9.9
East Carroll	12.6
Franklin	9.8
Jackson	5.8
Madison	5.1
Morehouse	9.9
Ouachita	6.6
Richland	8.4
Tensas	13.3
Union	5.8
West Carroll	3.8

Economic Overview

Workforce

The human resources of the North Delta District are its greatest asset and a major challenge. The number of available workers is sufficient to support major business/industrial development as many workers are unemployed. While offering a bountiful labor supply, the area does not offer a highly skilled labor force. However, the work ethic of the people is a very positive factor by industry.

Educational programs designed to meet the needs of industry are essential if the District is to take advantage of its greatest resource. The U.S. economy, with its growing dependency on high technology and service industries, demands skilled labor. Without a competent, literate workforce, there is little reason to expect the District to become a vital part of the state or national economies. However, the District has great resources to confront this challenge to train its labor force. The educational assets of the District were identified earlier in this document. In addition, it is important to note that the North Delta District is served by two Workforce Investment Boards which provide a vast array of training programs. The State of Louisiana has placed a major emphasis on training labor throughout the state, and Northeast Louisiana has benefitted greatly from this effort. The local university (ULM) and community colleges have already begun training citizens for jobs at the coming META facility in Richland parish.



Economic Clusters

These six clusters account for thirty-seven (37) percent of the total population in the region. The economic impact of Ouachita Parish upon the region is dramatically shown by the fact that fifty-six (56) percent of the total employment is located within this parish.

A. Legal, Finance & Real Estate Services

Legal, Finance & Real Estate services comprise the largest economic cluster in this region. This cluster contains 10,708 jobs. Five years ago, this cluster was not noted within the top five (5). While there is without doubt an increase in the number of people involved in this market, it is possible that the grouping of this data into a cluster this broad may have skewed the numbers.

B. Advanced Manufacturing and Skilled Production Workers

Over the last decade, the employment numbers in manufacturing have decreased, a trend common to many communities in America. However, the manufacturing industry has continued to provide employment for skilled workers at a stable pace. This is due in major part to the location or expansion of five (5) manufacturing businesses within the region. Skilled Trades are a vital and distinct segment of the workforce that plays a key role in infrastructure development and economic resilience. Electricians, Plumbers, HVAC Technicians, Welders, Heavy Equipment Operators, and Construction workers are in high demand due to ongoing retirement of the existing workforce.

C. Primary, Secondary & Post Secondary Education

There are twelve (12) public and one (1) city (Monroe) public school systems providing educational services to approximately 60,000 students in the North Delta Region. In addition to these twelve (12) public school's systems, there are twenty-two parochial/private/charter schools throughout the district serving additional servants.

The North Delta District is served beyond K-12 by the University of Louisiana-Monroe, Louisiana Delta Community Colleges and its seven (7) branches in the rural areas. In addition, Louisiana Tech University and Grambling State University are located within thirty (30) miles of the district and provide education services to students and adults throughout the district. The State of Louisiana has made a major effort to promote a seamless education transition from K-12 to college, whether at the university level or community college. Dual enrollment of high school students into classes at the universities and community colleges has increased dramatically over the past several years, and these numbers are expected to continue to grow.

D. Health Care & Medical Service

Health Care has maintained a steady presence in the district despite the major changes that have and continue to occur in the industry. Recognizing the aging of America, the three universities serving this region of Louisiana, ULM, La Tech, and Grambling, all have developed nursing programs. In addition, the LSU Medical School is in Shreveport, a short trip down I-20. Presently, there are eighteen (18) hospitals and medical centers in the district, with each parish having a minimum of one except for Tensas.

E. Managerial Sales, Marketing & HR

Retail sales remain a strong employment opportunity for the citizens throughout Northeast Louisiana. Ouachita Parish, the trade hub of the district, has experienced a growth in retail development over the past several years. This trend is continuing as several new commercial tracts are presently under planning and development.

F. Technology Based Knowledge

An encouraging fact derived from the data is the emergence of the Technology-Based Knowledge cluster as one of the top six in the district. Five years ago, this cluster barely registered, or perhaps did not exist. However, this cluster has rapidly increased with IBM, Amazon, BRIP and META companies bringing a lot of new jobs to our area. It is apparent that Northeast Louisiana is vastly becoming a contender in the technology industry.

BRIP (Biomedical Research and Innovation Park), located in Ouachita Parish, will provide new and emerging biotechnology and compatible businesses with an environment that will support their start-up phases and increase their likelihood of success. It will also stimulate the recruitment of larger companies seeking access and resources of the ULM College of Pharmacy, VCOM, and other assets in Northeast Louisiana. Also, META, located in Richland Parish, is constructing a \$10 billion AI-Optimized Data center. The data center will support 500 or more direct new jobs for Northeast Louisiana. They are projected to bring in more than 1,000 indirect jobs for a total of 1,500 direct and indirect jobs in the Northeast region. The 2,250 acre sits between the municipalities of Rayville and Delhi, about 30 miles east of Monroe.

Conclusion

The North Delta District is comprised of one primarily urban area, Ouachita Parish. The remaining ten parishes, with few exceptions, depend primarily upon agri-business for economic life.

Diversification of the business community in the urban area is well established. Diversification of the economic plan for the rural area beyond crop production is greatly needed. The development of businesses that can add value to the Agri-product to create wage paying jobs is of paramount importance. The construction of a potato processing plant and a rice drying mill in Richland and Morehouse Parishes respectively are prime examples of the type of industrial recruitment needed throughout the District.

The North Delta District very often suffers natural disasters, normally hurricanes and flooding caused by the Mississippi and Ouachita Rivers. Economic disasters can occur as a result of these natural disasters, particularly when the economy is based on agriculture. Economic Resiliency is a theme of the CEDS and is particularly important to the people of the region. This fact also points out the necessity of economic diversification and of the use of technology among the businesses of the region. To this point, this CEDS will strive to empower commerce using technology throughout the District. One major development in this regard is the recent acquisition of the North Delta Innovation and Technology Disaster Recovery Center funded by EDA and North Delta. This center will provide office space and internet access for dislocated businesses, and technology training to businesses across the region.

There is more than adequate and varied transportation resources and modes to support industrial development throughout the District. Four major highways, including an interstate highway (I-20), two navigable rivers with four functioning ports, railroads, numerous airports, one newly constructed and expanded, provide a plethora of transportation resources. These modes of transportation provide access to local, state, national and world markets for any product or crop manufactured or produced in this area.

The North Delta District needs a unified effort by all communities to maximize collaboration and eliminate competition among communities, particularly in the rural areas. Successful economic development in these areas can occur only when the communities understand that cooperation multiplies assets and diminishes the negatives. In order for this environment of regional economic growth to come to fruition, there must be a systemic plan developed with all communities accepting that product as “their own”.

There is strong common agreement among all stakeholders that unification is a necessity. The challenge is now to provide the leadership necessary to move this agreement from a philosophical belief to a plan of action.

SWOT Analysis

The CEDS Committee has agreed that the following information presents a true view of the North Delta Region. Using this information and a collaborative process, goals and objectives accompanied by implementation and performance measures with timelines were developed and confirmed.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Strengths	Weaknesses
I-20 Economic Corridor Educational Institutions Industrial Transportation Modes Stakeholders promoting economic development META, BRIP, IBM and Amazon Louisiana Watershed Initiative	Rural vs. Urban divides Education Equity Lack of broadband access in rural areas Rural isolation discourages industrial investment Lack of economic diversity Sparta Aquifer and other Aquifers Aging Water/Wastewater Infrastructure
Opportunities	Threats
Harmonize development efforts in the region Diversify economy by developing clusters adjacent and/or relevant to META, BRIP, IBM and Amazon Promote workforce training among education providers Develop a spirit of collaboration among communities	Traditional dependence upon “crop production” only Spirit of competition rather than cooperation Lack of financial capital Lack of technical training

STRENGTHS

The region is fortunate to have many stakeholders whose primary function is economic development within the region. All groups are pro-active and work energetically to locate and place industry in the region. This economic development is aided by the fact that diverse modes of transportation are readily available; air, rail, highway and water all assessable throughout most of the area. In addition, a diversity of educational institutions is available to train the workforce needed.

IBM has located a site very near and together they are developing a planned community of businesses and homes adjacent to their operations.

Strengths

I-20 Economic Corridor
Educational Institutions
Industrial Transportation Mode
Stakeholders promoting economic development
META, BRIP, IBM and Amazon
Louisiana Watershed Initiative

This region is ideally positioned by geography and circumstances to believe that the strengths noted provide hope for greater economic development.

WEAKNESSES

Though the region has many strengths, it does have competitive disadvantages or weaknesses as they are termed here. There is a major divide between the urban area (Ouachita) and all the rural parishes. This is true in practically all aspects, social, economic development, poverty rate and educational access and achievements. These issues are greatly affected by the isolation of the rural area that discourages economic investment, thus resulting in a diminished local tax base. Also, educational attainment outcomes are very uneven along racial and poverty lines and as a whole. This poses a workforce challenge for the region.

