

2021

**DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION**

**KANSAS LANE EXTENSION
REGIONAL MULTI-MODAL
CONNECTOR: EQUITABLE
CONNECTIONS FOR GROWTH**

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with
Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)
Grants Program



**CITY OF MONROE
LOUISIANA**

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-- Application Snapshot

Project Title: *Kansas Lane Extension Regional Multi-Modal Connector:
Equitable Connections for Growth*

Urban/Rural: Rural

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Location of Supplemental Materials

The Project application webpage with a copy of the application and supporting and referenced documents is located at: <https://monroela.us/raisegrant>



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Monroe in working partnership with the business community and education partners is applying for **\$15,200,000 in FY 2021 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant funds**, as part of an estimated total cost of \$39,821,346.56 for the construction of the LaDOTD H.007289 ***Kansas Lane Extension Regional Multi-Modal Connector: Equitable Connections for Growth (Kansas Lane Extension)***. Using a thirty year analysis period to anticipate a return of benefits, this project is forecasted to yield over \$1.83 in net public benefit per every dollar invested.

The Kansas Lane Extension Project is a critical component of a broader community vision to enhance equitable and broad based economic and community development through improved connectivity and accessibility to transportation assets for all. The project has significant regional and local impact as the final leg of a multi-modal loop connecting the Monroe Regional Airport with the regional university and new medical school, the air industrial park, the mid-town business center, and the corporate headquarters of Louisiana's only Fortune 500 company, Lumen Technologies. Total project cost for the entire loop is estimated at \$ 108 million with 18.5% completed and in service, 80.5% funded, 14% remaining to be funded by this 2021 RAISE Grant.

The innovative design of the Kansas Lane Extension Project protects hundreds of acres of designated wetlands with significant control of access and accommodates wildlife with the incorporation of animal passages. The project addresses climate change by utilizing low impact LED lighting and reserving right of way for the future addition of sidewalks. By reducing travel time and emissions, the project addresses climate change.

The project benefits areas of persistent poverty and addresses racial equity with improved safety, improved reliability of travel times, increased connectivity and reduced traffic congestion through traditionally African American residential neighborhoods. The multi-year construction project will result in good paying jobs and significant opportunities for DBE/MBE/WBE through the City of Monroe Minority Access Program (MAP).¹

Over the last two decades significant investments in transportation, technology and economic development infrastructure have been made by the City of Monroe, University of Louisiana Monroe, the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine and the State of Louisiana and other partners in the multi-modal loop guided by the City's comprehensive plan, the University's master plan, the Monroe Regional Airport Master Plan, and the State and Regional Transportation Master Plan. The fruits of those investments are being realized with the recruitment and retention of the Lumen national headquarters, the development and opening of

¹ <https://monroela.us/government/departments-divisions/administration/purchasing/dbe>

the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine and the most recent attraction of a Biomedical Research and Innovation Park announced in March 2021.

The U.S.DOT's most recent commitment of \$20 million to the addition of a third lane to Interstate 20 further confirms the merit of continued investments in transportation infrastructure for this region. We ask the DOT to partner with us to fund the Kansas Lane Connector as the last remaining link of the multi-modal loop to complete an efficient, sustainable transportation infrastructure for our city and region that promotes safety, health, quality of life, and technology based economic development.

Project Description

The Kansas Lane Extension Project will construct approximately 2.5 miles of new 4-lane road. It will extend the existing Kansas Lane Ave. from its terminus at the intersection with US 80 (DeSiard St) to Forsythe Avenue Extension at its intersection with US 165. The project will construct a new bridge across Bayou DeSiard near the south end of the project. This project will provide two 12-ft travel lanes in each direction and 10-ft shoulders on either side of the roadway. Two foot curb and gutter will be provided where required. The project will include construction of a new bridge with two 12-ft travel lanes in each direction, a 10-ft median and 4-ft unshoulders on each side.

To minimize impacts to wetlands, the design has a five lane section only in areas necessary to serve existing development. Where five lanes are proposed, this project will provide two 12-ft travel lanes in each direction, a 14-ft center turn lane, and 10-ft shoulders on either side of the roadway. In addition, 2-ft curb and gutters will be provided, where required. Control of access will be required as outlined in final environmental impact statement.

