



# **NORTHEAST LOUISIANA ECONOMIC TRENDS REPORT**

**PREPARED FOR THE  
NORTHEAST LOUISIANA ECONOMIC SUMMIT  
OCTOBER 22, 2026  
MICHAEL CRENSHAW, CRENSHAW ANALYTICS**





# Biomedical Research and Innovation Park

## CONNECTING RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY IN NORTHEAST LOUISIANA

Imagine an idea developed in a Northeast Louisiana laboratory becoming a product used around the world. The Biomedical Research and Innovation Park (BRIP) is working to help those discoveries become businesses that grow here, creating opportunities for the people who call this region home.

BRIP is a Monroe-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit that connects the region's research and educational strengths with private industry to support emerging biotechnology and other compatible technology businesses.

## HELPING RESEARCH BECOME BUSINESS

BRIP's planned research park near the University of Louisiana at Monroe's College of Pharmacy is intended to provide laboratory and office space, business guidance, and connections to technical expertise and potential funding sources for researchers developing new products. These resources would help researchers and entrepreneurs bring discoveries to market and attract established companies seeking access to the region's capabilities.

The effort builds on ULM's research strengths and the workforce and technical education resources at Louisiana Delta Community College. BRIP's focus spans biomedicine, pharmaceuticals, technology and agricultural research.

## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

BRIP's long-term direction is to diversify Northeast Louisiana's economy through businesses built around research and innovation. Its goals include expanding career opportunities for local graduates and helping companies connect with the talent they need to establish and grow operations in the region.

## THE PATH TO CONSTRUCTION

As a private nonprofit, BRIP has raised considerable funds for the 18-acre research park. This includes grants from the Economic Development Administration, Ouachita Economic Development Corporation, and ARPA funding through the Ouachita Parish Police Jury. These funds have been used to develop the park location including roads, infrastructure, landscaping and lighted sidewalks. Additional funding has been generated through the State of Louisiana. BRIP is working closely with area legislators to generate additional revenue to build a 52,000 square foot research building.

## BRINGING THE REGION TOGETHER

As a host of the 2026 Northeast Louisiana Economic Summit alongside ULM and Grow NELA, BRIP is bringing business and community leaders together to understand the forces shaping the region's future. The Summit connects economic insight with the people making decisions about investment, workforce, and business growth.

Learn more at [briplouisiana.org](http://briplouisiana.org)



# Building Opportunity Across Northeast Louisiana

## GROW NELA | REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is about more than attracting new businesses. It's about creating opportunities for people, strengthening existing industries and building a regional economy where businesses and communities can thrive.

Grow NELA serves as Northeast Louisiana's regional economic development organization, working alongside public and private partners to attract investment, support business growth and create new and better jobs throughout the region. As a nonprofit, investor-governed organization, Grow NELA brings together business leaders, elected officials, educational institutions and community partners around a shared vision for long-term economic growth.

Our work focuses on three essential priorities: attracting new business and industry, supporting the expansion and retention of existing employers, and strengthening the region's competitiveness for future investment. Through site development, workforce partnerships, strategic marketing and business engagement, Grow NELA helps position Northeast Louisiana as a place where companies can invest with confidence.

The region is experiencing significant economic momentum, with major industrial investments, infrastructure improvements and new workforce opportunities shaping its future. Grow NELA works to ensure that this momentum creates lasting benefits for communities throughout Northeast Louisiana, from increased employment opportunities to a stronger local tax base.

An important part of this work is helping communities understand the economic forces shaping their future. Through regional data, economic indicators and initiatives such as NELA Growth, Grow NELA works to make economic information more accessible and connect regional progress to the people and businesses it impacts.

Economic growth doesn't happen in isolation. It requires collaboration between businesses, educators, local governments and community leaders who recognize that regional success is built through shared investment and coordinated action.

As Northeast Louisiana continues to grow, Grow NELA remains committed to connecting opportunity with action, strengthening the region's economic foundation and helping build a more competitive and prosperous future for the communities we serve.





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## WE ARE THE WARHAWKS

The University of Louisiana Monroe is a cornerstone of northeast Louisiana's economic vitality and community well-being. As a driver of workforce development, innovation, and public service, ULM partners closely with local businesses, healthcare systems, schools, and government agencies to meet the region's evolving needs. Through education, research, and community engagement, the university delivers measurable impact, fueling economic growth, improving access to healthcare, expanding educational opportunity, and serving as a trusted resource for long-term workforce development.

*Let's build Monroe's future together!*

*The BEST place  
to call home.*

**\$617M+**

Annual Economic Impact

### Workforce

High-demand workforce  
pipeline in healthcare,  
education, business & STEM

**1,500+**

Healthcare professionals  
educated each year

### Community Care

Community care delivered via  
clinics and mobile outreach

### Access-focused

Access-focused institution serving  
first-gen and Pell-eligible students

### Pharmacy

Louisiana's only publicly  
supported Pharmacy school

### LSBDC

Home of the Louisiana Small  
Business Development Center



## **MICHAEL CRENSHAW**

Michael Crenshaw is the founder of Crenshaw Analytics, a Monroe, Louisiana firm that builds data platforms for companies and organizations to enable data-driven understanding of opportunities and successes. He led the data and analysis behind NELAGrowth.com, Grow NELA's public tracker of sales tax across ten Northeast Louisiana parishes, and authored the Northeast Louisiana Economic Trends Report. His work has one aim: to show that the region's momentum and opportunity are not hearsay, they are in the data.

Michael holds bachelor's degrees in finance and computer information systems from University of Louisiana Monroe, and has practiced analytics inside Fortune 200 companies and small businesses alike.



**Beyond the construction period, there are longstanding property tax implications that are going to lift up and boost our rural economy. The developments that spin from the revenue generated from that have the opportunity to be transformative for this region.**



**MICHAEL CRENSHAW**

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# A letter from the analyst

An analyst uses information about the past to produce insight, make predictions about the future, and drive decisions. I run a data analysis company here in Northeast Louisiana. This report is my best effort to tell you what the data says about where our region stands and where it is headed.

I took this on because I care about this region and the people in it. I want us to win.

On where we stand, the numbers do not lie, and they match the feeling that has been in the air. Our region is entering a new era. In this report you will see lines that sat flat for years breaking in new directions. The data does not show a perfect position. It shows momentum.

On where we are headed, I have to be plain. An analyst leans on the past, and there is no comparable past to pull from. You may think we are not the first town to get a data center. This report will show you that the comparison does not hold. Nothing this size has landed on an economy of our size.

No comparable past means I cannot tell you exactly what is coming. No one can. It also means we have the opportunity to write the story for the first time. This is a region that has waited for its time. It has paved the path for this moment, and I have full confidence in us to deliver on it.

What I can give you is the evidence and the openings. The report walks through five questions: whether anything like this has happened before, what is happening right now, what we have to build on, what it looks like in each parish, and how it could play out. Charts carry the story, and the analysis explains them.

My goal is that by the end you understand what is going on, where the opportunities are, and what resources are there to act on them. Act is the word. The last section is my case for why the time is now.

I want to thank the University of Louisiana Monroe, Grow NELA, and the Biomedical Research and Innovation Park (BRIP) for their interest in enhancing this region and for the roles they play in our community.

Thank you for your time in digging into this information. By reading this, you've shown interest in investing in or understanding this area, and for that I am thankful. If I can be of any further value in navigating the data, I am happy to assist.



**Michael Crenshaw**

Crenshaw Analytics, Monroe

# Five questions, in order

The report is built around five questions. Each one is a section.

1. Has anything like this ever happened?
2. What is actually happening right now?
3. What is there to build on?
4. What does it look like in each parish?
5. How does this play out?

Every sub-section page runs the same way. A few lines set up the page, the chart follows, and a few paragraphs say what it shows and what it means for the region. The charts carry the story, and the text explains them.

## Background

In December 2024 Meta announced a data center in Richland Parish, a farming parish of about 20,000 people on Interstate 20, east of Monroe. A data center is a set of large buildings full of computers. This one is being built to run artificial intelligence.

Meta first put the project at \$10 billion. In July 2026 it raised the figure to more than \$50 billion and said it expects to finish in 2036. At that size it is one of the largest data centers ever announced.

The report covers twelve parishes in Northeast Louisiana, home to about 343,000 people. Monroe, in Ouachita Parish, is the largest city. Ruston, in Lincoln Parish, is the second.

Before the announcement the region's economy was steady and slow. Sales tax collections were flat from 2021 to 2024. Six of the ten parishes that report them were flat or shrinking. More than half of the region's households earned less than a survival budget. This report measures what has changed since, and what the region has to build on.

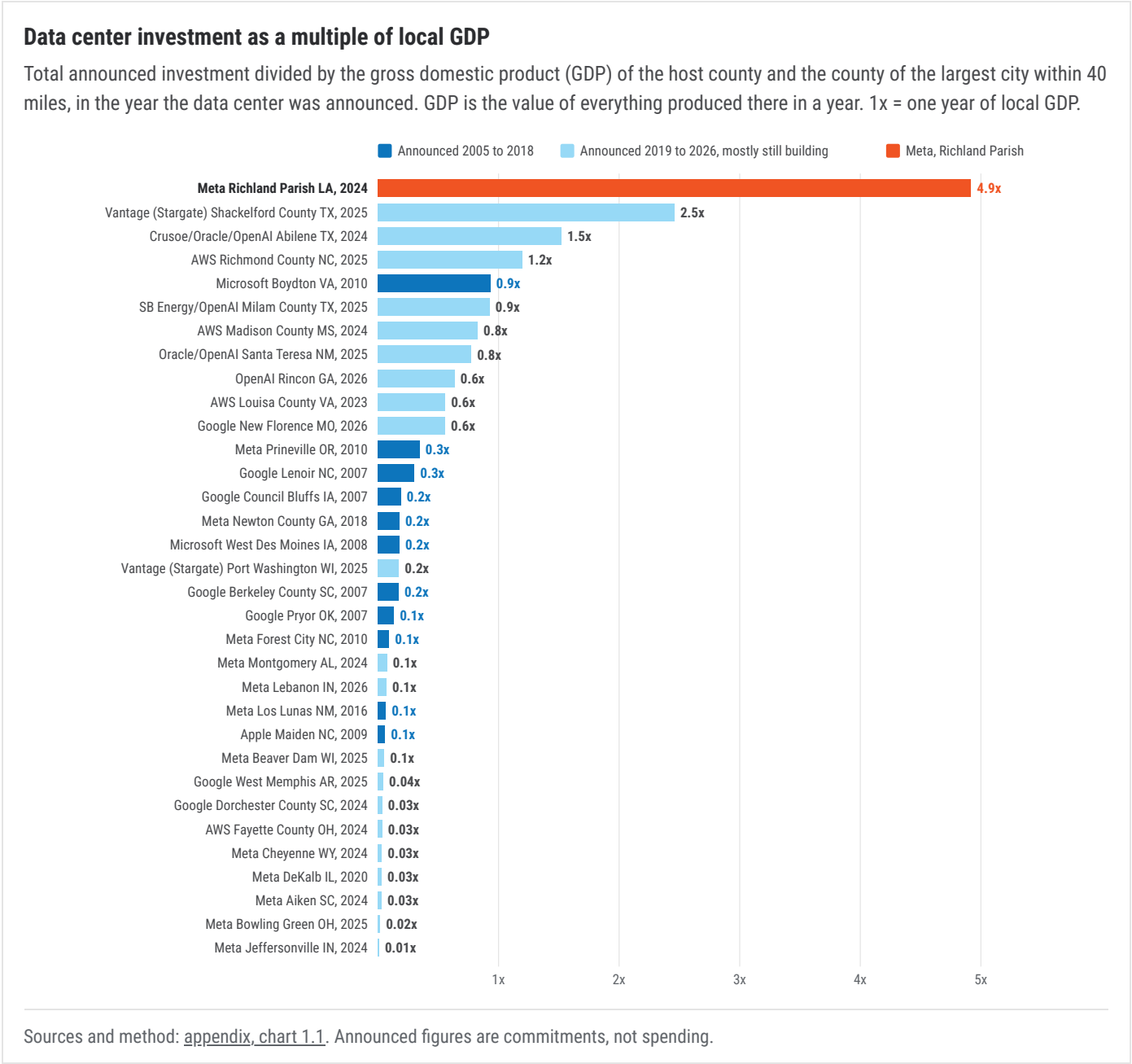
# Has anything like this ever happened?

Other towns have had data centers, and what happened to them is on record. One chart covers the last twenty years. It holds the large data centers that landed in a county this size and have a published investment figure, beside Richland's. For the ones old enough to have a record, the pages that follow track sales tax after the announcement. Each town is read beside its nearest city and beside counties that never got a data center.



# This situation is not comparable.

Other towns have had data centers, and the natural move is to find them, see what happened, and plan accordingly. This chart is that search. It holds the data centers of the last twenty years that landed in a county this size and have a published investment figure. Each is measured against the size of its local economy. That size is GDP (gross domestic product), the value of everything produced there in a year. The search comes back with a problem: nothing looks like this.



Meta has put a fifty billion dollar figure on its data center. At that figure, it is about 4.9 times the yearly GDP (gross domestic product) of Richland and Ouachita combined. That is five years of everything the two parishes produce, arriving as one project.

The nearest case is a Stargate data center in Shackelford County, Texas. It was announced in 2025 at about 2.5 times its local economy.

Everything else sits at one and a half times its local economy or under, and most sit under one. That includes the data center towns people have read about. Look at the bottom of the chart. Most of what has been called a data center town got a project that was small next to the town.

Size alone makes the region's situation different, and leaves open whether it is better or worse. A data center that is a fifth of the local economy comes with a precedent, drawn by the towns that went before. A data center that is five times the local economy comes with none. The towns that come after will be reading this one. The next page turns to what the towns on this chart got once the trucks left.



We have the energy. We have the resources. We have the land. We have the work ethic. Most importantly, we have the people. I've said it again and again: Our greatest natural resource is not what we mine or what we harvest. It's actually you.



**GOVERNOR JEFF LANDRY**

## In five of six earlier data center counties, the sales tax growth lasted

A construction boom shows up in the sales tax the year the crews arrive. What matters to a parish is what happens after. Of the data centers old enough to answer, we sampled six that sit in states that publish county sales tax far enough back to follow. The chart tracks how fast sales tax grew in each of those host counties. It covers the years before the announcement, the five years after, and the five after that. Each host county sits beside its nearest city and beside counties like it that never got a data center.



“There’s never been a better time in northeast Louisiana to be dialed in to economic development and the opportunities that are in front of us, and not just because of the Meta project, but there are more eyes on us, globally, than have ever been at any time before.”

**ROB CLEVELAND | PRESIDENT AND CEO, GROW NELA**

## How fast sales tax grew, before and after a data center announcement

Average growth per year in total sales tax collections: the three years before the announcement, the first five years after, and years six to ten. Host county, its nearest hub, and the median of counties like the host.



Sources and method: [appendix, chart 1.2](#). One state series per state, so host, hub, and comparable counties are measured the same way. Richland and Ouachita from their own audited local collections; 2026 projected from January to June collections.

In five of the six, the growth lasted. For five years after the announcement, the host county outpaced the growth of both its hub and the counties like it. The margin was one to eight percentage points a year. Two of them, Quincy and Boydton, have a ten-year record, and their growth then settled back toward what the neighbors were doing. Forest City is the exception: its sales tax sat flat for five years while the counties around it grew.

Whatever the data center's size, what separated the other five from Forest City was already there when the second project came looking. Quincy became six data centers on hydropower that was already in the ground and a state tax break that was already written. Newton County got Meta and then Rivian, through the same development authority. Los Lunas got Meta and then an Amazon fulfillment center. Boydton has had a Microsoft expansion under way most years since 2010.

Richland is the panel on the right, on its own scale because it has to be. The Police Jury's sales tax grew about 7% a year in the three years before the announcement. In the first year after, it grew 75%, from \$6.9 million to \$12.0 million. The best five-year run on this chart is 17% a year. The year 2026 is on pace for about 2.5 times the 2025 total.

Meta expects the project to be complete in 2036. For a parish, the record of the five host counties shows that growth can last beyond the year the crews arrive. Sales tax is what people spend. The next page covers what the towns built with it.



**We train students in our skills program. So we have a JAG program where students take the track of learning and getting credentials in high school.**

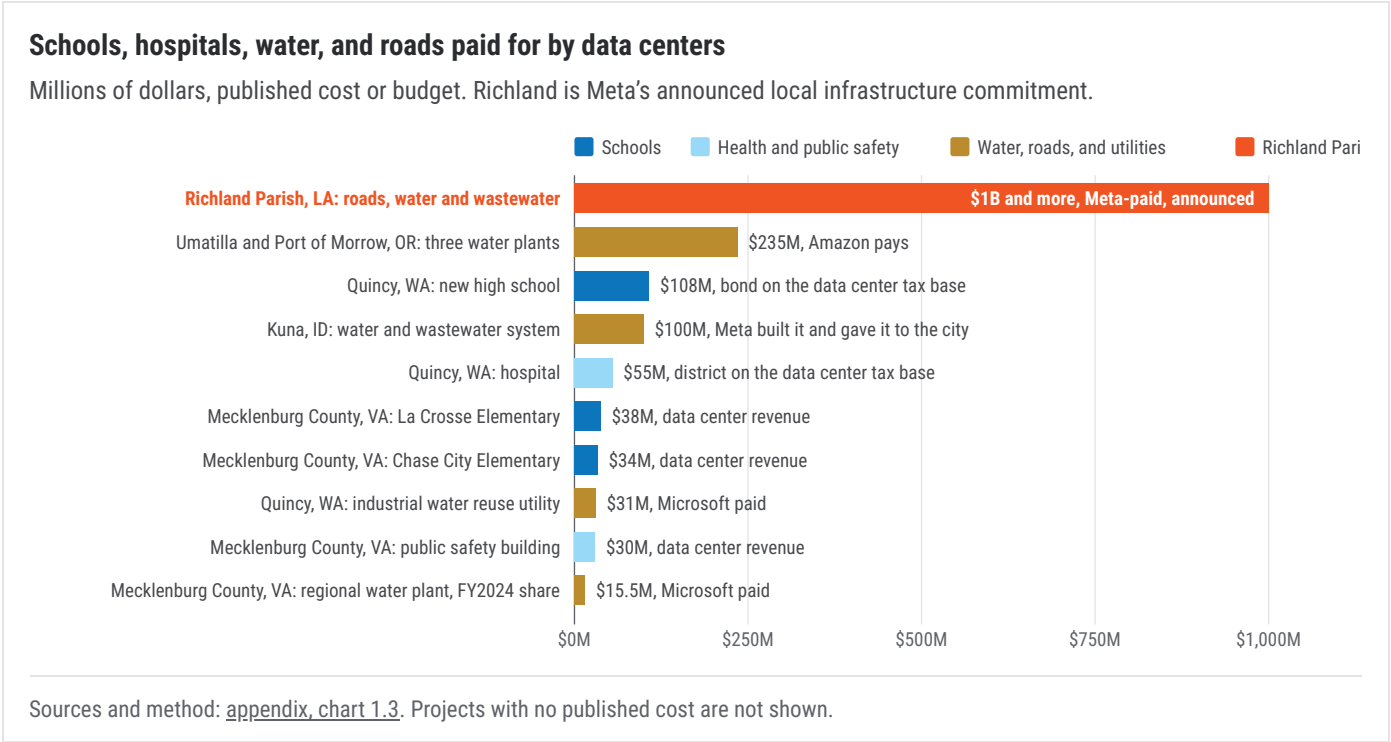
**Those students have been able to stay here at home and drive to Meta. So, only a 30 minute drive for some of our students, and they're making a salary as nice as if they were driving off and working offshore. It's just so refreshing to have a place for our people to be employed.**



**MAYOR HANNAH CUMMINGS SPRINGER | COLUMBIA, LA**

# What other data center towns kept when the construction left

What a data center town keeps is usually the thing it built while the tax base was growing. The chart holds the projects with a published price tag. A data center company paid for each one directly, or the tax revenue from a data center did. The one already announced for Richland is on the chart too.



Quincy, a town of about 7,500, has a new high school and a hospital bonded on a tax base that is mostly data centers. The superintendent said the schools were not possible without them. Mecklenburg County built two elementary schools and a public safety building on data center revenue. In Kuna, Idaho, Meta built the water and wastewater plant and gave it to the city. In Oregon, Amazon is paying for three water plants.

Richland’s bar is at the top because the commitment is larger than everything else on the chart combined. Meta has announced more than \$1 billion of roads, water, and wastewater.

Much of what these towns kept has no price and sits off the chart. Broadband reached a county because a data center needed fiber. A grid rebuilt for one customer now serves everyone. A workforce learned to build at scale.

That is what happened elsewhere. It is a pattern, and it comes with no promise. The last page of this section covers what this does and does not mean for the region.

# It is up to us

Here is what the last three pages do and do not mean. They do not guarantee Richland and the eleven parishes around it the Quincy story, the Boydtown story, or any story at all. Nothing on those pages was five times the size of its local economy. Nothing on those pages was a twelve-year project. The towns that pulled ahead did it over a decade, with a second project that came because the ground was ready. The one town that did not pull ahead sat flat for five years.

What they do mean is this. Whatever the size of the check, the two groups were separated by what was already there when the next company came looking. That was the power, the water, the sites, the people, and a local government that said yes on time. Every one of those is a decision somebody in this region makes, or does not make, in the next few years.

The rest of this report is the evidence for how we can write this story, and what building it would take. The next section starts with what is actually happening right now.



**So our sales tax collections are have increased at almost 20%. Steadily inclining as the new workforce shows up to large economic development activity here within the region. We just recently got news that our permitting fees and schedules have tripled in collection since 2021. So that shows you that businesses are here. They are permitting all of their businesses. They are opening their doors. And I think in recent days I've been to more ribbon cuttings than I ever have as mayor.**



**MAYOR FRIDAY ELLIS | MONROE, LA**

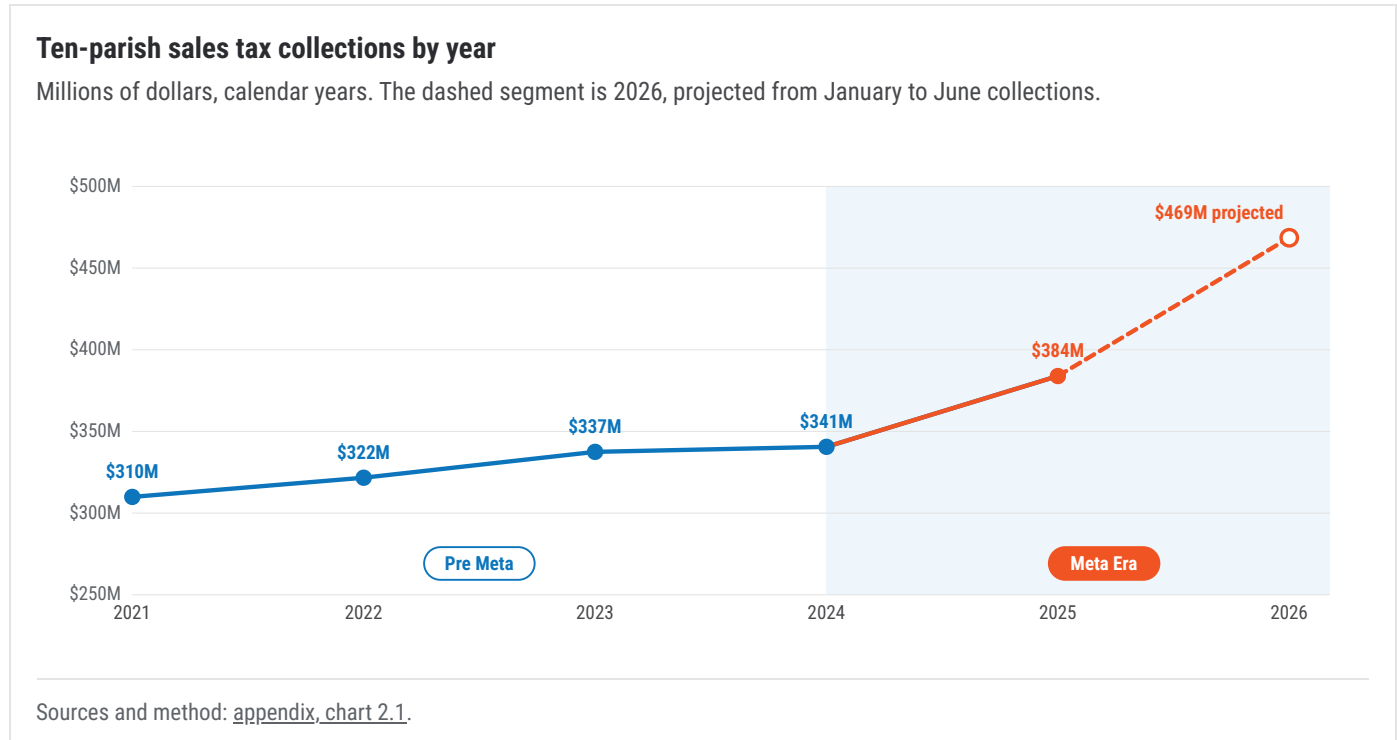
# What is actually happening right now?

Section 1 looked at other towns. This section looks at the Northeast Louisiana region. It starts with the one number every parish already watches: sales tax. Sales tax is an indicator of what people and businesses actually spent. Each parish's own office collects it, and it is audited every year. So it cannot be argued with, and it does not lag. From there the report follows the money to where it shows up next. Those places are Richland's own ledger, Monroe's permit office, paychecks, hotel rooms, contracts, and the airport.



## Sales tax sat flat for four years. It is on pace to rise 38% in two.

Every parish in Northeast Louisiana watches sales tax before any other number. Sales tax is the money that crossed a counter. It is remitted to the parish and audited every year. A change in the region shows up here first.



For four years the line barely moved. Collections across the ten parishes rose from \$310 million in 2021 to \$341 million in 2024. That is about 3% a year, slower than prices rose.

