FY 2019 BUILD Transportation Grant

Monroe Street Corridor Project

Executive Summary

The City of Ruston in partnership with Louisiana Tech University is requesting $17,191,530 in BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grant Capital Investment, as part of an estimated total cost of $23.6 million dollars for the Monroe Street Corridor Project. Using a thirty-year analysis period to anticipate a return of benefits, this project is forecasted to yield over **$3.47 in net public benefits per every $1 invested**.

The Monroe Street Corridor Project is a critical component of a comprehensive collaboration between the City of Ruston and Louisiana Tech University to modernize and redevelop the core of our city as a hub for technology-based economic development and create quality of life amenities around transportation, health, safety, culture, and recreation in an environmentally sustainable manner conducive to a 21st century knowledge economy workforce and economic base. The Project is composed of seven "shovel ready" interconnected multimodal transportation components, which will increase efficiency and safety between Louisiana Tech University, the University's Enterprise Campus, downtown Ruston, and the I-20 corridor.

The innovative "complete streets" design of the Monroe Street Corridor Project integrates road diets, revitalizing existing brownfield sites, and utilization of low-impact design principles such as zeroscaping, bioswales, and intelligent LED lighting. The proposed project will connect sections of the Rock Island Greenway – the backbone of a citywide active transportation system – and will develop the **Smart Cities Innovation Testbed**. The Smart Cities Innovation Testbed will utilize proprietary technology developed on Louisiana Tech's Enterprise Campus and will be implemented in the construction of the new infrastructure surrounding this campus. This technology will help the City of Ruston and Louisiana Tech University mitigate the effects of natural disasters using internet-of-things based sensor networks, provide real-time traffic and parking conditions to commuters, and facilitate repeatable, scalable, and sustainable research for communities throughout the United Sates. This technology, along with the upgrades to the infrastructure, is crucial for the safe deployment and research of autonomous vehicles and other innovative technologies currently being developed on Louisiana Tech's Enterprise Campus.

Growth of economic activity in the Louisiana Tech Enterprise Campus, growth of the university student and faculty community, and related growth throughout Ruston and along the U. S. Interstate 20 Corridor has put great pressure on the transportation infrastructure in the core of the City. These developments have created significant safety risks and transportation inefficiencies which are expected to increase significantly in the next several years as new buildings and expanded companies come operational in the Enterprise Campus, as enrollment at Louisiana Tech continues to grow, and as complimentary economic activity increases.

EXCELLENCE MADE HERE
CITY OF RUSTON

Mayor Ronny Walker

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Over the last decade significant investments in transportation, technology, health and wellness, and economic development infrastructure have been made by the City of Ruston, Louisiana Tech, the State of Louisiana, and a growing list of other partners in the core of the City. Guided by the City's strategic plan and the university's master plan, the next phase of this investment has begun with the launch of the City of Ruston's Moving Ruston Forward, $80 million dollar, infrastructure initiative; while Louisiana Tech has invested $40 million dollars in a 140,000 square foot Integrated Engineering and Sciences Building in the heart of this project area. We are asking the U.S. Department of Transportation to partner with us to fund one of the critical near-term components of our overall infrastructure enhancements—the Monroe Street Corridor Project—to create an efficient, sustainable transportation infrastructure for our city that promotes safety, health, quality of life, and technology-based economic development.