The project also includes the addition and/or modification of turning lanes on Forsythe Extension, US 165, US 80 and the existing Kansas Lane, together with modification of the traffic signals at the intersections on US 165 and US 80 as outlined in final traffic impact study.



Figure 1: Kansas Lane Extension Project Detail Map. (Lazenby & Associates, Inc for City of Monroe, LA)

This new road completes the final section of a four part transportation plan increases efficient movement of goods and people through the city of Monroe and the surrounding areas. The Kansas Lane Extension reduces traffic congestion on the major arterial connectors of Hwy 165 and Hwy 80 and increases connectivity between the residential, educational, commercial and manufacturing hubs in the region. Transportation improvements lead to demonstrated economic improvements in the region when implemented.²



Figure 2: Kansas Lane Extension (A) Forsythe Loop, (B) Kansas Lane Expansion (C), Kansas Garrett I-20 Interchange (D) (Lazenby & Associates, Inc for City of Monroe, LA)

Transportation Challenges

U.S. Highway 165 is a major North-South urban arterial highway that runs through Monroe connecting southern Arkansas with Interstate 10 in Lake Charles, Louisiana. U.S. Highway 80 is a major East-West urban arterial highway that connects Jackson, Mississippi and Dallas, Texas and all parts in between as an alternate to Interstate 20. Traffic studies for the Monroe, Louisiana Metropolitan area show traffic congestion, traffic accidents, indirect routes to major economic hubs, deteriorating infrastructure (roads: residential and regional corridors) are challenges for the City of Monroe and the surrounding areas. Poor

² <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publicroads/96winter/p96wi19.cfm>

connectivity and unreliable travel time also plague areas of persistent poverty and contribute to the continuation of disparities based upon racial inequities of the past such as red-lining.

The need for this project was identified in the 1996 Monroe, Louisiana Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan and the Monroe Urbanized Area Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan 2035 and in the 2013 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan and Connecting Ouachita 2045: Metropolitan Transportation Plan and is included in the Louisiana Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan. It is the last essential element in a multi-modal four phase project connecting the northern and southeastern areas of Monroe with Interstate 20 and the Monroe Regional Airport and other commercial centers in the region.

The traffic studies show traffic volumes on both U.S. 165 and U.S. 80 exceed road capacity. See Section 1.6 of the FEIS attached in [Appendix D](#). U.S. 165 is significantly congested with low travel speeds and a high number of accidents. The rapid growth in residential, commercial, office and industrial development along U.S. 165 and U.S. 80 contributes to traffic congestion and the situation is expected to get worse. The State of Louisiana and CenturyLink (now known as Lumen Technologies), the nation's third largest telecommunications company, announced in 2019 a long term commitment for the headquarters located in Monroe, Louisiana to remain in Northeastern Louisiana. The establishment of the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (located on University of Louisiana Monroe's campus) which opened with its first classes in 2020 and the rapidly expanding commercial and residential areas to the north of Monroe all of which are along U.S. 165 which will continue to add to the local road congestion.

A capacity analysis in the Final Environmental Impact Statement rated the Level of Service for Hwy 165 as an "F". An "F" rating is defined as vehicles moving in stop and go traffic conditions where traffic volumes exceed the roadway capacity. In addition, hazardous queues develop and congestion causes traffic to stop for long periods of time. The capacity analysis also found the "volume to capacity ratio" unacceptable and projected to get worse. All these measures of congestion translate directly to increased crashes and safety issues. The analysis is discussed more fully in the Safety Merit Criteria of this narrative. [[Appendix D](#)]

Addressing Transportation Challenges

The Kansas Lane Extension will provide traffic relief for U.S. 165 and U. S. 80 required to address the identified transportation challenges. As shown by the traffic studies and environmental impact study, the major traffic corridors for Northeast Louisiana (U.S. 165 and U.S. 80) are congested and will remain so unless alternative routes are provided for more direct and accessible connections to commercial, educational and manufacturing hubs in the Monroe, Louisiana, area. The multi-jurisdictional Kansas Lane Extension will provide that alternative route to relieve traffic congestion, decrease traffic accidents, decrease emissions from vehicles and increase the quality of life for residents of the region.