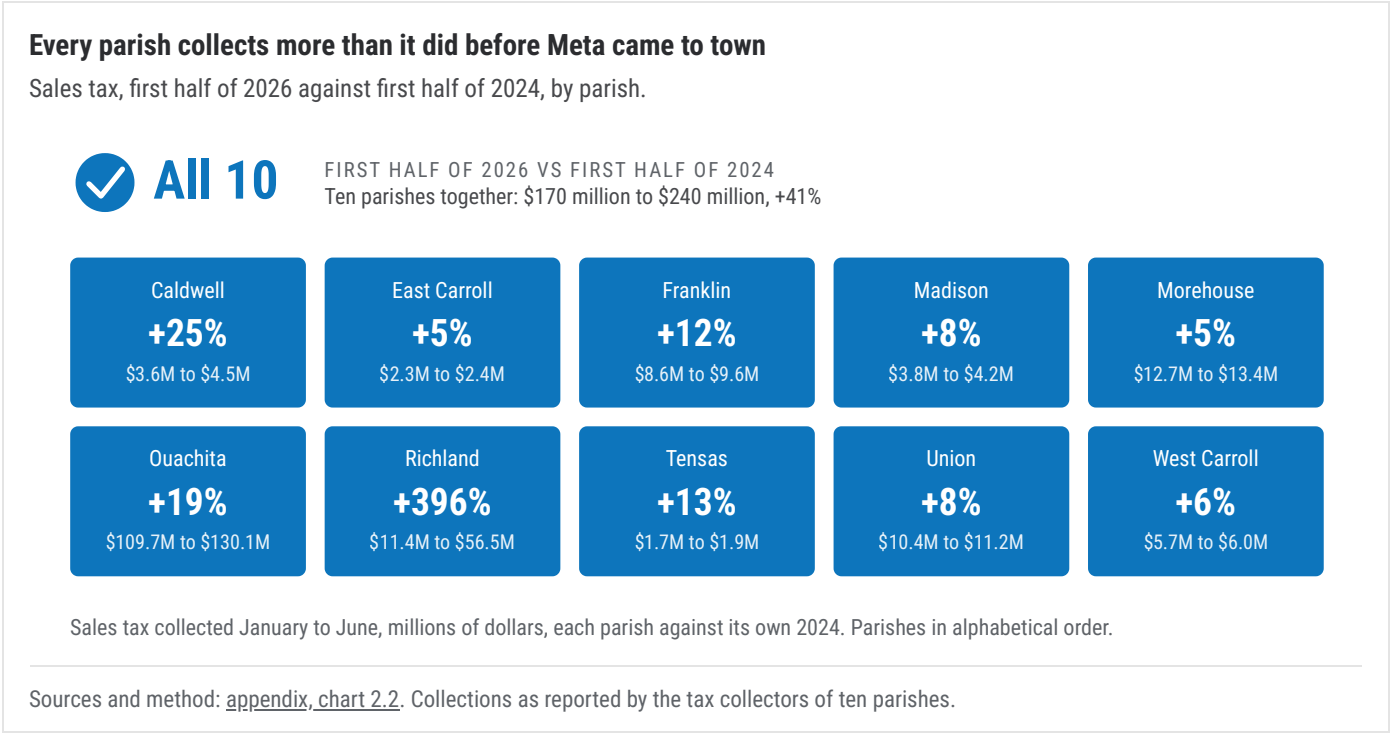
Then the line turned up. 2025 closed at \$384 million. The first six months of 2026 brought in \$240 million, more than any first half in the records. At the pace a first half usually sets, 2026 lands near \$469 million. That is 38% above 2024, before Meta came to town.

The rise came in more than one check. On its own, the first half of 2026 is running ahead of every year before Meta came to town. The base it rose from had also been flat for a long time. Most people had stopped expecting it to move.

Sales tax is a hard number to argue with. A 38% rise in two years is the plainest evidence that the region has entered a new era. The next page shows whether that rise is one parish or ten.

# Sales tax is up in all ten parishes that report it

One line for ten parishes can hide a lot. Richland alone could move it. The chart splits the same number by parish. Each parish’s first half of 2026 is set against its first half of 2024, the last first half before Meta came to town.



All ten parishes are up. Every parish collected more in the first half of 2026 than in the first half of 2024, and that is new. Before Meta came to town, 6 of the ten were flat or shrinking. East Carroll, Tensas, West Carroll, and Madison had collected less two years running. Caldwell and Franklin were collecting about the same.

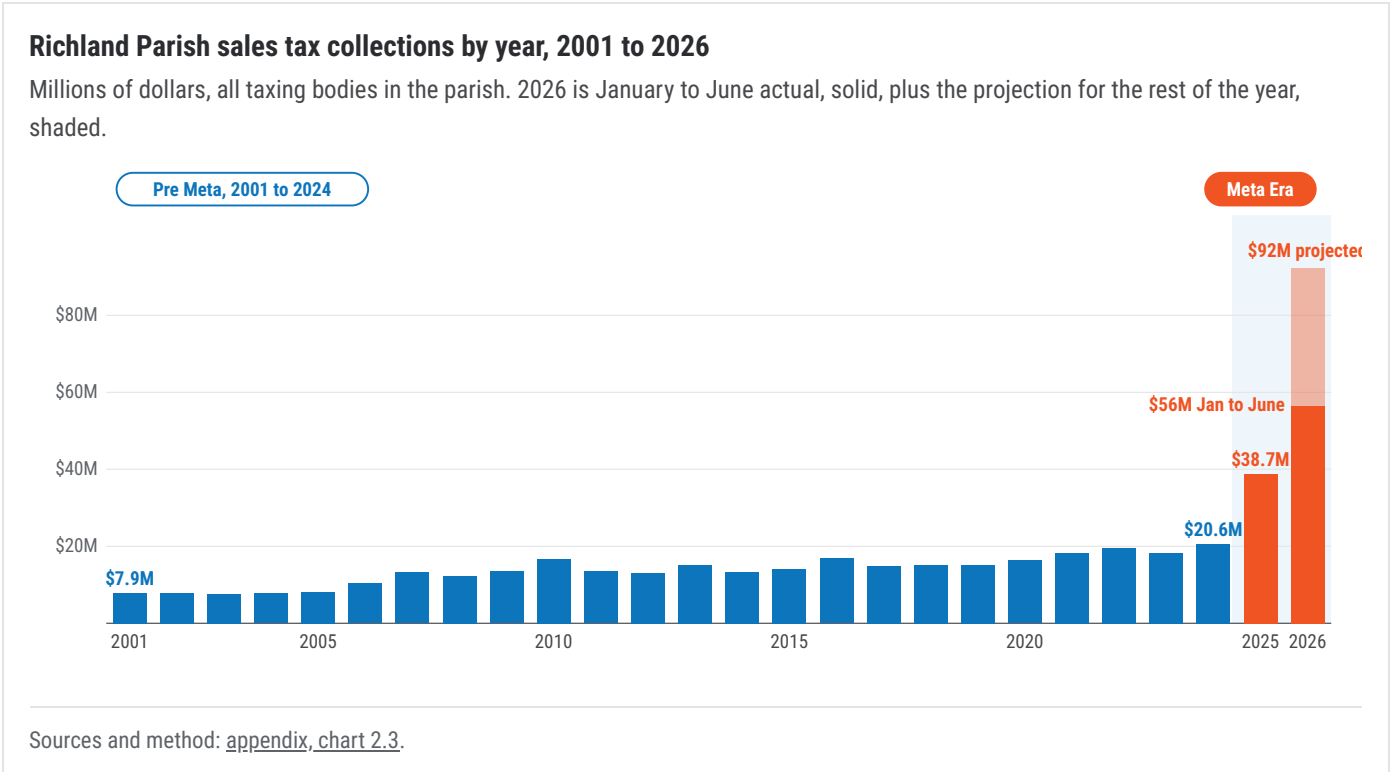
The gains vary in size. Richland, where the data center is, went from \$11.4 million to \$56.5 million. Ouachita, the hub, is up 19% on \$130 million in a half year, a large number for a parish that size. The other eight run from 5% to 25%.

Richland sits in the middle of the region and borders most of these parishes, including some of the smallest gains and the largest. The pattern among them follows what a parish sells and who drives through it, more than how close it is to Richland.

The gains outside Richland are smaller, and the measure for each parish is its own past. A 5% or 8% gain means more in a parish that was losing ground than in one that had been growing all along. East Carroll was shrinking and is now up. Madison and West Carroll were shrinking and are now up. For most of these parishes, this is more than they have had in years.

# Richland collected more sales tax in six months of 2026 than in any full year before

Richland Parish has kept the same sales tax ledger since 2001. For most of that time the ledger told a small story. Richland was a farming parish on the interstate, growing a little, flat some years. The chart puts the whole ledger in one place. The two years since the data center was announced sit at the end of it.



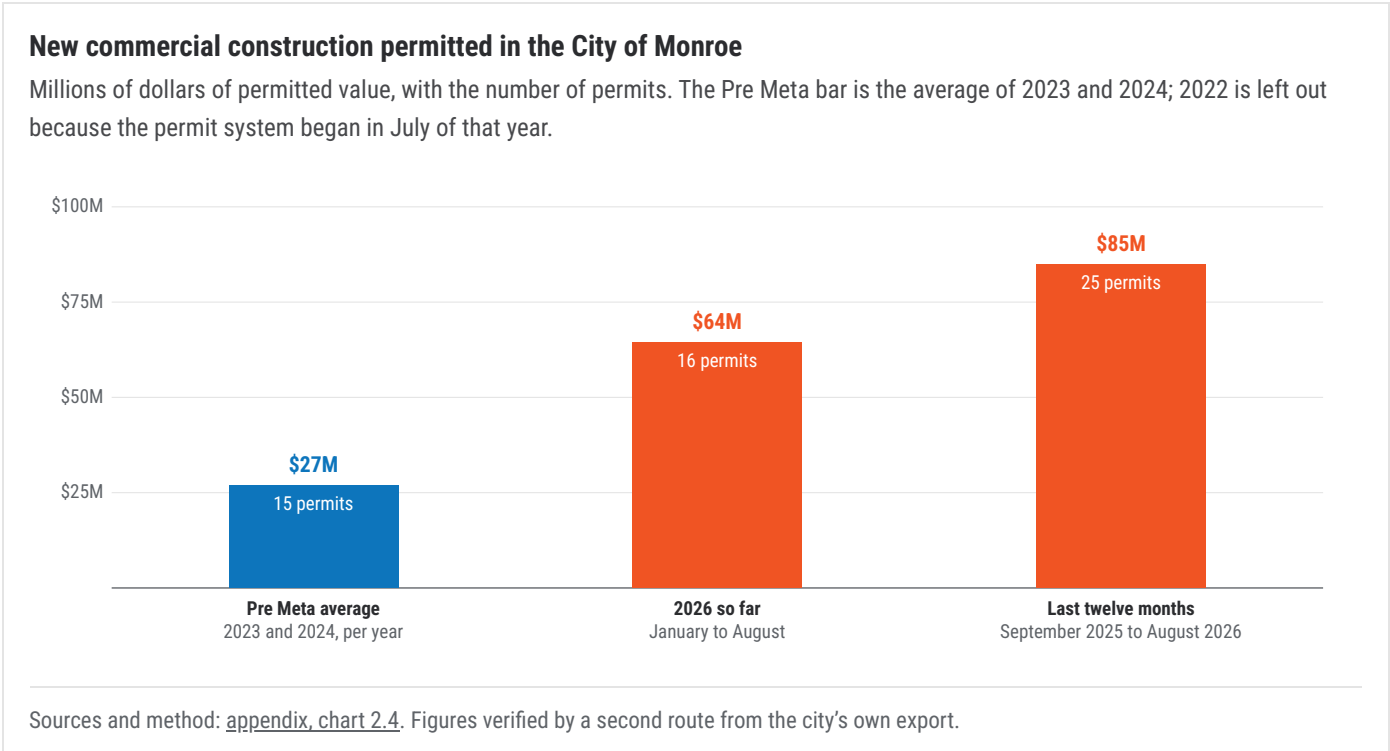
In 2001 Richland collected \$7.9 million. It took until 2024 to reach \$20.6 million, the best year the parish had ever had and a 160% rise over twenty-three years. Then 2025 collected \$38.7 million, nearly double the best year before it. The first six months of 2026 brought in \$56.5 million, more than any full year in the ledger. The year is on pace for about \$92 million.

2026 is on pace to collect in one year what the parish collected in the four years before the announcement combined. The change is fast as well as large. No year in the twenty-five before moved more than a few million dollars. Then 2025 moved \$18 million, and 2026 is on pace to move more than \$50 million.

Richland is the tile that did not look like the others on the last page, drawn here to its own length. A parish of 20,000 people now collects a fifth of the regional total. Five years ago its sales tax would have been a rounding error for the region. The pages that follow track where that money shows up next. The first place to look is the permit office in the region’s largest city.

# New commercial construction permits in Monroe went from \$27 million a year to \$85 million

A permit is a promise to build. The City of Monroe’s permit office records every one with its value. The commercial file separates new construction from work on buildings already standing. The chart covers the new construction. It sets what the city used to permit in a year beside this year so far and the last twelve months.



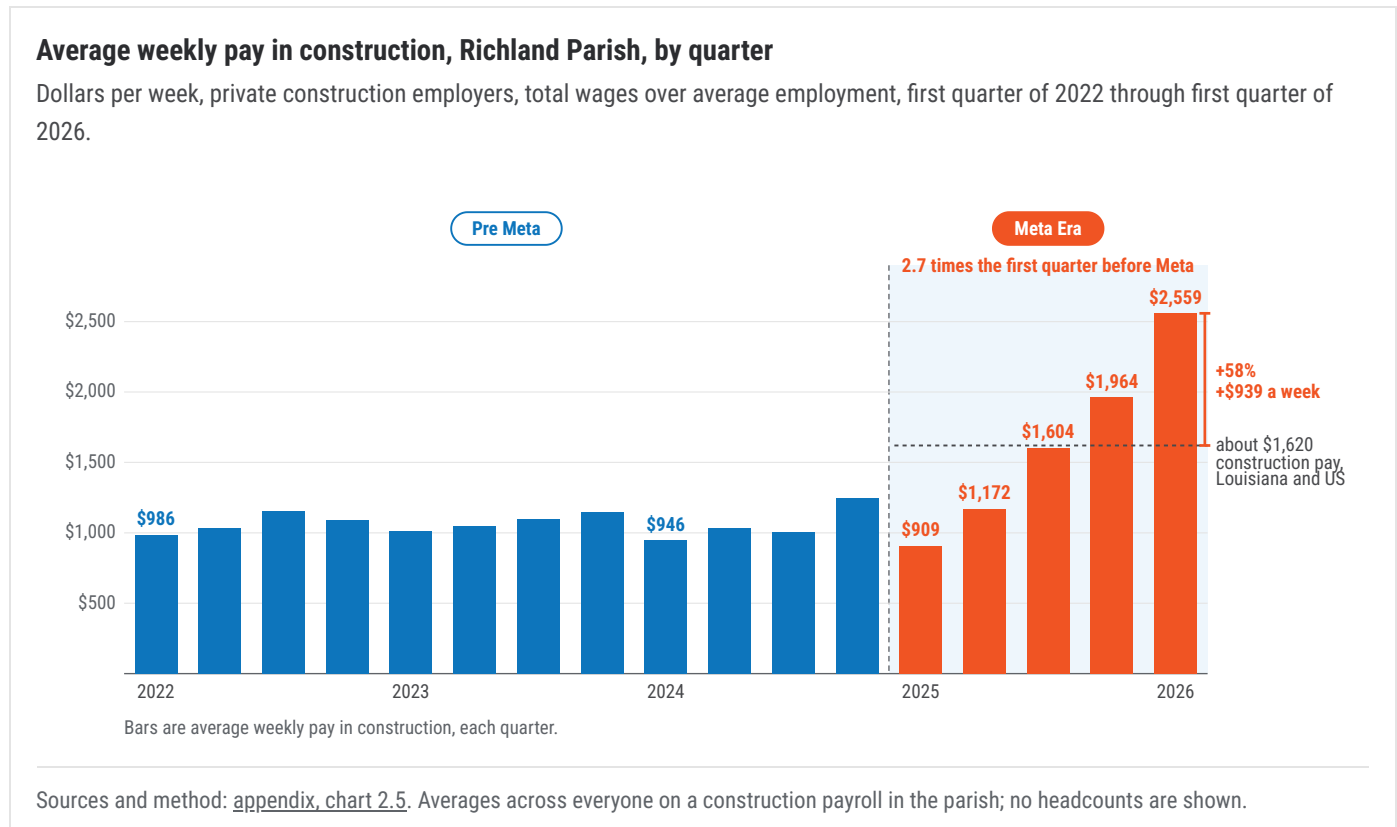
Before Meta came to town, the City of Monroe permitted about \$27 million a year of new commercial construction. In the first eight months of 2026 it has permitted \$64 million. That is more than any full year since the permit system began. Over the last twelve months the figure is \$85 million, more than three times the earlier pace.

The total is spread across many projects. The last twelve months hold 25 new construction permits. The largest is \$14 million and the typical one is about \$1.5 million. A single large job would be about one company. A spread of projects across the city is about what builders expect the next few years to look like.

Richland collects the construction. Many of the people who build it and serve it eat, sleep, and shop in Monroe, forty minutes west. The permit file is the first place that spending shows up in brick. The next page looks for it in the paycheck.

## A construction paycheck in Richland went from \$946 to \$2,559 a week

Sales tax shows that people are spending. The paycheck shows why. Every employer in Louisiana reports each quarter what it paid and to how many people. Those reports give the average weekly wage in construction in Richland Parish, quarter by quarter. The chart follows it through the announcement and into the Meta era.



Before Meta came to town, a construction job in Richland paid about \$1,067 a week. The first quarter of 2024 came in at \$946. The first quarter of 2026 came in at \$2,559, 2.7 times the first quarter before Meta came to town. That is \$939 a week more than a construction job pays across Louisiana and the United States.

The two years before were flat. From the start of 2022 to the start of 2024 Richland's construction paycheck did not grow at all: \$986 a week became \$946. Over the next two years it more than doubled. By the end, a construction job in a parish of 20,000 people paid more than the same job pays on average in Louisiana. It paid more than the average across the country too.

A paycheck like this leaves Richland. It is spent in Monroe, Ruston, and Winnsboro, on trucks, rent, groceries, and Friday nights. The sales tax pages before this one are where it lands. The people earning it also have to sleep somewhere. The next pages follow the paycheck to the hotels, the rentals, and the airport.

## \$1.6 billion of contracts, and most of the companies are local

Before the paycheck there is the contract. Meta publishes a running total of what it has committed to Louisiana businesses for the Richland data center. It also publishes how many of those businesses are from this corner of the state.

### Meta contracts with Louisiana businesses

Cumulative through July 2026, as published by the company.

META CONTRACTS WITH LOUISIANA BUSINESSES

# \$1.6 billion+

committed to Louisiana companies for the Richland data center through July 2026, as published by the company

**84%** of the 160-plus Louisiana businesses under contract were in Northeast Louisiana at the one-year mark, December 2025

Sources and method: [appendix, chart 2.6](#).

In July 2026 Meta said it had committed more than \$1.6 billion to Louisiana businesses for the Richland data center. That took about twenty months. At the one-year mark more than 160 Louisiana businesses held contracts. Of those businesses, 84% were based in Northeast Louisiana.

That money moves through local concrete, steel, electrical, hauling, and site-work companies. Money on that scale is the kind of thing that fills hotel rooms. The hotels around the Monroe airport are the next place to look.

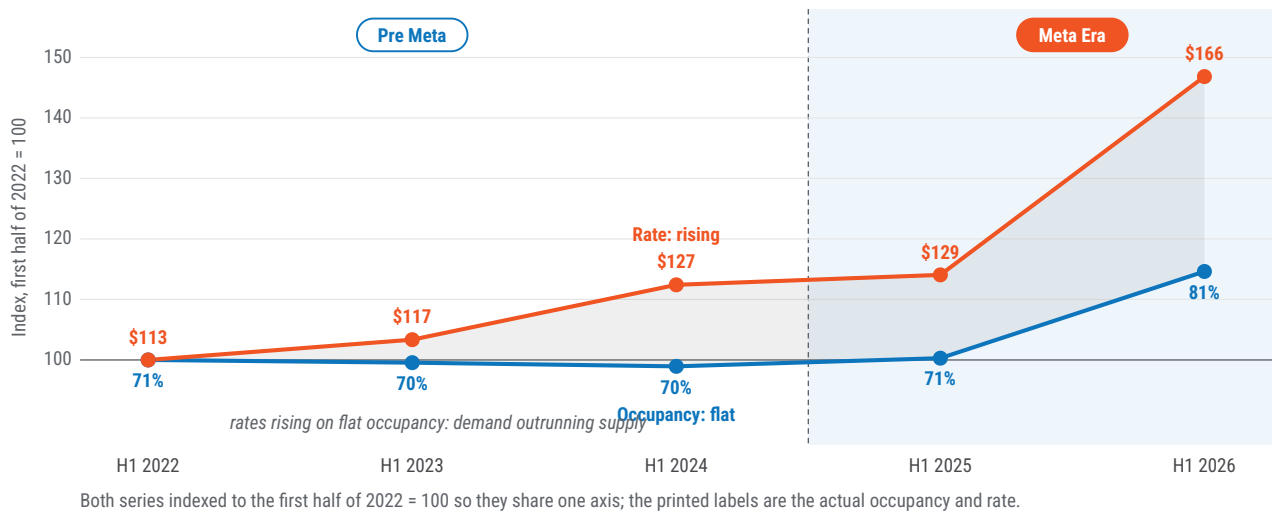


## Hotel rooms are 81% full at \$166 a night

A hotel market can be read in two numbers: how many rooms are sold, and what they sell for. The hotels around Monroe's airport share their numbers with each other through an industry service. The first half of each year since 2022 gives five clean points of comparison.

### Monroe airport-area hotels, first half of each year: occupancy and average daily rate

January to June, averaged across the competitive set. Both lines are indexed to the first half of 2022 so they share one axis; the labels are the actual occupancy and rate.



Sources and method: [appendix, chart 2.7](#). Contributed data, shown as aggregates.

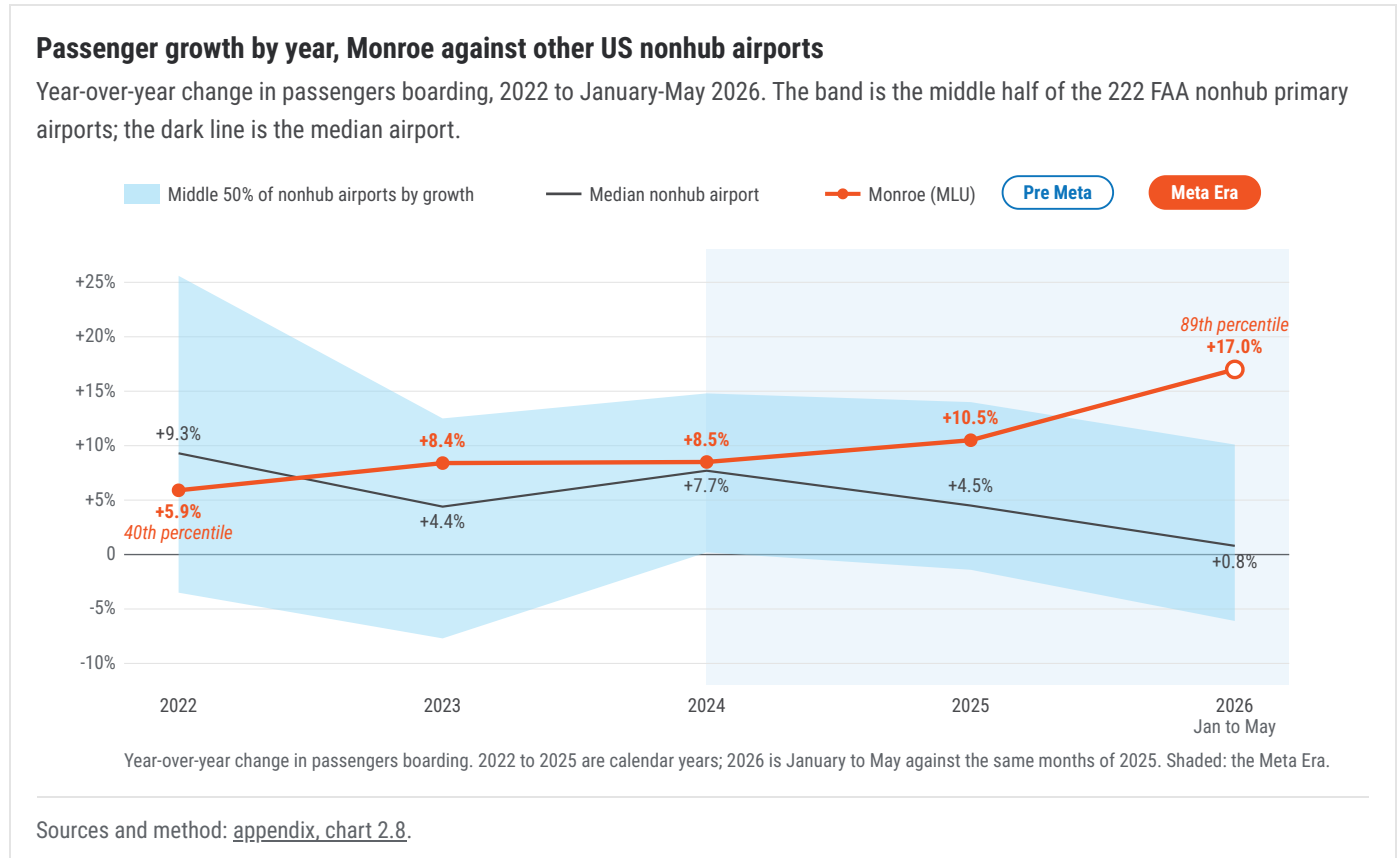
From 2022 to 2025 occupancy held near 70% in every first half. The rate climbed anyway, from \$113 a night to \$129. A market that raises its price every year and stays just as full is short of rooms. This one was short before anyone tied to the data center checked in.

Then both moved at once. The first half of 2026 ran 81% full at \$166 a night. That rate is 31% above the last first half before Meta came to town. Three hotels are under construction near the interstate. A market this full at these rates has room for more than that.

Every one of those rooms is a visitor eating, buying gas, and shopping in Ouachita Parish. The hotel tax on the room goes straight to the bureau that markets the region and books its events. A market this full at these rates is also what gets hotels built, and three are under construction already. Higher occupancy and a higher rate at the same time is the clearest sign a market can give. It shows the people filling these rooms came here for something, and are more than travelers passing through on the interstate.

## Monroe passenger growth has climbed every year since 2022 while peer growth has faded

A small airport depends on whether people have a reason to fly. The chart sets Monroe Regional's passenger growth each year since 2022 against the 222 small airports in its class across the country.



Monroe's passenger growth has climbed every year since 2022. It went 5.9%, then 8.4%, 8.5% and 10.5%. In the first five months of 2026 it reached 17% against the same months of 2025. Over the same years, growth at the typical small airport faded, from 9.3% in 2022 to under 1% so far in 2026.

In 2022 Monroe sat in the middle of the pack, at the 40th percentile of the 222 airports in its class. By 2026 it was at the 89th. The orange line leaves the band in 2026. That is the shape of a place where more people have a reason to fly than the year before. In the same year, that stopped being true for most towns this size.