Weakness

Rural Vs. Urban divides
Education Equity
Lack of broadband access in rural areas
Rural isolation discourages industrial investments
Lack of economic diversity
Sparta Aquifer and other Aquifers
Aging Water/Wastewater Infrastructure

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities

Harmonize development efforts in the region
Promote workforce training among education providers
Develop technology/internet commerce
Conservation and reuse of resources including water

It is important that the groups which promote economic development in the area work in a harmonic effort. As in all endeavors, a united effort produces greater success. Equally important is the development of a spirit of collaboration rather than competition among the rural communities as industry is recruited.

The economy of the region needs diversification. Developing economic opportunities like BRIP, IBM, META and Amazon are already bearing fruit and holds great promise for further success. This is an opportunity that must be maximized.

The region can also become more economically resilient by working to develop the industry cluster adjacent to its existing strengths. Developing industry clusters in the region would also benefit from further development of middle-skills labor in the region. A greater focus and more resources committed to developing middle-skill employees would enhance economic development in the region. The rural region in particular, is open to

expanding the use of technology and the internet to grow businesses. The internet can help diversify, grow and assist in economic resiliency effort. An apparent successful effort is underway to take advantage of those opportunities.

THREATS

For too long “crop production only” has been the major business plan for the vast rural area of the region. An economy that adds value to the bountiful crops produced in this area needs to be developed. This value-added economy will without argument require workers highly trained in technical skills. As efforts are made in this regard, sources for investment capital must be secured. A major concern, primarily in the rural area, is the need for workforce training and the necessity of leadership in the area in order to accomplish this objective. Along with this workforce training, all levels of business organization are threatened by a lack of technical knowledge that is limiting or denying internet commerce. North Delta is working to alleviate this threat, but much more effort and assistance from other groups are needed.

Threats

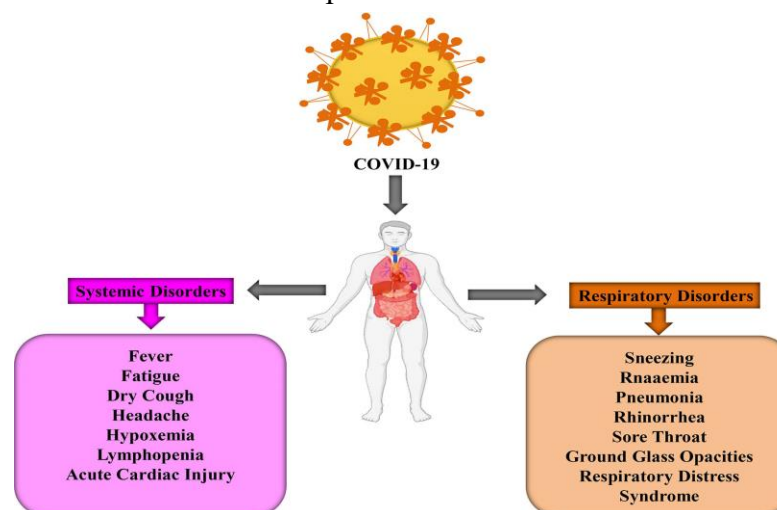
Traditional dependence upon “crop production” only
Spirit of competition rather than cooperation
Lack of financial capital
Lack of technical training
Sparta and Alluival Aquifers

COVID-19 has borne unprecedented disruption and uncertainty, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally, with no clear identified timeline for solutions. According to Louisiana Department of Health, Coronavirus spreads from an infected person to others through:

- ❖ Respiratory droplets produced when coughing and sneezing
- ❖ Close personal contact
- ❖ Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes

The chart below shows how COVID-19 has affected our parishes in Northeast Louisiana: Community Profile Report will no longer be produced.

Parish	Deaths
Caldwell	55
East Carroll	38
Franklin	186
Jackson	81
Madison	64
Morehouse	142
Ouachita	806
Richland	104
Tensas	13
Union	142
West Carroll	71



Total of 1,702 deaths

As of April 1, 2025, there have been a total of 7,057,132 deaths in the United States

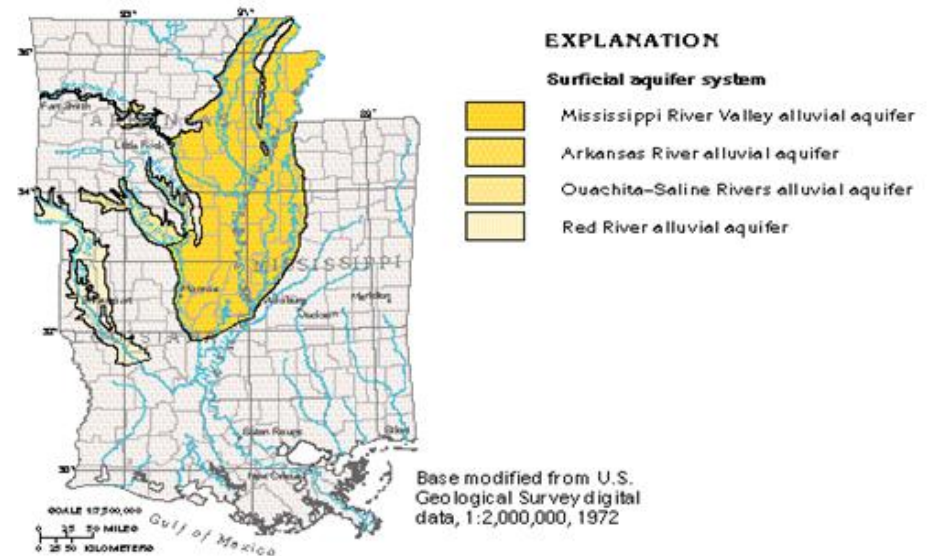
SPARTA AQUIFER

The Sparta Aquifer supplies water to sixteen parishes in North Louisiana. (Covering all of Ouachita, Jackson and Union Parishes and a portion of Morehouse, Richland and Caldwell Parishes). This resource is currently the primary source of water for public and industrial supply. Water is a key resource to ensure a region's economic growth. There is not current clear data to ensure and understand the condition of this key water supply.



ALLUVIAL AQUIFER

The Mississippi River Valley alluvial aquifer is the most widespread aquifer within the surficial aquifer system and extends across parts of eastern Arkansas, northeastern Louisiana, and northwestern Mississippi. Locally important stream-valley alluvial aquifers of the surficial aquifer system are the Arkansas River, Ouachita-Saline Rivers, and the Red River.



The Sparta has been heavily pumped for more than eighty years. In the past thirty years, well water levels have declined at average rates of one to three feet per year and have dropped below the top of the aquifer in many areas. Water users and managers have become concerned about potential consequences if the trend continues. Consequences may include, depending upon location, expansion of cones of depression, increased cost of drilling and pumping, decreased aquifer yield, deterioration of water quality, intrusion of salt water into the aquifer's freshwater, and compaction of sands that can permanently reduce the aquifer's capacity for storing water.

Because the Sparta aquifer is a limited source of accessible and relatively inexpensive potable water, there will always be a need to protect and conserve the aquifer. Conservation requires cooperation from the public, industries, lawmakers, and government officials. Conservation education is underway to encourage a culture of care for the Sparta.

Strategic Direction, Implementation Plan, Evaluation Framework

Directed by the SWOT Analysis of the District, North Delta proposes the following strategic direction and action plan for this region of Louisiana. The direction is presented as a series of development themes and goals. A plan for North Delta's role in the implementation of the strategic direction follows an evaluation framework utilizing a chart format, will detail themes, goals, objectives, performance measures and timelines of the CEDS implementation.

○ Strategic Direction

○ Themes

○ Economic Diversification

Goal: Unite region to attract and expand industry and entrepreneurship throughout the district.

○ Infrastructure Renewals and Rehabilitation

Goal: Promote the renewal and rehabilitation of the infrastructure throughout the district via a collaborative effort with political bodies to obtain funding to accomplish needs.

○ Resiliency

Goal: Develop plans to prepare businesses to become resilient to economic and natural disasters. Northeast Louisiana natural and manmade disasters are primarily restricted to tornados, flooding and potential hazardous spills. Thanks to the Statewide Emergency Response Plan developed by the Louisiana Fire Service, in conjunction with the Louisiana Fire Service Emergency Response Committee, and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, local communities feel that they have a well-developed network to turn to in the event of natural or manmade disasters.

○ **Leadership Development and Cooperative Planning**

Goal: Take a proactive role in promoting the development of leadership and cooperative planning among the political and economic development officials in the district.

○ **Implementation Plan**

North Delta, because of its many years of service, has developed many regional stakeholders who will assist in the implementation of this CEDS. The North Delta Board comprises a broad representation of interested citizens and officials who will serve as the catalyst to provide unity, direction and counsel as the CEDS is implemented in each community and throughout the District.

○ **Evaluation Framework/Performance Measures**

Ultimately, a CEDS is only useful to the extent it is successfully implemented. Any successful implementation requires not only a plan, but systemic monitoring of the plan to gauge the rate of installation progress and its timelines. The charts following the Vision Statement will provide a quick review of the CEDS themes, goals, objectives, Implementation status, performance measures, responsible parties and timelines.