Recently it was announced that the USDOT has committed a \$20 million dollar infrastructure investment to add a third lane to each side (east and westbound) to Interstate 20 between the interchange at US 165 and Garret Road in Monroe, Louisiana. This area is the exact location that our project, Kansas Lane Extension is addressing. The US government acknowledges with this investment that traffic congestion is a problem in Monroe, Louisiana. ³

The Kansas Lane Extension Multi-modal Connector addresses the transportation challenges with increased capacity through the construction of an alternate north to south bypass of the most congested areas on Hwy 165 and Hwy 80. The new roadway will also facilitate the expansion of public transit to an underserved area. Current ridership of Monroe Transit System is 677,036 passengers and the new roadway will open the opportunity for new routes to serve the city and the rural surrounding areas. ⁴

By establishing this alternative route there will be increased connectivity between region's manufacturing, the regional airport and an Intermodal Transportation Center at the University of Louisiana Monroe, and the region's medical, retail, education and employment hub to the Interstate Highway System.

The Kansas Lane Extension will reduce traffic congestion along existing U.S. 80 and U.S. 165, provide new and expanded cost effective and environmentally friendly transportation alternatives by offering additional transportation options while providing direct access to residential and commercial areas; and improve area-wide mobility and safety.

Project History

The City of Monroe and its regional partners have an established record of addressing transportation challenges by designing, planning and implementing infrastructure projects. Starting in the 1970s, the city of Monroe began planning an ambitious four phase transportation project to provide increased connectivity from major traffic corridors to commercial, educational, and manufacturing hubs in the region. With the continuing support of the business community and educational institutions, and elected officials in the local, state and federal delegations, over 88% of the ambitious \$108 million dollar multi-modal corridor illustrated in Figure 2 has been completed and placed in service or fully designed and funded. The Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector is the final section of that plan. The \$15.2 million funding request in this RAISE application is the gap funding required to complete the ambitious undertaking.

³ <https://gov.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/detail/3081>

⁴ <http://wwwapps.dotd.la.gov/multimodal/publictransportation/transitresources/Providers.aspx?Parish=37>

The Monroe Area Multi-Modal Plan was first proposed in 1975. The other three segments of this four part multi-modal project have been constructed with federal, state and local investment.

These segments include:

- the Forsythe Extension (2.96 miles) – Completed in 1993
- the Kansas Lane from U.S. 80 to Millhaven Road (1.79 miles) – Completed in 1997
- the Kansas Garret I-20 Interchange from Millhaven to I-20 - Fully Funded by LDOT (Estimated Completion 2025)
- The final segment, the 2.5 mile Kansas Lane Extension will link these three segments directly from U.S. 165 to U.S. 80 and on to I-20.

Several additional projects in the area of the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Regional Connector have already been programmed, funded and completed through LaDOTD and the City of Monroe. These projects include the widening of Old Sterlington Road from two lanes to four-lanes; the addition of turn lanes on U.S. 80 at Kansas Lane; and the installation of an intelligent traffic signal system on U.S. 165 at 18 intersections.

In addition, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development has programmed for widening U.S. 165 from the northern intersection with Old Sterlington Road to U.S. 80 from four lanes to six lanes. None of these completed, funded or programmed improvements, however, provide a direct link between the existing Kansas Lane at U.S. 80 and the Forsythe Avenue extension at U.S. 165. Nor do they provide an alternate route to U.S. 80 and U.S. 165 and a direct link to Interstate 20. The Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector Project fulfills the master transportation planning process by connecting all the dots of these previously completed projects and providing connectivity for the region.

Project Location

The Kansas Lane Extension Regional Multi-Modal Connector is a multi-jurisdictional project located in the upper right hand corner of the boot of Louisiana. It will be constructed within the boundaries of Ouachita Parish and the City of Monroe. Ouachita stems from the Choctaw language, pronounced “wash-i-ta”, means “Silver Waters” and spans the Ouachita River. Monroe, Louisiana, the parish seat, is the eighth largest city in the state of Louisiana, with a population of 48,815 (2010). Ouachita Parish, population 153,720 (2010), is the hub of the primarily rural and agricultural region. Considered part of the Mississippi Delta, Ouachita Parish and Monroe, LA anchor the economies of the entire region. The project is located 99 miles east of Shreveport, Louisiana, 95 miles northeast of Alexandria, Louisiana, 114 miles west of Jackson, Mississippi and 65 miles south of El Dorado, Arkansas.



