

ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT of the ST. BERNARD PORT, HARBOR, & TERMINAL DISTRICT



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ST. BERNARD PORT
HARBOR & TERMINAL DISTRICT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Louisiana's 14,500-mile waterway network is vital to connecting America's farming and manufacturing sectors with the international market. Centered on the Mississippi River, the Lower Mississippi River Port Complex (LMRPC), which includes the ports of St. Bernard, New Orleans, Plaquemines, Baton Rouge, and South Louisiana, is the world's largest port complex. It handles more than a quarter of all U.S. waterborne trade. The LMRPC accounts for over 60 percent of the nation's grain exports and significant portions of energy and chemical shipments, making it critical to both the local and national economies. The St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District has therefore been a significant economic engine for the state and a strategic national asset. In addition to the services it provides as a critical global supply chain hub, the St. Bernard Port directly employs many residents and indirectly supports many more Americans through induced effects.

This report estimates the economic impacts of the St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District on Louisiana and the nation using the input-output modeling framework. IMPLAN 2024 data, which includes local and national economic data and industry relationships, were used for this analysis. Additionally, primary data on the port's financial output and that of its tenants were obtained to determine the port's economic contributions.

Findings from the study suggest that the St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District supports a substantial number of jobs and income. It directly provides 1,415 jobs and \$183.2 million in output. Accounting for the ripple effects of port spending on suppliers and household expenditures, the overall impact is 2,267 jobs (indirect and induced), \$201.7 million in labor income, \$237.2 million in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and \$332 million in total statewide output.

In addition to jobs and productivity, the port's activities contribute to public revenues across multiple jurisdictions. The total tax generated is estimated at \$53.5 million, including \$38.8 million in federal taxes, \$8.1 million in state taxes, and \$6.6 million in local taxes distributed across the Parish and sub-Parish levels.

These results underscore the St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District's role as an economic engine, supporting employment and household income, generating value-added activity reflected in GDP, strengthening supply chain linkages, and generating substantial tax revenues. The findings can inform planning and policy discussions on infrastructure, operational reliability, land use, industrial development, and workforce strategies that sustain and expand the port's contribution to the Louisiana economy.

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
TABLE OF FIGURES	3
LIST OF TABLES.....	4
1.0 INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Historical Background of St. Bernard Port	7
1.2 Overview of the Port’s Role in the Logistics Ecosystem	9
1.3 Regional and National Significance	11
2.0 METHODOLOGY	12
2.1 Analysis Approach.....	12
2.2 Multipliers	13
2.3 Data Sources	13
2.4 Data Analysis: Economic Impact Analysis Using IMPLAN Modeling (IMPLAN Model, 2024)	13
3.0 ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS	14
3.1 Model Assumptions	14
3.2 Result Highlights	14
3.3 Economic Contribution of St. Bernard Port	15
4.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS	17
4.1 Discussion.....	17
4.1.1 Why the Multiplier Effects Matter	17
4.1.2 Fiscal Contributions and Public Value	18
4.1.3 Implications for Port Competitiveness and Regional Development	18
4.1.4 IMPLAN Modelling Limitations and Considerations	18
4.2 Conclusions.....	19
APPENDIX.....	21

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Lower Mississippi River Port Complex: Five Major Ports of Louisiana	5
Figure 2. The St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District	6
Figure 3. The Three Terminals and the Violet Properties at the St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District	6
Figure 4. Kaiser Aluminum Plant Smokestack, 2025	8
Figure 5. Unloading Barges- Midstream Mooring.....	10
Figure 6. Historical Cargo Volumes	10

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. St. Bernard Port Terminals and Violet Properties.....	6
Table 2. Overall Economic Contribution.....	15
Table 3. Overall Tax Contribution	16

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District (referred to as “St. Bernard Port”) is a vital part of Louisiana’s maritime infrastructure and a key contributor to the national freight logistics and global trade sectors. The port serves as an economic pillar in southeastern Louisiana and functions as a strategic hub within the Lower Mississippi River’s broader maritime logistics network. Positioned just downstream from the Port of New Orleans along the Mississippi River and within the world’s largest port complex (see Figure 1), St. Bernard Port is well positioned as a gateway for both domestic and international cargo, supporting industries such as petrochemicals, agriculture, breakbulk, and project cargo.

