City of Natchitoches, LA
Safe Streets Implementation Initiative
FY25

Project Narrative

I. Overview

The City of Natchitoches, Louisiana is paving the way toward safer streets with an unwavering commitment to Vision Zero principles. The City proudly secured an FY23 USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Action Plan grant, a testament to its bold leadership and unwavering commitment to transportation safety. Through dedicated staff efforts and meaningful community collaboration, Natchitoches published its comprehensive Safe Streets Action Plan in October 2023. Just months later, on January 22, 2024, the City Council formally adopted the plan by resolution. Focused on eliminating pedestrian fatalities, the Action Plan outlines evidence-based strategies, community-rooted solutions, and targeted investments—delivering life-saving impacts for this rural, underserved population.

According to the USDOT's SS4A Underserved Communities tool, the entire city is an Underserved Community. Natchitoches Parish is a Persistent Poverty county on the DOT's list of Areas of Persistent Poverty for MPDG 2025-2026. 88% of the City's residents live in Persistent Poverty census tracts (see Fig. 6, page 10). Poverty especially impacts Natchitoches families with children. Children make up 22.1% of the City's population, and 38.6% live in poverty.[1] The City's children are among the most vulnerable pedestrians and depend on safe routes to school, parks, and community services.

This grant request builds on Natchitoches' SS4A Action Plan as well as its FY22 RAISE grant award for the "Safe Streets Revitalization Project", which prioritizes infrastructure investments in Underserved Communities and/or areas designated by DOT as Areas of Persistent Poverty. The funding requested will support implementation activities that the Action Plan determined to be top priority road safety improvements. Investing in infrastructure that improves safety for all road users—such as installing a pedestrian bridge across Cane River Lake, connecting Woodyard Drive to destinations along South Drive, and installing high-visibility crosswalks, improved signage and lighting, and traffic calming measures—will directly benefit families with children, students at Northwestern State University, disabled residents, and all road users in the city and surrounding region.

II. Location

Located in northwestern Louisiana, Natchitoches holds a unique place in America as the oldest permanent settlement located within the Louisiana Purchase. Established in 1714, Natchitoches is a growing community ripe with natural beauty, historic sites, and enormous opportunities to improve the lives of its residents.

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[1] U.S. Census. Natchitoches, City, Louisiana. Profile. Poverty. Table S1701. 2023 American Community Survey Estimates. https://data.census.gov/vizwidget?g=160XX00US2253545&infoSection=Poverty.

With a total area of 23 square miles, Natchitoches is home to over 18,000 residents. As a certified Louisiana Development Ready Community, for the past ten years, the City has focused on attracting investments and improving infrastructure and public amenities to grow job and business opportunities for residents. For example, Natchitoches collaborated with the Cane River Waterway Commission to redevelop the historic Rue Beauport area. Rue Beauport now attracts visitors from around the region for concerts, weddings, and special events, supporting an increasing number of local entrepreneurs and small businesses in the process.

Figure 1: Natchitoches' historic downtown along the Cane River.

The City's recent work to beautify public spaces, restore historic buildings, and install new lighting has further increased the safety and attractiveness of its celebrated downtown.[2] Combined with Natchitoches' business-friendly policies, these infrastructure investments have attracted new development along the I-49 corridor and supported mixed-use development in areas like the Mill District and Texas Street Corridor. In 2025, the City also launched a business incubation program, UPLift Natchitoches Entrepreneurship Program (UPNEP), to support new small business development.

Natchitoches' economy has historically benefited from its identity as a college town. Northwestern State University (NSU), a partner in the proposed SS4A Implementation projects, is located in the heart of downtown and is one of the City's largest employers. Ensuring safety for students walking to and from campus and downtown residential and business areas is integral to the City's plan to support NSU's growth while also creating mixed-use, walkable communities that help local families and small businesses thrive.[3]

Thanks to the expansion of industrial employers such as Weyerhaeuser Lumber and Alliance Compressors, until recently, Natchitoches has also maintained a strong manufacturing industry, employing workers at nearly double the national rate. In 2021, the manufacturing industry was responsible for 23.4% of the gross regional product, the highest of any area industry.[4] However, the 2025 closure of International Paper's Campti Mill threatens to have significant economic consequences for Natchitoches. It will eliminate 481 jobs.[5] Also, NSU's increasing shift to online enrollment has impacted the City by reducing downtown campus jobs by 16%. The loss of

[2] Natchitoches, Louisiana. *Business View Magazine*. 24 August 2024.
[3] *Natchitoches NEXT: 2023 City of Natchitoches Comprehensive Master Plan*. Approved 26 February 2024. https://www.natchitochesla.gov/government/natchitoches-next/.
[4] Riverbend Research/CSRS. *Natchitoches Market Analysis 2022.* https://riverbendresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/Natchitoches-Market-Analysis-CSRS-12.01.22_FINAL.pdf. See also *NEXT: 2023,* cited above.
[5] Louisiana Workforce Commission. 2025 Warn Notices. https://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WFD/WarnNotices2025.pdf.

students and workers from this area has led to a reduction in property values and lowered revenues for restaurants, entertainment venues, and businesses near campus.[6]

Natchitoches' low median household income ($38,731), high poverty rate (34.8%), and exceptionally high percentage of children living in poverty (38.6%) make the City particularly vulnerable to these economic shocks. If poverty increases, Natchitoches families' vulnerabilities to traffic-related risks will also increase.[7] CDC research has shown that lower-income neighborhoods experience higher rates of pedestrian deaths and injuries, highlighting the urgent need for safer streets and improved pedestrian infrastructure in areas of persistent poverty.[8]

As a rural community located in an area of Persistent Poverty, ensuring its residents have access to a safe transportation infrastructure, including well-maintained roads, crosswalks, and traffic calming measures, is essential to Natchitoches' broader goals of supporting economic growth, expanding opportunities for individual success, and fostering thriving local businesses.

To guide recommendations on transportation safety investments, including those proposed by this application, the City used a High Injury Network (HIN) analysis to identify locations with historical safety concerns. The HIN was developed for the City using a geospatial analysis that joins crash data to road segments. To normalize the data and account for the varying road segment lengths, a crash per mile rate was calculated. The resulting HIN (Fig. 2) displayed that **65% of fatal or severe crashes occurred on just under 1.5% of road segments** in Natchitoches, Louisiana. Notably, nearly every HIN site is located within a DOT-recognized Underserved Community census tract.