Vision Statement

- **Vision Statement:** The North Delta District will experience growth in all areas of the region through a diversified business plan and cooperative alliances.

The North Delta Regional Planning and Development District's Comprehensive Economic Strategy Committee approved the following goals and objectives of a plan designed to make this vision a reality. This plan focuses on the following themes: Economic Diversification, Infrastructure Renewal and Rehabilitation, Resiliency, and Leadership Development and Cooperative Planning. An overarching principle of this plan is the creation and promotion of collaborative partnerships among all stockholders in each parish individually and region/district as a whole.



Themes, Goals, Objectives & Implementation Plan

○ Economic Diversification

Goal: Unite region to attract and expand industry and entrepreneurship throughout the district.

OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	IMPLEMENTATION GROUPS	TIMELINES
Align workforce development with industry needs.	Systemic process is implemented	WDB, industry leaders, education leaders at all levels, LED	Years 1-5
Targeted recruitment for technical and employment roles. Pre-employment screening and placement services.	Systemic process is implemented	WDB, industry leaders, education leaders at all levels, LED	Years 1-5
Support Entrepreneurship and small business innovation	Systemic process is implemented	WDB, industry leaders, education leaders at all levels, LED	Years 1-5

○ Infrastructure Renewal and Rehabilitation

Goal: Promote the renewal and rehabilitation of the infrastructure throughout the district via a collaborative effort with political bodies to obtain funding to accomplish needs.

OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	IMPLEMENTATION GROUPS	TIMELINES
Assess infrastructure and memorialize in plan	Staff development complete	North Delta staff	Years 1-5
Hold public meetings to take input	Plan developed and initiated	North Delta, Government Entity	Years 1-5
Develop a list of successes	List development complete	North Delta staff	Years 1-5

○ **Resiliency**

Goal: Develop plans to prepare businesses to become resilient to economic and natural disasters.

OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	IMPLEMENTATION GROUPS	TIMELINES
Hold training on mitigation and preparedness	Plan developed	WDB, industry leaders, education leaders at all levels, LED	Years 1-5
Hold training on continuity planning on supply lines, cash flow, and resources	Number of businesses using internet commerce increased for training	WDB, industry leaders, education leaders at all levels, LED	Years 1-5
Provide public briefing on community mitigation projects	Number of businesses/clusters available	WDB, industry leaders, education leaders at all levels, LED	Years 1-5

○ **Leadership Development & Cooperative Planning**

Goal: Take a proactive role in promoting the development of leadership and cooperative planning among the political and economic development officials in the district.

OBJECTIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	IMPLEMENTATION GROUPS	TIMELINES
Develop regional plan	Plan developed and implemented	Public officials, education leaders, WDB officials	Years 1-5
Promote unity in parish development to access resources for each rural parish	Plan developed	WDB, LED, elected officials, industry leaders	Years 1-5

Economic Resiliency

North Delta Regional Planning and Development District believes that a region's economic prosperity is linked to an area's ability to prevent, withstand and recover from major disruptions as well as developing independent diverse economic components that will not be at risk of collapsing because each component is independent yet a crucial interlocking part of developing a strong and vibrant economy that would continue to support a strong economy. Additionally, the economy would have the support of local stakeholders (elected officials, local governments, nonprofits/business leaders, investors, and entrepreneurs). These stakeholders are willing to invest time, energy and capital in components of the local economy because the business community would view the components as secure.

The North Delta believes that the planning effort must be strategic to ensure the District's role in the pre and post incident environment of an economic disaster is effective. First, securing that many people from the community (residents, stakeholders, teachers, etc.) are involved in the planning process). Then, the community will be viewed as independent and said component will enjoy the benefits of local businesses buying from one another and having a foundation for a successful economy rather than investing in a business organization than providing dollars to attract businesses to grow the local economy.

Investing local dollars to become self-reliant can lead to economic diversity in order to meet the needs of area residents; thus, not only growing the local/regional economy but also growing the population, increasing employment and economic opportunities and wealth. Additionally, the stakeholders must utilize the business tools of business incubators, business accelerators and shared space to grow businesses and the regional economy. The District intends to incorporate the following into its framework and work plan:

- Work with local officials, governments and economic partners to engage in comprehensive planning efforts that involve extensive involvement from the community. These efforts will align with other current and future planning efforts such as Hazard Mitigation Plans, and parish emergency plans. Each parish within the District has either an active Hazard Mitigation Plan or is currently working on a plan.
- North Delta has worked to broaden the industrial base of the region through various projects since the district's conception. It has been and will continue to be a priority of the District to build on the area's assets and strengths and to provide stability to any industry during economic distress. The State's and federal government's focus and distinction of Opportunity Zones will be prioritized in the recognition of potential cluster development. The District will continue to work with incoming and potential businesses to facilitate and that Opportunity Zones incentives are utilized to their fullest especially in the event of an economic downturn. Undertaking efforts to broaden the industrial base by diversification initiatives, such as the development of emerging clusters or industries that build on the region's unique assets and competitive strengths and provide stability. Utilizing business retention expansion programs that would assist businesses in recovery from economic disruptions.

- The District has worked with various businesses to assist them with retention and expansion programs during the recovery process. Workforce training is an important component to economic resilience. We believe by supporting workforce in its roll to help dislocated workers quickly and effectively shift between jobs and industries the District will remain a strong and adaptable place.
- The District works with cities, towns, parishes and entities to ensure that there is an established process for regular communication in the event of an economic disaster. This pre-disaster recovery plan ensures that the District will better respond to any type of disaster that may occur. North Delta serves as a point of contact for the northeast region of the state in the event of a disaster and will serve as a point of collaboration between public and private sectors of existing and future tasks.
- Utilize the CEDS to help respond to economic disruptions. The CEDS will help identify and source of information of economic challenges within the region and encourage collaboration to react to the areas of problem. Additionally, the CEDS is the vehicle to approach resiliency in a comprehensive fashion. It often fills an important role in ensuring that disaster mitigation efforts are well coordinated across parish lines to shape more resilient communities/regions.
- Equally important to the framework and work plan is the fact that there must be social equity. Studies have shown that businesses provide workers with high incomes show the population less inequality; thus, illustrating the need for more inclusion workforce programs.

CONCLUSION

In helping our communities build resilience, North Delta will be proactive in planning and mitigation by working with local officials, business leaders, and other community partners to facilitate discussion around issues of economic recovery and resiliency, especially as we continue to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We will encourage our partners to incorporate concepts and principles of economic resiliency into existing plans. In planning for recovery from the pandemic and in preparing for future economic or natural disasters, North Delta will establish familiarity with traditional and new economic and community recovery funding sources. We will work to build collaborative relationships with organizations that might provide data, funding, technical expertise, and other resources essential to intermediate and long-term recovery.

Resource Page

U.S. Census Bureau www.census.gov

STATS America..... www.statsamerica.org

Unemployment Rates..... <https://hdpulse.nimhd.nih.gov/data-portal>

North Delta will annually assess the CEDS to determine the completion of the Evaluation Framework/Performance measures in the Implementation Plan. This assessment will also ensure that the achievements of the CEDS are correlated to Louisiana’s economic development priorities and the goals of the North Delta Planning and Development District.

North Delta's Board 2025

NAME	JURISDICTION	POSITION
Billy Powell	Richland	Police Jury
Brad Roller	Jackson	Police Jury
Bryson Hendry	Franklin	Police Jury
Cardell Barnes	Jackson	Advisory Committee
Chris Lewis	Ouachita	Advisory Committee
Clarence Hawkins	Morehouse	Advisory Committee
Dave Wilson	Madison	Advisory Committee
Dianne Childress	Caldwell	Police Jury
Eddie Russell	West Carroll	Police Jury
Friday Ellis	Ouachita	Mayor
Hal Mims	Jackson	Mayor
Howie Robinson	Franklin	Police Jury
Ivory Smith	Morehouse	Advisory Committee
James Bradford	Jackson	Advisory Committee
Johnny Hughes	Madison	Police Jury
Johnny Jones	Richland	Police Jury
Johnny Sims	West Carroll	Police Jury
Maurice Norman	Morehouse	Advisory Committee
Mike Holley	Union	Police Jury
Paula Strickland	Union	Police Jury
Pauline Doyle	Tensas	Police Jury
Robert "Bubba" Rushing	Tensas	Police Jury
Shane Smiley	Ouachita	Police Jury
Staci Mitchell	Ouachita	Mayor
Terry Matthews	Morehouse	Police Jury
Todd Culpepper	Jackson	Police Jury
Toni Bacon	Ouachita	Police Jury
Wanda Stowe	Caldwell	Mayor
William Adkins	Caldwell	Police Jury