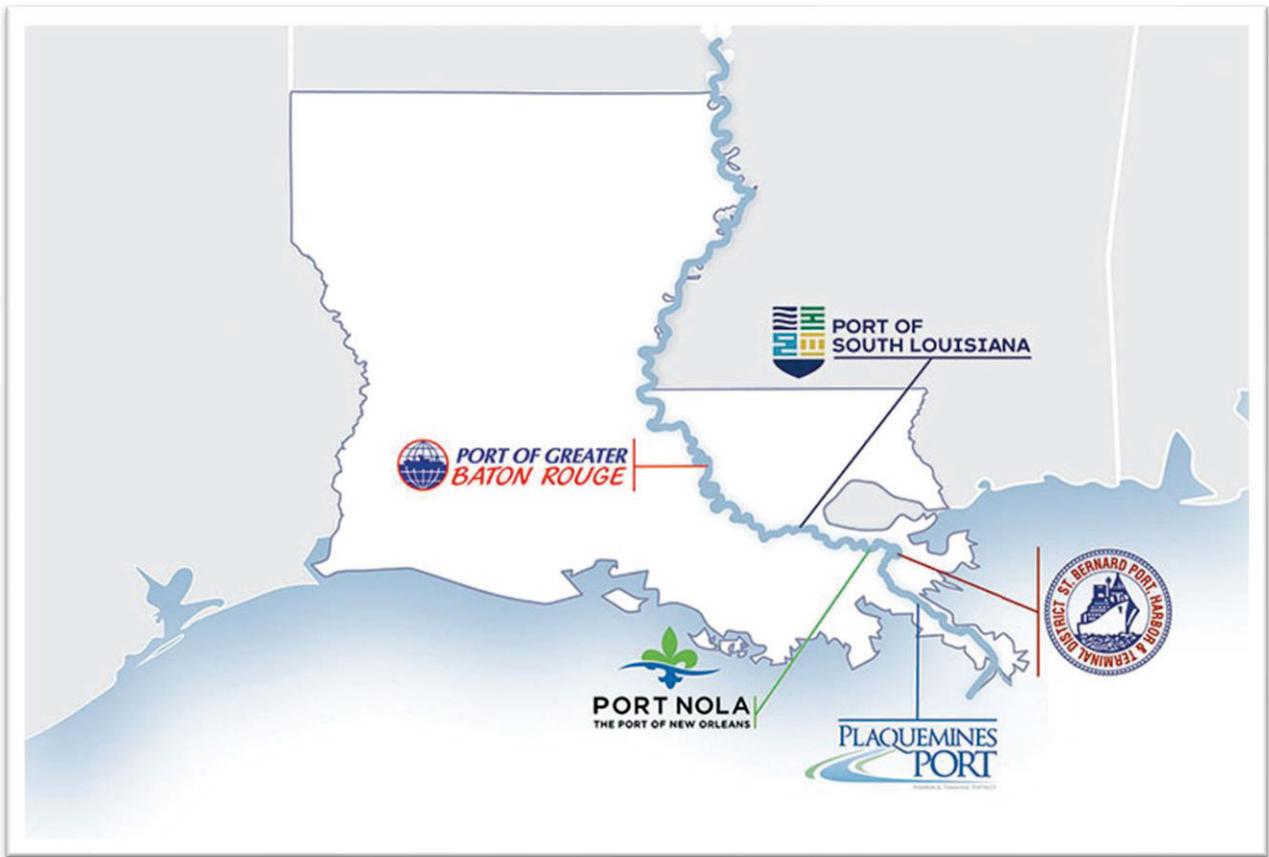


Figure 1. Lower Mississippi River Port Complex: Five Major Ports of Louisiana

(Source: St. Bernard Port)

The St. Bernard Port is often referred to as the gateway to the world's largest shipping corridor. It spans more than 380 acres and includes three terminals: Arabi, Chalmette, the Meraux Mooring, and Violet Properties. It is located between Mile Marker 81 and Mile Marker 91 AHP along the Mississippi River. See Figures 2, 3, and Table 1. The Port also owns approximately

1,000 undeveloped acres along the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO). This property has significant development potential if the right opportunity arises.