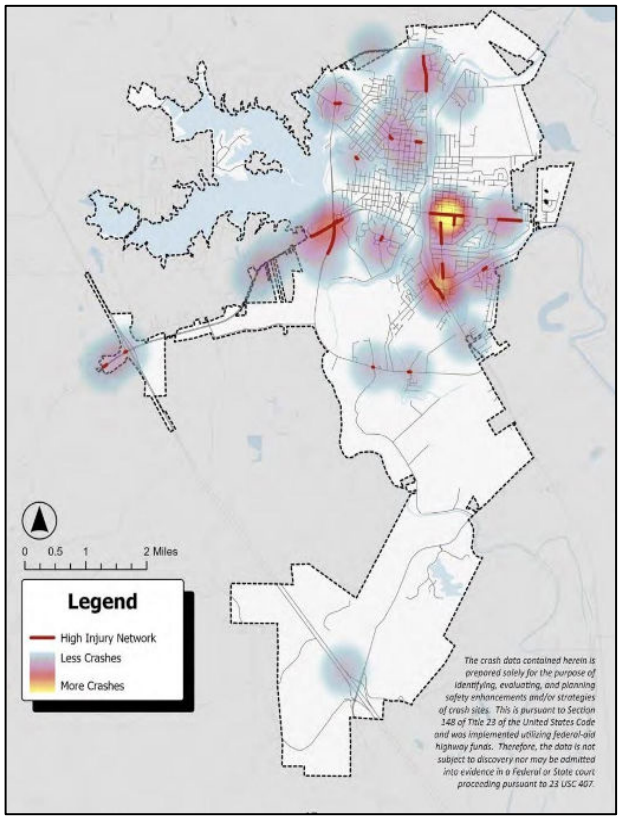

Figure 2: High Injury Networks and Locations of Fatal and Severe Injury Crashes, Natchitoches SS4A Action Plan

To select infrastructure implementation projects, the Action Plan used a quantitative rating system based upon crash/fatality history and proximity, common roadway sections for speeding, proximity to underserved census tracts, alignment with public input and opinion, and access to medical services/post-crash care. The prioritization process also considered the impacts of land use and the built environment to promote safe transportation design. Each resulting project and strategy is based within or in close proximity to the HIN and directly addresses

[6] *Natchitoches Parish Journal*. "Campti Mill Closure: An economic earthquake for Natchitoches Parish." 24 February 2025. https://natchitochesparishjournal.com/2025/02/14/campti-mill-closure-an-economic-earthquake-for-natchitoches-parish/.
[7] U.S. Census. Natchitoches, City Louisiana Profile. Poverty. S1701. 2023 American Community Survey Estimates. https://data.census.gov/vizwidget?g=160XX00US2253545&infoSection=Poverty.
[8] Smart Growth America. 2024 Dangerous By Design Report. N.d. 2024. https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/. This report used data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

identified safety problems in a way that minimizes impacts to the built environment. Using the quantitative rating system and factors described above, the following projects, technologies, and strategies were selected for Natchitoches' FY25 SS4A Implementation grant:

Table 2: Proposed Implementation Projects*	
Implementation Activity	**Location**
Pedestrian Bridge	Woodyard Drive @ South Drive
Lighting Improvements	Woodyard Drive @ South Drive University Parkway @ Second St Keyser Ave. @ N. Melrose St. Keyser Ave. @ E. Fifth St. Keyser Ave. @ Williams Ave Keyser Ave. @ South Drive Rapides Dr. (Fairgrounds Rd.--Mill St.) University Pkwy. (Old Robeline Rd.--College Ave.) E. Fifth St. (Keyser Ave. to Bienville St.)
Crosswalk with Refuge Island	Keyser Ave. @ N. Melrose Ave.
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB)	Keyser Ave. @ N. Melrose Ave. Third Street @ Church Street Church St. (Second St.--Third St.)
Yellow Change Intervals	Keyser Ave. @ E. Fifth St. Keyser Ave. @ Williams Ave Keyser Ave. @ South Drive
Crosswalk Enhancements	Woodyard Drive @ South Drive University Parkway @ Second St Keyser Ave. @ E. Fifth St. Keyser Ave. @ Williams Ave Keyser Ave. @ South Drive Church St. (Second St.--Third St.)
Shoulder Rumble Strips	Rapides Dr. (Fairgrounds Rd.--Mill St.) University Pkwy. (Old Robeline Rd.--College Ave.)
Road Striping	University Pkwy @ Second Street University Pkwy (Old Robeline Road to College Avenue) E. Fifth St. (Keyser Ave.--Bienville St.)
Signing	E. Fifth St. (Keyser Ave.--Bienville St.)
Intersection Realignment	Texas St. (MLK Drive--Berry St.)
Corridor Access Management via Road Extension	S. Jefferson Street extension
Channelization	University Parkway at Second Street

*****_The attached Project Map shows how these locations correspond to the HIN._

These proposed projects include all of the "High Priority" infrastructure projects that the Action Plan recommends within the HIN (see the Project Priority list on page 43 of the Action Plan). The City is also prioritizing a project to manage congestion along S. Jefferson Street, adjacent to NSU, as a way to proactively ensure vulnerable road users can safely access the campus and surrounding areas during high-use periods. The implementation of these highly needed safety countermeasures and infrastructure improvements will help Natchitoches achieve its vision of eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries, while also prioritizing equitable investments, improving street design, reducing vehicle speeds, and encouraging mode shifts.