Figure 3: Map showing location of Ouachita Parish in blue. Monroe, LA is located in this parish. (gisgeography.com)

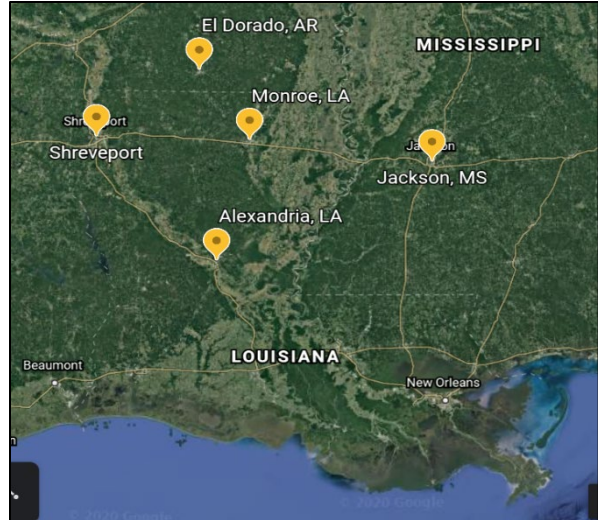


Figure 4: Relative locations of Shreveport, LA, Jackson, MS, El Dorado, AR, and Alexandria, LA (earth.google.com)



Figure 5: Kansas Lane Extension Project Detail Map. (Lazenby & Associates, Inc. for City of Monroe, LA)

The Kansas Lane Extension project begins at its terminus at the intersection of Kansas Lane and U.S. 80 (32°31'33"N, 92°03'08"W) and extends north across Bayou DeSiard. After crossing the bayou the road turns west and northwest to the intersection of Forsythe Avenue and U.S. 165 (32°33'03"N, 92°04'37"W).

Area of Persistent Poverty

The Kansas Lane Extension Project will benefit census tracts identified as Areas of Persistent Poverty by the 2021 RAISE grant program with increased connectivity and improved travel time reliability. The project is physically located in part within three designated APP tracts. The project

directly benefits these tracts with increased connectivity to US Hwy 165 and the Forsythe Extension connection to Monroe's mid-city center. This increased connectivity to the commercial and business opportunities translates to increased job opportunities. Increase reliability of travel time will also enhance employee and job retention with timely attendance to the accessible jobs.

Kansas Lane Extension Project Census Tracts
4.01
5
4.02

By providing an alternate connection between Hwy 80 and Hwy 165, the project will also reduce regional commercial traffic which cuts through low income neighborhoods to access the air industrial park during periods of high traffic congestions. This cut-through from Hwy 165 to Kansas Lane is Louberta St – Elm St – Central Ave, as illustrated in the lower left hand corner of Figure 5, clearly bi-sects a low-income, predominately African-American neighborhood which suffers from extensive blight due to past history of red-lining. A lower elementary public school is also located on the cut-through which increases the negative impact caused by the diversion of the unwanted commercial traffic through the neighborhood.

Residential APP Census Tracts benefited by Kansas Lane Extension
Census Tract 6
Census Tract 9800



Figure 6: Shaded area shows census tracts designated as Area of Persistent Poverty impacted by Kansas Lane Extension Project. (Lazenby & Associates, Inc. for City of Monroe, LA)

Kansas Lane Extension is a RURAL project.

Monroe, Louisiana is located in UA 58330. This is not a Census Designated Urbanized Area. Also, the populations of both the City of Monroe and Ouachita Parish are below the 200,000 threshold set for being considered an urban project. Therefore, the Kansas Lane Extension is considered a **Rural** project.

Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Project Funds

The City of Monroe, Louisiana, as the sponsoring partner of the multi-jurisdictional project, is requesting funding from the 2021 Department of Transportation Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grants in the amount of **\$15,200,000.00** for the Kansas Lane Extension Project. The RAISE funding request is the final and critical gap funding for this project. It will enable the completion of the entire project which addresses long standing transportation issues for the City and its regional partners.