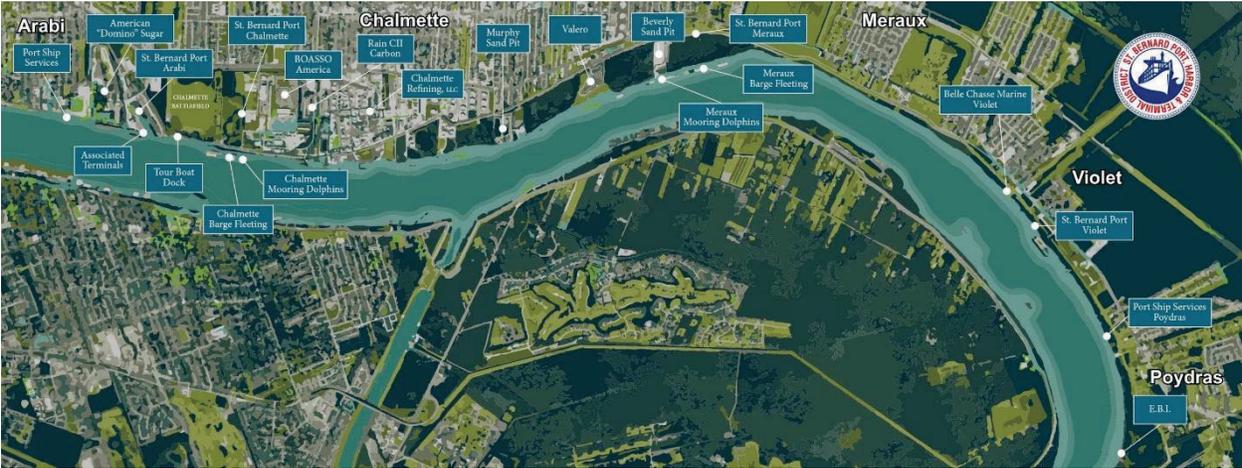


Figure 2. The St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District
 (Source: St. Bernard Port)

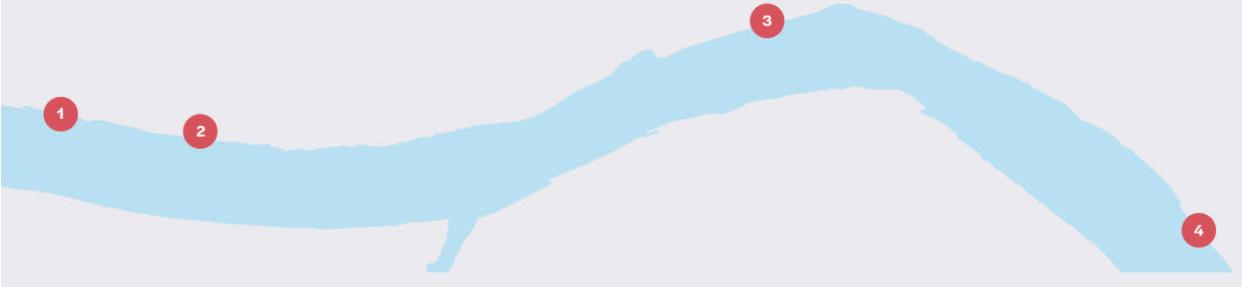


Figure 3. The Three Terminals and the Violet Properties at the St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District
 (Source: St. Bernard Port)

Table 1. St. Bernard Port Terminals and Properties

SN	Terminal	Description
1	Arabi Terminal	The Port’s Arabi Terminal consists of 120 acres at Mile Marker 90.5 is the only calm water, deep draft slip on the lower Mississippi River. It has five ship berths, a mooring dolphin, a 40,000 sq. ft. dry bulk warehouse, a 186,000 sq. ft. dockside transit shed, and an additional 200,000 sq. ft. of general warehousing. The terminal provides convenient access to interstate highways and all six Class I railroads.

2	Chalmette Terminal	The Port’s Chalmette terminal spans 216 acres at Mile Marker 89.5 and includes a tour boat landing, 600,000 sq. ft. of space, deep-draft vessel mooring, and a barge fleeting facility. It also houses the Administration and Security Complex, which includes the Manage Security Operations Center (MSOC).
3	Meraux Mooring	The Meraux Midstream Mooring Buoys at Mile Marker 86.3 AHP span 1,300 feet and accommodate vessels up to Capesize. Nearby barge fleeting facilities and Mooring No. 2 at MM 86.1 AHP are used for loading and unloading barges.
4	Violet Properties	The Violet properties span 28 unimproved acres at Mile Marker 84.5 AHP and include 1700 linear feet on river frontage.

(Source: St. Bernard Port)

This study provides a thorough analysis of the economic impact of St. Bernard Port, highlighting its role in stimulating economic activity at the local, state, and national levels. It examines how the port supports employment, generates income, increases tax revenues, and enhances Louisiana’s competitiveness as a major trade and logistics hub. This assessment is vital for economic development strategies and policymaking, providing a foundation for evaluating the port’s competitiveness, strategic objectives, and investment needs. Like many small- to mid-sized ports across the United States, St. Bernard Port operates in a rapidly changing environment shaped by evolving trade patterns, infrastructure demands, regulatory updates, and market shifts. Understanding the port’s full economic contribution is crucial to ensuring it remains a resilient and adaptable regional asset.