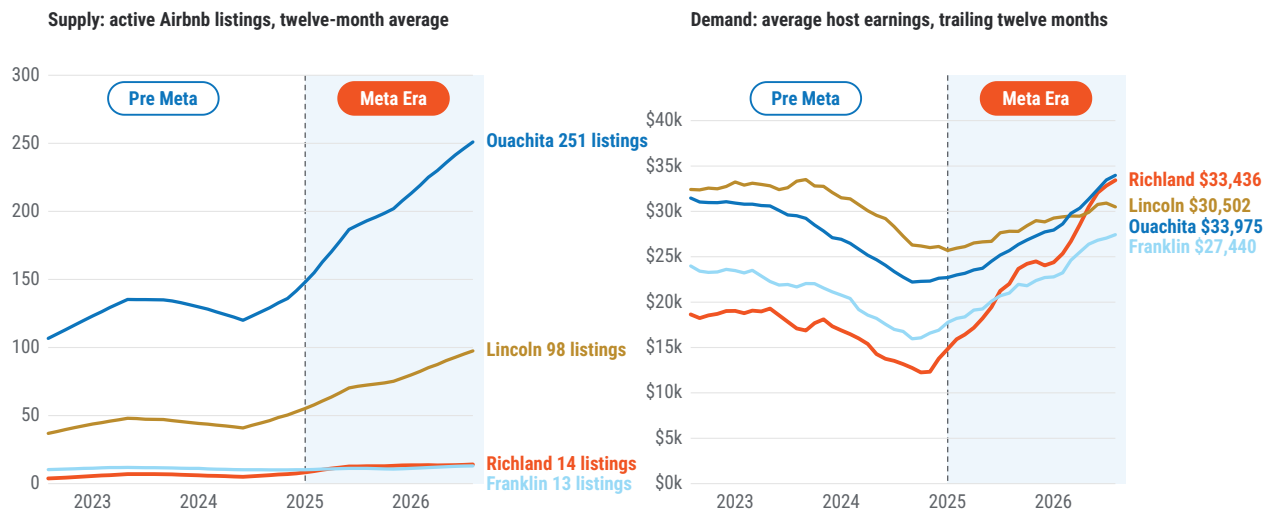
This matters beyond the terminal, because airlines put seats where the passengers are. A small airport growing at 17% while most of its peers stand still builds a record. That record earns a larger plane, another daily flight, or a new route. Each of those makes the region easier to reach. That counts for the company deciding whether to locate here, the executive deciding whether to visit, and the family deciding whether to stay.

## Airbnb listings roughly doubled in Ouachita, and hosts are earning more

A construction crew on a two-year job stays in more than hotels. It rents a house, a trailer pad, or a room, and a growing share of those are listed on Airbnb. The chart counts the listings in the host parish, the two hub parishes, and one neighbor. It also gives what the average host earns from one.

### Airbnb supply and host earnings, four parishes

Left: active listings, twelve-month average. Right: average host earnings, trailing twelve months.



Sources and method: [appendix, chart 2.9](#).

Listings roughly doubled in Ouachita, from 120 in the year ending June 2024 to 251 in the year ending August 2026. They tripled in Richland, from 5 to 14, and rose in Lincoln and Franklin. The counts in the two small parishes are a handful of hosts.

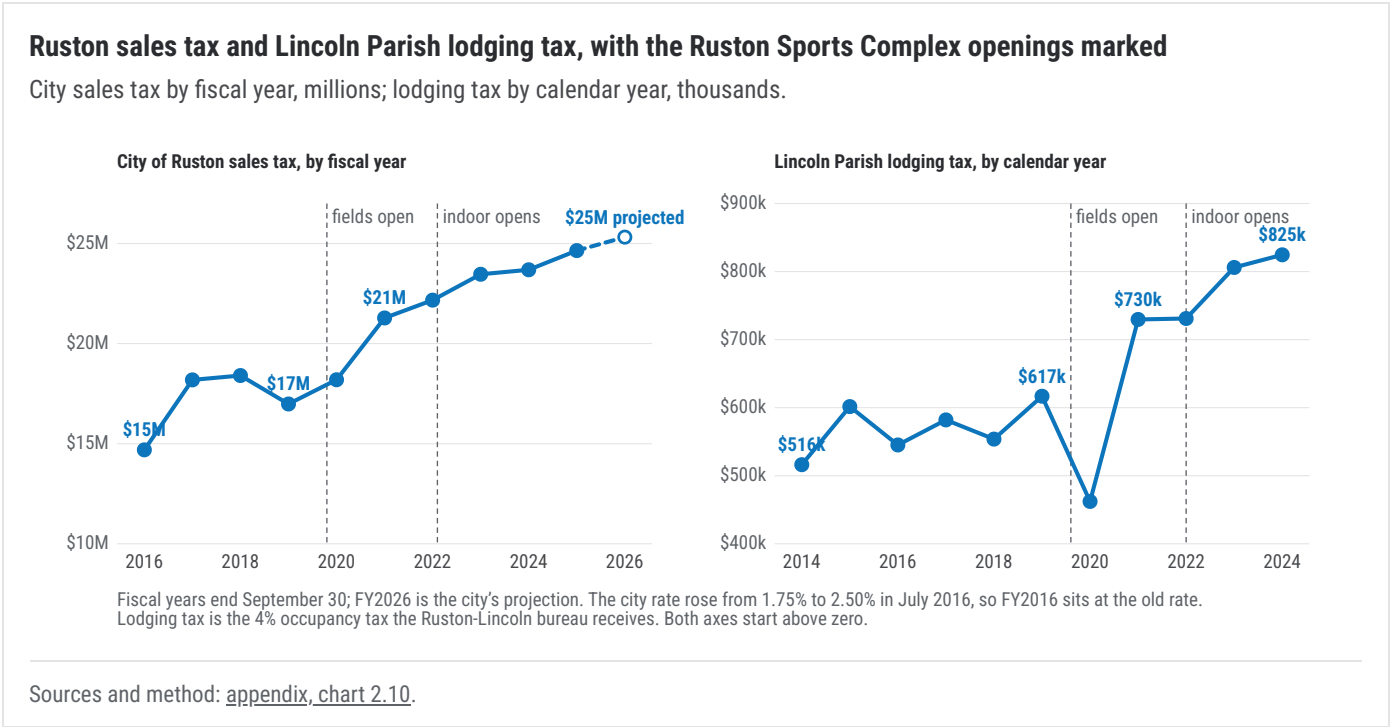
Supply that grows this fast usually pulls earnings down. Here earnings went up. The average host's trailing-year revenue rose in all four parishes. It reached \$33,975 in Ouachita, \$30,502 in Lincoln, \$33,436 in Richland, and \$27,440 in Franklin. In Richland that is up from \$13,759 in the year before Meta came to town.

More rooms are offered and each one earns more, so demand is still outrunning the new supply. A market where every new listing finds guests and the ones already there earn more has room for more of them.

This section started with money crossing a counter. It then followed a paycheck, a contract, a hotel room, a flight, and a spare bedroom. The same data center shows up in six different ledgers kept by six different people. The next two pages turn to Lincoln Parish and two projects of its own.

# Ruston sales tax and hotel tax rose after the sports complex opened

Ruston built a sports complex on U.S. Highway 167: 185 acres, 36 fields, and an indoor building with six courts, about \$67 million, run by the city. The outdoor fields opened in July 2019 and the indoor building in January 2022. Both openings are marked on the chart.



The sports complex is effective at boosting tourism, and the city’s sales tax shows it. Collections sat between \$17.0 million and \$18.4 million from 2017 to 2019. The fields opened in July 2019, and collections rose 25% over the next two fiscal years, to \$21.3 million. They reached \$24.6 million in 2025.

The lodging tax shows that more people are staying. It is the 4% tax on hotel rooms, and visitors pay it. It ran between \$516,000 and \$617,000 a year through 2019, the year the fields opened. It reached \$730,000 in 2021, the fields’ first full tournament season after the pandemic, and \$825,000 in 2024. The tourism bureau counted 285 youth and collegiate sporting events in 2024 across the complex, Louisiana Tech, and Grambling. About half of all visitors came from out of state.

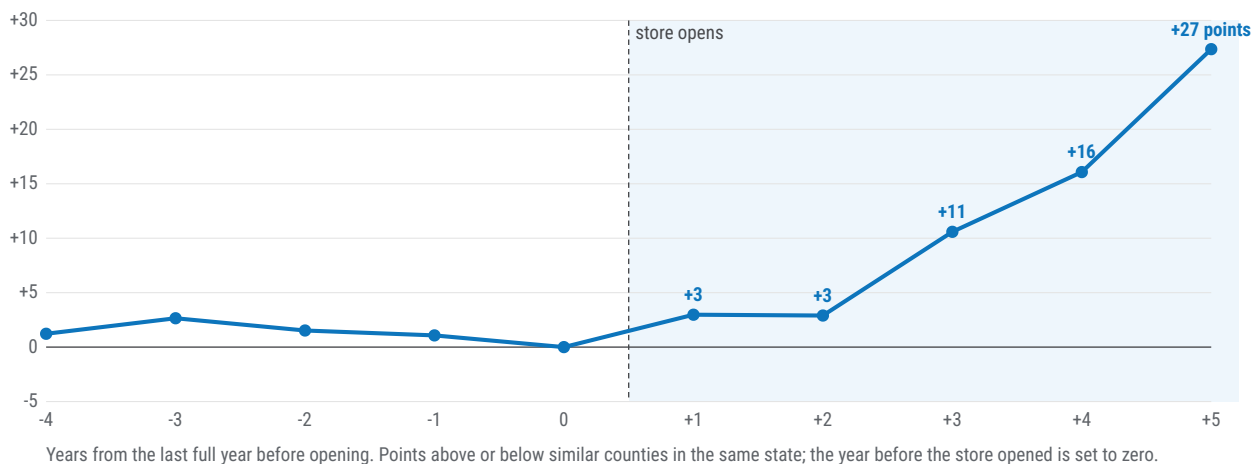
Both lines stepped up after the fields opened, and both have held. For the region, Ruston is the local proof that a public investment in visitors pays back in sales tax and hotel stays.

## After a Buc-ee's opens, the county registers more new businesses

Buc-ee's broke ground on Interstate 20 in Ruston in October 2025 and opens in April 2027. The store brings its own jobs. A town also wants to know what happens around it. One way to see that is business applications.

### New business applications in the county against similar counties, before and after a Buc-ee's opened

Points above or below similar counties in the same state, with the year before opening set to zero. Median across the Buc-ee's counties.



Sources and method: [appendix, chart 2.11](#).

For four years before the store, the Buc-ee's counties filed applications at the same pace as counties like them. The line on the left of the chart sits on zero. Then it bends. By year three the Buc-ee's counties were about 11 points ahead of their peers, and by year five 27. Flat before and rising after, against a fair comparison, is the shape a cause leaves. Of the 23 counties, 15 outgrew their peers, and the newest stores have only two or three years of data.

The count leaves out who filed. The filer could be a new restaurant or a hotel operator setting up a new entity. It could be a contractor the store needed, or a resident who finally opened the shop. The count does show that more people in these counties decided a new business was worth registering after the store than before. Similar counties in the same state did not see the same thing.

A Buc-ee's pulls cars off the interstate that would otherwise have kept going. Whoever opens next to one is counting on that. Ruston has already seen the small version with the Ruston Sports Complex. The parish went from ten lodging businesses in 2014 to sixteen.

The two Ruston pages show the same pattern as the region. Something gets built that brings people to town. The register follows, and then the next thing gets built. Lincoln Parish had one of those with the Ruston Sports Complex and has a second one, Buc-ee's, coming in 2027.

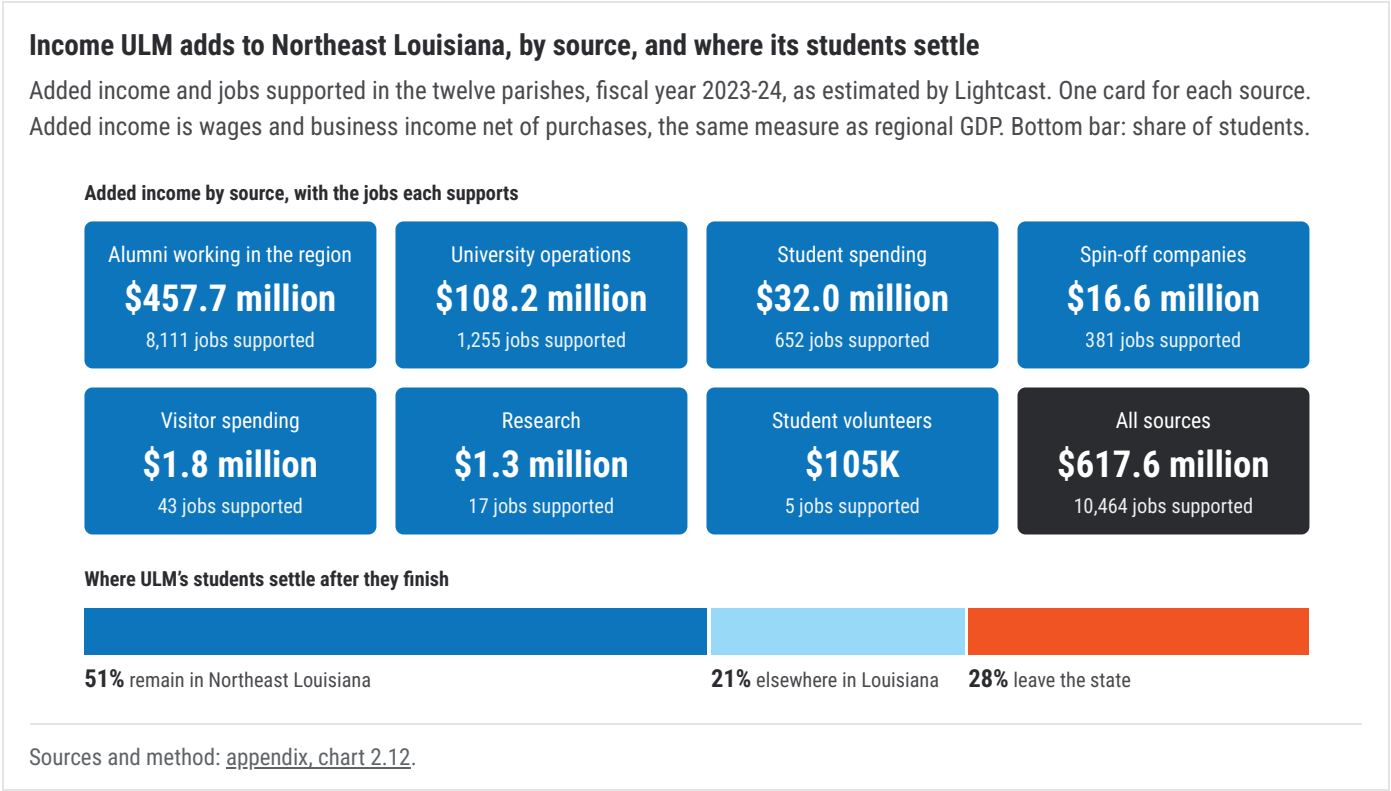


“The fact that the people of Ruston voted in 2016 the forward initiative that allowed us to position our city and our parish for growth, that has resulted in over \$250 million on infrastructure so that companies like Willis Knighton and Chase, Radiance Technology, Buc-ee's all of those could come. And because of that, we now have over \$900 million worth of private investments coming to our city.”

MAYOR RONNY WALKER | RUSTON, LA

# What ULM adds to the region's economy

The University of Louisiana Monroe added \$617.6 million in income to the twelve parishes in fiscal year 2023-24. That is the estimate of Lightcast, a labor-market data firm, in a study prepared for the university and published in April 2025. The Lightcast figures on this page are estimates for that one year. The chart splits the total by source and follows ULM's students after they finish.



The largest figure is alumni. Lightcast counts \$457.7 million in added income from former students who now work in the twelve parishes, about three-quarters of the total. The figure is the extra pay their ULM coursework earns them, the added income of their employers, and the spending both set off. Lightcast cuts the extra pay by 15% for people who would have found a similar education anyway. It cuts what is left by half for jobs employers could have filled by hiring from outside the region.

The other cards are spending. ULM paid \$88.5 million in salaries and benefits to 1,019 employees that year. Its operations, construction included, added \$108.2 million, net of what the same local tuition and tax dollars would have done in household budgets. Students who moved here or stayed here for school added \$32.0 million through rent, food, and other living costs. Spin-off companies, visitors, research, and student volunteers add the remaining \$19.8 million.

Lightcast sets the total at 4.5% of the region's economy, which it measured at \$13.7 billion for 2023. Against the \$16.9 billion the Bureau of Economic Analysis counts for the twelve parishes in 2024, the share is about 3.7%. The study ties 10,464 jobs to the total, one in every 18 in the region by its count. It also reports what each group gets back for a dollar put in. Students get \$5.30, taxpayers \$2.40 and Louisiana as a whole \$6.60.

ULM served 9,623 students that year, and about 1,500 finished a degree or certificate. Lightcast estimates that 51% of its students remain in Northeast Louisiana after they finish, 21% settle elsewhere in Louisiana, and 28% leave the state. The data center in Richland Parish and the employers that follow it will need trained people, and ULM already trains them inside the twelve parishes. Each graduate who stays for one of those jobs adds to the alumni figure. Chart 3.1 sets the credentials ULM and the region's three other colleges award against the openings the region expects each year.



“ULM is really supporting the region's future. So as we look at how we move forward as a university, we have to be nimble. We have to be responsive. So, we've added five new programs to make sure that we're in a complete alignment with the workforce development needs. Advanced innovation and learning is always going to be a priority for us. Every student that graduates from ULM moving forward will have a micro credential in artificial intelligence. So when they walk out the door, they're going to make sure that they have the technological proficiency to be successful in our workforce and grow with our economy.”

**CARRIE L. CASTILLE | PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA MONROE**

# What is there to build on?

Section 2 was what is happening now. This section is what it is landing on: the people, the housing, the stores, the streets, and the institutions that were here before the first crew arrived and will be here after the last one leaves. The towns in Section 1 that pulled ahead were the ones with something ready when the next project came looking. This is the inventory.



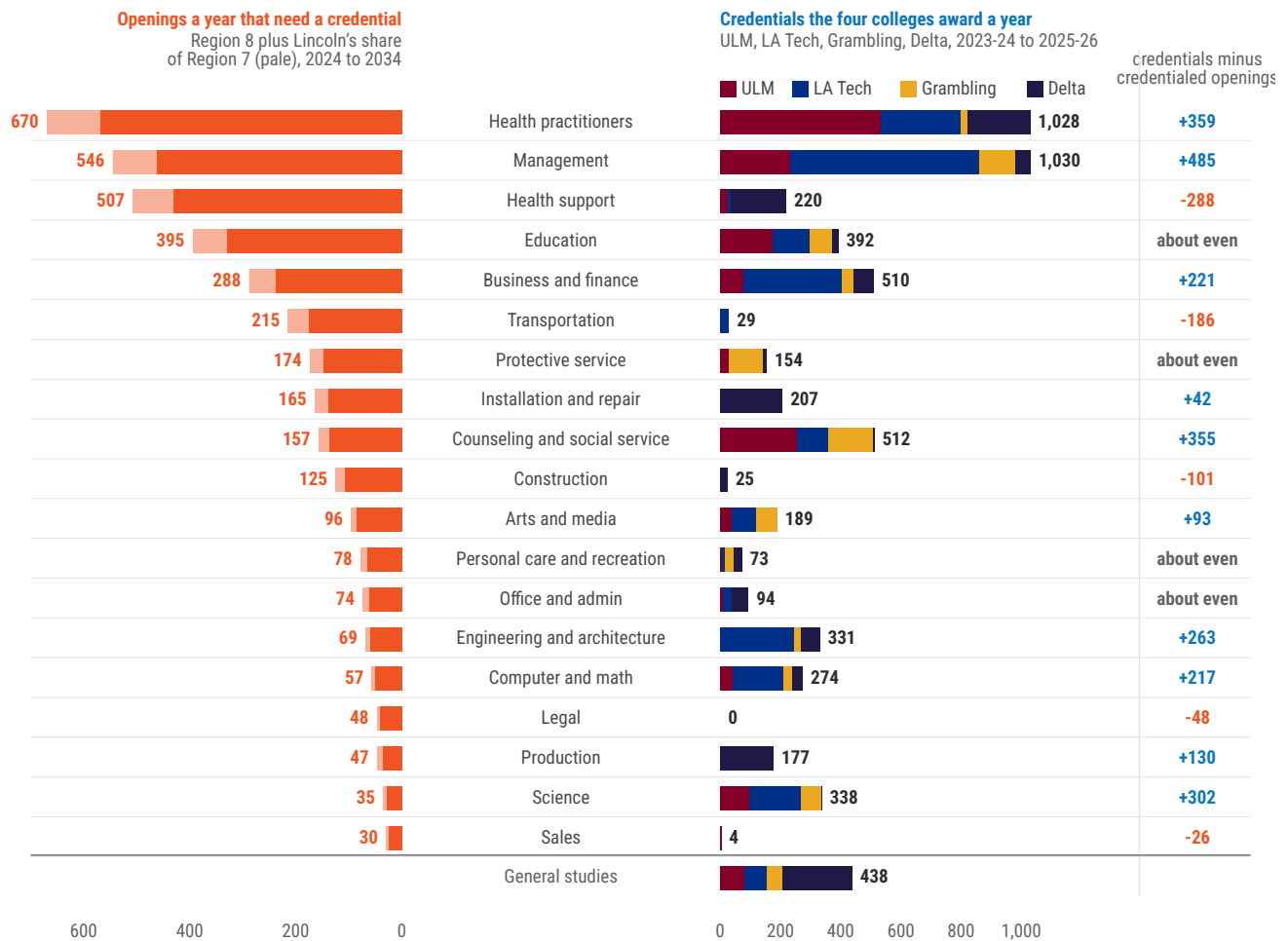
Oak Grove, LA

## The region graduates more people than it has jobs for

Four college and university campuses sit inside the twelve parishes: ULM, Louisiana Tech, Grambling, and Delta Community College. Between them they award about 6,022 credentials a year. The state projects about 3,775 openings a year here that call for one. Here is where the two line up, occupation by occupation.

### Openings a year that need a credential, against credentials awarded a year, by occupation group

Left: projected annual openings in occupations that call for a postsecondary award or degree. Right: credentials awarded a year by the four colleges, mapped to the occupations they train for. Far right: the difference.

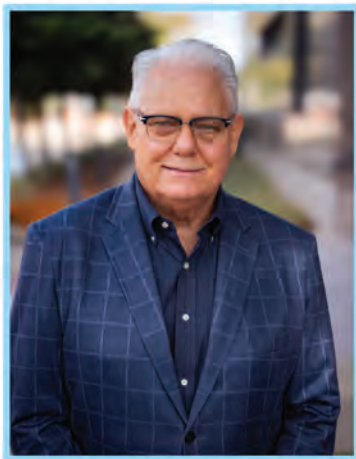


Sources and method: [appendix, chart 3.1](#). Groups with fewer than 20 openings and 50 credentials are left off.

The four campuses award about 6,022 credentials a year into a region with about 3,775 openings a year that call for one. In management, nursing and health practice, business, counseling, engineering, and the sciences, the campuses produce hundreds more graduates a year than the region has openings for, and about half of ULM’s students already settle outside Northeast Louisiana when they finish. That is a surplus of trained people, and it is the strongest single argument this section makes to a company looking in: the engineers, the nurses, and the managers are already here, and nobody has to be moved.

The chart also shows where the openings outrun the credentials, and those rows read like a list of what the next few years will need most. Health support, drivers, and the construction trades are the largest, and each of them is a certificate program measured in months rather than a degree measured in years.

A region that over-produces engineers and under-produces electricians is not short of talent. It is short of a few specific programs, and the campuses that fill them will be training people for jobs that are already posted. The larger number on the chart is the surplus, and it comes with a clock. Every one of those graduates lives here while they study. The time to make them want to stay is while they are here: the internship, the first apartment, the job offer that comes before the one from out of town.

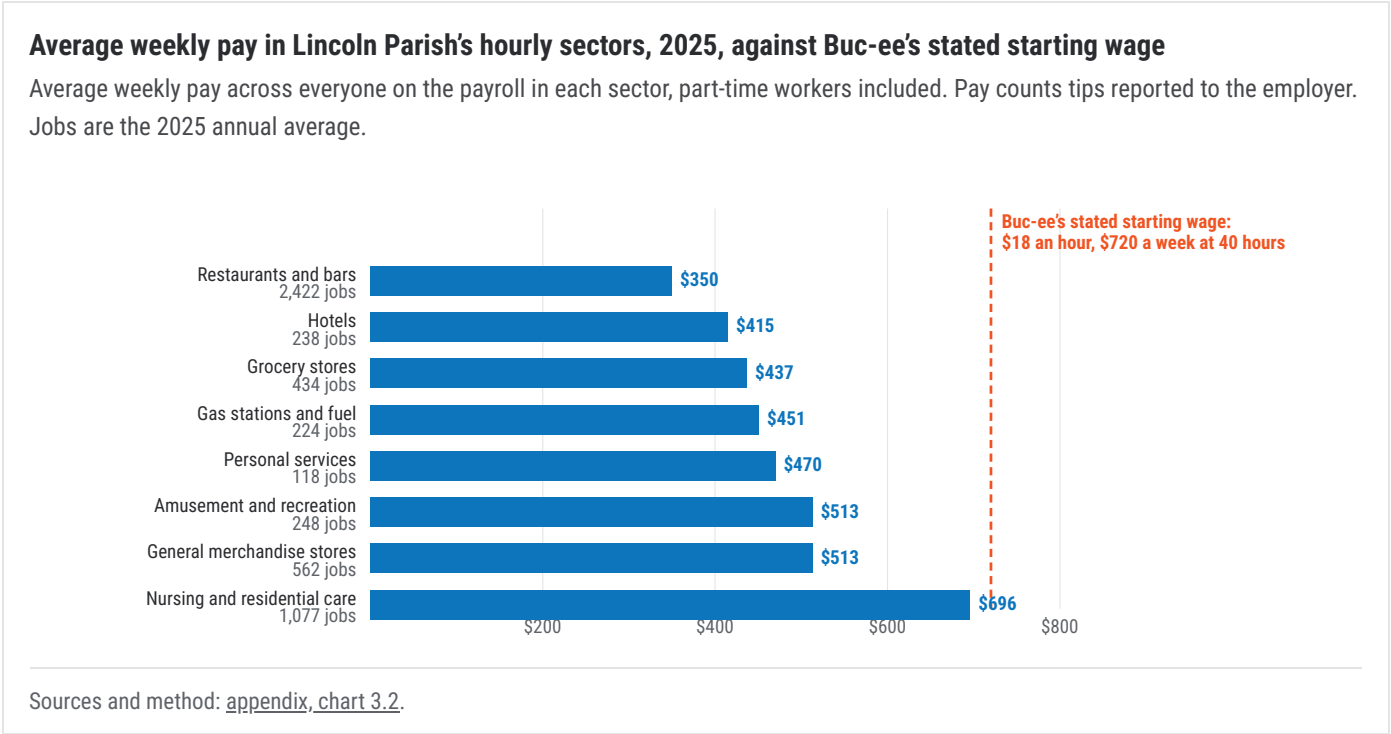


“Major investment changes the conversation. Better information changes what you do next.”