Project budget

Table 1: Kansas Lane Extension Project Budget

Item	Total Project Costs
Construction Costs	\$34,689,678.35
5% Contingency	\$1,731,668.18
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$36,421,346.53</i>
10% CE&I	\$3,400,000.00
<i>Total Project Costs</i>	<i>\$39,821,346.56</i>

Table 2: Funding Sources and Amounts

Source	Total Funding Amount	% of Total	Type of Funding
Requested RAISE Funding	\$15,200,000	38%	Federal Funding
Louisiana Capital Outlay Funding	\$24,621,346.56	62%	Non-Federal Funding
<i>Total Project Costs</i>	<i>\$39,821,346.56</i>	<i>100 %</i>	

Funding Commitments

The State of Louisiana has committed \$24,621,346.56 to the Kansas Lane Extension Project as match funding through the State Capital Outlay process. See Excerpt from 2021 Legislative

Regular Session House Bill No.2, adopted as Act No. 485 and signed by Governor John Bel Edwards on July 1, 2021 with effective date July 1, 2021. [[Appendix C](#)]

Expenditures for the engineering and design, clearing and grubbing, right of way acquisition, and utility relocation recapped in the Project Readiness section of this narrative.

Primary Selection Criteria

Safety

The Kansas Lane Extension project provides a safe, efficient and reliable route to Monroe Regional Airport and its industrial park and to the regional retail hub Pecanland Mall for two distinct stakeholder groups which are detrimentally impacted by existing conditions of poor connectivity and the traffic congestion on Hwy 165 and Hwy 80. The stakeholder groups are local and regional commercial and industrial traffic as well as the students, faculty, staff and visitors of the educational centers - ULM and VCOM and LDCC.

This project aligns with the Safety criteria for the RAISE discretionary grant by decreasing the volume of traffic on roadways that currently access U.S. 165 and U.S. 80 and by providing an alternative and direct route to educational, industrial and commercial hubs in the city of Monroe, Louisiana.

The Section 2.4 at page 3 of the Benefit Cost Analysis prepared by Arcadis US and attached as [Appendix F](#) identifies the monetized safety benefit as second only to the travel time savings. The safety benefit is realized from a combination of avoided miles and avoided hours of travel. The Kansas Lane Extension Project will reduce accidents by 4 per year and provide travel time savings of 8 minutes. The total discounted safety benefit for the project is \$13,801,776 at the end of the analysis period.

Increased residential development in areas north and west of Monroe has expanded demand on the U.S. 80 and U.S. 165 corridor as many residents of these neighborhoods are traveling to the growing employment areas in Ouachita Parish that are located along U.S. 165 and along Interstate 20, U.S. 80, and LA 594 (Millhaven Road). As these areas continue to develop, greater demand will be placed upon the U.S. 165 and U.S. 80 corridors.

Traffic studies for the Monroe, Louisiana Metropolitan area forecast the major corridors of U.S. 165 and U.S. 80 in Northeast Louisiana are severely deficient in 2021 causing serious traffic congestion, increased vehicle crashes and increased pollution resulting in higher transportation cost for commuters, business and freight. The improvements concluding with the Kansas Lane Extension are essential to adequately accommodate the current and future traffic needs along U.S. 165 and U.S. 80 in Monroe, Louisiana. [FEIS- [Appendix D](#)]



As a part of the Final Environmental Impact Statement a capacity analysis was conducted to determine the impact of the area’s growing transportation demand on the existing transportation network in the proposed Kansas Lane Road Extension Multi-Modal Connector area. A qualitative measure called the Level of Service was used to rate roadway conditions in the project area. U.S. 165 rated a Level of Service “F”. According to the measure of congestion “volume to capacity ratio”, which measures the level of congestion on a roadway, a serious level of congestion occurs when traffic is a 1.00 to 1.24. At the time of the study, the volume to capacity ratio for U.S. 80 from U.S.165 to Kansas Lane is 1.08 and is expected to be 1.49 by 2030. Similarly, the volume to capacity ratio for U.S. 165 between Forsythe Extension and U.S. 80 is 1.17 and is expected to be 1.62 by 2030. Both the Level of Service “F” rating and the volume to capacity ratio projections reflect a significant increase in roadway congestion over time. [FEIS - [Appendix D](#)]

According to the 2010 Monroe Urbanized Area Transportation Plan, the majority of crashes along U.S. 165 and U.S. 80 took place between peak travel hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. with the majority occurring between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. and 80% occurring under dry conditions. The likely cause of the majority of the accidents was that the roadway was not designed to accommodate large traffic volumes and the congestion that currently exists. The Kansas Lane Road Extension will improve the capacity along U.S. 165 and U.S. 80 which will help prevent vehicle accidents, injuries and fatalities. The Benefit Cost Analysis projects that the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will help to lower congestion levels along U.S. 165 and U.S. 80, and improve safety.