Section 1 of the report provides an introduction, including a historical background of the port, an overview of its logistics and its role in the logistics ecosystem, and its regional and national significance. Section 2 describes the study’s methodology, including the data sources and analysis approach used. Section 3 presents the economic impact analysis, while Section 4 discusses the results and conclusions.

1.1 Historical Background of St. Bernard Port¹

In the 1950s, discussions began regarding the establishment of a port authority in St. Bernard Parish, but concrete steps were not taken until the early 1960s. On July 2, 1960, the St. Bernard Navigable Waterway and Terminal District, known as “the District,” was created by Act No. 228. Its boundaries matched those of St. Bernard Parish, excluding the Mississippi River, levees, and batture. By March 1962, five local citizens had been appointed to the District’s Board of

¹ Historical background provided by the St. Bernard Port.

Commissioners, which was responsible for developing policies and strategies for the Gulf Outlet. However, due to limited funding, the Board lost momentum and eventually stopped operations.

Fortunately, the idea of establishing a prosperous port in St. Bernard Parish persisted despite the decline of the Navigable Waterway and Terminal District. Legislation under R.S. 34 1701 created the St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District, commonly known as “the St. Bernard Port.” The Port’s boundaries were set to match those of St. Bernard Parish, including “all lands, Parish.” The district was also given “full authority to oversee all domestic, coastwise, and intercoastal commerce and traffic within the limits of St. Bernard Parish.” It was additionally granted “full authority to oversee all domestic, all commerce conducted through or by a facility entirely owned by the Port,” providing broad control over local maritime activities.

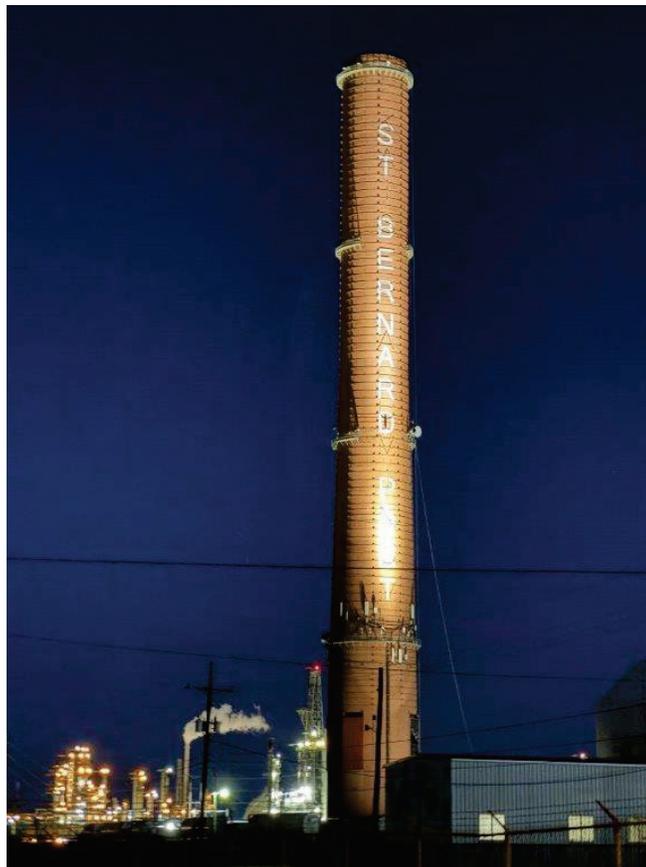


Figure 4. Kaiser Aluminum Plant Smokestack, 2025

(Source: St. Bernard Port)

In 1981, this legislation allowed the appointment of an additional five-member Board of Commissioners. The new Board consisted of lawmakers and forward-thinkers committed to shaping the current form of the St. Bernard Port.

Since 1984, the St. Bernard Port and the National Park Service have partnered with the Chalmette Tour Board Dock to offer tours and cultural activities. This collaboration draws visitors to Chalmette National Battlefield, part of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, each morning and evening.

In 1989, the St. Bernard Port made its second major acquisition by purchasing the Kaiser Aluminum manufacturing plant in Chalmette (Figure 4). This acquisition enabled the port to develop the Chalmette Terminal. The industrial buildings, offices, and warehouses on the site within the terminal later became revenue-generating assets for the port.