JOE HOLYFIELD | BOARD CHAIR,  
BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PARK

# Buc-ee's will out-pay every hourly sector in Lincoln Parish

Buc-ee's opens in Ruston in April 2027. The company says the store brings at least 200 full-time jobs with full benefits, and local reporting put the starting wage at \$18 an hour, or \$720 for a forty-hour week. The chart sets that figure beside what Lincoln Parish's hourly sectors pay now.



All eight bars stop short of the orange line. Restaurants and bars are the parish's largest hourly employer, with about 2,400 jobs, and the average paycheck there is \$350 a week, reported tips included. Nursing and residential care comes closest, at \$696. Together the eight sectors hold about 5,300 jobs, one in three private-sector jobs in Lincoln Parish.

The gap has two parts: the hourly wage and the hours. Each bar averages everyone on the payroll, and many of those jobs are part-time. A restaurant worker averaging \$350 a week is likely working fewer than forty hours. Buc-ee's is offering a higher hourly wage and a full week at the same time. By the parish's own standard, \$720 is an ordinary paycheck. The average private-sector job in Lincoln paid \$892 a week in 2025.

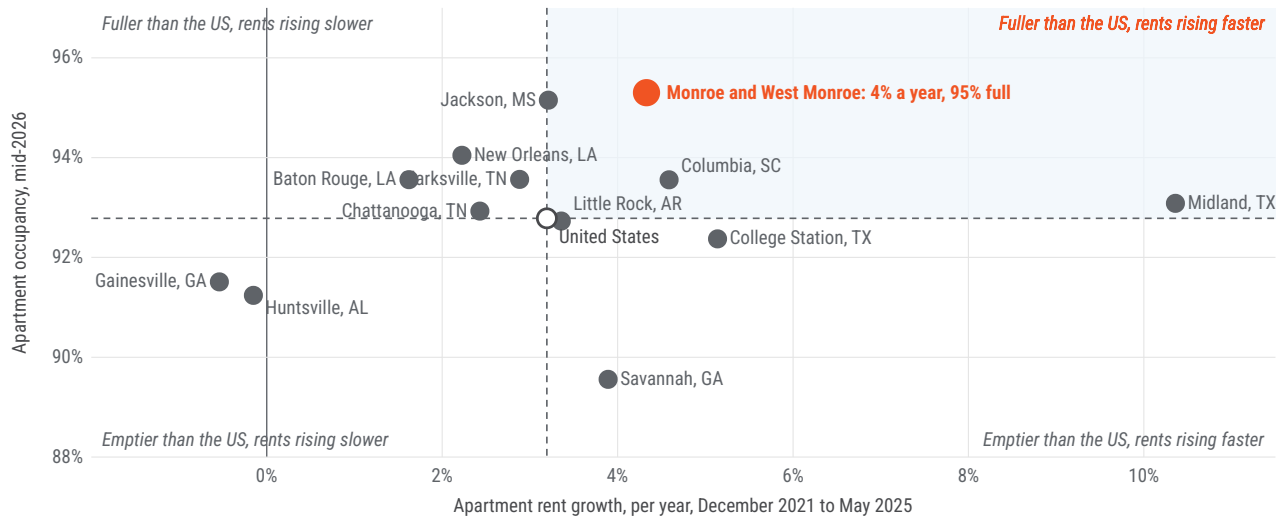
A full-time year at \$18 an hour comes to about \$37,400, twice what the average restaurant job in the parish paid in 2025. The store has at least 200 of those jobs to fill, and about 5,300 people work in sectors that average less. From April 2027, every employer on this chart will be hiring against that wage.

## Monroe and West Monroe apartments raised rents 4% a year and stayed 95% full

Two numbers describe an apartment market: how fast rents are rising and how many units are occupied. The chart places Monroe and West Monroe on both, beside twelve Southern metros and the country. The local figures come from listed rents and a property-manager survey.

### Apartment rent growth against apartment occupancy, Monroe and West Monroe and twelve Southern metros

Monroe and West Monroe: rent growth is the median of 22 apartment complexes with a listed rent in both December 2021 and May 2025. Occupancy is a 2026 property-manager survey of 13 Monroe communities, 1,778 units. Peers: all multifamily listings in each metro, regional centers of 200,000 to over a million people. Rent growth is per year, December 2021 to May 2025. Occupancy is mid-2026. The dashed lines are the United States.



Sources and method: [appendix, chart 3.3](#). Monroe's own figures come from local rent records and a property-manager survey, matched to the peers' windows.

Rents in Monroe and West Monroe rose about 4% a year from 2021 to 2025. That is faster than the nation and faster than nine of the twelve metros on the chart. Most of those metros are several times Monroe's size. A market this small raising rents faster than New Orleans and Baton Rouge is a signal.

The signal is demand running ahead of supply. Apartments in Monroe are 95% full, above the national figure of 93%, and only Jackson, Mississippi, comes close. About 80 of the 1,778 surveyed apartments were empty in the summer of 2026. When nearly every unit is taken, a landlord can raise the rent and still fill the apartment.

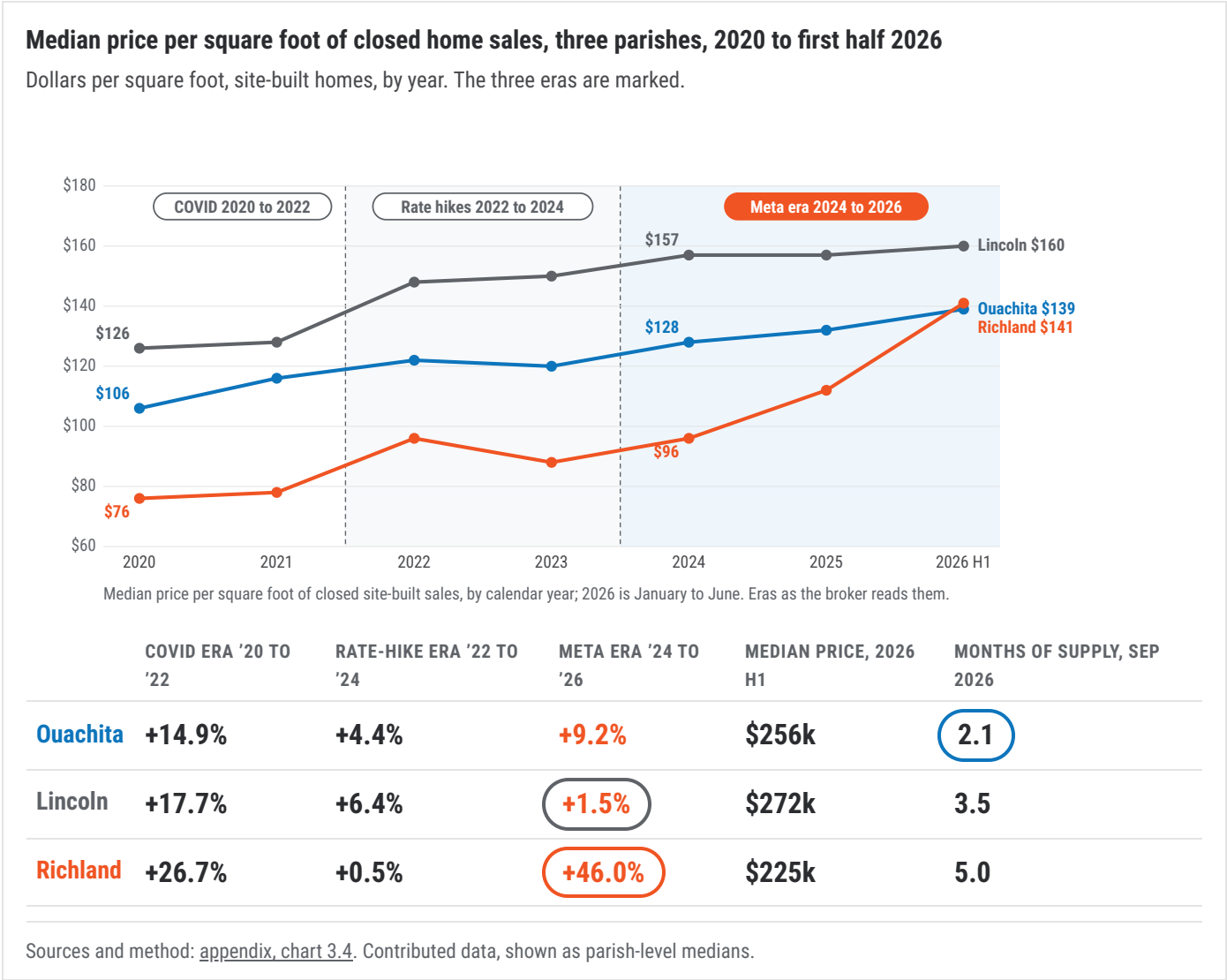
The chart ends in May 2025, and the pressure has grown since. The talk across the region has been of serious rent hikes in 2026, a response to a housing shortage tied to the data center. At twelve complexes with a 2026 reading, rents quoted that summer ran a median 7% above their 2025 listings. At 95% full there is room for additional supply, and more apartments are what would steady the rent increases.



Monroe, LA

# The for-sale housing market in three parishes

This page is a guest feature. Brian Bendily, an associate broker with John Rea Realty, pulled every closed site-built home sale in Ouachita, Lincoln, and Richland parishes from January 2020 through June 2026 and read them by era: the COVID boom, the 2022 rate hikes, and the Meta era. One chart holds all three parishes. The three readings below are his.



Richland's story is the simplest of the three parishes, and the most dramatic. It barely reacted to the two forces that drove the rest of the country: the COVID boom added only modest value here, and the 2022 interest-rate shock left prices essentially flat (+0% over two years). Then Meta announced its data center, and everything changed: price per square foot has jumped 46% in the eighteen months since, and median prices are up about 40%. The single most important fact about this market is that one event, the data center, is now its dominant driver, and it is meeting almost no new supply: builders deliver only a handful of homes a year, and just two homes have sold above \$800,000 since 2020. For anyone asking where the data-center opportunity is most concentrated, the answer is here, at the epicenter.

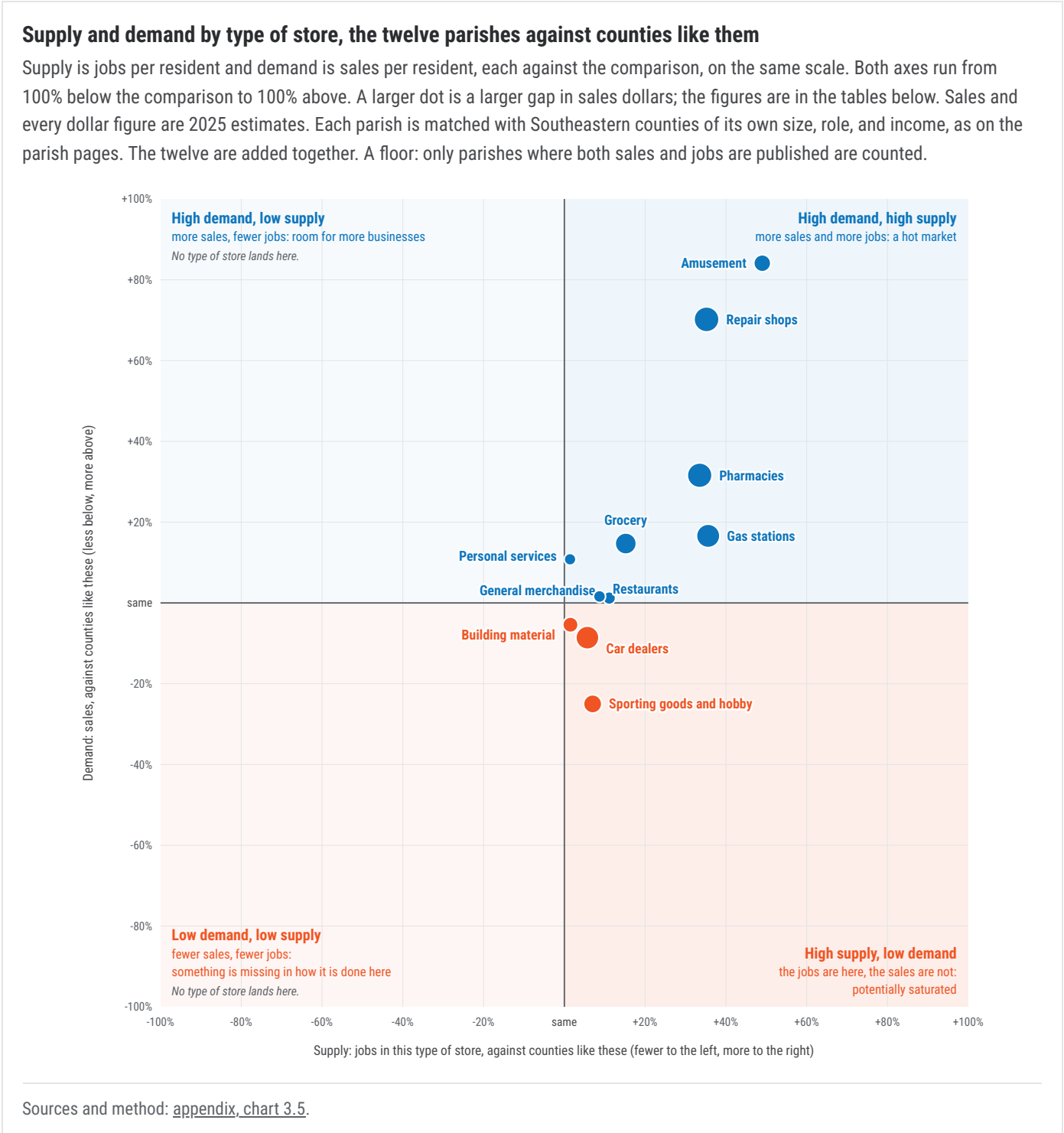
Ouachita is the region's most resilient market: it captured the COVID boom and gave back very little when the 2022 rate hikes cooled the rest of the country. Now, in the Meta era, it is re-accelerating: price per square foot at a record and median values up more than 8% in the first half of 2026 alone. But that all-weather demand is hitting a market with almost nothing to sell, roughly 2.1 months of supply against a balanced four to six, and the shortfall is structural: new construction has held at just 8–11% of sales for seven straight years. Builders simply are not adding homes fast enough to absorb the demand the data center is pulling into the parish. Put plainly, Ouachita needs new construction, and the builder or developer who delivers move-in-ready inventory in the right neighborhoods and price points is selling into the tightest, most durable market in Northeast Louisiana.

Lincoln is the steady one. Anchored by Louisiana Tech and Ruston's professional base, it rode the COVID boom and then held its value through the rate-hike era while pandemic boomtowns elsewhere began giving theirs back. But the most important signal on this chart is what didn't happen: Lincoln has barely responded to the data center. While Richland surged and Ouachita re-accelerated, Lincoln's price per square foot has been essentially flat since the announcement (+2%). That makes it the region's value play: a stable, university-anchored market with a dependable demand floor that has not yet priced in the data-center growth reshaping the parishes to its east. It offers durability today, with regional upside that still appears to be on the table.

Analysis by Brian Bendily, Associate Broker, John Rea Realty.

# Supply and demand, by type of store

Every type of store has a supply side and a demand side. Jobs measure supply: how much of that type of store the region has. Sales measure demand: how much gets bought. The chart sets both against counties like the region’s own, one dot for each type of store.



**How to read it.** Left to right is supply: the region's jobs in that type of store against counties like its own. Bottom to top is demand: its sales against the same counties. The center lines are where the region matches the comparison. The corner a dot lands in describes that market.

For example, gas stations have 36% more job supply in the region than they do in comparable counties, with 17% more in sales. More supply puts the dot right of the center line, and more sales puts it above.

Read as supply and demand, most of the region's stores are in hot markets. Eight of the eleven types of store on the chart have more jobs and more sales than counties like the region's own. Three are potentially saturated. None is short of supply.

## High demand, high supply: the hot markets

Eight types of store sit in the top right. Together they ring up an estimated \$490 million a year more than the comparison.

The corner is called hot because both sides of the market are above the comparison at once. Supply is high: the region has more jobs in these stores than counties of its size, role, and income. Demand is high: those stores also ring up more sales. A hot market has customers, and it has businesses competing for them.

| TYPE OF STORE          | JOB<br>S HERE | JOB<br>S AGAINST THE<br>COMPARISON | SALES<br>AGAINST THE<br>COMPARISON | ESTIMATED SALES GAP A<br>YEAR |
|------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Repair shops           | 1,410         | +35%                               | +70%                               | \$124 million more            |
| Pharmacies             | 1,160         | +34%                               | +32%                               | \$121 million more            |
| Gas stations           | 1,620         | +36%                               | +17%                               | \$104 million more            |
| Grocery                | 1,840         | +15%                               | +15%                               | \$77 million more             |
| Amusement              | 980           | +49%                               | +84%                               | \$38 million more             |
| General<br>merchandise | 3,650         | +11%                               | +1%                                | \$12 million more             |
| Restaurants            | 8,740         | +9%                                | +2%                                | \$9 million more              |
| Personal services      | 680           | +1%                                | +11%                               | \$8 million more              |

Five of the eight stand clear of center: pharmacies, repair shops, gas stations, grocery stores, and amusement. Each is about 15% or more above the comparison on both jobs and sales. Pharmacies and repair shops are the largest in dollars, each an estimated \$120 million a year above.

The other three are hot by a small margin. Restaurants, general merchandise, and personal services each sit close to the comparison on both lines. They read as typical markets.

**What to do with it.** An existing business in a hot market is working with strong demand and with more competitors than counties like these have. A prospective business can count on the demand and should plan for the competition. For an economic development organization, these are the region’s retail strengths, and the figures in the table are ones a recruiter can use.

**High supply, low demand: the potentially saturated markets**

Three types of store sit in the bottom right: car dealers, sporting goods and hobby stores, and building material stores. Together they ring up an estimated \$170 million a year less than the comparison.

The corner is called potentially saturated because the supply is here and the sales are short. The region has as many jobs in these stores as counties like its own, or more. Those jobs have fewer sales to go around.

| TYPE OF STORE                  | JOB<br>S HERE | JOB<br>S AGAINST THE<br>COMPARISON | SALES AGAINST<br>THE COMPARISON | ESTIMATED<br>SALES GAP A<br>YEAR | SALES PER<br>JOB HERE | SALES PER JOB IN<br>THE COMPARISON |
|--------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Car dealers                    | 1,970         | +6%                                | -9%                             | \$99 million less                | \$540,000             | \$620,000                          |
| Sporting<br>goods and<br>hobby | 920           | +7%                                | -25%                            | \$48 million less                | \$160,000             | \$220,000                          |
| Building<br>material           | 1,310         | +1%                                | -5%                             | \$26 million less                | \$350,000             | \$380,000                          |

Car dealers carry the largest shortfall, an estimated \$100 million a year. A car dealer job here sells about \$540,000 a year, against \$620,000 in counties like these. Sporting goods and hobby stores sit furthest below the line, with sales 25% under the comparison. Building material stores have about the same number of jobs as the comparison and 5% less in sales.

The word potentially is there for a reason. The data shows that sales are short against the jobs. It does not show why.

**What to do with it.** Existing and prospective businesses here must differentiate to succeed. One more store like those already open adds supply to a market that is short of demand. An existing business can ask what it offers that the others do not: a product line, a service, a price point. A prospective business needs its own answer before it opens.

Demand in two of these markets may be about to change. Cars and building material are things a region buys more of when construction is running and pay is rising. If that demand arrives, the stores to meet it are already open.

## Low demand, low supply: nothing lands here

A type of store in the bottom left would have fewer jobs and fewer sales than counties like these. The same type of store is more successful in other markets, so something may be missing in how it is done here.

No type of store lands in this corner for the region as a whole, and that is a finding. Every type of store on the chart has a tested supply and a tested demand in this region. A business deciding what to open, expand, or change has a track record here to decide from.

The corner is not empty parish by parish. Added together, the twelve parishes clear the line. Taken one at a time, some parishes fall below it on both jobs and sales in a type of store. The parish pages in Section 4 show where.

**What to do with it.** A business in this corner would look at what works in other markets and ask how it can be adapted to stir up demand in its own.

## High demand, low supply: nothing lands here

A type of store in the top left would ring up more sales than the comparison with fewer jobs to make them. Customers are buying and few businesses are serving them. That is where a new business has the most room.

No type of store lands here for the region as a whole. A few parishes do, in single types of store, and the parish pages show where.

**What to do with it.** A prospective business looking for an unserved market will not find one across the region in these eleven types of store. The place to look is the parish pages.

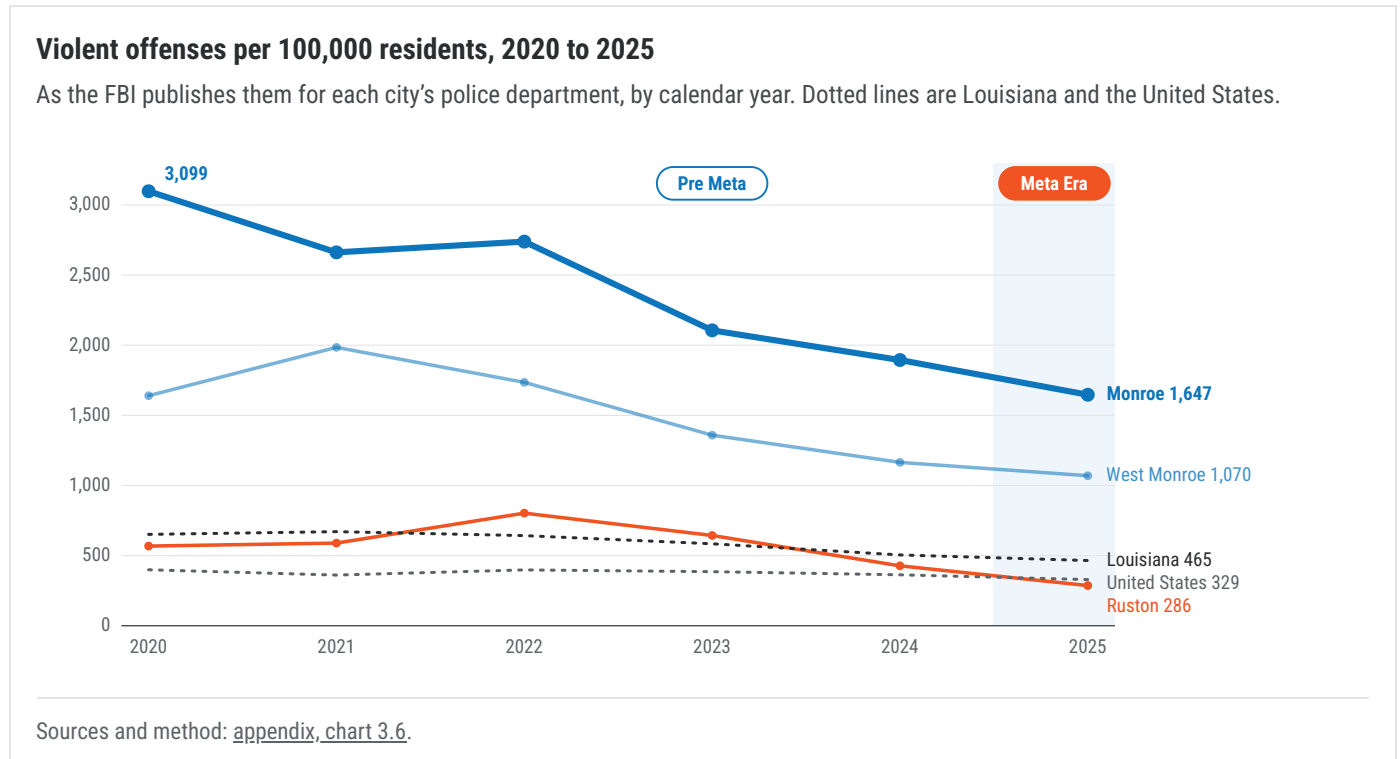
## What the chart cannot show

Every figure here is a floor. It counts only the parishes where the Census publishes sales and BLS publishes jobs for a type of store. Restaurants, grocery, sporting goods, and amusement rest on Ouachita and Lincoln, which hold 60% of the region's residents. Clothing and furniture stores cannot be shown at all.

The chart is also a single reading. The Census counts store sales every five years. The 2025 sales here are the 2022 count carried forward by job change and prices, so every dollar figure on this page is an estimate. Whether a market is growing or shrinking cannot be measured until the 2027 count.

## Violent crime is down in the region's three largest cities

Monroe has carried a high crime ranking for years. The number behind those rankings is the FBI's violent crime rate: murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault for every 100,000 residents. The chart follows that rate since 2020 in Monroe, West Monroe, and Ruston, beside the state and the nation.



Monroe's violent crime rate fell by nearly half in five years. It went from 3,099 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 1,647 in 2025. Louisiana's rate fell 29% over the same years. West Monroe and Ruston are down too, and Ruston now sits below the state and the nation.

Monroe's rate is still high. It is the highest line on the chart and well above the state's. But the gap is closing. Monroe stood 2,448 offenses per 100,000 above Louisiana in 2020 and 1,182 above it in 2025. Half the gap is gone.

That works out to the gap shrinking by about 250 every year. If it keeps shrinking at that pace, Monroe's violent crime rate matches Louisiana's around 2030. A city known for its crime ranking would be at the state average in about five years.