III. Response to Selection Criteria

A. *Safety Need*

Natchitoches' current surface transportation infrastructure needs serious safety upgrades. From January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2022, there were 17 fatal crashes and 40 suspected severe injury crashes reported within the City limits.[9]

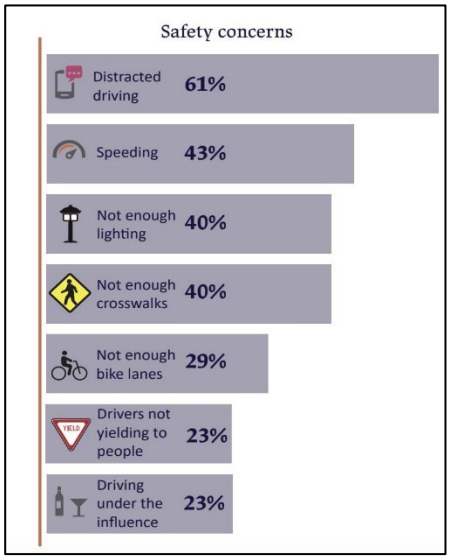

Figure 3: Community Safety Concerns articulated during Community Outreach events and surveys, Natchitoches SS4A Action Plan

The City's approach to developing its SS4A Action Plan prioritized inclusive community engagement to learn from local families, business owners, and other community stakeholders about their safety concerns for its roadway network (see Fig. 3). Building on the City's work, since 2021 (as part of its successful RAISE grant process), to engage community stakeholders in collaboratively developing solutions to transportation safety challenges, Natchitoches led extensive community engagement activities, including well publicized meetings at local churches and City hall.[10] The City also used a website with an interactive map, surveys, public meetings, council and technical advisory committee meetings, and social media posts to gather community input on the Action Plan. Stakeholder participants emphasized their desire to see the City implement measures to reduce distracted driving and speeding, improve lighting, and install crosswalks and bike lanes to increase safety for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

Between 2018-2022, the most common crash type among the fatal and severe injury crashes was non-collision crashes, which accounted for approximately 50 percent (50%) of all fatal and serious injury crashes in Natchitoches.[11] Non-collision crashes include single-car crashes (into a fixed object) and collisions between a vehicle and a bicycle or pedestrian. This data validates Natchitoches residents' concerns about vehicle impacts on pedestrians and other vulnerable road users, especially concerns about the lack of crosswalks and bike lanes, and the need for better street lighting. Rear-end crashes (14.8%), right-angle crashes (14.8%), and left turn-f crashes (7.4%) were the next most common crash types reported.

During the Action Plan's 2017-2021 analysis period, among the 45 fatal and severe injury crashes, there were 9 pedestrian-involved crashes and 1 bicycle crash recorded within the city limits, which also correspond with the proposed project area. Among these incidents, 8 of the pedestrian crashes resulted in a fatality, and 1 resulted in severe injury. The singular bicycle crash

[9] Fatality data is based on FARS data (https://cdan.dot.gov/query). Suspected serious injury data is from the LA DOTD, pulled May 2025. The LA DOTD data referenced in this grant application was prepared solely for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, and planning safety enhancements and/or strategies of crash sites. This data is pursuant to Section 148 of Title 23 of the United States Code and was implemented utilizing federal-aid highway funds. Therefore, the data is not subject to discovery nor may be admitted into evidence in a Federal or State court proceeding pursuant to 23 USC 407.

[10] KTAL News. 12 Sept. 2023. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C72DnGCTRpo

[11] Source: LA DOTD crash data portal report, May 2025. Note: the percent of non-collision crashes increased between 2018-2022 compared to the Action Plan's 2017-2021 analysis: from 42% to 50%.

resulted in a fatality (see Fig. 4, below). During this period, all non-collision crashes were fatal crashes with bicyclists or pedestrians, and pedestrians and bicyclists made up ***69.2% of fatalities***.

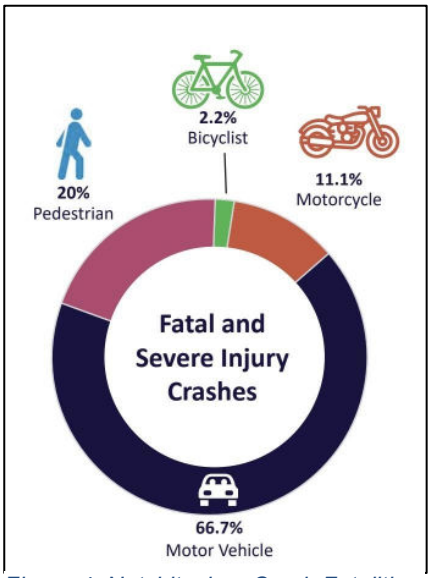

Figure 4: Natchitoches Crash Fatalities by Road User Type, 2017-2021. From Action Plan, pg. 16.

During the 2018-2022 period of analysis for this grant proposal, these trends worsened. Between 2018-2022, there were a total of **57** fatal and severe injury crashes, including 14 pedestrian-involved crashes and 1 bicycle crash. 2021 and 2022 each saw 15 fatal and severe injury crashes, significantly more than years prior.[12] Though the number of non-collision crashes was just a fraction of the total, pedestrians and bicyclists in Natchitoches have proved much more likely to be killed in a crash.

To design and prioritize high-impact projects that will reduce and help eliminate fatal and serious injury crashes, the City's Action Plan used data collected from the HIN analysis and a review of crash data to analyze safety issues. The Plan also analyzed population density, median household income, household vehicle access, and disability status to prioritize solutions to roadway safety that will reduce traffic injuries and fatalities to improve safety outcomes for working families. Community input, engagement with regional and state partners, and established Action Plan goals informed the process. The solutions the Plan produced prioritize data-based investments in Persistent Poverty census tracts.

Natchitoches' SS4A approach adheres to the Safe Systems principle of pursuing a proactive safety analysis, which advises communities to identify and address roadway safety issues rather than solely react to crashes after the fact. For example, Natchitoches' DOT-funded (FY24) SS4A Demonstration Project will gather data on the impact of temporary speed management and corridor access management improvements to inform updates to the Action Plan that will improve the City's future roadway redesign. The proposed implementation projects will complement the demonstration project by providing low-cost long-term solutions that will reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries in Natchitoches while also providing infrastructure investments that improve the lives of working families and support business growth.