In 1993, the St. Bernard Port made a significant development by acquiring the Chalmette Slip from Norfolk Southern Railroad, creating the Arabi Terminal. The Chalmette Slip was rehabilitated in 2025, a project funded by port funds and supported by local legislatures. The slip is currently leased and managed by a Marine Terminal Operator, which handles approximately 8.7 million tons of general cargo annually.

It will continue operating its terminals, industrial park, and mooring dolphins to generate revenue and drive economic growth in St. Bernard Parish and the state of Louisiana.

1.2 Overview of the Port's Role in the Logistics Ecosystem ²

The St. Bernard Port serves as a landlord port authority, leasing facilities to 47 private tenants operating businesses in cargo handling, storage, warehousing, and manufacturing. This arrangement allows the port to focus on infrastructure development, real estate management, and business promotion, while private operators manage daily commercial operations.

The port handles various cargoes, including:

- Dry bulk (e.g., fertilizers, coal, grains, feeds, minerals, ferrous alloys, zinc concentrates, metallic and non-metallic ores)
- Breakbulk (e.g., steel, project cargo, and heavy equipment)
- Liquid bulk (e.g., petroleum products and chemicals)
- Containers (via intermodal transfer)

Generally, these goods are unloaded from ocean vessels at the port and then transported by barge fleets (see Figure 5), rail, and truck to various destinations across the U.S., including cities such as Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Saint Paul, Chicago, St. Louis, Memphis, Little Rock, Houston, Birmingham, as well as numerous locations throughout Georgia, Kentucky, Florida, Oklahoma, and nearby areas.

² Information provided by the St. Bernard Port.



Figure 5. Unloading Barges- Midstream Mooring

(Source: St. Bernard Port)

Over the past 10 years, the port has handled 80.5 million tons of cargo, averaging 8.05 million tons per year, and anticipates even higher volumes, as shown in Figure 6.

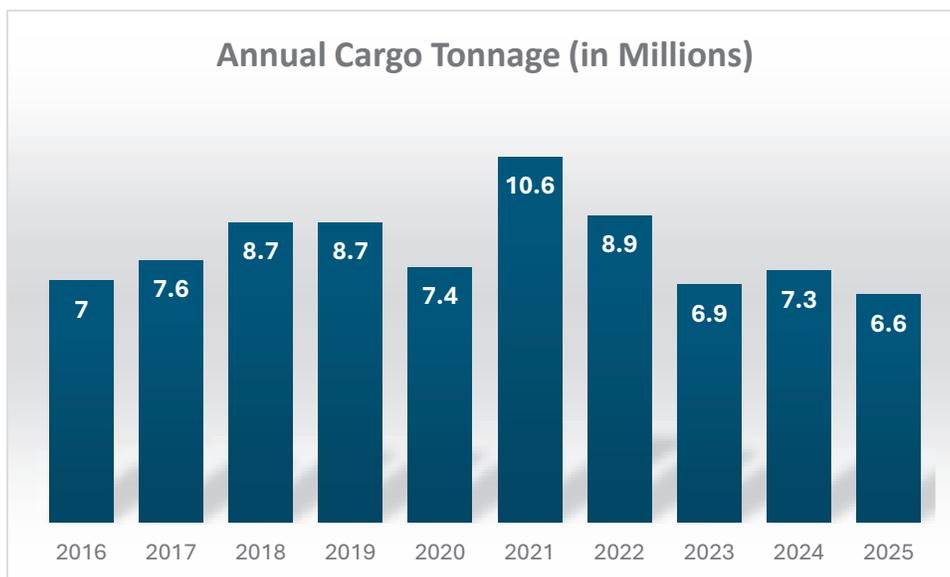


Figure 6. Historical Cargo Volumes

(Source: St. Bernard Port)

1.3 Regional and National Significance

At the parish level, the St. Bernard Port supports direct employment for residents and provides essential tax revenue for local governance. Many port tenants are longstanding businesses that have contributed to local economic stability and community development. At the state level, the port enhances Louisiana's position as a global trade and transportation hub by handling a diverse range of commodities and linking inland producers to international markets. The port supports the agricultural, energy, construction, and chemical industries in the state, complementing Louisiana's broader industrial base. Additionally, the port contributes to the efficient functioning of the Mississippi River transportation system, a backbone of America's freight logistics, thereby improving the nation's international commodity trade productivity by enhancing its competitiveness.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

This study uses the IMPLAN input-output (I-O) modeling approach to assess the economic impacts of the St. Bernard Port on the regional economy. The I-O framework tracks how spending and productivity by the port, its tenants, and related activities circulate through the economy, generating business-to-business transactions and household expenditures (Remmers, 2018).

