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## **New Report Shows Consumer Spending and Vaccination Rates Up, Unemployment and COVID-19 Case Rates Down in St. Tammany Parish**

*St. Tammany Corporation's May Snapshot Marks One Year of Tracking COVID-19 Recovery in St. Tammany Parish*

MANDEVILLE, La – Today, St. Tammany Corporation releases its May edition of *Snapshot: Impacts of COVID-19 on St. Tammany* – a dashboard of timely, relevant, easy-to-understand data that continues to focus specifically on telling the story of St. Tammany through analysis of its economic characteristics. This report comes one year after St. Tammany Corporation's launch of the monthly Snapshot report in May 2020 and shows how, more than a year into the pandemic, the economic landscape in St. Tammany has been changed and provides context essential to our economic recovery moving forward: where are we now, where were we before, and where are we going. Elements in this edition of the Snapshot include updates on COVID-19 cases and mortality, local and state vaccination status, employment, community behaviors, and more.

Four key takeaways from this month's report include:

- **St. Tammany has recorded 25,800 confirmed and probable COVID-19 cases and has surpassed 500 COVID-related deaths over 14 months. However, daily new cases have stayed below 100 for three months, and for 11 consecutive days in April, there were no new COVID-19 deaths in St. Tammany. Relatedly, St. Tammany also continues to have one of the highest vaccination rates in the state.**
- **So far in 2021, the average number of weekly initial claims for unemployment insurance in St. Tammany is about a quarter of the 2020 average. The unemployment rate has remained below 6.0% in St. Tammany for five consecutive months.**
- **While many households across the nation now feel more comfortable traveling and returning to work, school, and doctors' appointments, many households continue to struggle with finances, employment, housing, and food insecurity resulting from the ongoing economic crisis.**
- **Gas prices in the New Orleans Metro are among the lowest 5% of metro areas in the nation at a time when the national average fuel price has surpassed \$3.00 per gallon for the first time since 2014.**

“As economic developers, it’s our job to pay close attention to multiple factors that affect our community’s economy and well-being,” said Chris Masingill, CEO of St. Tammany Corporation. “Over the past year, I have been proud of the way we have taken that responsibility a step further by packaging the data in a format that can be useful to local decision-makers and other interested members of the community as we navigate the overlapping challenges of the pandemic and economic downturn together.”

*The AnalyST* research initiative, led by St. Tammany Corporation Research and Policy Analyst & Project Associate for Strategic Initiatives Elizabeth Lee, tracks, interprets, visualizes, and reports on an array of the economic and demographic indicators that make up St. Tammany.

Masingill added, “We are encouraged by decrease in cases, increase in vaccinations, and return of local jobs, which is the recipe for ramping up our economy to be even better than before.”

Additional resources and previous publications, including today’s release of the Snapshot in an interactive dashboard format, can be found at [www.sttammanystats.com](http://www.sttammanystats.com).

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***About St. Tammany Corporation:*** As the lead economic development organization for St. Tammany, the St. Tammany Corporation functions as the comprehensive resource center for business formation throughout the parish. The services provided by the St. Tammany Corporation include, but are not limited to, business retention, site selection, workforce development, research and data services, state and local incentives, business attraction, talent retention, certified site development, relocation support, and marketing St. Tammany.