B. Safety Impact

The projects and strategies included in this proposal directly address the safety problems identified in the SS4A Action Plan. The proposed projects and the recommendations in the Action Plan align with all five elements of the USDOT's Safe System Approach (Safe Road Users, Safe Vehicles, Safe Speeds, Safe Roads, and Post-Crash Care) to address safety problems and maximize safety benefits over time.[13] The projects were prioritized based on USDOT's evidence-based *Proven Safety Countermeasures* and NHTSA's *Countermeasures that Work,*[14]

[12] Fatality data is FARS data (cited above). Severe Injury (KABCO Level A) data is LA DOTD crash data, pulled in May 2025.
[13] See pages 2-3 of the City's SS4A Action Plan.
[14] Federal Highway Administration, Proven safety countermeasures (n.d.), https://highways.dot.gov/safety/Proven-safety-countermeasures; and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety*

focusing on four- and five-star NHTSA countermeasures that address persistent behavioral safety issues. Further, the Action Plan's goals and action items draw on the evidence-based safety countermeasures recommended by FHWA through its "Every Day Counts" model (see Table 1).

Table 1: Natchitoches' Action Plan's Recommended Safety Countermeasures	
FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures: Speed Management	
Appropriate Speed Limits	Speed Safety Cameras
	Variable Speed Limits
FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures: Pedestrian/Bicyclist	
Bicycle Lanes	Medians & Pedestrian Refuge Islands
Road Diets	Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements
Walkways	Leading Pedestrian Intervals
Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons	Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons
Lighting	
FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures: Roadway Departure	
Longitudinal Rumble Strip	Enhanced Delineation for Horizontal Curves
Median Barriers	Roadside Design Improvements at Curves
Safety Edge	Wider Edge Lines
FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures: Intersections	
Corridor Access Management	Backplates with Retroreflective Borders
Roundabouts	Dedicated Left and Right Turn Lanes at Intersections
Yellow Change Intervals	Reduced Left Turn Conflict Intersections
Pavement Friction Management	Local Road Safety Plans
Lighting	Road Safety Audit
Systemic Application of Multiple Low-Cost Countermeasures at Stop-Controlled Intersections	

In addition to drawing on proven FHWA countermeasures, the projects chosen for implementation (listed in Table 1 on page 4) ensure a proactive approach to crash prevention. Extending S. Jefferson Street to the Highway 1 Bypass will allow vehicles to enter and exit NSU's campus away from foot traffic, proactively reducing the number of vehicles traveling through the intersections along University Parkway's pedestrian-dense areas during high traffic events (such as football games, festivals, and graduations). This will reduce pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vulnerable road users' exposure to vehicles, allowing them to travel more safely through the campus and surrounding areas during high-use periods. Likewise, the proposed pedestrian refuge island at Keyser and N. Melrose Avenues (a Top 10 high-crash intersection in the city) will encourage safer, reduced speeds by physically narrowing the roadway, making it appear shorter and thereby more challenging for drivers to maintain higher speeds. It will also reduce the complexity of the crossing, allowing pedestrians to cross one direction of traffic at a time.

According to the Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse, high-visibility crosswalks alone have a Crash Reduction Factor (CRF) of 40%, indicating a reduction in crashes.[15] Improving the visibility of crosswalks via lighting, RRFBs, and signage will further increase their impact,

Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices, https://www.nhtsa.gov/book/countermeasures/countermeasures-that-work.

[15] Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse. N.D. https://cmfclearinghouse.fhwa.dot.gov/detail.php?facid=4123.

providing greater protection for Natchitoches' vulnerable road users.[16] Improving yellow change intervals and intersection alignments, along with adding new road striping and shoulder rumble strips, will enhance visibility throughout the HIN, providing drivers with better guidance and increasing their awareness of their surroundings.[17]

The proposed pedestrian bridge (located at the center of intersecting HIN corridors) will complement the safety countermeasures above by implementing an urgently needed safety improvement for pedestrians at a high-traffic intersection near several large apartment buildings in a neighborhood with many no-vehicle households. The existing bridge on South Drive at Woodward has two lanes and no sidewalks. Daily, pedestrians (including parents walking with baby strollers) cross the bridge by walking on its 1-foot-wide curb to get to work, take their children to daycare or the park, or shop at businesses across the river. The City is using RAISE grant funding to construct sidewalks on the streets adjacent to the bridge. Providing a pedestrian bridge across Cane River Lake at this location will therefore link multiple improved infrastructure elements together to ensure pedestrians can travel safely from one side of the river to the other (See Fig. 5).

Figure 5: Location of Pedestrian Bridge on Woodward Drive. Red lines indicate sidewalks to be constructed with funding from the City's US DOT RAISE grant.

If approved, this proposal's $5,707,839 federal request will help fund projects and strategies that are low-cost, high-impact, and geographically distributed throughout the City to maximize their

[16] According to the Crash Modification Factors (CMF) Clearinghouse, RRFBs have a CRF of as much as 47%. https://cmfclearinghouse.fhwa.dot.gov/detail.php?facid=9024.
[17] According to the CMF Clearinghouse, shoulder rumble strips alone have a CRF of as much as 16.1%. https://cmfclearinghouse.fhwa.dot.gov/detail.php?facid=9763.

benefits to Natchitoches' residents, with an emphasis on benefits to the City's working families over time. The proposed projects not only align with Natchitoches' SS4A Action Plan and US DOT RAISE grant, but they also support Louisiana's current State Strategic Highway Safety Plan and Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment, which also utilize the Safe System approach.[18]

These projects are an integral next step in Natchitoches' commitment to working towards the goal of zero fatal and severe injury crashes. This commitment, demonstrated by the previous SS4A initiatives and continued engagement with the public, will continue through SS4A grant implementation to maintain accountability, progress, and transparency. There will be community meetings to discuss the implementation projects. Furthermore, as identified in the Action Plan, to ensure continued community engagement, the City and its Vision Zero Task Force will release annual Performance Report cards indicating progress, along with regular updates to online dashboards of the plan and interactive maps. To do so, the City will draw on successful performance measures from DOT resources and the SS4A Community of Practice.

Specific performance measures/indicators for project success include:

- Number of serious and fatal crashes
- Number of intersection redesign projects
- Number of signal improvements
- Number of new crosswalks
- Number of speed limit reductions
- Number of outreach & education projects
- Number of policies/plans that incorporate the Safety Action Plan vision
- Share of HIN with upgraded street lighting
- Share of projects within underserved communities

To fully address the safety problems the Action Plan identified, in addition to the proposed infrastructure improvements, the City is developing policies and programs to comprehensively improve safety for all road users. For example, in FY25, Natchitoches is working to adopt a Complete Streets policy to ensure the proposed projects and all future projects accommodate people of all ages and abilities. The City also recently published a *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan,* which provides recommendations for infrastructure interventions to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and recommends programs and policies that create a culture of safety.