Economic impacts are grouped into three categories:

- **Direct impacts:** These involve economic activities directly connected to the Port's operations and productivity. This includes employment, revenue from terminal operators, tenants, shipping services, and associated businesses at the ports.
- **Indirect impacts:** These are the effects of economic activities resulting from port-related businesses purchasing goods and services from local companies.
- **Induced impacts:** These are economic activities created when port employees—both directly and indirectly—spend their earnings on household goods and services in the community.

2.1 Analysis Approach

The analysis uses the IMPLAN (Impact Analysis for Planning) economic modeling system, which employs Input-Output analysis and the Social Accounting Matrix (SAM). This method estimates the effects of economic activities on a specific geographic area (Clouse, 2020). For this study, the most recent 2024 IMPLAN data for Louisiana are used to precisely capture local industry relationships, patterns, and household consumption behavior.

The key findings of the analysis will be presented as follows:

- **Employment:** The jobs created by the Port's economic activities, including both full- and part-time positions.
- **Labor income:** Earnings from wages, salaries, and benefits paid to workers.
- **Value added:** Contribution to Gross Regional Product (GRP), which includes labor, income, business profits, and production taxes.
- **Economic output:** The total revenue generated.
- **Tax revenues:** The estimated local, state, and federal taxes generated by the Port's operations.

2.2 Multipliers

Multipliers derived from IMPLAN indicate how each dollar or job linked to the port generates additional economic activity in the region. These reflect the strength of local supply chains and consumer spending, which vary across industries and locations. Both Type I (direct + indirect) and Type SAM (direct + indirect + induced) multipliers are provided when relevant.

2.3 Data Sources³

The analysis includes the following:

- Primary data, including operational and financial information, collected through surveys from port management, tenants, and operators.
- Secondary data are gathered through the IMPLAN system, which compiles information from various sources for economic analysis.

2.4 Data Analysis: Economic Impact Analysis Using IMPLAN Modeling (IMPLAN Model, 2024)

To analyze the economic impact of the St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District using IMPLAN, the following steps were taken:

- Selected the Existing Industry/Firm Contribution guide on IMPLAN.
- Defined geographical boundaries for the study; in this case, Louisiana was selected.
- Port Operations with IMPLAN code 402 was selected as the firm/industry.
- Total output and employee numbers were entered into IMPLAN.
- An economic impact analysis was run, producing results.
- A detailed report was then generated.

³ See IMPLAN.com for additional information on IMPLAN data types and sources.

3.0 ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

3.1 Model Assumptions

This study used IMPLAN 2024 data and IMPLAN modeling to estimate the economic contributions of the St. Bernard Port to the Louisiana region. The financial output used to generate the results reported in this study was entered into IMPLAN to obtain the impact results. All results are reported in 2025 dollars.

3.2 Result Highlights



The contributions of **St. Bernard Port** support **2,267** jobs.



These jobs enjoy an associated labor income of **\$201.7 million**.



St. Bernard Port contributes **\$237.2 million** to GDP.



The contribution of **St. Bernard Port** results in **\$332 million** in output across **Louisiana**.



St. Bernard Port's contribution generates approximately \$53.5 million in local, state, and federal tax revenue, including sales and income taxes.

3.3 Economic Contribution of St. Bernard Port

The direct contribution of the port's activities and operations supports 1,415 jobs, \$155.6 million in labor income, \$151.1 million in GDP contribution, and \$183.2 million in output in the 2025-dollar year. This results in a total economic contribution of 2,267 jobs, \$201.7 million in labor income, \$237.2 million in GDP contribution, and \$332 million in regional output (Table 2).

Table 2. Overall Economic Contribution⁴

	Employment	Labor Income	Contribution to GDP	Output
Direct	1,415	\$155,562,292	\$151,143,165	\$183,232,368
Indirect	177	\$11,264,604	\$16,080,678	\$29,276,360
Induced	675	\$34,832,794	\$69,936,279	\$119,531,181
Total	2,267	\$201,659,691	\$237,160,122	\$332,039,909

Port operations and support activities also contribute to tax revenues. The total contribution for sub-Parish general taxes (municipal/town) is estimated at **\$1.9 million**. Sub-Parish special district taxes (police, fire, schools, etc.) are estimated at **\$2.7 million**. Parish taxes are estimated at **\$1.9 million**. State taxes are estimated at **\$8.1 million**. Federal taxes are estimated at **\$38.8 million**. This totals **\$53.5 million** in tax revenues supported (Table 3).