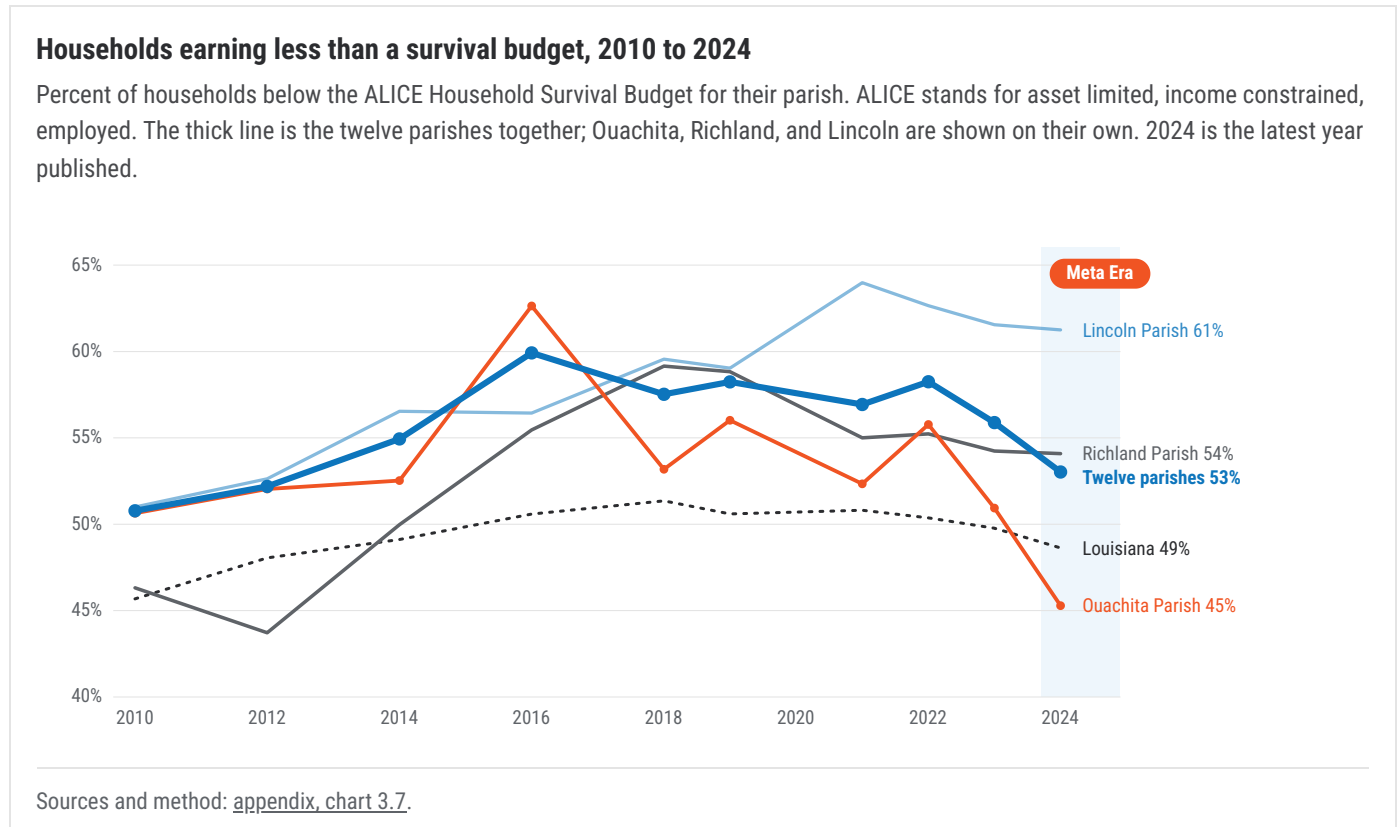
The rankings this region is known for describe years that are behind it. About two-thirds of Monroe's drop came before 2024, before Meta came to town. That part belongs to the cities: their police departments and the people who live there.

The Meta era adds jobs and better pay to that work. A construction paycheck in Richland has gone from \$946 to \$2,559 a week, and Buc-ee's is bringing at least 200 full-time jobs to Ruston. Steady work at better pay can contribute to a lower crime rate. The cities' efforts and the new economic opportunity together can change the tide for the whole region.



## Economic opportunity for all

How many households here earn enough to get by? United Way of Northeast Louisiana's United For ALICE report prices a survival budget for each parish: housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, a phone, and taxes, with nothing left for savings. The chart counts the households earning less than that, those in poverty included.



In 2024, 53% of households in the twelve parishes earned less than a survival budget for their parish. That is about 71,000 households. The share is 49% across Louisiana and 41% across the nation.

The line has turned. The region's share peaked at 60% in 2016 and held between 56% and 58% through 2022. By 2024 it was 53%. Nearly all of that change is Ouachita Parish, which went from 56% to 45%, about 7,000 fewer households under the budget. It crossed below the state line for the first time in the series. The other eleven parishes together stayed near 60%.

### What United Way of Northeast Louisiana sees

United Way of Northeast Louisiana works with these households every day, and its 211 help line is the closest thing to a live reading on them. From July 2025 to June 2026 the line took 13,270 calls. Food was the most common request, then help with the electric bill, then rent, at 3,503 requests.

United Way reports that rent calls have risen as rents have gone up, and that more families are calling with no place to go.

The organization's phrase for its own work is data with dignity, and its view of this moment has two halves. It is definitely championing what is happening in the region and excited about the growth. However, it also tells of a mother putting five dollars of gas in her tank, who may not be excited about the growth yet.

What is coming reaches them. The data center is in Richland, a rural parish where 54% of households live under the budget. Buc-ee's opens in Lincoln Parish in 2027 at a starting wage reported at \$18 an hour, more than any hourly sector there pays on average. Lincoln's share under the budget is 61%. Higher pay is arriving in the parishes where the most households need it. That is an opportunity for generational change in this region.

Pay, housing, public money, and giving all bear on these households. Section 5 details how those pieces work together to help fulfill United Way's mission: economic opportunity for all.



“One concrete economic development change that I’m seeing in the communities that I’m representing is that there has been an uptick in employment. I do workforce development, and what I’m seeing is that individuals that I’ve been serving over the years are now really getting into living wage jobs with benefits and a career path.”

**JUANITA WOODS | NOVA WORKFORCE INSTITUTE OF NELA  
AND VICE CHAIR, MONROE CITY COUNCIL**

# What does it look like in each parish?

Twelve parishes, two pages each, in alphabetical order. Every parish gets the same four things: a snapshot, its sales tax, its celebration callouts, and its relative supply and demand by type of store, with a short reading. Each parish is measured against counties like it and against its own past, never against its neighbors.



Winnsboro, LA

# Caldwell Parish

Parish seat Columbia. 9,344 residents, 3,716 households, 2,233 jobs.

## Snapshot

POPULATION

**9,344**

-2% since 2021

JOB

**2,233**

+2% since 2021

AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY

**\$826**

+14% since 2021

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**\$52,399**

+34% since 2021

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

**5.2%**

2025 average

HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET

**57%**

57% in 2021

BANK DEPOSITS

**\$640M**

+48% since 2021

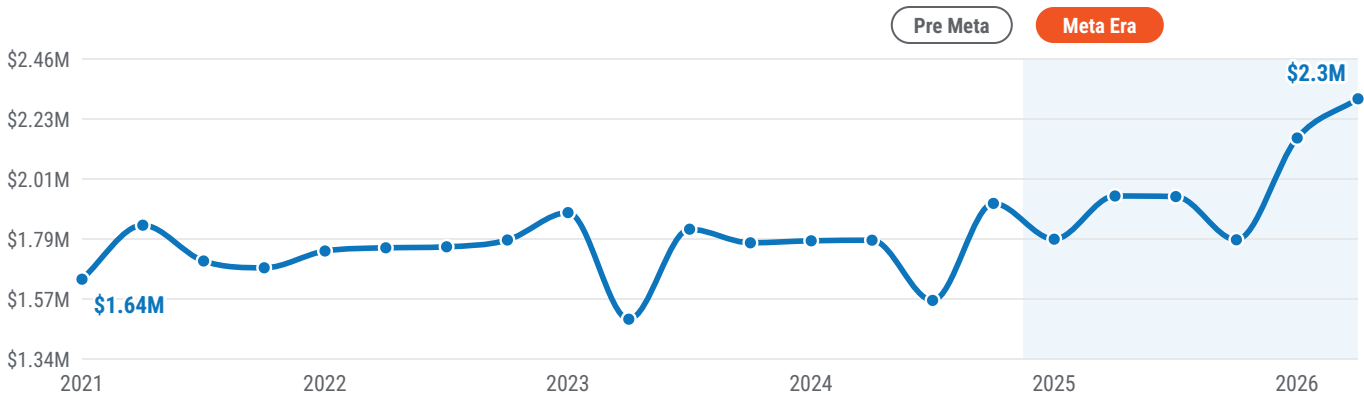
SIZE OF THE ECONOMY

**\$249M**

GDP, 2024

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

Caldwell's sales tax has gone from flat to fast. Collections rose 6% in 2025, and the first half of 2026 ran 20% ahead of the first half of 2025.

Deposits in Caldwell's banks reached \$640 million, up 48% since 2021, and grew every year.

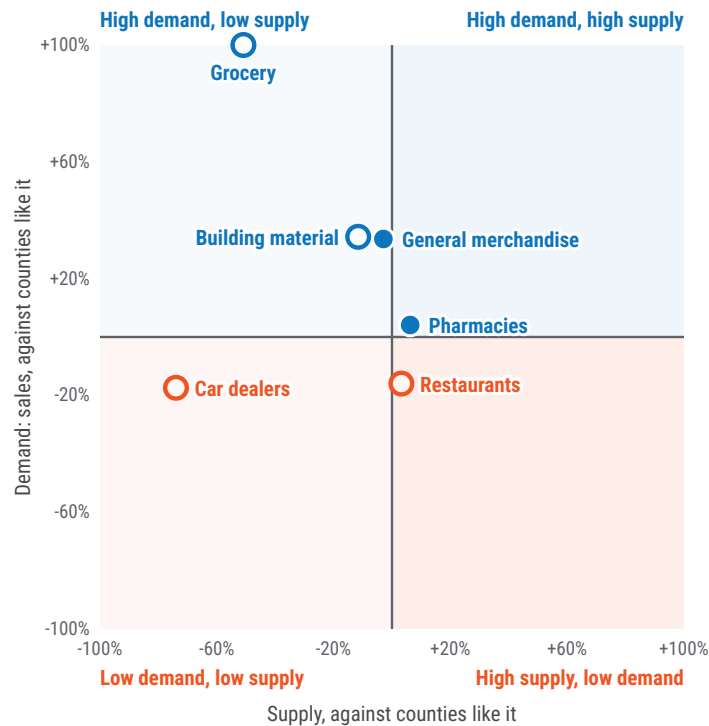
Median household income is \$52,399, up 34% since 2021. That is twice the state's pace.

Private paychecks are up 20% since 2021, a faster rise than the state's or the nation's.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against small rural counties of Caldwell's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where Caldwell matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. No type of store lands here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. Restaurants are here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. Grocery stores, general merchandise stores and building material stores are here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. Car dealers are here.

**At the center.** Pharmacies match counties like it on both.

Solid dots measure supply by jobs. Hollow dots measure it by the number of stores, because the job counts are withheld. Past the edge of the chart: grocery stores (-51% supply, +134% sales).

## The reading

For three years Caldwell's sales tax barely moved, holding near \$1.8 million a quarter. Then it rose 6% in 2025, and the first half of 2026 came in 20% above the first half of 2025.

The chart above has an unusual shape. Three types of store land in the corner with room for more businesses: sales above the comparison, supply below it. Grocery stores ring up more than twice what they do in small rural counties like Caldwell. General merchandise stores and building material stores each take in about a third more.

Pharmacies match the comparison. Restaurants have the supply and 16% less in sales, which makes them potentially saturated. Car dealers

are under the comparison on both, a sign something may be missing in how that business is done here.

Together the two charts show a parish with rising sales tax and customers for more stores than it has. The money to spend is here. Median household income is up 34% since 2021, twice the state's pace, and deposits in Caldwell's banks are up 48%. The growth is a response to the data center.

The hard numbers stay on the page. Caldwell has 2% fewer residents than in 2021, and 57% of its households live under a survival budget. Private paychecks are up 20%. Rising income and room for more stores are what Caldwell has to build on.

# East Carroll Parish

Parish seat Lake Providence. 6,760 residents, 2,617 households, 1,410 jobs.

## Snapshot

POPULATION

**6,760**

-7% since 2021

JOB

**1,410**

-6% since 2021

AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY

**\$807**

+18% since 2021

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**\$36,713**

+21% since 2021

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

**13.0%**

2025 average

HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET

**69%**

69% in 2021

BANK DEPOSITS

**\$142M**

-15% since 2021

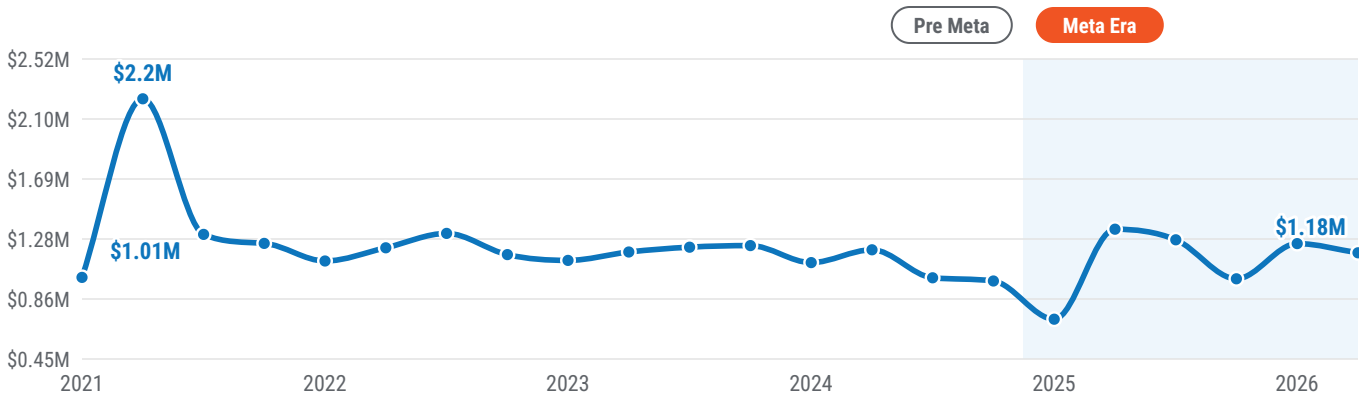
SIZE OF THE ECONOMY

**\$166M**

GDP, 2024

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

East Carroll's first half of 2026 was its strongest in five years for sales tax, 17% above the first half of 2025.

Paychecks average \$807 a week, up 18% since 2021. That is a faster rise than the state's or the nation's.

Lake Providence's sales tax is up 21% since Meta came to town.

248 East Carroll residents are enrolled in college, up 19% since 2021.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

This chart cannot be drawn for East Carroll. It needs each type of store's sales and its jobs or store count, and for a parish this small the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics withhold nearly all of them to protect individual businesses.

### The reading

East Carroll's sales tax had been falling. It ran close to \$1.2 million a quarter from 2022 through 2024 and held level in 2025. Then the first half of 2026 came in 17% above the first half of 2025, the parish's strongest first half in five years.

The relative supply and demand chart cannot be drawn here. The Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics withhold most store figures for a parish this small, to protect individual businesses. Two types of store can be read, general merchandise and gas stations. Both sit below small rural counties like East Carroll on supply and on sales.

What the parish does have is a turn, and it shows in more than one place. Lake Providence's own sales tax is up 21% since Meta came to town. Paychecks average \$807 a week, up 18% since 2021, a faster rise than the state's or the nation's. And 248 residents are enrolled in college, 19% more than in 2021. The growth is a response to the data center.

The hard numbers are large here. East Carroll has 7% fewer residents than in 2021, and 69% of its households live under a survival budget. A sales tax that has stopped falling and pay that is rising are what East Carroll has to build on.

# Franklin Parish

Parish seat Winnsboro. 19,002 residents, 7,525 households, 4,657 jobs.

## Snapshot

POPULATION

**19,002**

-3% since 2021

JOB

**4,657**

-1% since 2021

AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY

**\$777**

+19% since 2021

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**\$44,022**

+15% since 2021

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

**5.5%**

2025 average

HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET

**58%**

61% in 2021

BANK DEPOSITS

**\$570M**

+19% since 2021

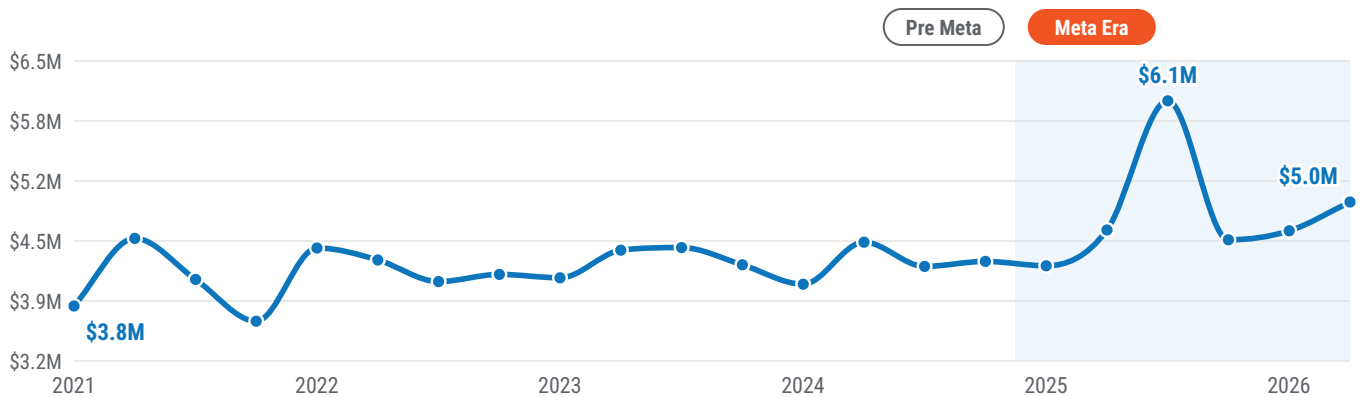
SIZE OF THE ECONOMY

**\$619M**

GDP, 2024

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

Paychecks in Franklin average \$777 a week, up 19% since 2021. That is a faster rise than the state's or the nation's.

Sales tax collections reached \$19.5 million in 2025, up 21% since 2021.

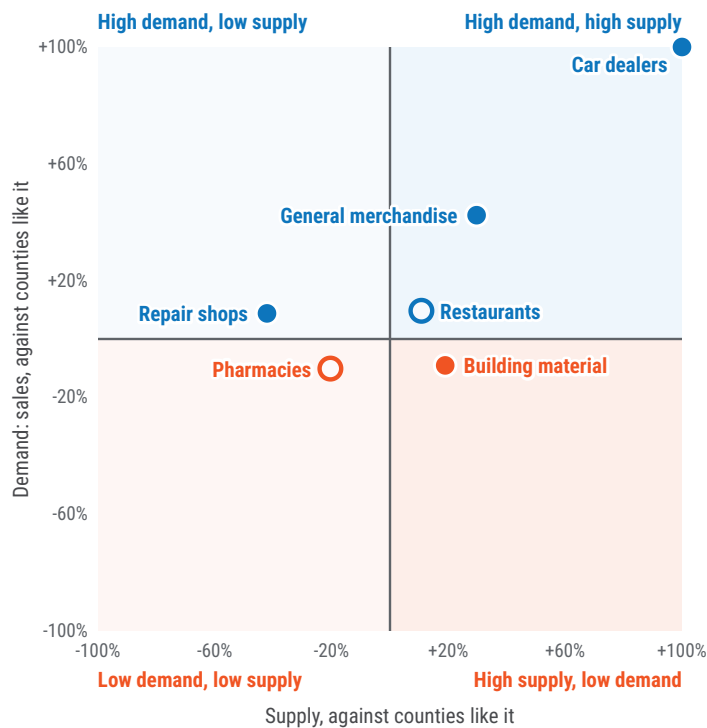
Winnsboro keeps Franklin's business at home. Car dealers, general merchandise stores, clinics, and nursing care each employ more people per resident than three fourths of rural counties its size.

Car dealers in Franklin ring up more than four times what dealers do in rural counties its size.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against rural counties of Franklin's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where Franklin matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. Restaurants, general merchandise stores and car dealers are here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. Building material stores are here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. Repair shops are here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. Pharmacies are here.

Solid dots measure supply by jobs. Hollow dots measure it by the number of stores, because the job counts are withheld. Past the edge of the chart: car dealers (+173% supply, +336% sales).

## The reading

Franklin's sales tax ran close to \$4.3 million a quarter from 2022 through 2024. Since Meta came to town it has stepped up. Collections in 2025 were 14% above 2024, and the first half of 2026 ran 8% above the first half of 2025.

The chart above shows where that money is rung up. Car dealers take in more than four times what dealers do in rural counties like Franklin. General merchandise stores take in about 42% more, and restaurants about 10% more. All three have more supply than the comparison as well, which makes them hot markets.

The rest of the chart is mixed. Building material stores have 19% more supply and 9% less in sales, so they are potentially saturated. Repair shops ring up more with less supply, the corner

with room for another business. Pharmacies are under the comparison on both, a sign something may be missing in how that business is done here.

Together the two charts show a parish where sales tax is rising and the stores that collect it are already strong. Winnsboro keeps Franklin's business at home, and paychecks are up 19% since 2021, a faster rise than the state's or the nation's. The growth is a response to the data center and to the work of Develop Franklin.

The hard numbers are on the page too. Franklin has 3% fewer residents than in 2021, and 58% of its households live under a survival budget. Rising pay and stores that keep business at home are what Franklin has to build on.

# Jackson Parish

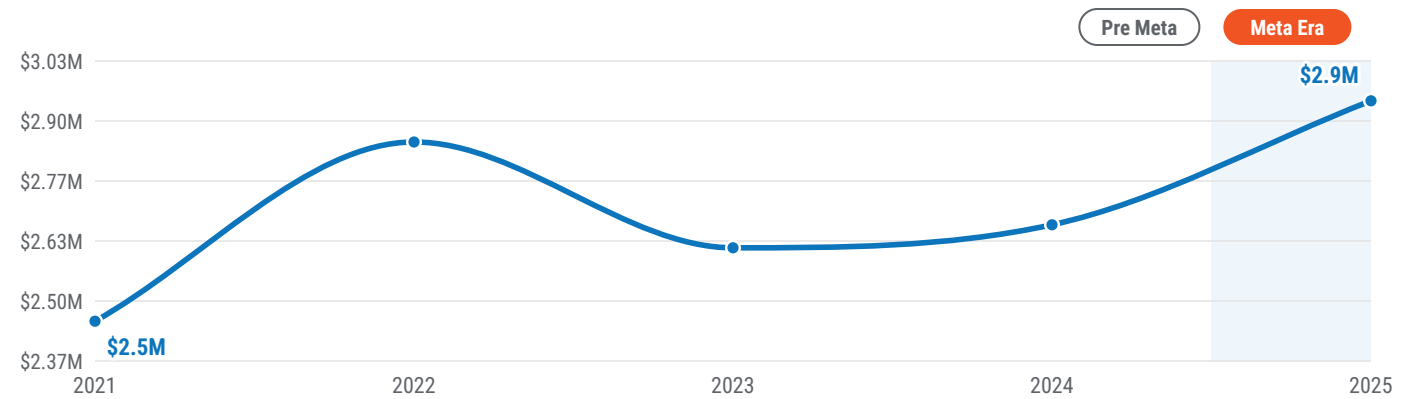
Parish seat Jonesboro. 15,834 residents, 5,576 households, 3,943 jobs.

## Snapshot

| POPULATION                      | JOB                                | AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY                | MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME            |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>15,834</b><br>+6% since 2021 | <b>3,943</b><br>+17% since 2021    | <b>\$1,068</b><br>+16% since 2021 | <b>\$55,711</b><br>+22% since 2021 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE               | HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET | BANK DEPOSITS                     | SIZE OF THE ECONOMY                |
| <b>4.8%</b><br>2025 average     | <b>60%</b><br>56% in 2021          | <b>\$1.28B</b><br>June 30, 2025   | <b>\$604M</b><br>GDP, 2024         |

## Parish sales tax by year

Jackson Parish Police Jury sales tax, millions of dollars, from its audited statements. No quarterly series is available for Jackson.



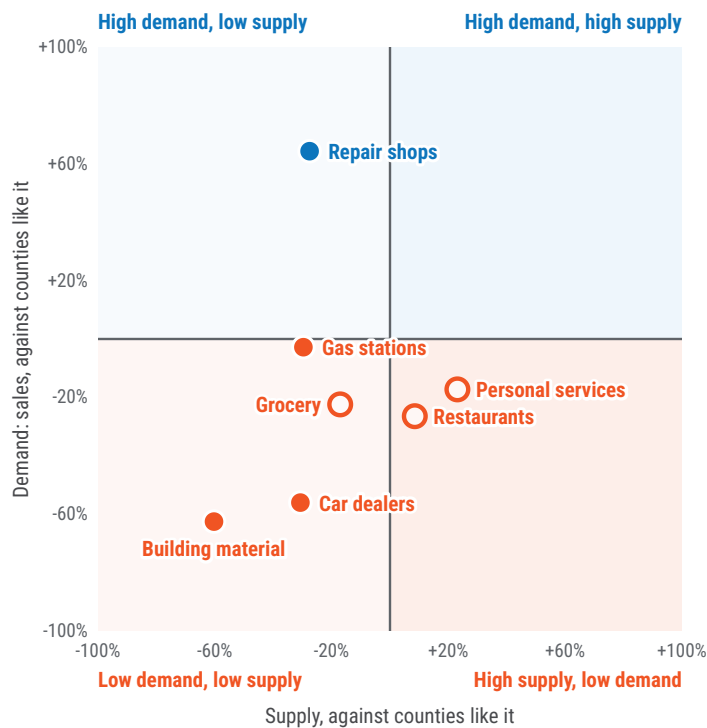
## Celebration callouts

- Jackson’s parish sales tax grew 10% in 2025 to a record \$2.9 million.
- Jackson has added jobs every year since 2021. One in seven jobs in the parish is new since then.
- Jackson’s population has grown every year since 2021, to 15,834, up 6%.
- House prices are up 40% since 2021, against 20% for the typical Louisiana parish.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; Jackson Parish Police Jury audited statements for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against rural counties of Jackson's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where Jackson matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. No type of store lands here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. Restaurants and personal service businesses are here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. Repair shops are here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. Grocery stores, car dealers, building material stores and gas stations are here.

Solid dots measure supply by jobs. Hollow dots measure it by the number of stores, because the job counts are withheld.

## The reading

Jackson's parish sales tax was \$2.6 million in 2023 and \$2.7 million in 2024. In 2025 it rose 10%, to a record \$2.9 million.

The chart above is a separate reading. It shows where Jackson's stores stand against rural counties like it in a single year. No type of store has both more supply and more sales than the comparison. Grocery stores, car dealers, building material stores, and gas stations sit below the comparison on both. Building material is the furthest down, about 60% under on each.

That corner suggests something is missing in how those businesses are done here. What works in other markets could be adapted to stir up demand. Restaurants and personal services have the supply and less in sales, so they are

potentially saturated. Repair shops are the exception. They take in 64% more than the comparison with less supply, which leaves room for another business.

A rising sales tax and low corners can sit together. The chart cannot say where these stores stood before, and they may have stood lower. Beside Jackson's other numbers, the low corners look like an opening. The parish has added jobs every year since 2021, and its population has grown every year. The growth is a response to the data center.

The hard numbers remain. Jackson has 6% more residents than in 2021, and 60% of its households still live under a survival budget. Paychecks are up 16%. More people and rising pay are what Jackson has to build on.