C. Engagement and Collaboration

By supporting the proposed SS4A implementation projects in Natchitoches, the US DOT will make an infrastructure investment that will prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in an underserved, rural community located in a Persistent Poverty parish/county (see Fig. 6, below).[19] Throughout the Action Plan development process, Natchitoches prioritized solutions and investments to reduce the risk that its underserved communities face regarding traffic injuries and fatalities. To generate these solutions, the City evaluated community engagement data, demographic data, and crash data to generate solutions that will reduce the traffic safety risks that local families face. Community partners from the Chamber of Commerce, the local police department, NSU, CASA of Central Louisiana, the Parish school board, and others served on the Action Plan's steering committee and provided input based on their longstanding dialogues with

[18] LA DOTD. FY2023-28 Strategic Highway Safety Plan. https://www.lahighwaysafety.org/media/wprdmyze/lhscstrategicplan23-24to27-28.pdf. Accessed 30 May 2025.
[19] According to the USDOT's SS4A Underserved Communities Tool, all of Natchitoches is an Underserved Community.

local stakeholders to inform the plan's analysis. The City emphasized intentional outreach to disadvantaged households during the analysis period.

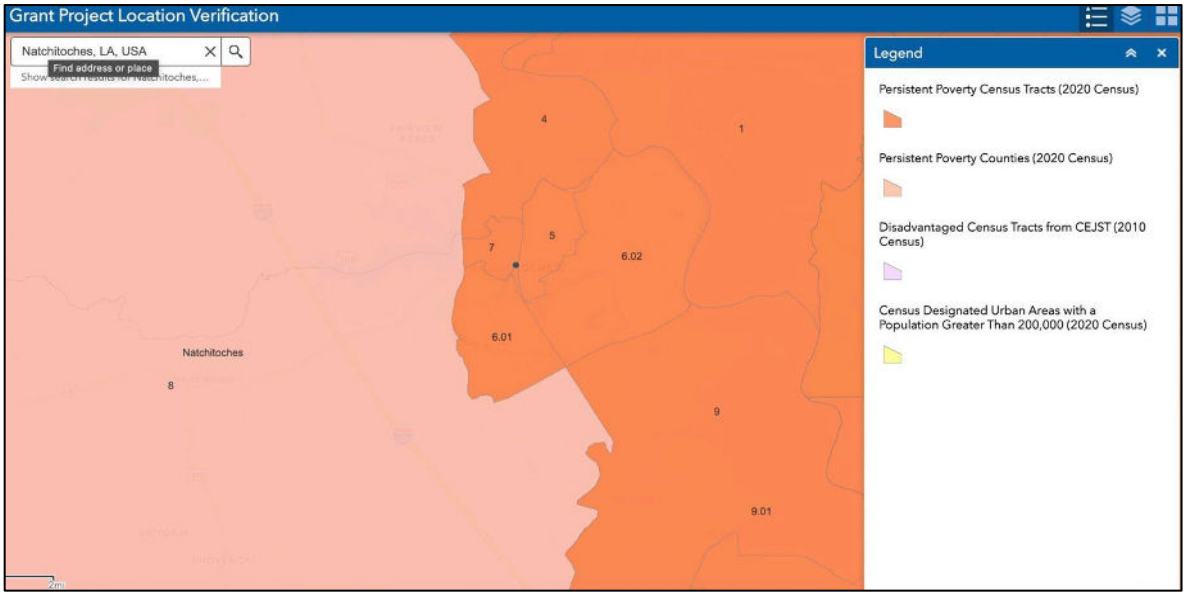

Figure 6: Natchitoches' Persistent Poverty Census Tracts (88% of City) and location in a Persistent Poverty County.

The Action Plan's demographic analysis of census block locations that exceed typical percentages of low-income households relative to the region informs the plan's solutions. The solutions draw on ACS data about the challenges these households face. Natchitoches' population of low-income residents is concentrated on its western side, with the block groups adjacent to downtown and near the university having the largest population of low-income families. In most of these block groups, the median household income is near or below the federal poverty line of $30,000 for a family of four. The Action Plan found that many of the no-vehicle households in the City are located on the western side, especially in the neighborhoods northwest of downtown and near the university.[20]

Other areas of concern are near the Cane River on the eastern edge of the City limits near the intersection of Keyser Avenue and Masonic Drive.[21] These areas show a strong need for improved pedestrian safety measures and are, as such, prioritized in the proposed implementation projects. For example, as noted on pages 7-8, the proposed pedestrian bridge will address the urgent safety issue of pedestrians from a neighborhood with many no-vehicle households routinely crossing a bridge that has no sidewalk.

Economic Competitiveness:
The proposed SS4A implementation projects' focus on the western portion of the City presents a substantial opportunity to increase the economic competitiveness of working families in Persistent Poverty census tracts. This proposal was designed to leverage Natchitoches' RAISE-supported Safe Streets Revitalization project, which also focuses investments in west-side neighborhoods to grow business activity and mobility through the improved surface infrastructure necessary for residents to access commercial centers, jobs, healthcare, education,

[20] The neighborhoods East of the Cane River have higher incomes and most households have access to at least one vehicle.
[21] Natchitoches SS4A Action Plan. Pgs. 10-12. The Action Plan drew on ACS Community Survey data for its analysis.

and workforce opportunities. To ensure the widespread impact of DOT-supported projects, Natchitoches has also leveraged significant LA DOTD support.

Approximately **60% of the proposed projects are located in Federally Designated Opportunity Zones** (see Fig. 7)**.** The proposed SS4A implementation projects will catalyze the impacts that Natchitoches' two Opportunity Zones have on families and local businesses.