⁴ All dollar values are presented in 2025 USD.

Table 3. Overall Tax Contribution⁵

	Sub Parish General	Sub Parish Special District	Parish	State	Federal	Total
Direct	\$294,667	\$446,017	\$294,023	\$3,665,793	\$28,411,635	\$33,112,135
Indirect	\$180,013	\$297,545	\$194,581	\$615,546	\$2,303,701	\$3,591,386
Induced	\$1,460,291	\$1,961,352	\$1,426,172	\$3,867,749	\$8,129,118	\$16,844,682
Total	\$1,934,971	\$2,704,914	\$1,914,776	\$8,149,088	\$38,844,454	\$53,548,203

⁵ All dollar values are presented in 2025 USD.

4.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Discussion

This study assesses the economic impact of the St. Bernard Port's operations and related services. The economic modeling software IMPLAN was used for the analysis, which generates impacts across three categories: direct, indirect, and induced effects. Direct effects reflect immediate implications for employment, wages, and production output associated with the port's on-site operations and port-supported activities, as captured in the job numbers, financial, and output data entered into the IMPLAN software during the analysis. This generated 1,415 jobs, \$155.6 million in labor income, \$151.1 million in GDP contribution, and \$183.2 million in output. Indirect effects encompass business-to-business purchases throughout the Louisiana supply chain, including goods and services from in-state vendors that support port operations (e.g., maintenance, professional services, wholesale, utilities, transportation support, and other supplier activities). The indirect effects support 177 jobs and \$29.3 million in output. Additionally, induced effects occur when workers supported by direct and indirect activities spend on household needs such as housing, healthcare, retail, and food services. This generates 675 jobs and \$119.5 million in output, underscoring the broader household-spending channel through which port activity benefits communities throughout Louisiana.

4.1.1 Why the Multiplier Effects Matter

The gap between direct and total effects indicates that the port's footprint extends beyond the waterfront. Every major port relies on a network of suppliers and services, and St. Bernard Port's results indicate meaningful spillovers across several industries:

- Supplier industries (indirect effects) as operational activity stimulates demand for Louisiana-based goods and services.
- Household and local commerce (induced effects), as labor income translates into spending that supports additional jobs in consumer-facing sectors.

Notably, the induced effects are substantial in this analysis, indicating that labor income tied to port activity plays an essential role in supporting consumer-driven employment across the state.

4.1.2 Fiscal Contributions and Public Value

Beyond production and jobs, the analysis shows that port-supported activities generate tax revenue across levels of government. Total tax revenue is estimated at \$53.5 million, distributed as follows:

- Federal taxes: \$38.8 million
- State taxes: \$8.1 million
- Parish taxes: \$1.9 million
- Sub-Parish taxes (municipal/town): \$1.9 million
- Sub-Parish special district taxes (police, fire, schools, etc.): \$2.7 million

This revenue stream is essential to public services and long-term competitiveness. Tax contributions reflect the fiscal link between port-enabled commerce and governments' capacity to fund transportation infrastructure, emergency response, schools, and other services that support economic and community well-being.

4.1.3 Implications for Port Competitiveness and Regional Development

The analysis results suggest several implications for economic development strategies:

- Workforce and income efforts are central: With an estimated \$201.7 million in labor income supported, the port's contribution is strongly tied to household purchasing power and regional quality of life. Workforce development, safety, and labor reliability can be viewed as economic development interventions rather than merely operational priorities.
- Supplier linkages are a lever for greater in-state capture: Indirect effects indicate the presence of supply-chain spending that supports Louisiana vendors. Strategies that expand local sourcing strengthen small- and medium-sized suppliers and reduce procurement leakages, thereby increasing in-state value capture.
- Infrastructure and reliability protect statewide benefits: Port-related output and tax revenues depend on consistent, efficient operations. Measures that reduce downtime, improve access, and strengthen resilience can preserve and potentially expand the contribution identified in the analysis.

4.1.4 IMPLAN Modelling Limitations and Considerations

As with any input-output model, IMPLAN estimates reflect the structure of the regional economy and the model's embedded assumptions:

- The results are contributions, not necessarily "net new" impacts, and represent economic activity associated with the port under the modeled conditions.

- Estimates depend on the quality and scope of the financial and output data entered into IMPLAN.
- IMPLAN assumes fixed production relationships in the short run and does not fully capture dynamic pricing, capacity constraints, or long-run behavioral responses.