# Lincoln Parish

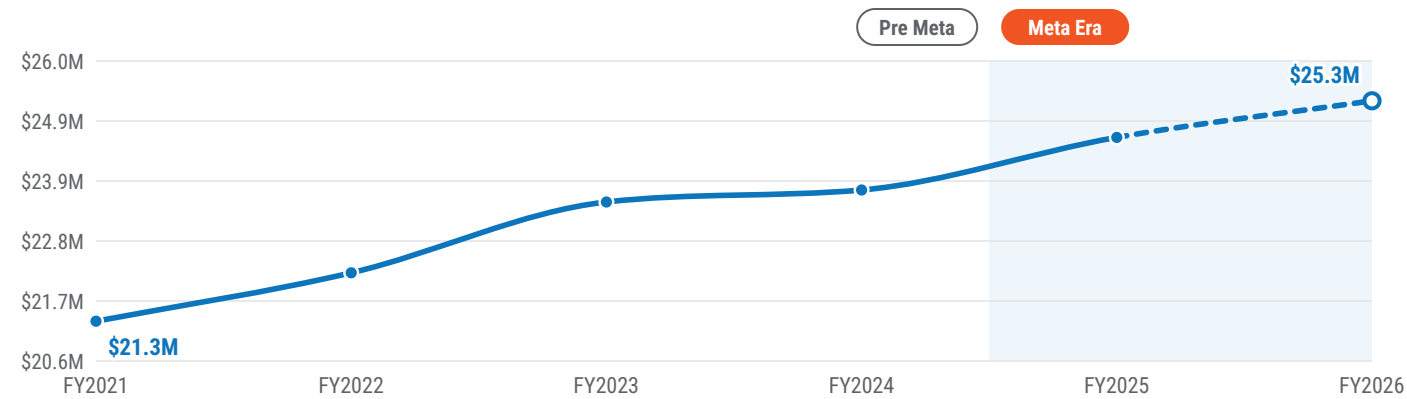
Parish seat Ruston. 48,360 residents, 18,487 households, 19,084 jobs.

## Snapshot

| POPULATION                      | JOB                                | AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY                | MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME            |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>48,360</b><br>+0% since 2021 | <b>19,084</b><br>+4% since 2021    | <b>\$928</b><br>+16% since 2021   | <b>\$52,669</b><br>+30% since 2021 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE               | HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET | BANK DEPOSITS                     | SIZE OF THE ECONOMY                |
| <b>4.5%</b><br>2025 average     | <b>61%</b><br>64% in 2021          | <b>\$2.27B</b><br>+30% since 2021 | <b>\$2.8B</b><br>GDP, 2024         |

## City of Ruston sales tax by fiscal year

Millions of dollars, fiscal years ending September 30. The city's own series is shown. 2026 is the city's projection.



## Celebration callouts

Ruston’s sales tax has risen every year since 2021, to \$24.6 million in the fiscal year that ended in September 2025.

Louisiana Tech has 9,006 undergraduates enrolled this fall, the most in its history.

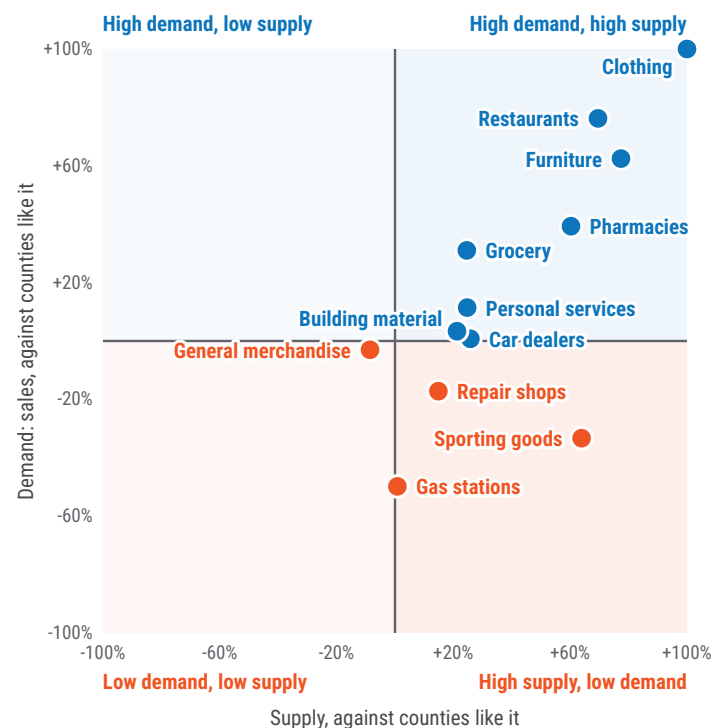
Median household income is \$52,669, up 30% since 2021, against 17% for the state.

Gas stations have the supply of a parish this size and half the sales, and Buc-ee’s opens into that market in April 2027.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; City of Ruston for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against small-city hubs of Lincoln's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where Lincoln matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. Restaurants, grocery stores, pharmacies, car dealers, building material stores, clothing stores, furniture and electronics stores and personal service businesses are here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. Sporting goods and hobby stores, gas stations and repair shops are here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. No type of store lands here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. General merchandise stores are here.

Past the edge of the chart: clothing stores (+148% supply, +116% sales).

## The reading

Eight of the twelve types of store on Lincoln's chart are hot markets. Clothing stores ring up more than twice what they do in small-city hubs like Lincoln. Restaurants take in 76% more, furniture and electronics stores 62% more, and pharmacies 39% more. Each has more supply than the comparison as well.

Sales tax shows the same strength over time. Ruston's collections have risen every year since 2021, from \$21.3 million to \$24.6 million in fiscal 2025. The city projects \$25.3 million for 2026.

Three types of store sit in a different corner. Gas stations have the supply of a parish this size and half the sales. Sporting goods stores and repair shops also have more supply than the comparison and less in sales. All three are potentially saturated. General merchandise sits just under the comparison on both.

Together the charts describe a parish with strong, tested demand. Louisiana Tech has 9,006 undergraduates this fall, the most in its history. Grambling State has nearly 5,000 students this fall. Median household income is up 30% since 2021, against 17% for the state. The growth here has sources of its own: the Ruston Sports Complex, JP Morgan Chase, Radiance Technologies, Louisiana Tech, and Buc-ee's from April 2027.

The hard numbers sit beside all of that. Lincoln's population is level with 2021, and 61% of its households live under a survival budget. Paychecks are up 16%. Rising pay and stores with proven demand are what Lincoln has to build on.

# Madison Parish

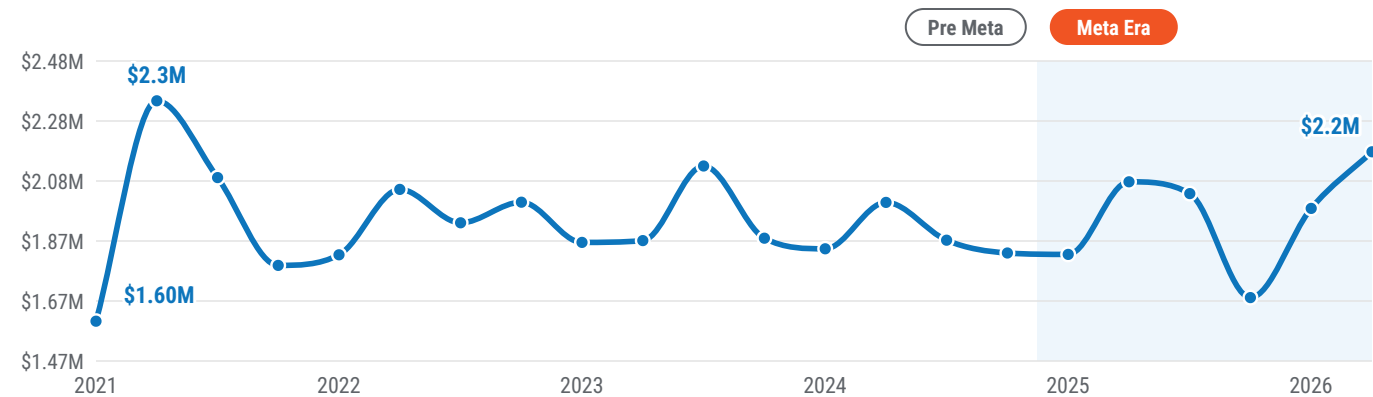
Parish seat Tallulah. 8,844 residents, 3,053 households, 3,016 jobs.

## Snapshot

| POPULATION                      | JOB                                | AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY              | MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME            |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>8,844</b><br>-10% since 2021 | <b>3,016</b><br>-1% since 2021     | <b>\$754</b><br>+13% since 2021 | <b>\$39,406</b><br>+17% since 2021 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE               | HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET | BANK DEPOSITS                   | SIZE OF THE ECONOMY                |
| <b>7.1%</b><br>2025 average     | <b>69%</b><br>67% in 2021          | <b>\$241M</b><br>+7% since 2021 | <b>\$464M</b><br>GDP, 2024         |

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

Madison turned decline into growth. Collections slipped from 2022 through 2024, returned to growth in 2025, and rose 7% in the first half of 2026.

316 Madison residents were in college in fall 2025, up 14% in two years.

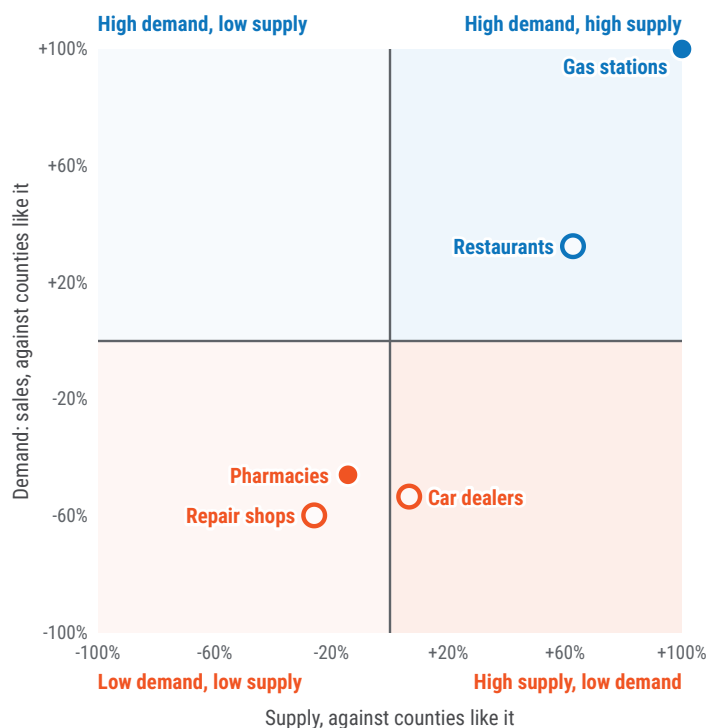
Tallulah’s sales tax is up 10% since Meta came to town, its best first half in the series.

Madison’s nursing-care jobs pay 23% more than in 2021. The parish has three times the nursing-care jobs per resident of small rural counties like it.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against small rural counties of Madison's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where Madison matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. Restaurants and gas stations are here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. Car dealers are here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. No type of store lands here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. Pharmacies and repair shops are here.

Solid dots measure supply by jobs. Hollow dots measure it by the number of stores, because the job counts are withheld. Past the edge of the chart: gas stations (+230% supply, +291% sales).

## The reading

Madison turned a decline into growth. Its sales tax slipped from 2022 through 2024, running close to \$1.9 million a quarter. It steadied in 2025 and rose 7% in the first half of 2026. In Tallulah, collections are up 10% since Meta came to town.

Two types of store carry the chart above. Gas stations ring up nearly four times what they do in small rural counties like Madison, with more than three times the supply. Restaurants take in 32% more, with more supply as well. Both are hot markets.

The other three sit low. Car dealers have the supply of a parish this size and half the sales, which makes that market potentially saturated. Pharmacies and repair shops are under the comparison on both supply and sales. Something

may be missing in how those are done here, and what works in other markets could be adapted to stir up demand.

Together the charts show a parish whose sales tax has turned and whose strength is in fuel and food. Other numbers have turned with it. There were 316 residents in college in fall 2025, up 14% in two years, and nursing-care jobs pay 23% more than in 2021. The growth is a response to the data center.

The hard numbers are the heaviest part of the page. Madison has 10% fewer residents than in 2021, and 69% of its households live under a survival budget. Paychecks are up 13%. A sales tax that has turned and two hot markets are what Madison has to build on.

# Morehouse Parish

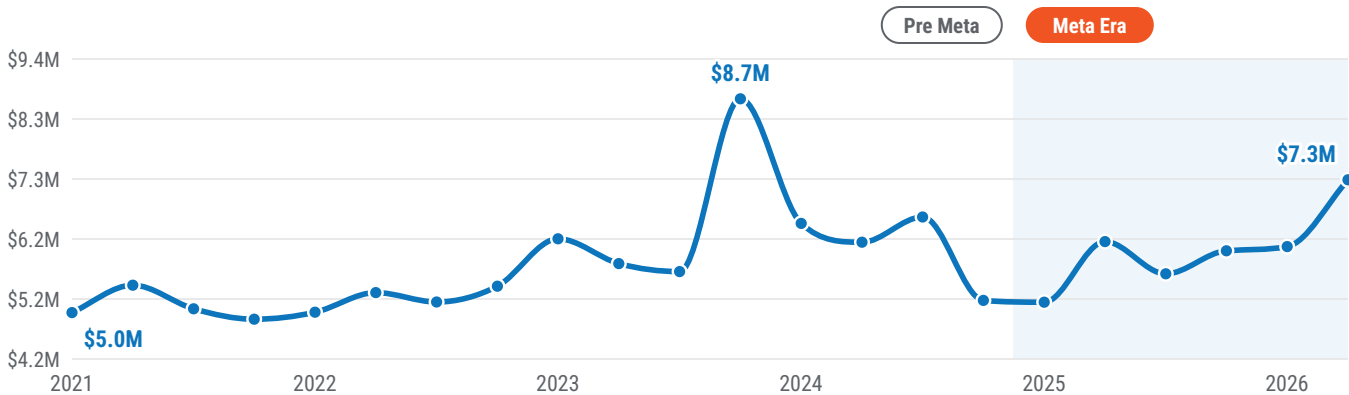
Parish seat Bastrop. 23,705 residents, 9,769 households, 6,261 jobs.

## Snapshot

| POPULATION                      | JOB                                | AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY              | MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME            |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>23,705</b><br>-5% since 2021 | <b>6,261</b><br>-2% since 2021     | <b>\$898</b><br>+16% since 2021 | <b>\$45,435</b><br>+23% since 2021 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE               | HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET | BANK DEPOSITS                   | SIZE OF THE ECONOMY                |
| <b>6.2%</b><br>2025 average     | <b>62%</b><br>66% in 2021          | <b>\$329M</b><br>-5% since 2021 | <b>\$755M</b><br>GDP, 2024         |

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

Morehouse collected \$13.4 million in sales tax in the first half of 2026. That is its best first half on record and 18% above the first half of 2025.

Construction jobs grew 17% in 2025 alone. Construction pay is \$1,352 a week, up 18% since 2021.

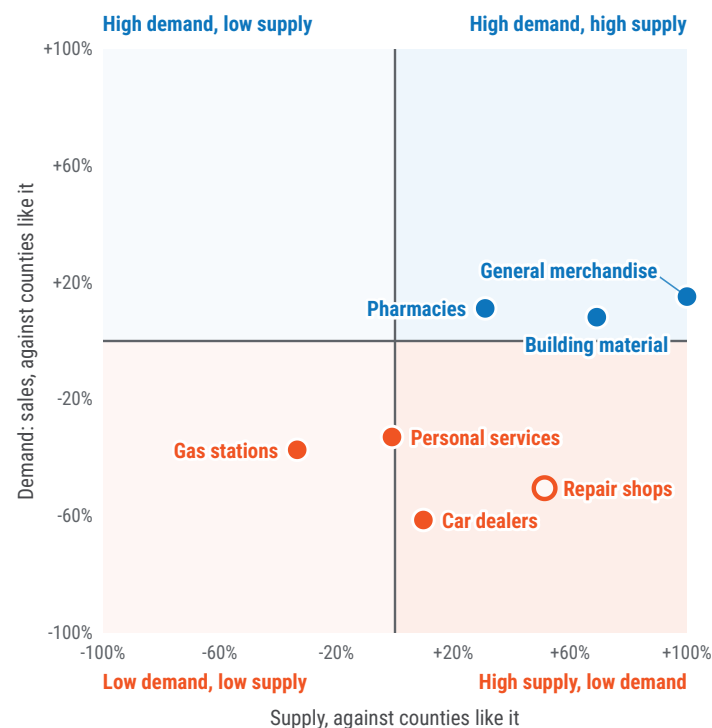
Professional and technical jobs are up 42% since 2021, and their pay is up 52%, to \$1,143 a week.

Retail jobs rose 6% in 2025, and retail pay is up 21% since 2021.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against outlying metro counties of Morehouse's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where Morehouse matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. General merchandise stores, pharmacies and building material stores are here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. Car dealers and repair shops are here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. No type of store lands here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. Gas stations and personal service businesses are here.

Solid dots measure supply by jobs. Hollow dots measure it by the number of stores, because the job counts are withheld. Past the edge of the chart: general merchandise stores (+187% supply, +15% sales).

## The reading

Morehouse collected \$13.4 million in sales tax in the first half of 2026, its best first half on record. That is 18% above the first half of 2025. The year before went the other way. Collections in 2025 were 6% below 2024, after running close to \$6.0 million a quarter since 2022.

On the chart above, three types of store are hot markets. General merchandise stores, pharmacies, and building material stores each have more supply than outlying metro counties like Morehouse. Each rings up more as well: 15%, 11%, and 8% more.

Two types of store have plenty of supply and far less in sales. Car dealers take in 61% less than the comparison and repair shops 50% less. Both are potentially saturated, and a new business in

either would need to offer something the others do not. Gas stations and personal services are under the comparison on sales as well.

Together the charts show a parish with a record first half and a core of stores with proven demand. The work behind that is changing. Professional and technical jobs are up 42% since 2021. Construction jobs grew 17% in 2025 alone, and retail pay is up 21% since 2021. The growth is a response to the data center.

The hard numbers follow. Morehouse has 5% fewer residents than in 2021, and 62% of its households live under a survival budget. Paychecks are up 16%. Better-paying work and stores with proven demand are what Morehouse has to build on.

# Ouachita Parish

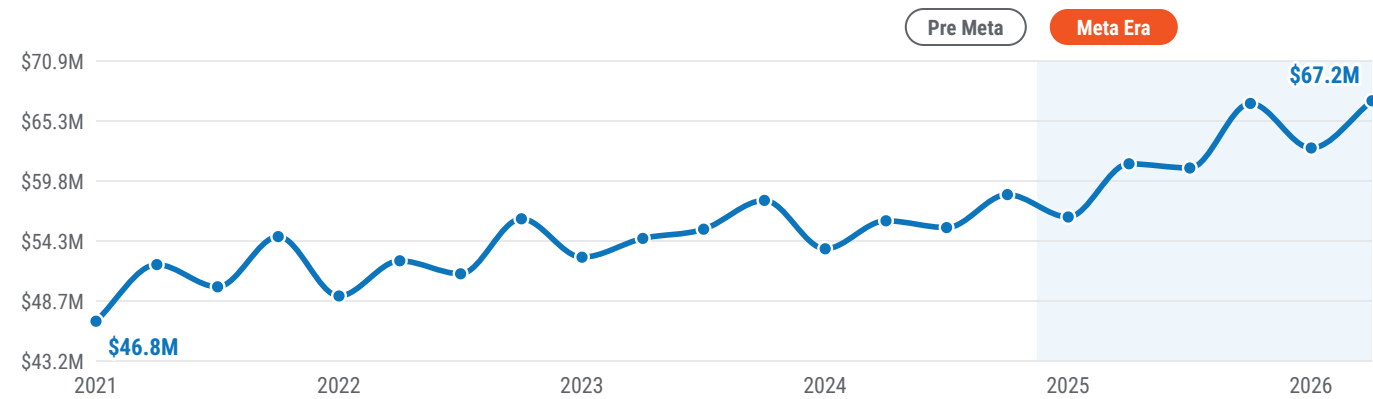
Parish seat Monroe. 158,542 residents, 61,489 households, 69,886 jobs.

## Snapshot

| POPULATION                       | JOB                                | AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY                | MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME            |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>158,542</b><br>-0% since 2021 | <b>69,886</b><br>+4% since 2021    | <b>\$999</b><br>+18% since 2021   | <b>\$59,701</b><br>+25% since 2021 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE                | HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET | BANK DEPOSITS                     | SIZE OF THE ECONOMY                |
| <b>4.5%</b><br>2025 average      | <b>45%</b><br>52% in 2021          | <b>\$4.34B</b><br>+10% since 2021 | <b>\$9.3B</b><br>GDP, 2024         |

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

- The parish economy has grown 21% since 2021, to \$9.3 billion.

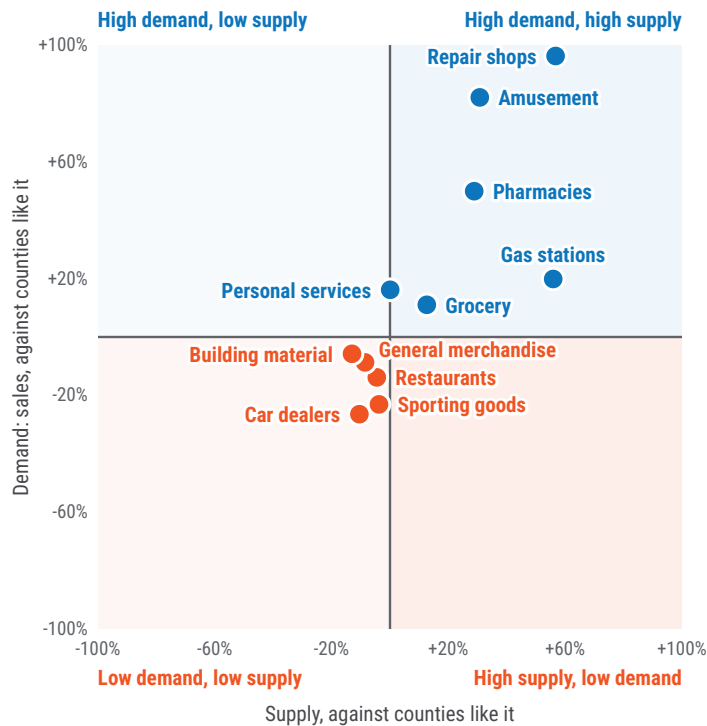
The City of Monroe permitted \$64 million of new commercial construction from January through August 2026, already more than any full year on record.
- Median household income is \$59,701, up 25% since 2021, against 17% for the state.

Violent offenses fell 39% in Monroe and 45% in West Monroe from 2021 to 2025. The state fell 31% and the nation 9%.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against small metro hubs of Ouachita's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where Ouachita matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. Grocery stores, pharmacies, gas stations, amusement and recreation businesses, personal service businesses and repair shops are here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. No type of store lands here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. No type of store lands here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. Restaurants, general merchandise stores, car dealers, building material stores and sporting goods and hobby stores are here.

## The reading

Ouachita is the region's hub. Its sales tax ran close to \$54.5 million a quarter from 2022 through 2024, and since Meta came to town it has stepped up. Collections rose 10% in 2025 and another 10% in the first half of 2026.

The supply and demand chart above splits in two. Six types of store are hot markets, with more supply and more sales than small metro hubs like Ouachita. Repair shops ring up nearly twice the comparison. Amusement and recreation takes in 82% more, and pharmacies 50% more.

The other five sit in the opposite corner. Car dealers, sporting goods stores, restaurants, general merchandise stores, and building material stores all have less supply and fewer sales than hubs like it. Car dealers are the

furthest under, 26% below on sales. Something may be missing in how those businesses are done here, and what works in other hubs could be adapted to stir up demand.

Together the charts show a parish with rising sales tax, six proven markets, and five to rethink. The money behind them is growing. The parish economy is up 21% since 2021, to \$9.3 billion. The City of Monroe permitted \$64 million of new commercial construction through August 2026, more than any full year on record. The growth is a response to the data center.

The hard numbers are part of the picture. Ouachita's population is level with 2021, and 45% of its households live under a survival budget. Paychecks are up 18%. Rising pay and proven markets are what Ouachita has to build on.

# Richland Parish

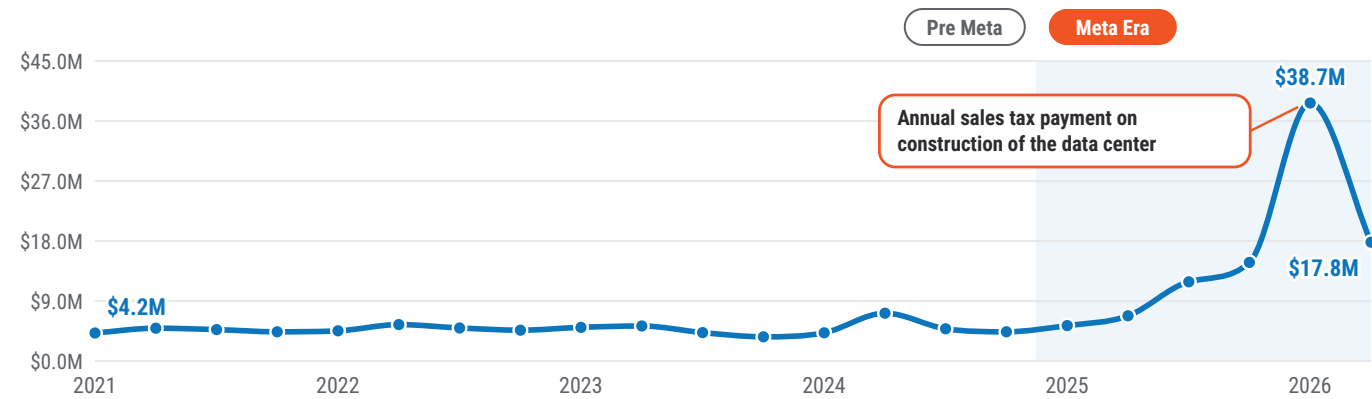
Parish seat Rayville. 19,582 residents, 7,240 households, 6,378 jobs.

## Snapshot

| POPULATION                      | JOB                                | AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY               | MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME            |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>19,582</b><br>-1% since 2021 | <b>6,378</b><br>+2% since 2021     | <b>\$900</b><br>+17% since 2021  | <b>\$47,023</b><br>+18% since 2021 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE               | HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET | BANK DEPOSITS                    | SIZE OF THE ECONOMY                |
| <b>5.2%</b><br>2025 average     | <b>54%</b><br>55% in 2021          | <b>\$809M</b><br>+31% since 2021 | <b>\$857M</b><br>GDP, 2024         |

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

- Richland’s sales tax nearly doubled in 2025, to \$38.7 million. The first half of 2026 alone brought in \$56.5 million.

