



## The Port of Shreveport-Bossier: Building for more business

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CADDO PARISH (KSLA) - Business is booming at the Port of Shreveport-Bossier, and officials there say they're ready to bring in more. A few miles south of Shreveport on the Red River, the Port is perfectly positioned, with immediate access to 4-lane highways, the Inner Loop and major Interstates including: I-20, I-49 and future I-69 corridor. Now, they're banking on those factors, and building on them to bring in even more business.

Large and small, local and international, the port of Shreveport-Bossier is courting industries that bring jobs, like Omni Specialty Packaging. They blend and package motor and engine oils, along with small motor and hydraulic oils. With about 100 employees, Omni has expanded twice in its ten years here. Owner David Curtis credits support from the Port. "The Port's been good to help us get all of the things we need to help us with expanding, their infrastructure for the roads, and we've got rail to our place."

It's that infrastructure that Port Commission President James Pannell says will draw even more business. "Everything from the rail to the buildings, infrastructure, streets, everything," says Port Commission President James Pannell.

Thanks to improvements and expansions to rail and dock facilities and cargo receiving capacity, the Port is handling more tonnage than ever this year, up 18% over last year. "When you look at two years ago, whatever the tonnage was, the next year it doubles and then the next year it doubles." And all that tonnage translates into cash, which can be reinvested back into the port.

Among the improvements realized in 2008 were improvements to the tank and truck terminal for Red River Terminals, and the design of a new 100,000 square-foot warehouse for ADS Logistics. Over the last year, the Port has also built two new heavy-duty roads to handle the heavy truck traffic carrying all the materials coming off the rails and barges. They've also expanded a rail receiving yard, expanded cargo unloading capacity and brought in a new dock and crane.

Another major selling point, the Port hopes, is a second AEP SWEPCO substation, which expands the availability of power to prospective tenants. It's also going to be fed by a transmission loop, which will enable The Port and its tenants to be fed from two directions which increases power reliability.

One of the most recent improvements is new re-use water line and pump house makes "gray water" available for the Port's manufacturing operations, which expands the Port's water capacity without putting critical demands on the area's potable water supply.

It's all part of the port's plan to expand this "industrial neighborhood" that's already grown so much. "Oh, it's a lot different," says Omni's David Curtis, "When you drive by now you see a lot of large structures. We were the biggest for a while and now we're kinda small."

Port officials confirm that they are currently courting "several" prospects to locate here, and that they've even used the Port's newest tenant, Pratt Industries, to showcase what they can offer.

Pratt is in "start-up" operations right now, and expect to be certified and officially ready to roll as early as April. The Manufacturing Recycling Facility is expected to bring 125 permanent full-time jobs, with an annual payroll of more than \$6 million dollars. It's also expected to create more than 500 more jobs indirectly.

According to the Port of Shreveport's Annual report, the mill is designed to produce 100% recycled container board for the value-added container board packaging industry. It will consume 280,000 tons per year of mixed waste and 150,000 tons of old corrugated containers (OCC)-feedstock that would otherwise be directed to a landfill. The mill will recycle up to 415,000 tons of waste paper every year.



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