This project will facilitate a change in travel patterns that will reduce motorists traveling through the University of Louisiana Monroe campus to reach either U.S. 165 or U.S. 80. In addition, the project will reduce the number of vehicles traveling from U.S. 165 through residential neighborhoods to reach Kansas Lane and the Monroe Regional Airport. These neighborhoods meet the qualifications for Areas of Persistent Poverty, which means located in a census tract with a poverty rate of at least 20% as measured between 2014 – 2018 from the American Community Survey from the US Census Bureau.

Based on the findings in the current Motorized Transportation Plan that many of the crashes occurred due to road congestion, the alternative route provided by the Kansas Lane Extension would decrease the number of crashes on these roads. [See [Connecting Ouachita 2045 – Appendix D](#)] The new roadway will reduce the critical response time for emergency responders who are traveling to neighborhoods in northeast Ouachita Parish. In addition, Louisiana State Police identified U.S. 80 east of Kansas Lane as problematic as it is used as an alternate route for Interstate 20 for hazardous materials. Further, both U.S. 165 and Interstate 20 are designated Hurricane Evacuation Routes. In addition, the Kansas Lane Extension will result in a significant decrease in Vehicle Miles Traveled resulting in less vehicle emissions and



a cleaner environment.

The project will enhance safety along the corridor and within the residential and campus communities by incorporating the following into the design:

- New and improved striping and signage at road crossings consistent with pedestrian and bicycle transportation
- New and improved signalization at major intersections
- Addition of turn lanes to increase capacity for turning movements and reduce delays
- Minimizing the number and width of intermittent road connections
- New lighting will provide necessary illumination for safe transportation for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.
- Improved roadway surfaces
- Improved drainage facilities at Hwy 80

The City of Monroe will be able to utilize the existing LaDOTD crash databases to quantify the frequency and severity of accidents before and after the improvements have been completed.

Environmental Sustainability

The Kansas Lane Extension aligns with the Department of Transportation's criteria for environmental sustainability because during the planning and design phases of the Project impacts to the environment were specifically considered and a series of mitigation measures identified. The Project mitigates impacts to both the environment and neighborhoods surrounding the project while building new infrastructure that will create benefits for all of Monroe's citizens.

As noted in the Record of Decision dated April 2005 and attached in its entirety in [Appendix D](#), of the five build alternatives evaluated in the Final Environmental Impact Study (FEIS) the final route was selected as the least damaging, most practicable alternative that minimized impacts to the social, economic and natural environment. Some of the specific measures taken to reduce the adverse impact are described as follows:

- Wetlands – the project was designed with significant control of access. Rights of way were acquired with deed restrictions and prohibitions of access through designated regulated wetlands. These restrictions protect thousands of acres of wetlands in and near the project location in perpetuity.
- Erosion and vegetation - the project construction plans and specifications require the contractor to stabilize exposed soils by revegetating such areas at the end of the construction period.

- Erosion and vegetation – the project construction plans and specifications require the contractor to implement mitigation measures to prevent or minimize erosion and sedimentation during the construction period.
- Animal Habitat – the project implements measures to minimize impacts to migratory bird habitat to avoid any harm to migratory birds.
- Animal Habitat – the project was designed to minimize impacts to fish and aquatic animal passages by spanning Bayou Desiard and constructing three box culverts in strategic locations to facilitate the movement of fish and wildlife.
- Flood Protection - the project design utilized the current LaDOTD and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) hydraulic design policies and standards to ensure that encroachment on the floodplains would not increase the base-flood elevation to a level that would violate applicable flood regulations.
- Flood Protection – the project design utilized the current LaDOTD and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) hydraulic design policies and standards to permit conveyance of the 1 00-year flood of the roadway without causing significant damage to the roadway, stream, or other property.