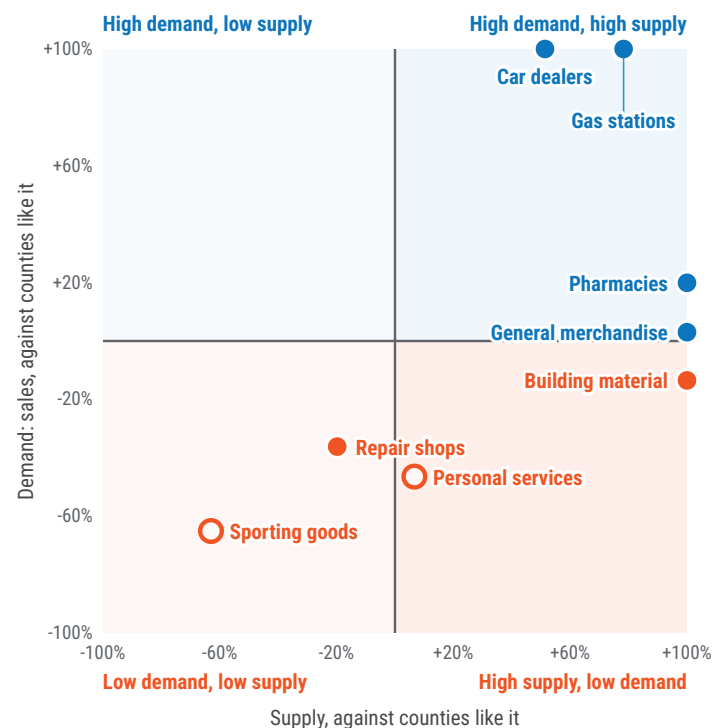
A construction job in Richland averaged \$1,565 a week across 2025, up 64% since 2021. By the first quarter of 2026 it paid \$2,559.
- Collections grew more in 2025 than in the twenty years before it combined: \$18.1 million in one year.

The school system’s sales tax went from \$8.6 million in 2024 to \$18.0 million in 2025.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against outlying metro counties of Richland's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where Richland matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. General merchandise stores, pharmacies, car dealers and gas stations are here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. Building material stores and personal service businesses are here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. No type of store lands here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. Sporting goods and hobby stores and repair shops are here.

Solid dots measure supply by jobs. Hollow dots measure it by the number of stores, because the job counts are withheld. Past the edge of the chart: general merchandise stores (+147% supply, +3% sales); pharmacies (+124% supply, +20% sales); car dealers (+51% supply, +139% sales); building material stores (+107% supply, -14% sales); gas stations (+78% supply, +229% sales).

## The reading

Richland is where the data center is being built, and its sales tax shows it. Collections ran close to \$4.9 million a quarter from 2022 through 2024. They rose 88% in 2025. The first half of 2026 brought in \$56.5 million, more than 2023 and 2024 together.

Richland is hard to model with the data available. The store figures on the chart above start from the 2022 count, before the data center, and are carried forward by job change. Read with that in mind, four types of store are hot markets. Gas stations ring up more than three times what they do in outlying metro counties like Richland. Car dealers take in more than twice as much and pharmacies 20% more. General merchandise stores take in about the same. All four have more supply than the comparison.

Building material stores show about twice the supply of counties like Richland and 14% less in sales. That reading is probably a lag in the model. Construction-era buying may not show in it yet, and building material likely ranks much differently today. Repair shops and sporting goods stores are under the comparison on both.

Together the charts show a parish where the money has arrived and is being rung up at the pump, the car lot, and the pharmacy. It reaches public budgets and paychecks as well. The school system's sales tax went from \$8.6 million in 2024 to \$18.0 million in 2025. A construction job averaged \$1,565 a week across 2025, up 64% since 2021.

The hard numbers have moved less. Richland has 1% fewer residents than in 2021, and 54% of its households live under a survival budget. Paychecks are up 17%. New public money and rising pay are what Richland has to build on.

# Tensas Parish

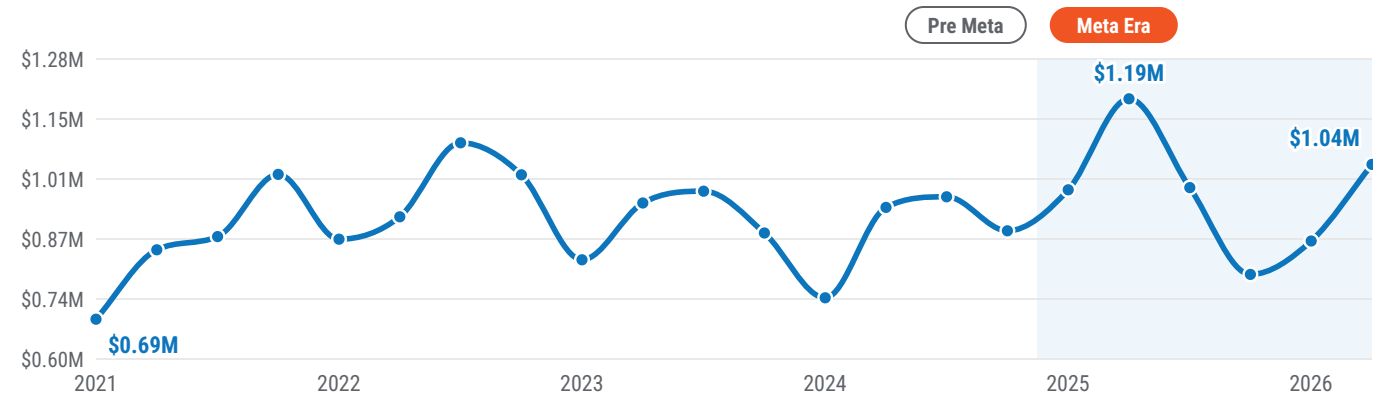
Parish seat St. Joseph. 3,700 residents, 1,578 households, 792 jobs.

## Snapshot

| POPULATION                     | JOB                                | AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY               | MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME            |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>3,700</b><br>-8% since 2021 | <b>792</b><br>-4% since 2021       | <b>\$858</b><br>+19% since 2021  | <b>\$38,583</b><br>+23% since 2021 |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE              | HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET | BANK DEPOSITS                    | SIZE OF THE ECONOMY                |
| <b>7.2%</b><br>2025 average    | <b>67%</b><br>67% in 2021          | <b>\$233M</b><br>+42% since 2021 | <b>\$160M</b><br>GDP, 2024         |

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

Tensas collected \$3.96 million in sales tax in 2025, its highest year on record and 12% above 2024.

Paychecks average \$858 a week, up 19% since 2021. That is a faster rise than the state's or the nation's.

Tensas collects 13% more than it did before Meta came to town.

Median household income is \$38,583, up 23% since 2021, against 17% for the state.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

This chart cannot be drawn for Tensas. It needs each type of store's sales and its jobs or store count, and for a parish this small the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics withhold nearly all of them to protect individual businesses.

### The reading

Tensas collected \$3.96 million in sales tax in 2025, its highest year on record and 12% above 2024. The first half of 2026 gave some of that back. It ran 12% below the first half of 2025, and still 13% above the first half of 2024, before Meta came to town.

The relative supply and demand chart cannot be drawn for Tensas. The Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics withhold nearly every store figure for a parish this small, to protect individual businesses. One type of store can be read. Gas stations have more than twice the supply of small rural counties like Tensas and 24% less in sales.

What can be measured is what households earn. Paychecks average \$858 a week, up 19% since 2021, a faster rise than the state's or the nation's. Median household income is \$38,583, up 23%, against 17% for the state.

The hard numbers are steep. Tensas has 8% fewer residents than in 2021, and 67% of its households live under a survival budget. Rising pay is what Tensas has to build on.



St. Joseph, LA

# Union Parish

Parish seat Farmerville. 20,561 residents, 8,508 households, 5,513 jobs.

## Snapshot

POPULATION

**20,561**

-2% since 2021

JOB

**5,513**

+19% since 2021

AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY

**\$843**

+17% since 2021

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**\$54,865**

+25% since 2021

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

**5.1%**

2025 average

HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET

**56%**

57% in 2021

BANK DEPOSITS

**\$367M**

-1% since 2021

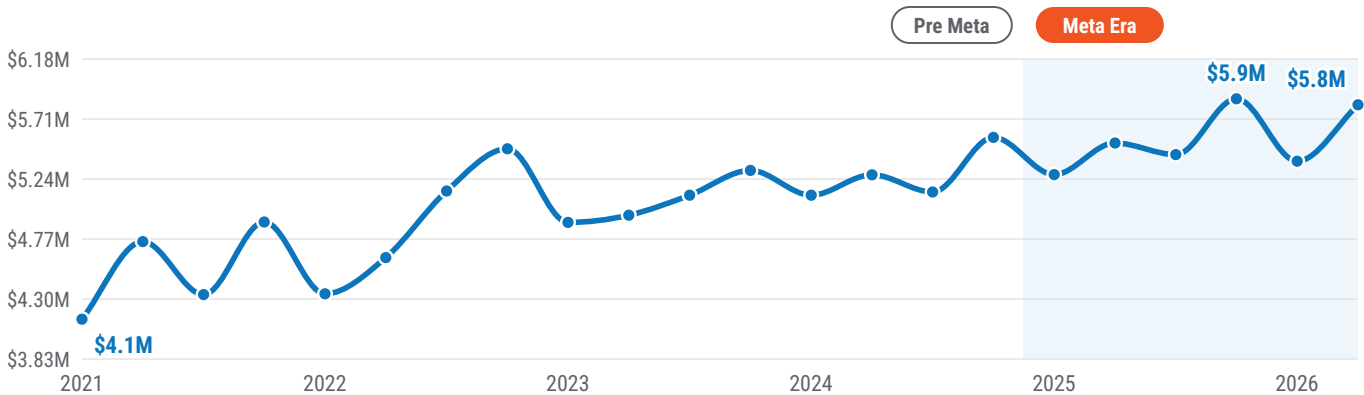
SIZE OF THE ECONOMY

**\$752M**

GDP, 2024

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

Union's sales tax has grown every year since 2021, from \$18.1 million to \$22.1 million.

The parish economy has grown 45% since 2021, to \$752 million.

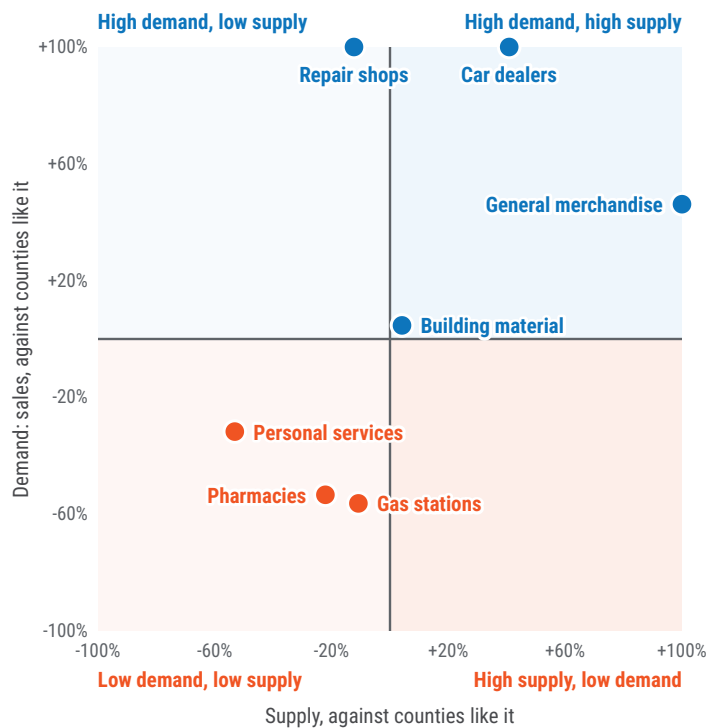
Union has added jobs every year since 2021. One in five private jobs in the parish is new since then.

Median household income is \$54,865, up 25% since 2021, against 17% for the state.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against outlying metro counties of Union's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where Union matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. General merchandise stores and car dealers are here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. No type of store lands here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. Repair shops are here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. Pharmacies, gas stations and personal service businesses are here.

**At the center.** Building material stores match counties like it on both.

Past the edge of the chart: general merchandise stores (+160% supply, +46% sales); car dealers (+41% supply, +158% sales); repair shops (-12% supply, +140% sales).

## The reading

Union's sales tax has grown every year since 2021, from \$18.1 million to \$22.1 million. The pace has been steady: 5% in 2025 and 4% in the first half of 2026. That is close to what it was before Meta came to town.

The chart above is a chart of extremes. Car dealers ring up more than two and a half times what they do in outlying metro counties like Union. General merchandise stores take in 46% more. Both have more supply than the comparison, so both are hot markets. Repair shops take in more than twice the comparison with less supply, the corner with room for another business.

Three types of store sit at the other end. Gas stations and pharmacies take in less than half of what the comparison does, and personal

services about a third less. All three have less supply as well. Something may be missing in how those businesses are done here, and what works in other markets could be adapted to stir up demand. Building material stores match the comparison.

Together the charts show steady growth resting on a few strong markets. The base under it has widened. Union has added jobs every year since 2021, and one in five private jobs is new since then. The parish economy has grown 45%, to \$752 million.

The hard numbers are here too. Union has 2% fewer residents than in 2021, and 56% of its households live under a survival budget. Paychecks are up 17%. Steady growth and proven markets are what Union has to build on.

# West Carroll Parish

Parish seat Oak Grove. 9,156 residents, 3,850 households, 2,011 jobs.

## Snapshot

POPULATION

**9,156**

-4% since 2021

JOB

**2,011**

-0% since 2021

AVERAGE WEEKLY PAY

**\$859**

+23% since 2021

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**\$50,254**

+23% since 2021

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

**6.5%**

2025 average

HOUSEHOLDS UNDER A SURVIVAL BUDGET

**54%**

54% in 2021

BANK DEPOSITS

**\$247M**

+26% since 2021

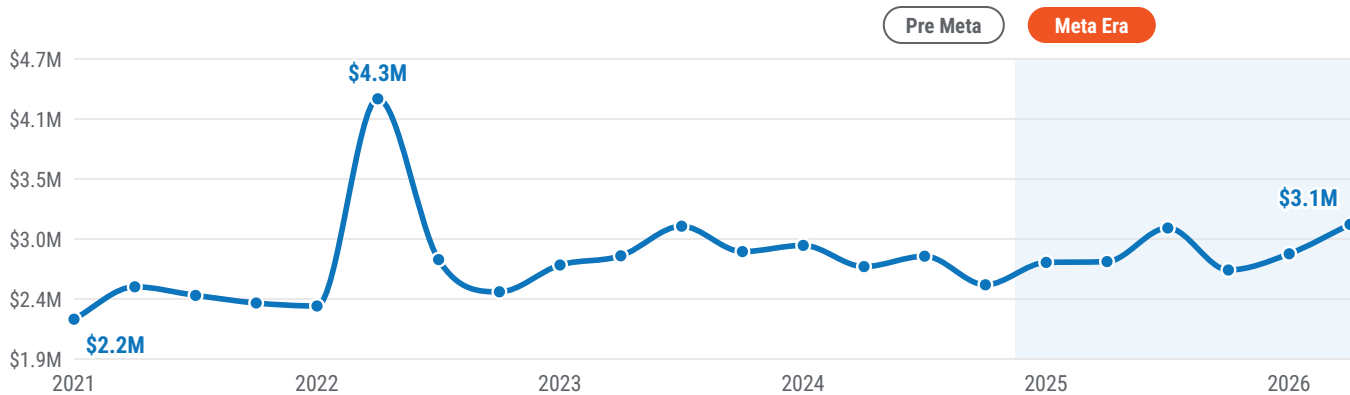
SIZE OF THE ECONOMY

**\$237M**

GDP, 2024

## Sales tax collections by quarter

All taxing bodies in the parish, millions of dollars, as reported by the parish tax collector. The shaded quarters are the Meta era.



## Celebration callouts

Paychecks average \$859 a week, up 23% since 2021. That is a faster rise than the state's or the nation's.

West Carroll has 21 more private employers than in 2021, 199 against 178.

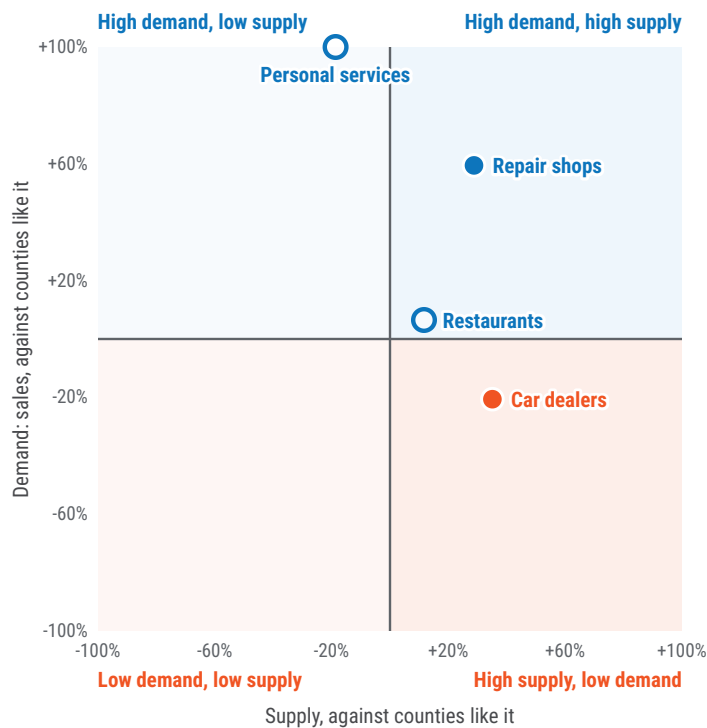
Median household income is \$50,254, up 23% since 2021, against 17% for the state.

Sales tax in the first half of 2026 ran 8% above the first half of 2025, with every parish fund up.

Sources: Census Bureau, BLS, FDIC, BEA, and United For ALICE for the snapshot; the parish tax collector for sales tax; Census Bureau Economic Census 2022 and BLS for relative supply and demand. Full notes in Appendix A.

## Relative supply and demand, by type of store

Relative means against small rural counties of West Carroll's size and income. Left to right is supply. Bottom to top is demand, measured by sales. The center lines are where West Carroll matches those counties. Only types of store with published figures are shown.



**Top right: a hot market.** More supply and more sales than counties like it. Restaurants and repair shops are here.

**Bottom right: potentially saturated.** The supply is here and the sales are short. Car dealers are here.

**Top left: room for more businesses.** Sales above the comparison with less supply to make them. Personal service businesses are here.

**Bottom left: something is missing in how it is done here.** Less supply and fewer sales. No type of store lands here.

Solid dots measure supply by jobs. Hollow dots measure it by the number of stores, because the job counts are withheld. Past the edge of the chart: personal service businesses (-19% supply, +101% sales).

## The reading

West Carroll's sales tax ran close to \$2.9 million a quarter from 2022 through 2024. It rose 3% in 2025. The first half of 2026 ran 8% above the first half of 2025, with every parish fund up.

Only four types of store can be read on the chart above, and each lands somewhere different. Repair shops are a hot market, with 29% more supply than small rural counties like West Carroll and 59% more in sales. Restaurants are hot by a smaller margin. Personal services ring up twice the comparison with less supply, the corner with room for another business. Car dealers have 35% more supply and 21% less in sales, which makes that market potentially saturated.

Together the charts show modest growth at the register and a short list of strong markets. More of the strength is in what people earn. Paychecks average \$859 a week, up 23% since 2021, a faster rise than the state's or the nation's. Median household income is up 23% as well, against 17% for the state. The parish has 21 more private employers than in 2021.

The hard numbers close the page. West Carroll has 4% fewer residents than in 2021, and 54% of its households live under a survival budget. Rising pay and a growing number of employers are what West Carroll has to build on.

# How does this play out?

No one can forecast this, and Section 1 showed why. This section is the close: what I believe the region does with the data in this report, and who to call.



Madison Parish Port, Mississippi River

## The time, at long last, is now

I care about my neighbor. I care about the road that was paved by the people before me. I am proud to stand alongside such great people and to work for a better life for our families and neighbors. I want us to win. The report has laid out the data. This is what I believe we do with it, in the four letters of our own name.

### What the report found

- **Nothing like this has happened before.** Meta's data center is about 4.9 times the yearly GDP of Richland and Ouachita combined. The nearest case is 2.5 times.
- **Where it has happened, the growth lasted.** Five of six earlier host counties outgrew their neighbors for five years, and their towns built schools, a hospital, and water plants with the money.
- **The money is here.** Regional sales tax sat flat from 2021 to 2024 and is on pace to rise 38% by 2026, to about \$469 million. All ten parishes that report are up.
- **Companies are looking.** Grow NELA's project leads went from 20 in 2024 to 74 in 2025, with 53 more by late September 2026.
- **It shows in paychecks, permits, hotels, and flights.** A construction paycheck in Richland went from \$946 to \$2,559 a week. Monroe permitted more new commercial construction in eight months of 2026 than in any full year on record. Hotels ran 81% full at \$166 a night, and passengers at Monroe's airport are up 17% this year.
- **The region has people to build on.** Its colleges award about 6,000 credentials a year against about 3,800 openings that call for one. The shortfalls are in health support, truck driving, and the construction trades.
- **Housing is tight.** Apartments in Monroe and West Monroe raised rents 4% a year and stayed 95% full.
- **Most stores are in hot markets.** Eight of eleven types of store have more supply and more demand than counties like the region's. Three are potentially saturated.
- **Crime is falling.** Violent crime in Monroe has fallen by nearly half in five years.
- **Opportunity has to reach everyone.** 53% of households earn less than a survival budget. Ouachita's share fell from 56% to 45% in two years.

## **NEXT: What opportunities are ahead?**

EMERGING INDUSTRIES · INNOVATION · FUTURE WORKFORCE · TECH · TRENDS

It will be exciting to see how the region's municipalities deploy the new funding for the betterment of their communities, and how they use it to set up the next investment. Regional sales tax is on pace to rise 38% in two years, and that money lands in parish, city, and school board budgets.

It will be exciting to see new housing development. Apartments in Monroe are 95% full, and there is room for more.

It will be exciting to see crime go down. Violent crime in Monroe has fallen by nearly half in five years.

It will be exciting to see how the supply and demand charts inspire entrepreneurship. Every parish page shows where the openings are.

And it will be exciting to see people take a chance on themselves, and to see people from the outside take a chance on us.

## **ENGAGE: Who needs to be at the table?**

BUSINESS · GOVERNMENT · EDUCATION · HEALTHCARE · COMMUNITY · INVESTORS

This region has done well at setting aside differences for a common goal. It has to work better still.

When one of us wins in Northeast Louisiana, we all win. Helping your neighbor, a local business, another municipality, or a college is helping the whole region.

That includes the 53% of households here that earn less than a survival budget. Higher pay, more housing, and fuller public budgets reach them when we work together. United Way calls that economic opportunity for all.

## **LEAD: What are we willing to do?**

LEADERSHIP · ENTREPRENEURSHIP · COLLABORATION · VISION · INVESTMENT

Leaders in government, business, and the community need to act. Watching will not do it.

Use this data. Have the conversations. Bet on our people.

This is our circumstance. We do not need to complain about it. We need to embrace it, because it is coming either way. Take a chance.

## **ADVANCE: How do we turn ideas into economic impact?**

ACTION · INFRASTRUCTURE · GROWTH · OPPORTUNITY · MEASURABLE IMPACT

In ten years this can be a region that is well connected, with people moving here because they want to be part of the action and businesses competing for land.

The worry is that we wait. We wait for the right moment, or for someone else, and it misses us.

The time, at long last, is now. If we do not act strategically, collaboratively, and proactively, it could pass us by. The next page lists who to call.



East Carroll Parish



“The growth occurring throughout northeast Louisiana has the potential to benefit all of our communities. All of our businesses, and most importantly, all of our people.”

MAYOR GERALD BROWN | RICHWOOD, LA

# Doing business here

A business decision needs a person to call. These are the front doors for the twelve parishes.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

|                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Grow NELA</b><br><a href="http://grownela.com">grownela.com</a>                                                  | <b>Caldwell Parish Industrial Board</b><br><a href="http://wearecaldwell.com">wearecaldwell.com</a>               |
| <b>Louisiana Economic Development</b><br><a href="http://opportunitylouisiana.gov">opportunitylouisiana.gov</a>     | <b>Develop Franklin</b><br><a href="http://developfranklin.org">developfranklin.org</a>                           |
| <b>North Delta Regional Planning and Development District</b><br><a href="http://northdelta.org">northdelta.org</a> | <b>Biomedical Research and Innovation Park (BRIP)</b><br><a href="http://briplouisiana.org">briplouisiana.org</a> |
| <b>Morehouse Economic Development Corporation</b><br><a href="http://morehouseedc.org">morehouseedc.org</a>         |                                                                                                                   |

## CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

|                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Monroe Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://monroe.org">monroe.org</a>                                          | <b>Union Parish Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://unionparishchamber.org">unionparishchamber.org</a>                |
| <b>West Monroe-West Ouachita Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://westmonroechamber.org">westmonroechamber.org</a> | <b>Jackson Parish Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://jacksonparishchamber.org">jacksonparishchamber.org</a>          |
| <b>Northeast Louisiana African American Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://nelacc.org">nelacc.org</a>            | <b>Winnsboro-Franklin Parish Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://visitfranklinparish.org">visitfranklinparish.org</a> |
| <b>Ruston-Lincoln Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://rustonlincoln.org">rustonlincoln.org</a>                    | <b>Madison Parish Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://madisonparishchamber.com">madisonparishchamber.com</a>          |
| <b>Grambling Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="mailto:gramblingchamber95@yahoo.com">gramblingchamber95@yahoo.com</a>   | <b>West Carroll Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://westcarrollchamber.com">westcarrollchamber.com</a>                |
| <b>Richland Parish Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://richlandparishchamber.com">richlandparishchamber.com</a>   | <b>Caldwell Parish Chamber of Commerce</b><br>(318) 649-0726                                                                 |
| <b>Bastrop-Morehouse Chamber of Commerce</b><br><a href="http://bastroplacoc.org">bastroplacoc.org</a>                   | <b>Lake Providence-East Carroll Chamber</b><br>(318) 559-5125                                                                |

## COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

|                                                                                |                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>University of Louisiana Monroe</b><br><a href="http://ulm.edu">ulm.edu</a>  | <b>Grambling State University</b><br><a href="http://gram.edu">gram.edu</a>              |
| <b>Louisiana Tech University</b><br><a href="http://latech.edu">latech.edu</a> | <b>Louisiana Delta Community College</b><br><a href="http://ladelta.edu">ladelta.edu</a> |

## COMMUNITY

|                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>United Way of Northeast Louisiana (dial 211)</b><br><a href="http://unitedwaynela.org">unitedwaynela.org</a> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

# Where every number comes from

One entry per chart, in book order. Each states the data, the vintage, the calculation, and the choices made. Crenshaw Analytics calculations throughout.