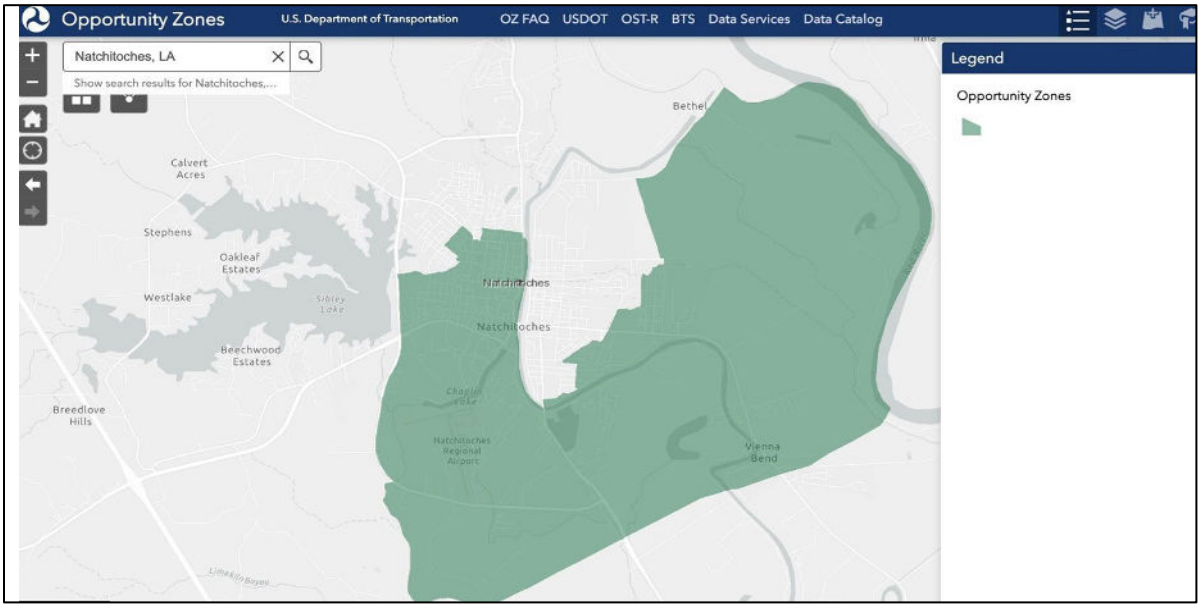

Figure 7: Natchitoches' two opportunity zones. Source: US DOT Opportunity Zones map.

Insufficient and outdated infrastructure, impacting safe and reliable access to education and workforce training opportunities, has been cited as a barrier for many low-income residents when considering new and emerging job opportunities in Natchitoches.[22] The ongoing implementation of Opportunity Zone incentives, alongside the RAISE Safe Streets Revitalization project and SS4A implementation projects, will collectively address many of these challenges. For example, as noted above, the proposed SS4A projects include a long-needed but previously unfunded project to address transportation safety and accessibility on NSU's campus. With the extension of S. Jefferson Street as a reliable second entry/exit point at the university, the City will reduce traffic flow in high-pedestrian areas.

The proposed projects will build on the City's commitment to fostering an environment that presents workforce training opportunities for residents in existing and emerging fields. The City's strong partnership with NSU and the local school system presents substantial opportunities for Natchitoches residents to access educational and workforce training opportunities critical for improving the economic prospects of residents of the City's rural and Persistent Poverty census tracts. The City will continue to work with NSU and other higher education institutions to identify viable training opportunities as part of the project, which could include pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship readiness programs and youth service.

[22] *Natchitoches NEXT: 2023 City of Natchitoches Comprehensive Master Plan*. Cited above.

The City is also committed to working with FHWA to determine how best to utilize skilled construction labor on the project, while incorporating strong labor standards. To support opportunities for Natchitoches workers, the City will require local compliance or cooperation with federal immigration enforcement and with other goals and objectives specified by the President of the United States or the Secretary. This comprehensive approach will increase economic opportunities for Natchitoches families, businesses, and neighborhoods.

IV. Project Readiness

Natchitoches is prepared to execute and complete the full scope of work for the project within 5 years of the grant agreement being executed. As noted in the project schedule, the implementation activities will continue to use community engagement during the planning, design, construction, and reporting phases. The City has also planned for all required environmental permits and reviews and will fully comply with environmental regulations. The project will use roadway design standards that align with those of the LA DOTD. LA DOTD and FHWA approvals will be required at 30%, 60%, and 90% plan completion. A Project Permit must be obtained from DOTD for all planned work located within the limits of the State highway right-of-way. Such permits are generally approved at the DOTD District level within 30 days of submittal.

To ensure NEPA requirements are met, Natchitoches' City Engineer, Nick Verret P.E., will draw on his extensive experience with DOTD and FHWA projects and processes to coordinate with DOTD and FHWA officials. Based on the planned scope of work, it is anticipated that the environmental impacts will be minimal and that the project can be environmentally cleared as a "Categorical Exclusion." The majority of the planned safety improvements will be accomplished within the limits of the existing travelway of the affected streets. Therefore, right-of-way and utility impacts should be minimal, and no significant risks to project delivery are anticipated.

Detailed Project Schedule with Construction Milestones:

2025 CITY OF NATCHITOCHES SAFE STREETS FOR ALL (SS4A) GRANT APPLICATION
ANTICIPATED PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES
MAY 5, 2025

Project Activity	Anticipated Start	Anticipated Completion
Funding Award		9/30/2025
Execute Project Agreement with FHWA	10/1/2025	3/30/2026
Procure Engineering Design Firm	4/1/2026	6/30/2026
Design Activities Including Public Involvement	7/1/2026	6/30/2027
Add Project to Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan *	7/1/2026	9/30/2026
NEPA Environmental Clearance *	9/1/2026	5/31/2027
Obtain Regulatory Permits *	9/1/2026	5/31/2027
Approval of Final Plans, Specs, and Cost Estimate / Obligation of Federal Funds	7/1/2027	9/30/2027
Right-of-Way Appraisal & Acquisition [including review by FHWA]	10/1/2027	3/30/2028
Preparation for Letting	4/1/2028	4/30/2028
Bid Advertisement	5/1/2028	5/31/2028
Bid Review / Contract Award & Execution / Schedule Pre-Construction Conference	6/1/2028	8/31/2028
Utility Relocation *	9/1/2028	10/31/2028
Construction	9/1/2028	12/31/2029

* The noted activities are concurrent with other project activities.