MITIGATION OF IMPACT TO CHAUVIN SWAMP: The final design of the route for the new Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will pass through the environmental sensitive area of the Chauvin Swamp. As such, it is necessary to allow for the flow of water at intervals under the roadway. In addition, the area supports various wildlife. For that reason the final design of the project includes the installation of large box culverts **wildlife passages** to provide a walk through for wildlife and serve the dual purpose of providing an outlet for water flow. This dual purpose solution will protect the community, motorists and wildlife and aligns with the criteria to avoid adverse environmental impacts to wetlands and wildlife. The wetlands are also protected by the acquisition of rights of way with **enforceable control of access restrictions**. Most of the 2.5 miles of the project has some measure of controlled access. See FEIS excerpt page 2-27 and map illustration attached in [Appendix A](#).

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: The FEIS and Record of Decision clearly show impacts of this project on low income or disadvantaged neighborhoods were a concern of the City of Monroe and its partners throughout the planning process. The Record of Decision at pages 4 and 6 clearly records that the lowest overall cost alternative route was NOT selected in part because of severe impacts to community cohesion south of Bayou Desiard. [[Appendix D](#)] This area, known as the Ingleside neighborhood, is within an Area of Persistent Poverty as designated in the RAISE NOFO. See Figure 6 of this narrative. During the planning and assessment phase, 5 other alternative planned locations for this project, all of which has some impact on low income neighborhoods, particularly the Ingleside neighborhood, located at Kansas Lane and Hwy 80. All the alternatives for this project had some impact but the Preferred Alternative (Kansas Lane Extension as described in this project) was found to have the least impact. This lack of adverse

impact is affirmed in the BCA Analysis which applied the EJSCREEN environmental justice tool and found no adverse impact on environmental justice communities.

Additional mitigation commitments to protect affected neighborhoods were implemented through the final design as follows:

- The final roadway design worked with existing neighborhoods in the vicinity of the Kansas Lane Connector to better integrate the design of the roadway with the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Asbestos and lead-based paint assessments were made of the five residential structures demolished in preparation for construction and abated through air monitoring and proper disposal at an appropriate disposal facility.
- The final construction plans and specifications require the contractor take precautions when conducting construction and excavation activities in the wetland area as well as the area north of Ouachita Fertilizer to avoid disturbing unmarked high and low-pressure gas lines within the area.

CLIMATE IMPACT - REDUCTION OF EMISSIONS: The City of Monroe and the State of Louisiana has considered climate impacts and environmental justice impacts during the planning of the Kansas Lane Extension project. The Benefit Cost Analysis in Appendix F clearly shows the location and design of Kansas Lane Extension reduces emissions through travel time savings and vehicle miles avoided. The total discounted emissions reduction benefit calculated in accordance with the requirements of the RAISE grant NOFA and applicable guidance for the project is **\$509,502** at the end of the analysis period. Additional reduction of emissions will come from the utilization of low impact LED lights throughout the project.

Quality of Life

The Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will have a positive impact on the quality of life of the community in and around Monroe, Louisiana. By achieving the strategic transportation goal to move people and good more efficiently, the Project will:

- reduce travel time,
- avoid travel miles,
- increase travel time reliability,
- improve connectivity,
- increase transportation choices and freedom for the region
- equitably expand access to services and the educational, commercial and retail hubs in the area.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the City of Monroe has a poverty rate of 36.8 percent, which is approximately 3 times the national average of 10.5 percent.⁵ The Monroe area has the ignominy of being one of the poorest areas in the nation. In addition, the average per capita income in the City of Monroe for the past 12 months is \$21,532 which is less than the national average of \$34,1031. The unemployment rate in the City of Monroe and Ouachita Parish as of January 2021 was 6.6 percent which is higher than the national average of 6.3 percent for the same month.⁶ However, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the workforce is still being realized. Due to the high poverty in the Monroe area, access to affordable transportation options is critical.⁷

By improving transportation options for our citizens, the Kansas Lane Extension equitably connects our population to all of the resources found in our community. The Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will improve community cohesion and is consistent with the Monroe City Comprehensive Plan.

The Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will provide a route for personal and commercial travel that is two miles shorter than the existing route which results in associated fuel and other operating cost savings. The facility will reduce travel time by 8 minutes from the existing route, and result in a more equitable and efficient distribution of traffic on the area roadway network. It will improve safety and reduce costs associated with vehicle accidents. The reduction in vehicle miles traveled will also result in lower greenhouse gas emission, reduced air pollution and reduced dependency on foreign oil.