## Chart 1.1 · Campus investment as a multiple of the local economy

Cumulative campus investment from company fact sheets, state economic development releases, county economic development corporations, and trade press, latest published as of September 28, 2026, reviewed October 2, 2026; where no campus total is published, the sum of announced expansions is used. Google's campuses use the construction totals Google published through 2024. In 2025 Google restated its state totals to add servers and networking equipment and does not split them by campus, so the restated totals are not used. Google's campus in The Dalles, Oregon, is left off the chart. Its figure is a cumulative total built up over nineteen years of expansions (\$2.4 billion through December 2024), set against the county's 2005 economy. That would read as about 3.2 times and is not comparable with a single announced project. The other campuses announced before 2019 are cumulative totals too, and all of them sit under one times their local economy. The Santa Teresa campus uses the developer's \$50 billion for the first five years, not the \$165 billion thirty-year bond ceiling, which includes equipment replacement. The Milam County figure is press-reported.

Local economy: Bureau of Economic Analysis GDP by county, current dollars, in the announcement year (2024 for campuses announced in 2025 and 2026), for the host county plus the county of the largest incorporated place within 40 straight-line miles of the site, by 2020 Census population (Richland plus Ouachita for Meta; a single county where the campus sits in the hub). County-size rule: host county under 150,000 people, or 150,000 to 250,000 outside a metro of one million. Campuses without a published dollar figure are left out (Microsoft Quincy, Microsoft Pecos, Google Armstrong and Haskell counties, the Paducah and Pike County proposals). Announced figures are commitments, not spending.

## Chart 1.2 · Sales tax after a data center announcement

State revenue departments and state auditors, one series per state applied alike to the host county, its hub, and every comparable county: Washington Department of Revenue taxable retail sales; Iowa Department of Revenue taxable sales; Nebraska Department of Revenue net taxable sales for Omaha; North Carolina Department of Revenue Statistical Abstract retail taxable sales; Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts local sales and use tax; New Mexico Taxation and Revenue taxable gross receipts; Georgia Department of Revenue local option sales tax distributions. Each series is shown as percent change from its own announcement-year value. Comparable counties: same state, population half to twice the host county's in the announcement year, excluding any county with a hyperscale campus and excluding the hub. Rutherford County, NC has a state methodology break in its announcement year, which inflates its base. Iowa does not tax construction labor. Catawba County is both Lenoir's hub and Apple's host. Oregon has no sales tax, and the South Carolina and Oklahoma series cannot be indexed to the announcement year, so The Dalles, Prineville, Berkeley County, and Pryor are not shown. Richland: Richland Parish Police Jury local sales and use tax from the audited financial statements, 2019 to 2025 (Road, Drainage and Courthouse Maintenance funds, the full 1.5 percent levy). Ouachita: Ouachita Parish School Board local sales and use tax from its audited statements.

Richland 2026 projected: the Police Jury's monthly collections January to June 2026 (the parish tax collector's files), the March 2026 annual payment held aside, divided by the share of the year the first half carried on average in 2021 to 2025, plus the March line once; chained onto the audit-based 2025 figure. Ouachita 2026 projected the same way from the School Board's four levies in the same monthly series (no such payment). DeKalb County, IL (Meta, 2020), added 2026-09-30: Illinois Department of Revenue county sales tax data, hub Kane County, 17 comparable counties, with two statewide changes in destination sourcing (2021 and 2025) and a 2020 base year, so its gap to the comparable median is read rather than its level. Louisa County VA (2023), Abilene TX (2024), and Cheyenne WY (2024) were pulled the same way and set aside as too recent to read; Shackelford County TX (2025) has no full year after its announcement.

### Chart 1.3 · Schools, hospitals, water, and roads paid for by data centers

Each bar is a public project with a published cost that a data center company paid for directly or that was financed by data center tax revenue. Meta, 2026-07-13, and KNOE, 2026-07-15 (Richland Parish infrastructure commitment, more than \$1 billion, announced; Meta's own pages describe it both as invested to date and as to be invested); Amazon, 2026-03-31 (Oregon water plants); KOMO News, 2026-09-10 (Quincy high school and hospital, with the superintendent's and hospital CEO's statements); Meta, 2026-09-03 (Kuna water and wastewater system, more than \$100 million); EPA water reuse case study (Quincy industrial water reuse utility); Mecklenburg County FY2025 adopted budget and offsite infrastructure fund records, budgeted figures (La Crosse and Chase City elementary schools, public safety building, regional water plant share). Projects with no published cost are not shown.

### Chart 2.1 · Ten-parish sales tax collections by year

Monthly sales tax collections, from files received directly from the parish tax collectors, for ten parishes (Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, West Carroll), all taxing bodies and all revenue types, summed by calendar year, 2021 to 2025, and January to June 2026. The 2026 projection: first-half collections, less the March 2026 annual payment of the 1 percent sales tax on construction materials, divided by the average share of the year the first half carried in 2021 to 2025 (0.487), plus the March remittance once. The collector files do not cover Lincoln and Jackson parishes, which are not in this total.

### Chart 2.2 · Sales tax growth by parish

Monthly sales tax collections by parish, from files received directly from the parish tax collectors, all taxing bodies and revenue types, summed for January to June of 2024 and of 2026. The text's "flat or shrinking" count uses the Pre Meta indicator, the average of the 2023 and 2024 year-over-year changes (2022 left out as the stimulus-rebound year, as the site does). Region first, parishes alphabetical; no parish is ranked against another by design.

### Chart 2.3 · Richland Parish sales tax collections by year

Monthly sales tax collections for Richland Parish, from files received directly from the parish tax collector, all taxing bodies (Police Jury, School Board, Sheriff, the towns) and all revenue types, summed by calendar year, 2001 to 2025, and January to June 2026. The 2026 projection: first-half collections, less the March 2026 annual payment of the 1 percent sales tax on construction materials, divided by the average share of the year the first half carried in 2021 to 2025 (0.488), plus the March remittance once. The remittance is an annual payment and is stated as such.

### Chart 2.4 · New commercial construction permitted in the City of Monroe

City of Monroe permit export, projects by create date, 2026-09-16 copy; Designation "Commercial" and WorkType "New Construction (C)" for the bars, "Remodel (C)" and "Addition (C)" for the remodel figures in the text; permitted contract value, summed by calendar year; permits dated before 2026-09-01. The permit system starts 2022-07-12, so 2022 is a half year. Figures verified by a second route. Addresses are held in the raw file and never printed.

### Chart 2.5 · Average weekly pay in construction, Richland Parish

Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Richland Parish, private ownership, NAICS 236, 237, and 238 combined: total quarterly wages divided by average quarterly employment, divided by thirteen weeks. First quarter 2022 through first quarter 2026. Louisiana and US construction reference: the same calculation statewide and nationally for the first quarter of 2026. Overtime is included in wages as reported.

### Chart 2.6 · Meta contracts with Louisiana businesses

Company figures. Meta and Louisiana Economic Development, 2026-07-13: more than \$1.6 billion committed to Louisiana businesses. Meta, 2025-12-19, at the one-year mark: 84 percent of the 160-plus Louisiana businesses under contract were in Northeast Louisiana. The 84 percent is a share of businesses, not of dollars. Scale: Bureau of Economic Analysis GDP by county, 2024, twelve parishes, \$16.9 billion. Not audited; the company's own count of commitments.

**Chart 2.7 · Monroe airport-area hotels**

Occupancy and average daily rate for a set of Monroe airport-area hotels, monthly, January to June of each year 2022 to 2026: independently collected research from individuals who granted permission for its use. The set is the airport-area hotels, not the whole market. Occupancy and average daily rate are averages across the set; the set’s revenue and room counts are not shown. Under construction: Residence Inn West Monroe, Home2 Suites, and Holiday Inn Express, Monroe (KNOE 2026-04-29; site visit 2026-09-14).

**Chart 2.8 · Passengers boarding at Monroe Regional Airport**

Bureau of Transportation Statistics T-100 segment data, all service classes, passengers boarding at the origin airport, which matches FAA enplanements within 0.3 percent at Monroe. Calendar years 2019 and 2021 to 2025; 2026 is January to May against January to May 2025 and is subject to revision. Peer comparison in the text: the 222 FAA nonhub primary airports (more than 10,000 boardings a year and under 0.05 percent of the U.S. total) as classified in 2022, with scheduled service and consistent counts, the same airports every year, each on its own change; Monroe’s 17 percent is at the 89th percentile.

**Chart 2.9 · Active Airbnb listings by parish**

AirROI, Airbnb listings, monthly September 2021 to August 2026, twelve-month rolling average. Ouachita and Lincoln from the vendor’s market series (Monroe, West Monroe, and Sterlington summed; Ruston); Franklin and Richland from listing-level history (listings with revenue or availability in the month, within fifteen miles of the parish center). Host earnings in the text are the trailing twelve-month average revenue per active listing.

**Chart 2.10 · Ruston sales tax and Lincoln Parish lodging tax**

City of Ruston sales tax by fiscal year (ending September 30) is the city finance department’s workbook, FY2016 to FY2026, with FY2026 the city’s projection. The city rate rose from 1.75 to 2.50 percent in July 2016, so FY2016 sits mostly at the old rate. The workbook was reconciled to the city’s audited financial reports: through FY2018 it equals the audited sales tax total, which includes about \$3 million a year of state sales tax increment paid to the city’s I-20 tax increment district; from FY2019 it matches the four citywide taxes plus the new economic development district taxes within 1.4 percent in every year, with the increment outside that total. Because that break falls in the year the fields opened, the rise was checked on the four citywide taxes alone (2.5 percent combined, in place for the whole period): they rose 23 percent from FY2019 to FY2021 against 25 percent in the workbook, and the two move together through FY2025, so the chart shows the workbook series. Lincoln Parish lodging tax (4 percent, unchanged) is the amount the Ruston-Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau received by calendar year, 2014 to 2024, from its audited financial statements; receipts arrive a month or two after the stay, and the 2020 figure holds about eleven months. Openings are from the city’s audits (outdoor fields 2019-07-26, indoor building January 2022); event counts and the out-of-state share are from the bureau’s visitor reports.

**Chart 2.11 · New business applications where a Buc-ee’s opened**

Census Bureau Business Formation Statistics, business applications by county and year, for the Buc-ee’s counties against counties in the same state of similar size, each indexed to the year before the store opened and expressed as points above or below the peer median; the chart is the median across the Buc-ee’s counties (23 county-years at the start, 16 by year five as the newer stores run out of data).

### Chart 2.12 · Income ULM adds to Northeast Louisiana, by source, and where its students settle

Lightcast, The Economic Value of the University of Louisiana Monroe, main report, published April 2025, fiscal year 2023-24 ([ulm.edu/upa/documents/ulmmainreportfy2324finaleis.pdf](http://ulm.edu/upa/documents/ulmmainreportfy2324finaleis.pdf)). The study was prepared for the university, which supplied the employee, finance, and student data and approved the study with the University of Louisiana System; the estimates are Lightcast's and are not audited. Lightcast's Northeast Louisiana is the same twelve parishes as this report. Added income and jobs supported by source: Table 3.12, page 44 (alumni \$457.7 million and 8,111 jobs; operations \$108.2 million and 1,255; student spending \$32.0 million and 652; spin-off companies \$16.6 million and 381; visitor spending \$1.8 million and 43; research \$1.3 million and 17; volunteerism \$105 thousand and 5; total \$617.6 million and 10,464). Added income is labor income plus non-labor income, net of purchases from other firms, on the same basis as gross regional product; it is smaller than sales. Operations are net of the alternative use of the 28 percent of ULM's funding that comes from inside the region (\$123.5 million gross, less \$15.3 million; Table 3.2, page 26); capital construction is counted inside operations (page 24).

Alumni: \$545.9 million of added wages earned in the year by former students working in the region, less 15 percent for alternative education and 50 percent for labor employers could have imported, leaving \$232.0 million, plus employer income and multiplier effects (Tables 3.10 and 3.11, pages 40 and 43). The 50 percent assumption moves the total: at 25 percent the alumni figure is \$686.6 million and at 75 percent \$228.9 million (Appendix 1, page 77). Lightcast shows spin-off companies (51 companies, 240 employees, reported by the university) separately because it calls that link more subjective (page 30). Share of the economy: 4.5 percent of Lightcast's regional product of \$13.7 billion for 2023 (Table 2.3, page 19); against Bureau of Economic Analysis GDP by county, 2024, twelve parishes, \$16.9 billion, the same total is about 3.7 percent. One job in 18 is against Lightcast's count of 191,201 regional jobs, which includes the self-employed (page 19). Employees 1,019 and payroll and benefits \$88.5 million: Table 2.1 and page 16. Students 9,623, unduplicated, and 1,498 graduates and certificate completers: Table 2.2, page 17. Where students settle (51, 21, and 28 percent): page 17, Lightcast's estimate from ULM's Alumni Pathways matched data. Returns per dollar are present values over the students' working lives, discounted: students \$5.30 on their own costs, state and local taxpayers \$2.40 on \$58.6 million of funding, Louisiana as a whole \$6.60 (pages 9, 10, 59, and 64).

The report warns against comparing these results with ULM's earlier studies because the model changed.

### Chart 3.1 · Openings a year that need a credential, against credentials awarded

Openings: Louisiana Workforce Commission long-term occupational projections 2024 to 2034, Regional Labor Market Area 8 (Monroe, Northeast) plus Lincoln Parish's share of Area 7 (8.5 percent, its share of Area 7 covered employment, QCEW 2025), total openings over ten years divided by ten, restricted to occupations whose typical entry education is a postsecondary award or degree, plus occupations the campuses clearly train for (at least ten credentials a year and a fifth of the openings: welders, electricians, diesel mechanics, police and corrections officers, pharmacy technicians). Openings count growth plus replacement of workers who retire or change occupation. Credentials: Board of Regents completers by program, ULM, Louisiana Tech, Grambling, and Delta, all award levels, average of 2023-24 to 2025-26, mapped to occupations by the NCES CIP 2020 to SOC 2018 crosswalk, each program's completers split equally across its matched occupations, with adjustments: programs outside education are not counted toward college-teaching openings, even where the crosswalk lists college teaching as a match; psychology to social service and counseling; criminal justice to police, corrections, and probation; general and other health, pharmacy, architecture, family-studies, and recreation programs to the occupations they feed. General studies shown separately. Groups under 20 openings and 50 credentials omitted.

Completers include students who leave the region (51 percent of ULM's students remain in Northeast Louisiana after they finish, 21 percent settle elsewhere in the state, and 28 percent leave it: Lightcast, The Economic Value of the University of Louisiana Monroe, April 2025) and who continue to further study.

### Chart 3.2 · Average weekly pay in Lincoln Parish's hourly sectors, against Buc-ee's starting wage

BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2025 annual averages, Lincoln Parish, private ownership: NAICS 722 restaurants and bars, 721 hotels, 445 grocery stores, 457 gas stations and fuel dealers, 812 personal services, 713 amusement and recreation, 455 general merchandise stores, 623 nursing and residential care; average weekly wage is total wages over average employment over 52 weeks, part-time workers included. Wages in this source count tips and gratuities reported to the employer, bonuses, and the cash value of meals; cash tips a worker does not report are not captured. Buc-ee's: company release for the 2025-10-24 groundbreaking (at least 200 full-time jobs, full benefits); \$18 an hour as reported by KNOE from the groundbreaking (KSLA reported \$18 to \$20), \$720 a week at 40 hours. The eight sectors hold 5,323 of the parish's 15,195 private-sector jobs (35 percent). A full-time year at \$18 an hour is 2,080 hours, \$37,440; the average restaurant job paid \$350 a week, \$18,200 a year. Parish average: all private-sector employment, \$892 a week, same file.

### Chart 3.3 · Apartment rent growth against apartment occupancy

The chart places each market on two measures: how fast apartment rents rose from December 2021 to May 2025, per year, and what share of apartments were occupied in mid-2026. Monroe and West Monroe are measured from local records because the national rent and vacancy indexes do not cover Monroe for these dates (Zillow publishes a Monroe multifamily rent index only from July 2023; Apartment List does not publish Monroe).

Rent growth for Monroe and West Monroe comes from advertised rents on apartments.com, read from two copies of its Monroe listing page saved by the Internet Archive on 2021-12-04 and 2025-05-04. Every named apartment complex listed on both dates is included, matched by its listing id: 22 complexes, 17 in Monroe and 5 in West Monroe. For each complex the starting rent (the low end of its advertised range) on the two dates gives a change, converted to a yearly rate over the 1,247 days between the captures. The chart shows the median of the 22: 4.3 percent a year, with 20 of the 22 rising. Using the midpoint of each advertised range instead gives 4.1 percent, and the high end 4.3 percent. The median is used rather than a unit-weighted average because unit counts are not known for most complexes. Single-address rentals are not counted, and a management company that lists several of its complexes on one page counts once. In all, 51 named complexes appear in the saved pages in some year;

33 had a listed rent in May 2025, with a median starting rent of \$800 a month.

Occupancy for Monroe is a survey of apartment communities in the City of Monroe conducted in July and August 2026, independently collected research from individuals who granted permission for its use, reported here in aggregate only: 13 communities, 1,778 units, built between 1970 and 2004 with one set of townhomes added in 2014. Weighted by units, 95.3 percent of them were occupied, which is 83 empty apartments; one community holds 64 percent of the empty units, and the other twelve are 98.1 percent occupied. Where a community was surveyed twice, the later answer is used. No West Monroe occupancy reading exists. Nine complexes have both a rent-growth and an occupancy reading; on those nine alone, rent growth is 3.0 percent a year and occupancy 94.6 percent, consistent with the full figures.

The twelve comparison metros are Southern regional centers of roughly 200,000 to 1.2 million people, chosen because both national vendors cover them, not matched to Monroe's size: Baton Rouge, Chattanooga, Clarksville, College Station, Columbia SC, Gainesville GA, Huntsville, Jackson MS, Little Rock, Midland, New Orleans, and Savannah; the United States is the reference. Their rent growth is the Zillow Observed Rent Index for multifamily listings, metro level, smoothed and seasonally adjusted, December 2021 to May 2025, annualized.

Their occupancy is one minus the Apartment List vacancy index for the twelve months to August 2026.

The 2026 figure in the text (rents quoted in summer 2026 a median 6.7 percent above the May 2025 listings, higher at ten of twelve) compares the survey's quoted starting rent with the 2025 listed rent at the twelve complexes that have both. An advertised range and a manager's quoted rent are different measures, so that comparison shows direction, not a rate, and it is not on the chart.

### Chart 3.4 · Median price per square foot of closed home sales, three parishes

Guest feature: Brian Bendily, Associate Broker, John Rea Realty, from the regional MLS, every closed site-built sale in Ouachita, Lincoln, and Richland parishes, January 2020 to June 2026, with land, manufactured, and new-construction segments kept separate; median price per square foot and median price by calendar year, 2026 January to June; the September 2026 snapshot for active listings, months of supply, and era changes, as he states them. Eras are his: COVID 2020 to 2022, rate hikes 2022 to 2024, the Meta era from the 2024 announcement. Contributed data, shown as parish-level medians.

### Chart 3.5 · Supply and demand by type of store

Comparison counties: each parish is matched with a class of counties in twelve Southeastern states (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia), the same classes used on the parish pages. Ouachita: the principal-city counties of metros under 500,000 residents (50 counties in the twelve states), kept where the county itself has 100,000 to 250,000 residents. Lincoln: counties holding the main town of a micropolitan area, 30,000 to 75,000. Morehouse, Union, and Richland: outlying metro counties of 14,000 to 30,000. Franklin and Jackson: rural counties of 14,000 to 30,000. Caldwell, East Carroll, Madison, Tensas, and West Carroll: rural counties of 3,000 to 12,000. Rural means outside any metropolitan or micropolitan area. Metro and micro roles follow the Office of Management and Budget's July 2023 list. Size bands use Census 2025 population estimates. The twelve parishes are left out of every class. Within each class only counties whose 2022 per capita personal income (BEA) is within 20 percent of the parish's are kept; 41 to 160 counties per parish, 495 counties in all. A class shared by several parishes is used as a rate on each parish's own population, so no county is counted twice. Sales: Census Bureau Economic Census 2022, county sales by store type. The 2022 benchmark is each parish's class median sales per resident.

Counties whose sales are withheld are left out of the median, and counties with no store of that kind count as zero. Every 2025 sales and dollar figure is an estimate, carried forward from 2022 in two steps. The parish side: the parish's own 2022 sales, times its own 2022 to 2025 change in private jobs in that type of store (BLS QCEW), times the category's price change (CPI-U). The comparison side: the class median 2022 rate, times the median job change among the class's counties (counties with at least ten jobs in 2022; Louisiana's change where fewer than fifteen counties qualify), times the same price change, put back on a per-resident basis with the class's 2025 population, then times the parish's 2025 population. Where a parish's job count is withheld in either year, its job change is estimated from its number of establishments in each year times Louisiana's jobs per establishment in that year; with fewer than five establishments, Louisiana's job change is used. Price series, annual averages 2022 to 2025: food away from home (restaurants), food at home (grocery), commodities less food and energy (general merchandise, building material, sporting goods, furniture), medical care commodities (pharmacies), new and used motor vehicles (car dealers), gasoline (gas stations), motor vehicle maintenance and repair (repair shops), miscellaneous personal services (personal services), recreation (amusement), apparel (clothing).

Jobs: BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2025 annual averages, private ownership, three-digit industry; benchmark is each parish's class median jobs per 1,000 residents times the parish's population. Reading: jobs stand for supply and sales for demand, each measured for the region itself against the comparison; the chart makes no assumption about where the buyers live. The chart position is the sum over parishes of actual over benchmark, for sales and for jobs. On the parish pages, where a parish's job count is withheld, supply is measured by its number of establishments per resident against its class median and drawn as a hollow dot. A parish counts for a type of store only where both its sales and its jobs are published, so both axes cover the same parishes and every figure is a floor. Coverage, share of the region's residents: car dealers 92 percent (eight parishes), general merchandise 89, building material 89, gas stations 86, repair shops 85, pharmacies 84, personal services 73; restaurants, grocery, sporting goods, and amusement 60 (Ouachita and Lincoln only, because BLS withholds the job counts elsewhere). Clothing and furniture cover under 25 percent and are left off. Sales per job is sales over jobs on the parishes counted.

Parish by parish, on the same data, 31 of 59 parish readings sit in high demand and high supply, 17 in low demand and low supply, 7 in high supply and low demand, and 4 in high demand and low supply; the regional chart is the sum, so it can clear a line that single parishes do not. No over-time version is shown: 2025 sales are the 2022 count carried forward by job change, so a line from 2022 to 2025 would move with jobs on both axes by construction. A store's sales count whoever the buyer is, so building material, fuel, cars, and repair carry contractor and fleet business. Hotels excluded.

### **Chart 3.6 · Violent offenses per 100,000 residents**

FBI Crime Data Explorer, summarized agency, state, and national violent-crime series, refreshed 2026-09-15, pulled 2026-09-21; years with twelve months reported. Violent crime is the FBI's four-offense definition (murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault), counted as offenses known to the police, per 100,000 residents of the reporting agency's jurisdiction. Cities are their police departments. Monroe: 1,460 offenses in 2020 and 764 in 2025 on FBI populations of 47,119 and 46,376. Gap with Louisiana: Monroe's rate minus the state's, 2,448 in 2020 and 1,182 in 2025, a 52 percent reduction. Years to meet: from 2020 to 2025 Monroe's rate fell an average of 290 a year and Louisiana's 37, so the gap closed by about 253 a year; at that pace 1,182 closes in 4.7 years. This assumes both keep falling by the same number each year, which would put Monroe near 290 per 100,000. At the same percent a year instead (Monroe down 12 percent, Louisiana down 7 percent) the lines would take about two decades to meet. Neither is a forecast. Monroe's rate rose from 2021 to 2022 and fell in every other year shown.

### **Chart 3.7 · Households earning less than a survival budget (economic opportunity for all)**

United For ALICE, State of ALICE in Louisiana 2026 report and Louisiana data sheet, 2010 to 2024 by parish; the United Way of Northeast Louisiana parish flyer, 2026 update, agrees parish for parish. The share is households in poverty plus ALICE households over all households; the twelve parishes are summed. The ALICE Household Survival Budget is United For ALICE's estimate from local costs in each parish and is not the official poverty rate; the 2024 budget for a working-age household is \$58,901 in Ouachita. Regional households below the budget: 77,655 of 133,317 in 2022 and 71,193 of 134,271 in 2024; Ouachita 7,009 fewer over the same years. National share 41 percent (United For ALICE, 2024). The parish-by-parish figures are on the parish pages. United Way of Northeast Louisiana: 211 impact flyer, July 2025 to June 2026 (13,270 calls; 7,870 food-pantry, 7,488 electric-assistance, and 3,503 rent-assistance requests); economic opportunity flyer; and an interview with United Way staff on 2026-09-24 (rent calls rising with rents, placements of displaced families in short-term rentals, transportation as a barrier). Economic opportunity for all is one of United Way's three community aspirations.

## **Section 4 · Parish pages**

Snapshot, with changes measured from 2021. Residents: Census Bureau population estimates, 2025. Jobs and average weekly pay: BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2025 annual averages, all employers. Median household income: Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2024. Unemployment rate: BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2025 average. Households under a survival budget: United For ALICE, 2024. Bank deposits: FDIC Summary of Deposits, June 2025. Size of the economy: Bureau of Economic Analysis GDP by county, 2024, current dollars. Sales tax: all taxing bodies in the parish by quarter, from files received directly from the parish tax collectors. Those files do not cover Lincoln or Jackson, so Lincoln's line is the City of Ruston's sales tax by fiscal year and Jackson's is the Police Jury's audited sales tax. Collections are totals as published. A rise in collections is more revenue for the community, whether it comes from more spending or from a new or changed tax. Relative supply and demand: the method of chart 3.5, parish by parish. Celebration callouts draw on the sources above and on the charts in Sections 2 and 3, and on: Louisiana Tech University, fall 2026 enrollment (2026-09-29); Grambling State University, fall 2026 enrollment of nearly 5,000 as reported by KNOE on 2026-10-07 (no exact figure given); Louisiana Board of Regents, college enrollment by parish of residence, fall terms through fall 2025;

Federal Housing Finance Agency county house price index, 2021 to 2025, with the typical parish taken as the median of Louisiana parishes; FBI Crime Data Explorer (chart 3.6); City of Monroe permits (chart 2.4). Where a callout says private, the figure covers private employers only.

**Section 5 · What the report found**

Grow NELA project leads: counts by year from Grow NELA’s project leads report, as reported to Crenshaw Analytics by email on 2026-10-08: 20 entries in 2024, 74 in 2025, and 53 in 2026 through September 23. Every other figure in the summary is from the chart it restates.



“All the future growth is possible, if we work together. We want a thriving economy for our children and grandchildren to stay in northeast Louisiana and have bright futures.”

MICHAEL CRENSHAW | FOUNDER, CRENSHAW ANALYTICS