North Delta's CEDS Committee

NAME	JURISDICTION	POSITION
Matt Talbert	Ouachita/Sterlington	Mayor/Elected Official
Tom Malmay	Ouachita/Monroe	Consultant
Terri Mitchell	Northeast Louisiana	Executive Director/WDB-83
James Harris	Jackson	Mayor/Elected Official
Jarrold Bottley	Tensas	Mayor/Elected Official
Catherine Middlebrook	East Carroll	Alderwoman/Elected Official
Ronnie Lofton	Ouachita	Retired/Private Individual
Courtney Hornsby	Ouachita/West Monroe	WM Mayor's Office/Chief of Staff
Kay King	Morehouse	CEO Morehouse Economic Dev. Corp.
Kimmeka Sterling	Madison	Secretary/Treasurer & Asst. Director
Doretha Bennett	Ouachita/Monroe	Executive Director/WDB-81
Virendra Chhikara	Ouachita/Monroe	ULM/BRIP
Greg Richardson	Caldwell	Port Director
Austin Ballott	Jackson	Compliance Officer



North Delta's Cities, Towns, and Villages

Caldwell Parish

Clarks
Columbia
Grayson

East Carroll

Lake Providence

Franklin

Baskin
Crowville
Fort Necessity
Gilbert
Winnsboro
Wisner

Jackson

Chatham
East Hodge
Eros
Hodge
Jonesboro
North Hodge

Quitman

Madison

Delta
Mound
Richmond
Tallulah

Morehouse

Bastrop
Bonita
Collinston
Mer Rouge
Oak Ridge

Ouachita

Monroe
Richwood
Sterlington
West Monroe

Richland

Delhi

Mangham
Rayville

Tensas

Newellton
St. Joseph
Waterproof

Union

Bernice
Downsville
Farmerville
Junction City
Lillie
Marion
Spearsville

West Carroll

Epps
Forest
Kilbourne
Oak Grove
Pioneer

Regional Needs

Economic Development Needs:

- ❖ Improve the digital/technological landscape
- ❖ Increased economic diversification
- ❖ Improved entrepreneurial opportunities
- ❖ Bolster the region's economic resiliency
- ❖ Improve skilled and educated workforce
- ❖ Partner with our universities and colleges
- ❖ Encourage and build upon tourism
- ❖ Stop the rapid decline of manufacturing in the region

Community Development Needs:

- ❖ Broadband availability
- ❖ Improved education facilities
- ❖ Parks and public spaces
- ❖ Building community resilience throughout the region
- ❖ Lack of avoidable housing

Physical Infrastructure Needs:

- ❖ Water and wastewater treatment facilities
- ❖ Highways and bridges
- ❖ Broadband Infrastructure
- ❖ Waterways and Port Improvements
- ❖ Railroads

Workforce Development Needs:

- ❖ Improve retention rates for high school students
- ❖ More and better job opportunities for our citizens
- ❖ Workforce development training programs that meet our businesses needs
- ❖ Improved interaction between employees
- ❖ Local educational facilities to address employer needs
- ❖ Improved "soft skills" and good attitude among our workforce
- ❖ Better job opportunities to keep our youth in the region

DRA supports and promotes economic development within the lower Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions through its programming opportunities. Designed to make strategic investments in critical and human infrastructure, DRA's programming aims to impact economic growth and opportunity in economically distressed communities.

The eleven parishes within North Delta's region are included in the Delta Regional Authority (DRA's) service area. These parishes are Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union and West Carroll. All, except Caldwell, Jackson and Union are classified as "distressed and persistent poverty" these three are classified as "distressed". The DRA, through its programs, including the State Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP), the Community Infrastructure Funds (CIF) and its health-related initiatives, are consistent with EDA's goals to create jobs, build communities and improve the lives of the citizens in the region. North Delta serves as the Local Development District (LDD) for the DRA in Northeast Louisiana and has incorporated and addressed DRA's priorities, as well as Federal and State DRA priorities. A complete list of DRA programs can be found at <https://dra.gov/programs/>.

Investment Opportunities

States' Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP)

This is DRA's main investment tool used to fund basic public infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, business development with an emphasis on entrepreneurship, and workforce development.

Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF)

This program complements SEDAP with investments in basic public infrastructure such as water, sewer and flood mitigation.

The following are outcomes of DRA investments, in North Delta's region from FY 2020- FY2024 (SEDAP and CIF), totaling \$21,042,810.00 in 44 projects.

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA

FY 2020 the total investment amount of \$1,670,755.00

Tensas Water Distribution Association
North Hodge
Village of Delta
City of West Monroe
St. Francis Medical Center
Morehouse Community Medical Center

FY 2021 the total investment amount of \$3,330,105.00

Franklin Medical Center
Madison Parish Port Commission
City of West Monroe
Ouachita Parish Police Jury
University of Louisiana at Monroe
Village of Waterproof
Union Parish Waterworks District No 1
Town of Farmerville

FY 2022 the total investment amount of \$4,914,746.00

Columbia Port Commission
Town of Wisner
Town of Jonesboro
City of Tallulah
Workforce Development Board 83
Louisiana Chamber of Commerce Foundation
Workforce Development Board 83
Village of Lillie
Village of Forest
Village of East Hodge
Ouachita Parish Police Jury
Town of Sterlington
Town of Farmerville

FY 2023 the total investment amount of \$6,346,159.00

NOVA Rural Workforce Development Program
Ochsner LSU, Monroe
Town of Jonesboro
Madison Parish Port
Town of Rayville
Village of Grayson
Columbia Port Commission
Village of Hodge
Ouachita Parish Police Jury

FY 2024 the total investment amount of \$4,781,000.00

Village of Waterproof
City of West Monroe
Ochsner LSU Health Monroe
Ouachita Parish Police Jury
Town of Marion
Town of Farmerville
City of West Monroe
Lake Providence Port Commission

NORTH DELTA REGIONAL PLANNING

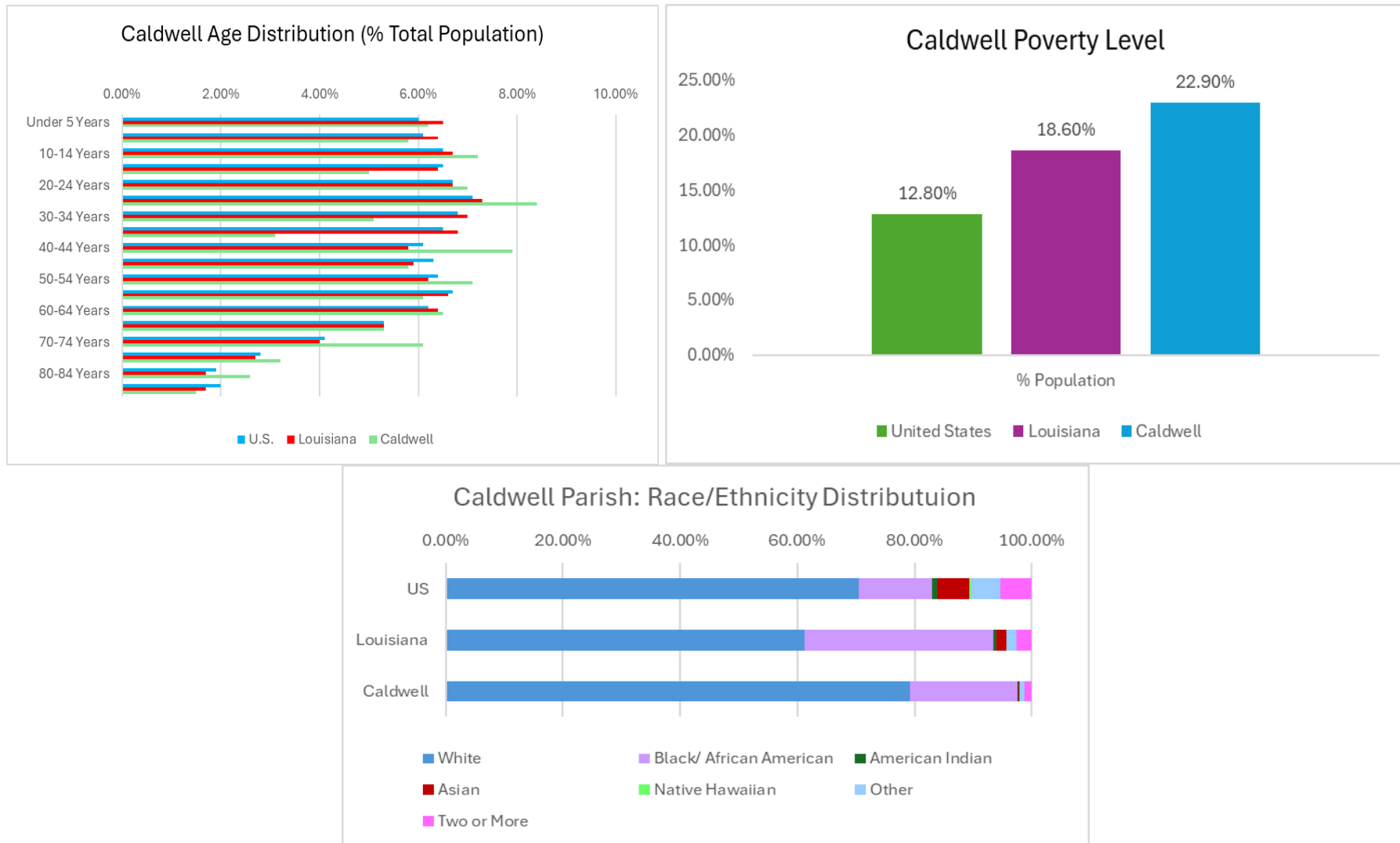
North Delta Regional Planning & Development District is dedicated to serving the people, businesses, communities, and local governmental units within the eleven parishes of northeast Louisiana. North Delta has been successful each year in obtaining grants for our communities.