I. Budget

Note: The construction cost for each location includes a 10% contingency plus an inflationary adjustment of 1.12239 for 2025 dollars adjusted to the future year of expenditure.

SS4A Implementation Grant Application - Supplemental Estimated Budget

This budget template should be submitted with an Implementation Grant application. This template is structured based on Table 5 of the FY25 NOFO and illustrates the appropriate level of detail for project-level budget estimation.

Please note that this form is set up to calculate project costs from any sub-activities and to calculate subtotals and totals. Please only enter information into white cells; the gray shaded cells are calculated based on the inputs to the white cells. If you add or remove rows to meet your project needs, check that these calculations are correct before submitting.

Note: The "Other Federal Funds" column listed below may include funds directly received from a Federal agency or funds received through a pass through agency (e.g., state governmental agency) that originated as federal funds.

Supplemental Estimated Budget

Itemized Estimated Costs of the (A) Supplemental Action Plan Activities (if applicable)				
Activities	**SS4A Federal Request**	**SS4A Non-Federal Match**	**Total SS4A Project Cost**	**Other Federal Funds (if applicable)**
Supplemental Planning or Demonstration Activity #1	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
N/A	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Supplemental Planning or Demonstration Activity #2	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
N/A	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Subtotal Budget for (A) Supplemental Action Plan Activities	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Itemized Estimated Costs of the (B) Planning, Design, and Development Activities (if applicable)				
Activities	**SS4A Federal Request**	**SS4A Non-Federal Match**	**Total SS4A Project Cost**	**Other Federal Funds (if applicable)**
Planning, Design, and Development - Location #1: Woodyard Drive at South Drive	$ 721,210.00	$ 180,303.00	$ 901,513.00	$ -
Right-of Way costs	*$ 112,689.00*	*$ 28,172.00*	*$ 140,861.00*	$ -
Utility relocation	*$ 112,689.00*	*$ 28,172.00*	*$ 140,861.00*	$ -
Engineering Design	*$ 495,833.00*	*$ 123,958.00*	*$ 619,791.00*	$ -

Planning, Design, and Development - Project #2: University Parkway at Second Street	**$ 27,546.00**	**$ 6,887.00**	**$ 34,433.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 4,304.00*	*$ 1,076.00*	*$ 5,380.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 4,304.00*	*$ 1,076.00*	*$ 5,380.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 18,938.00*	*$ 4,735.00*	*$ 23,673.00*	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development- Project #3: Keyser Avenue at North Melrose Avenue	**$ 23,234.00**	**$ 5,808.00**	**$ 29,042.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 3,630.00*	*$ 908.00*	*$ 4,538.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 3,630.00*	*$ 908.00*	*$ 4,538.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 15,974.00*	*$ 3,992.00*	*$ 19,966.00*	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development Project #4: Keyser Avenue at Williams Avenue	**$ 33,648.00**	**$ 8,412.00**	**$ 42,060.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 5,258.00*	*$ 1,314.00*	*$ 6,572.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 5,258.00*	*$ 1,314.00*	*$ 6,572.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 23,132.00*	*$ 5,784.00*	*$ 28,916.00*	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development Project #5: Keyser Avenue at Williams Avenue	**$ 31,325.00**	**$ 7,831.00**	**$ 39,156.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 4,894.00*	*$ 1,224.00*	*$ 6,118.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 4,894.00*	*$ 1,224.00*	*$ 6,118.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 21,537.00*	*$ 5,383.00*	*$ 26,920.00*	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development Project #6: Keyser Avenue at South Drive	**$ 31,325.00**	**$ 7,831.00**	**$ 39,156.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 4,894.00*	*$ 1,224.00*	*$ 6,118.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 4,894.00*	*$ 1,224.00*	*$ 6,118.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 21,537.00*	*$ 5,383.00*	*$ 26,920.00*	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development Project #7: Third Street at Church Street	**$ 13,940.00**	**$ 3,485.00**	**$ 17,425.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 2,178.00*	*$ 545.00*	*$ 2,723.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 2,178.00*	*$ 545.00*	*$ 2,723.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 9,584.00*	*$ 2,395.00*	*$ 11,979.00*	*$ -*

Planning, Design, and Development Project #8: Rapides Drive (Fairgrounds Road to Mill Street)	**$ 23,896.00**	**$ 5,974.00**	**$ 29,870.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 3,733.00*	*$ 934.00*	*$ 4,667.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 3,733.00*	*$ 934.00*	$ 4,667.00	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 16,430.00*	*$ 4,106.00*	$ 20,536.00	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development Project #9: University Parkway (Old Robeline Road to College Avenue)	**$ 36,509.00**	**$ 9,127.00**	**$ 45,636.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 5,705.00*	*$ 1,426.00*	*$ 7,131.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 5,705.00*	*$ 1,426.00*	*$ 7,131.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 25,099.00*	*$ 6,275.00*	$ 31,374.00	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development Project #10: East Fifth Street (Keyser Avenue to Bienville Street)	**$ 19,250.00**	**$ 4,813.00**	**$ 24,063.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 3,008.00*	*$ 752.00*	*$ 3,760.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 3,008.00*	*$ 752.00*	*$ 3,760.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$13,234.00*	*$ 3,309.00*	*$ 16,543.00*	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development Project #11: Texas Street (MLK Drive to Berry Street)	**$ 82,974.00**	**$ 20,744.00**	**$ 103,718.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 12,965.00*	*$ 3,241.00*	*$ 16,206.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 12,965.00*	*$ 3,241.00*	*$ 16,206.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 57,044.00*	*$14,262.00*	*$ 71,306.00*	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development Project #12: Church Street (Second Street to Third Street)	**$ 6,970.00**	**$ 1,742.00**	**$ 8,712.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 1,089.00*	*$ 272.00*	*$1,361.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 1,089.00*	*$ 272.00*	*$ 1,361.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 4,792.00*	*$ 1,198.00*	*$ 5,990.00*	*$ -*
Planning, Design, and Development Project #13: South Jefferson Street	**$ 331,896.00**	**$ 82,974.00**	**$ 414,870.00**	**$ -**
Right-of Way costs	*$ 51,858.00*	*$ 12,965.00*	*$ 64,823.00*	*$ -*
Utility relocation	*$ 51,858.00*	*$ 12,968.00*	*$ 64,823.00*	*$ -*
Engineering Design	*$ 228,180.00*	*$ 57,044.00*	*$ 285,224.00*	*$ -*