These limitations and considerations do not invalidate the findings; rather, they provide context for interpreting and using the results in planning and policy development.

4.2 Conclusions

The St. Bernard Port, Harbor, and Terminal District is a significant contributor to Louisiana's economy. Results show that port operations and related activities support thousands of jobs, generate substantial labor income for workers and households, and contribute hundreds of millions of dollars to Louisiana's GDP and output. These benefits extend beyond the port footprint through supplier purchases and household spending, underscoring the port's role in sustaining broader economic activity across both industrial and consumer-facing sectors.

Importantly, the port's contribution yields substantial fiscal benefits, with an estimated \$53.5 million in combined tax revenue across all levels of government. This underscores the public value of policies and investments that maintain operational reliability, strengthen infrastructure and resilience, and deepen local supply-chain linkages.

Overall, the findings position St. Bernard Port as an economic engine for Louisiana, supporting employment, income, production, and public revenues, and provide a quantitative foundation for ongoing planning, investment prioritization, and stakeholder engagement to sustain and expand these contributions. The findings also provide an excellent basis for grant applications at the state and federal levels.

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APPENDIX

Economic Indicators

IMPLAN reports five key economic indicators. Each is based on the production function for a given industry in the selected region for a given year or set of years, demonstrating the economy's interconnectedness.

Employment

An industry-specific mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment, calculated as an annual average that accounts for seasonality. Employment is not equal to full-time equivalents.

Labor Income

All forms of employment income, including Employee Compensation (wages and benefits) and Proprietor Income.

Contribution to GDP

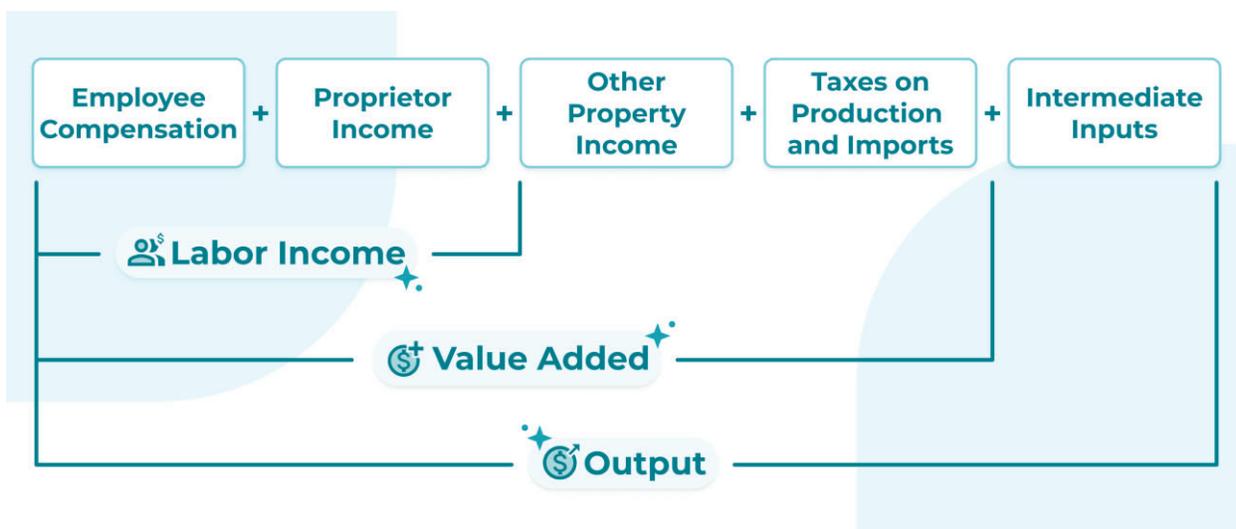
Known as Value Added, this is the difference between an Industry's or establishment's total Output and the cost of its Intermediate Inputs.

Output

In IMPLAN, industry production is the annual production estimate for the dataset year. In most cases, output equals sales or revenue. In this analysis, output was modeled as total operating expenditures via Industry Contribution Analysis.

Tax

Taxes are reported at the sub-Parish general (municipal/town), sub-Parish special district (fire, police, school), Parish, state, and federal levels based on effective tax rates in the Region.



Types of Effects



Direct Effects are the initial effects on a local industry or industries resulting from the activity or policy under analysis.



Indirect Effects are the effects arising from business-to-business purchases in the supply chain that occur within the state.



Induced Effects are the effects in the state stemming from household spending of labor income, after removal of taxes, savings, and commuters.