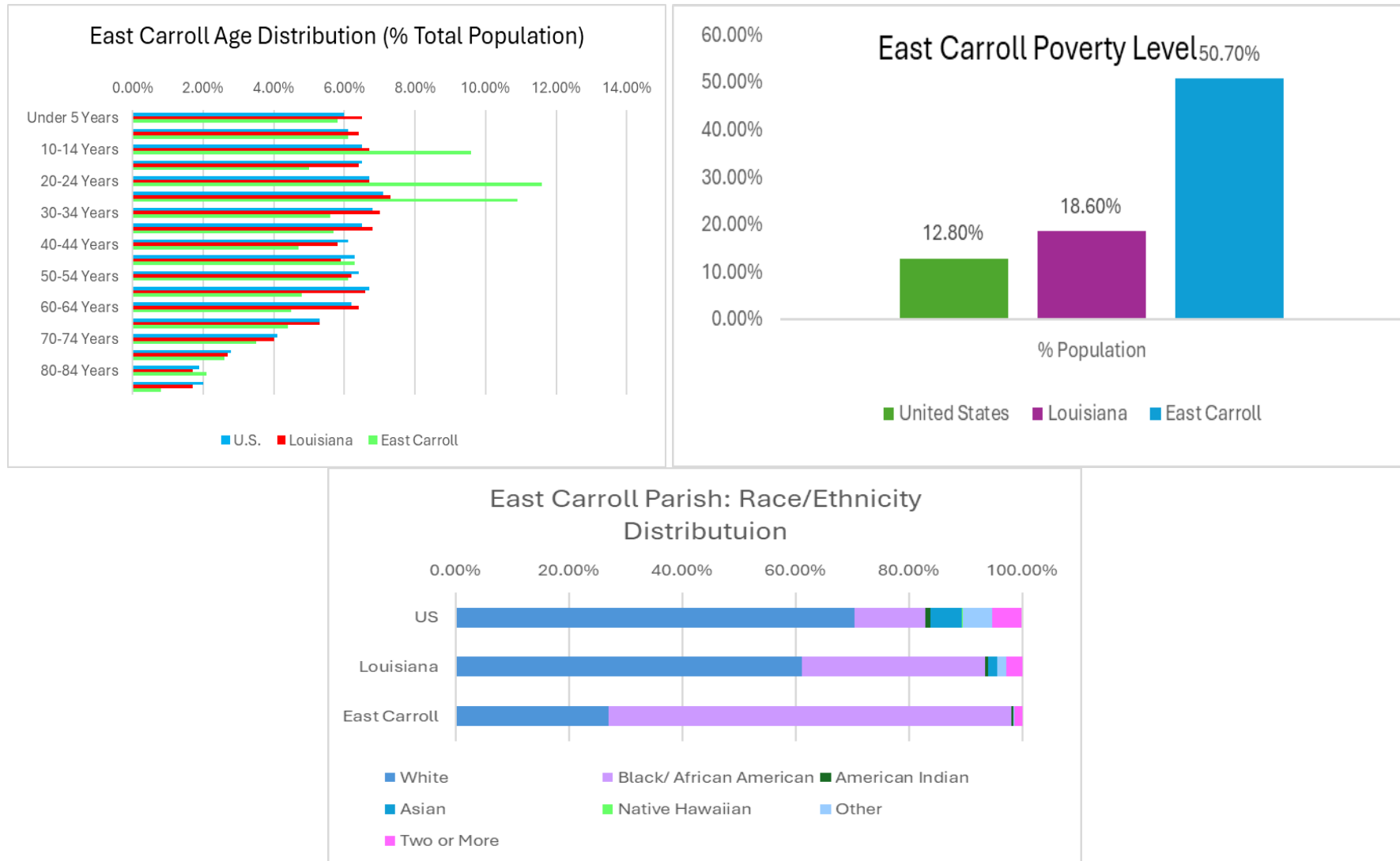
Lagniappe/Regional Statistics



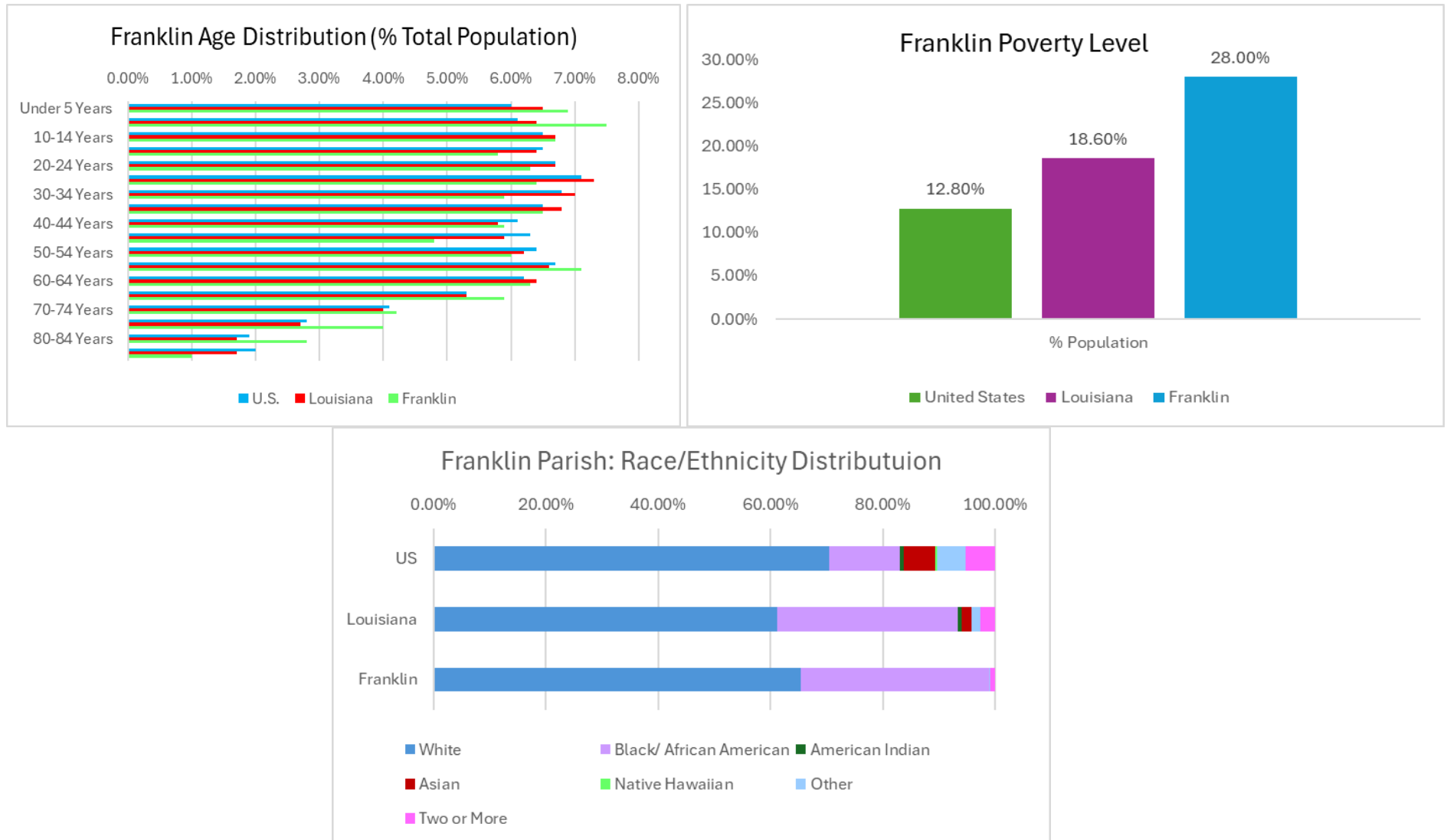
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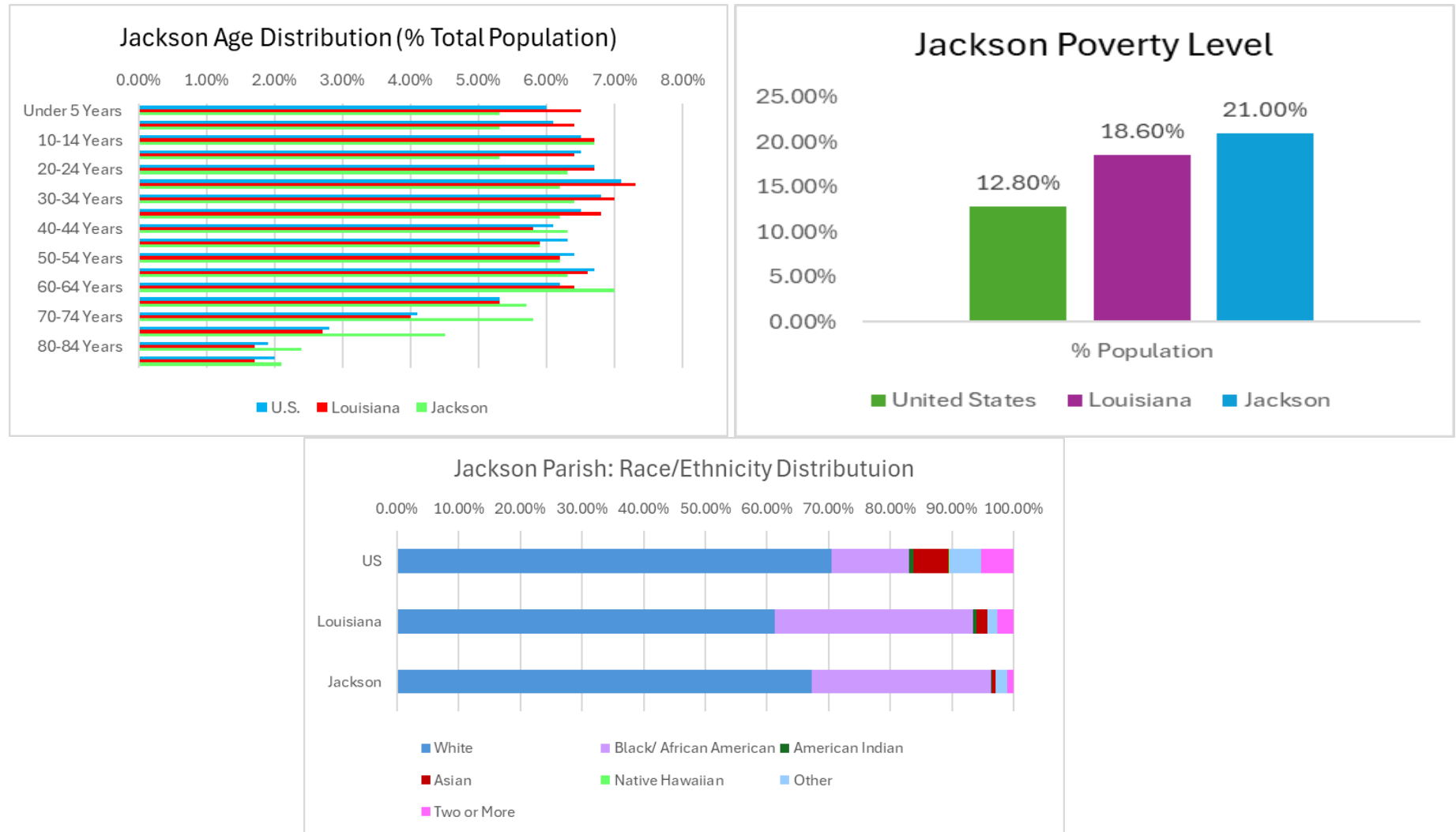