Subtotal Budget for (B) Conducting Planning, Design, and Development Activities	**$ 1,383,723.00**	**$ 345,931.00**	**$ 1,729,654.00**	**$ -**
Itemized Estimated Costs of the (C) Proposed Projects and Strategies				
Activities	**SS4A Federal Request**	**SS4A Non-Federal Match**	**Total SS4A Project Cost**	**Other Federal Funds (if applicable)**
Implementation Project #1: Woodyard Drive at South Drive	**$ 2,253,774.00**	**$ 563,443.00**	**$ 2,817,217.00**	**$ -**
Construct new pedestrian bridge across Cane River	*$2,179,400.00*	*$544,849.00*	*$2,724,249.00*	*$ -*
Crosswalk enhancements	*$60,852.00*	*$15,213.00*	*$76,065.00*	*$ -*
Lighting Improvements	*$13,522.00*	*$3,381.00*	*$16,903.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #2: University Parkway at Second Street	**$ 86,085.00**	**$ 21,521.00**	**$ 107,606.00**	*$ -*
Crosswalk enhancements	*$62,154.00*	*$15,538.00*	*$77,692.00*	*$ -*
Lighting Improvements	*$12,741.00*	*$3,185.00*	*$15,926.00*	*$ -*
Channelization	*$6,198.00*	*$1,550.00*	*$7,748.00*	*$ -*
Striping Improvements	*$4,993.00*	*$1,248.00*	*$6,241.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #3: Keyser Avenue at North Melrose Avenue	**$ 72,602.00**	**$ 18,151.00**	**$ 90,753.00**	*$ -*
Lighting Improvements	*$26,137.00*	*$6,534.00*	*$32,671.00*	*$ -*
Crosswalk with refuge islands & Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB)	*$46,465.00*	*$11,617.00*	*$58,082.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #4: Keyser Avenue at East Fifth Street	**$ 105,150.00**	**$ 26,287.00**	**$ 131,437.00**	*$ -*
Crosswalk enhancements	*$88,957.00*	*$22,239.00*	*$111,196.00*	*$ -*
Yellow change intervals	*$3,154.00*	*$789.00*	*$3,943.00*	*$ -*
Lighting improvements	*$13,039.00*	*$3,259.00*	$16,298.00	*$ -*
Implementation Project #5: Keyser Avenue at Williams Avenue	**$ 97,890.00**	**$ 24,472.00**	**$ 122,362.00**	*$ -*
Crosswalk enhancements	*$88,394.00*	*$22,099.00*	*$110,493.00*	*$ -*
Yellow change intervals	*$3,035.00*	*$758.00*	*$3,793.00*	*$ -*
Lighting Improvements	*$6,461.00*	*$1,615.00*	*$8,076.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #6: Keyser Avenue at South Drive	**$ 97,890.00**	**$ 24,472.00**	**$ 122,362.00**	*$ -*

Crosswalk enhancements	*$88,394.00*	*$22,099.00*	*$110,493.00*	*$ -*
Yellow change intervals	*$3,035.00*	*$758.00*	*$3,793.00*	*$ -*
Lighting Improvements	*$6,461.00*	*$1,615.00*	*$8,076.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #7: Third Street at Church Street	**$ 43,561.00**	**$ 10,890.00**	**$ 54,451.00**	*$ -*
Crosswalk enhancements with RRFB's	*$43,561.00*	*$10,890.00*	*$54,451.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #8: Rapides Drive (Fairgrounds Road to Mill Street)	**$ 74,676.00**	**$ 18,669.00**	**$ 93,345.00**	*$ -*
Shoulder rumble strips	*$2,240.00*	*$560.00*	*$2,800.00*	*$ -*
Lighting Improvements	*$72,436.00*	*$18,109.00*	*$90,545.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #9: University Parkway (Old Robeline Road to College Avenue)	**$ 114,089.00**	**$ 28,522.00**	**$ 142,611.00**	*$ -*
Shoulder rumble strips	*$1,711.00*	*$428.00*	*$2,139.00*	*$ -*
Striping Improvements	*$86,137.00*	*$21,534.00*	*$107,671.00*	*$ -*
Lighting Improvements	*$26,241.00*	*$6,560.00*	$32,801.00	*$ -*
Implementation Project #10: East Fifth Street (Keyser Avenue to Bienville Street)	**$ 60,156.00**	**$ 15,039.00**	**$ 75,195.00**	*$ -*
Lighting Improvements	*$45,839.00*	*$11,460.00*	*$57,299.00*	*$ -*
Road Striping	*$13,415.00*	*$3,353.00*	*$16,768.00*	*$ -*
Improved Signage	*$902.00*	*$226.00*	*$1,128.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #11: Texas Street (MLK Drive to Berry Street)	**$ 259,293.00**	**$ 64,823.00**	**$ 324,116.00**	*$ -*
Intersection realignment	*$259,293.00*	*$64,823.00*	*$324,116.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #12: Church Street (Second Street to Third Street)	**$ 21,781.00**	**$ 5,445.00**	**$ 27,226.00**	*$ -*
Crosswalk improvements with RRFB's	*$21,781.00*	*$5,445.00*	*$27,226.00*	*$ -*
Implementation Project #13: South Jefferson Street	**$ 1,037,169.00**	**$ 259,295.00**	**$ 1,296,464.00**	*$ -*
Extension of South Jefferson Street	*$1,037,169.00*	*$259,295.00*	*$1,296,464.00*	*$ -*
Subtotal Budget for (C) Carrying Out Projects and Strategies	**$ 4,324,116.00**	**$ 1,081,029.00**	**$ 5,405,145.00**	*$ -*
Total Budget for Activities (A), (B), and (C)	**$ 5,707,839.00**	**$ 1,426,960.00**	**$ 7,134,799.00**	*$ -*