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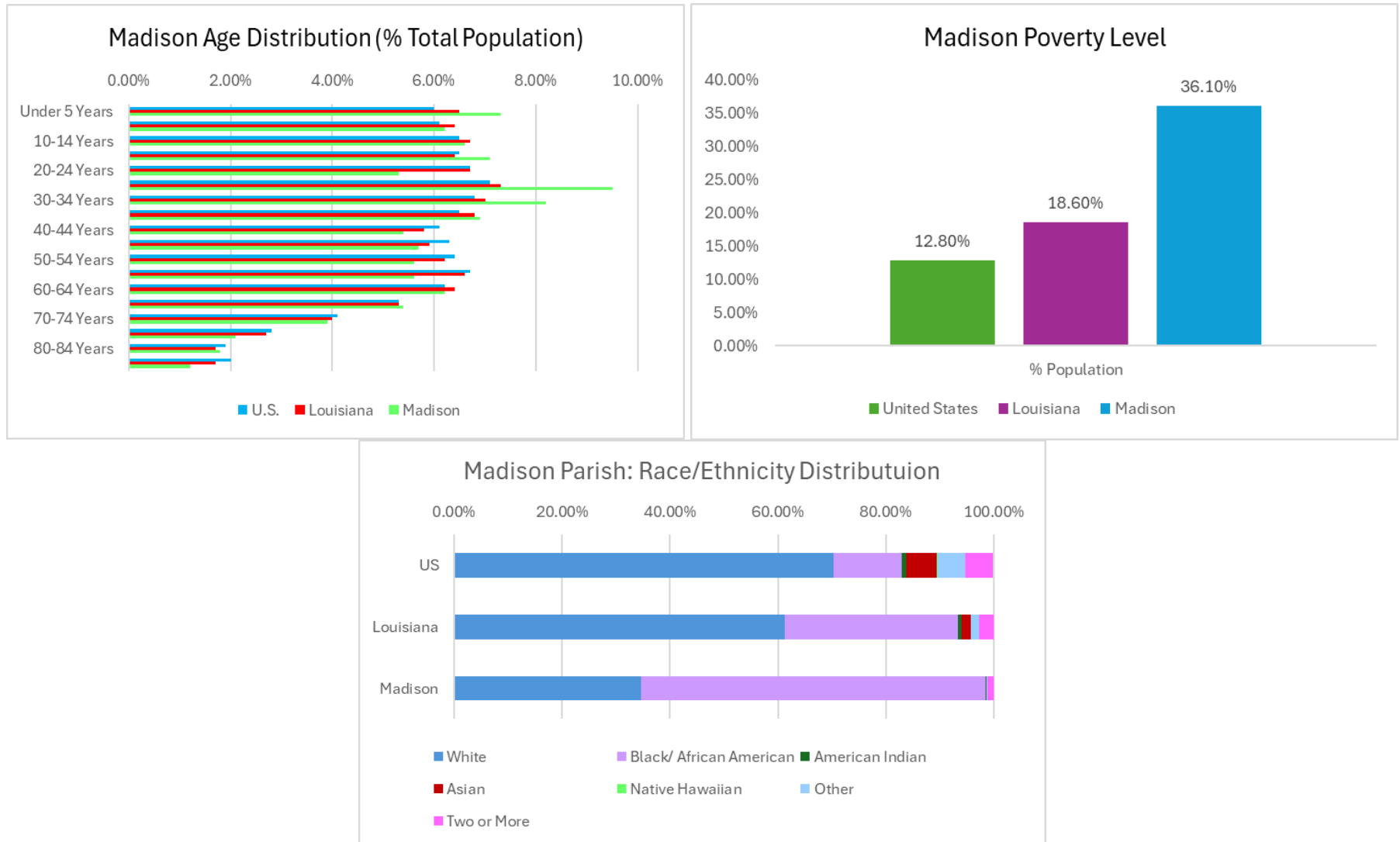
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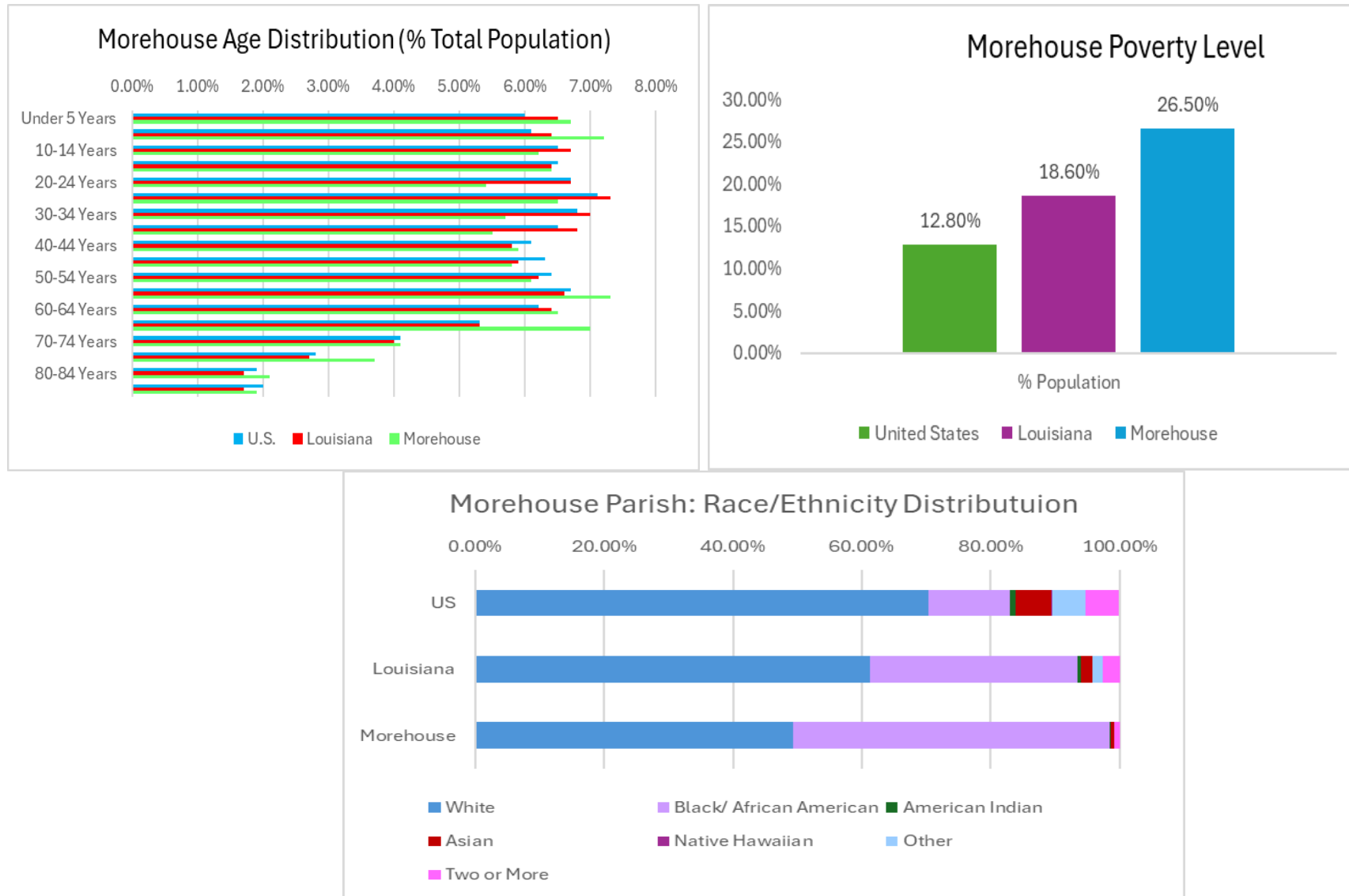
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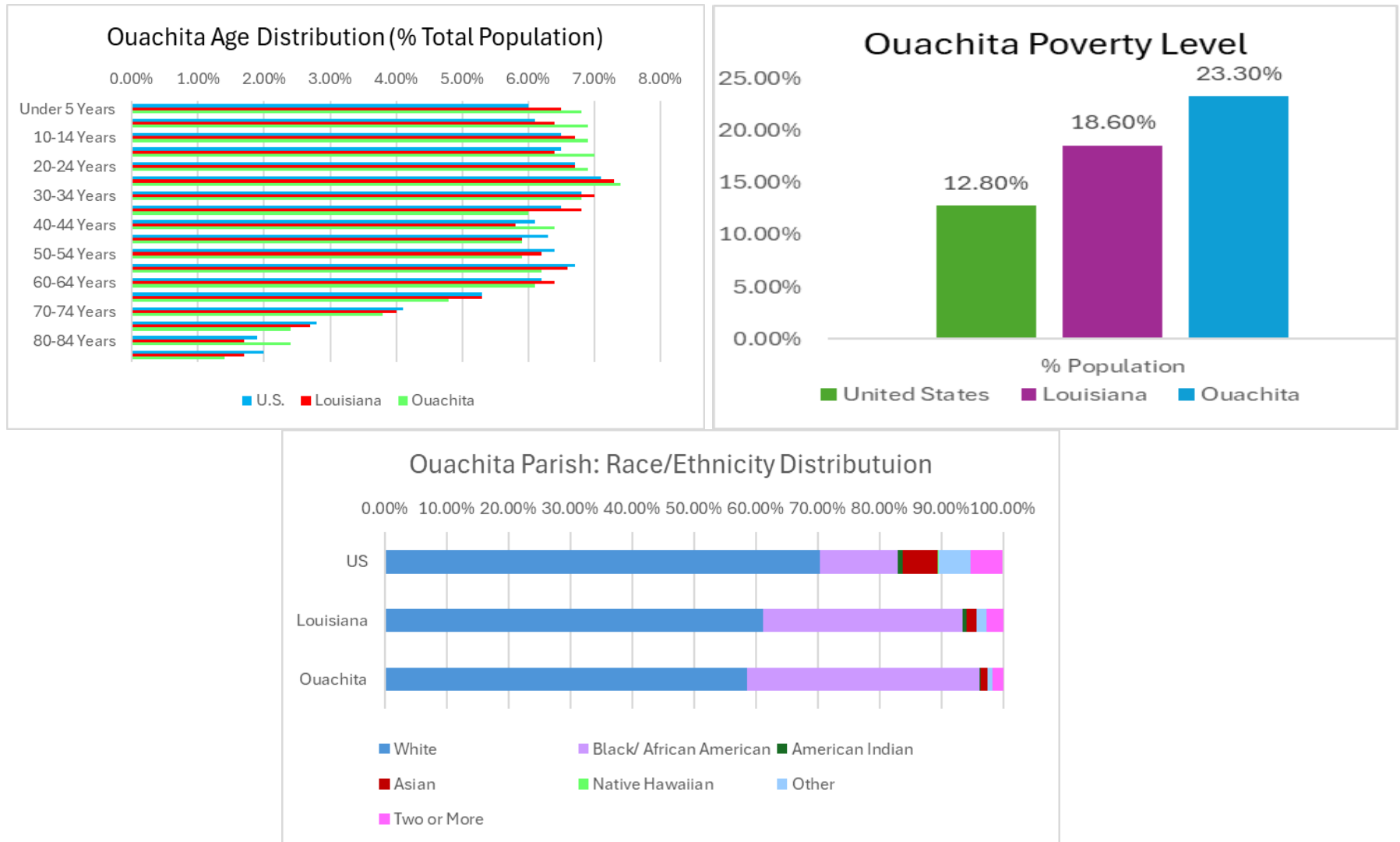
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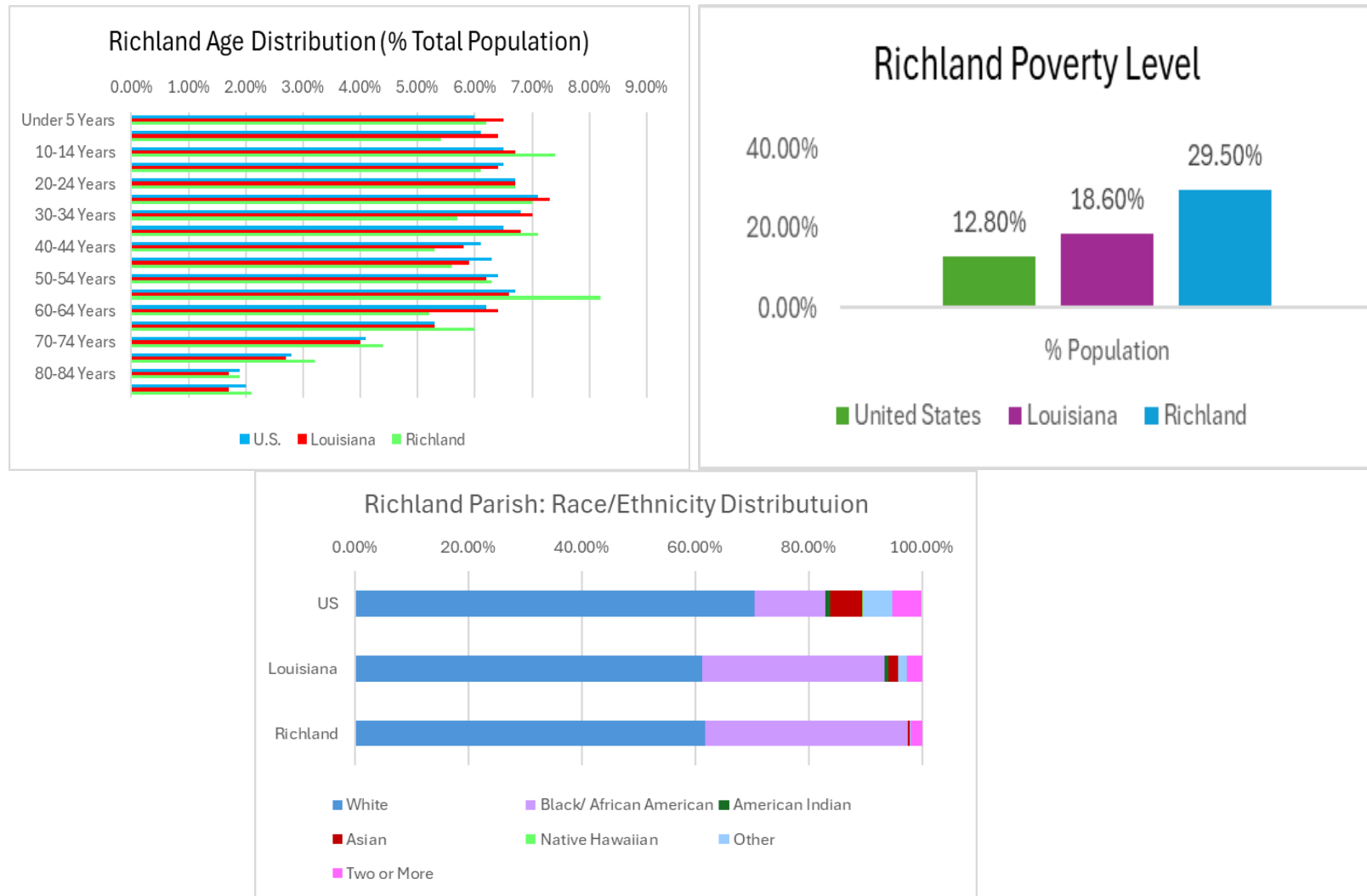
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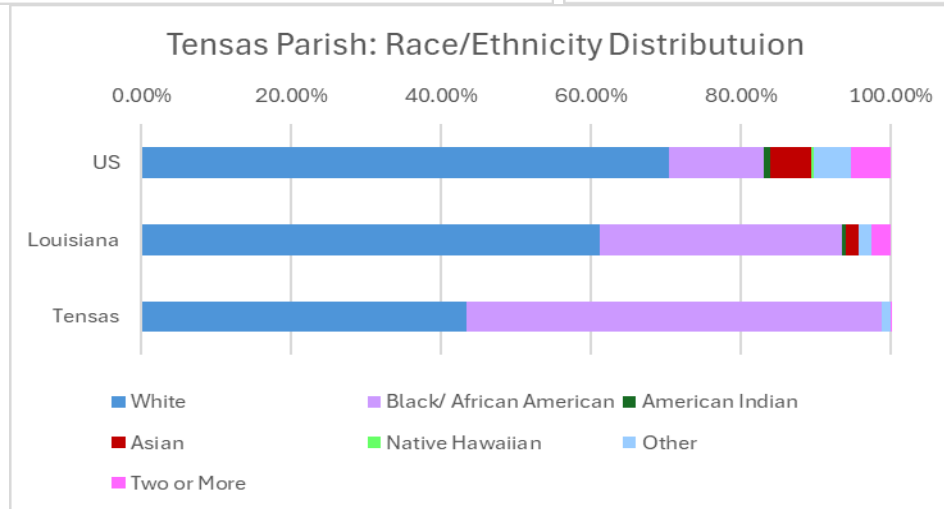
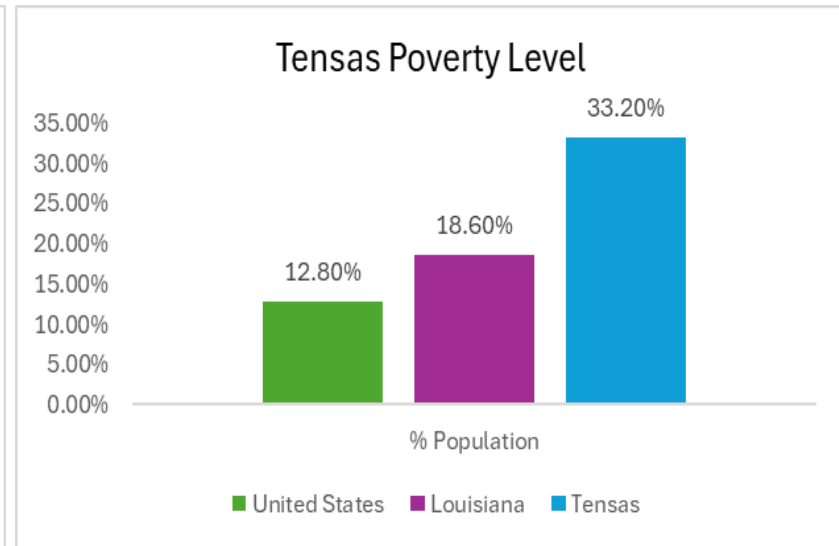
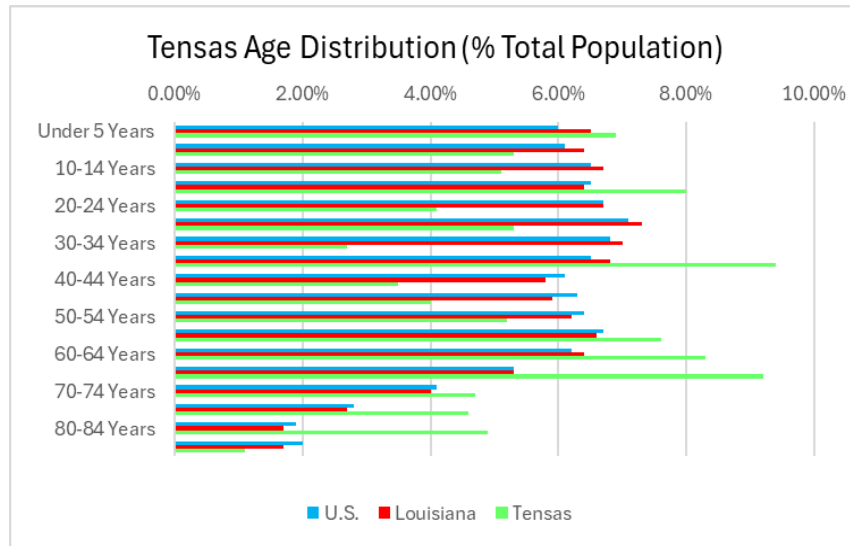
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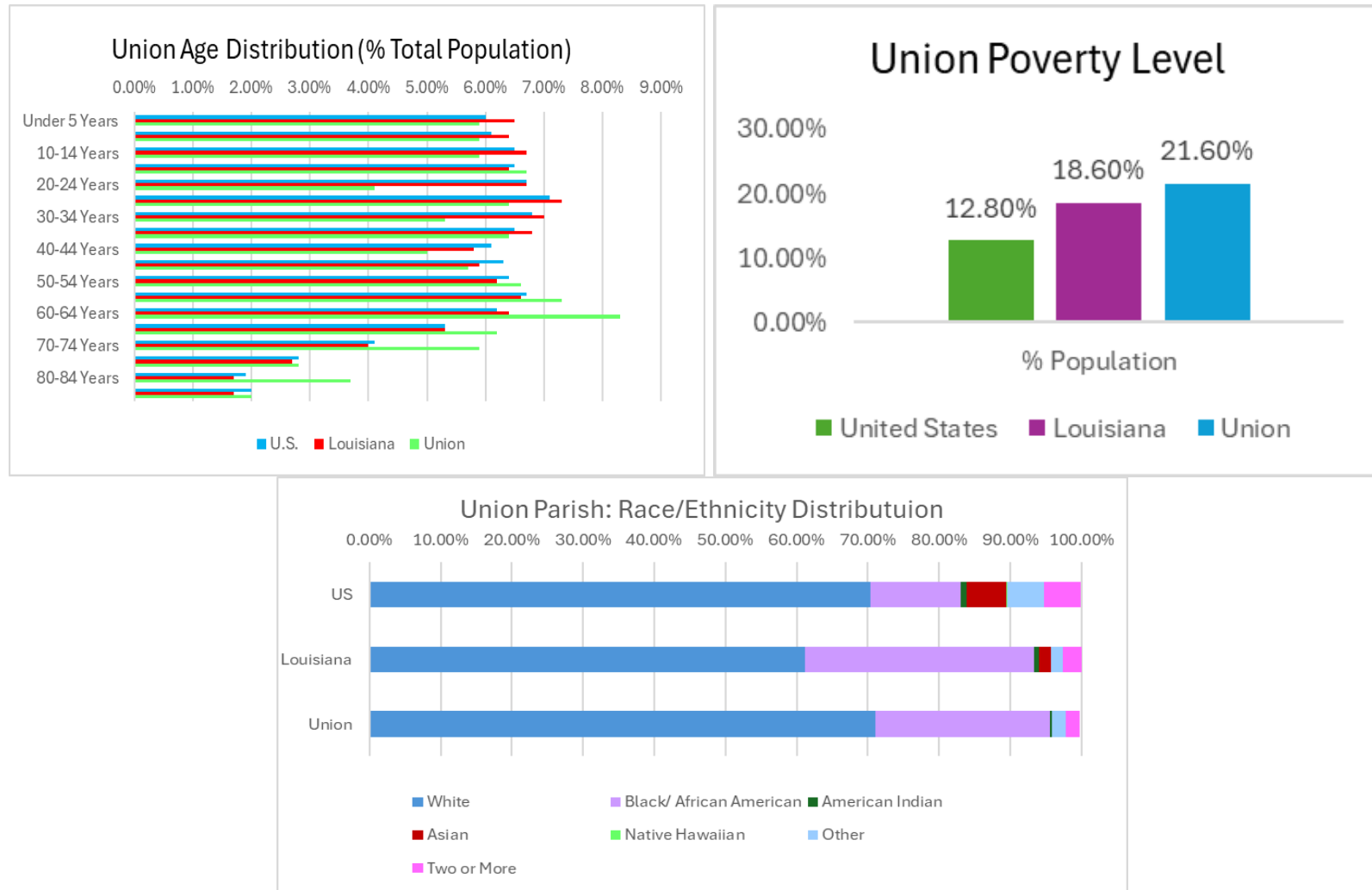
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