The completion of the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will facilitate expanded public transit to underserved neighborhoods and will connect these services directly to the Intermodal Transportation Center at the University of Louisiana Monroe that links directly to the Monroe Central Business District and the main terminal of the Monroe Transit System. Currently 697,036 passengers used the Monroe Transit System with 60% traveling to or from work.⁸

Although not within the current scope of the Project, through project planning the city and its partners reserved Right of Way for the addition of sidewalks in the future. Included in the city's developing master pedestrian experience plan, the addition of future sidewalks will increase connections within an existing vibrant and continually expanding network of pedestrian and bike facilities.

These expanded transportation options are especially important to the 9,000 students enrolled at the University of Louisiana Monroe. Approximately 2,300 students live on campus. The

⁵ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/monroecitylouisiana/INC110218>

⁶ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/SEX25219>

⁷ https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.la_monroe_msa.htm

⁸ <http://wwwapps.dotd.la.gov/multimodal/publictransportation/transitresources/Providers.aspx?Parish=37>

remaining 6,700 commute each day along with 500 faculty and staff members. Many of these students live in single family and multi-family rental units in the region.

In addition, residents with low income or residing in section 8 and other subsidized housing in the Areas of Persistent Poverty served by the Project will especially benefit from better connectivity, more reliable travel times, and additional transportation options. Better and more equitable transportation options improve community cohesion and increase economic opportunities with reliable and low cost access to work, school, health care, centers of commerce and other public services.

The low income neighborhoods near the terminus of the Kansas Lane Extension at US Hwy 80 identified as Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) are Census Tract 6 and Census Tract 98000. These areas are often used as transportation routes for commercial trucks that are traveling the U.S. 165 and U.S. 80 corridors to the Regional Airport or the Industrial Park. The alternate route provided by Kansas Lane Extension will relieve these low income residential areas from the unsafe and detrimental impact of heavy commercial traffic cutting through predominantly residential areas.

Improved access to public transit will increase transportation choices for individuals and provide more freedom regarding transportation decisions. Households without access to an automobile are dependent upon public transportation, walking or biking to access critical destinations and services. Once the Project is completed, the City of Monroe can add, as a future Complete Streets project, additional bus stops and bus shelters with lighting, shade structure, trash receptacles and appropriate ADA requirements. The implementation of these strategies will encourage use of alternate routes of transportation by enabling greater access to the local transit system.

The Project will provide the City of Monroe Fire Department's fire station at the Monroe Regional Airport direct access to neighborhoods north of Bayou Desiard and to the University of Louisiana Monroe. This addition of direct access allows for faster critical response time for emergencies. Although currently served by another fire station, the benefit and resiliency afforded through redundant protection cannot be overstated.

Concurrent installation of Fiber - The City of Monroe is working to stand up a municipally owned fiber optic service provider to provide gigabit direct fiber-to-the-home broadband services to residential and underserve areas of the city and neighboring rural areas. The City is undertaking the endeavor to insure equitable, reliable, affordable and adequate access for all of its citizens. Due to the strategic location of this project and the lack of conflicting infrastructure in the right of way, this project could facilitate the concurrent deployment of a fiber trunk as a key component for the initial startup of the service. Such installation is not an included project cost and would be pursued as a separate project. Access to affordable, reliable broadband utility is as essential as electricity and telephone to a sustainable quality of life in the 21st century.



Economic Competitiveness

SUSTAINED SUPPORT OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY: Economic competitiveness is the reason for the enduring support of the local business community for the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector Project. An efficient transportation network is essential to sustaining the economic health of a community. As referenced earlier a Federal Highway Administration report titled, *Linking the Delta Region with the Nation and the World*, stated that after studying transportation projects the agency found that “the connection between transportation improvements and the demonstrated economic improvements in the region is direct, fundamental, and unambiguous.”⁹ By decreasing transportation costs and improving reliable access for all users, the Project creates new opportunities with equitable and efficient connections between residences, businesses, classrooms, public recreational areas, governmental offices, healthcare facilities, grocery stores and new areas not previously accessible for development in the northern areas of the city.

The primary impact on economic competitiveness through this project will be the improved access to the Monroe Regional Airport for the business community and education institutions, especially the world headquarters of the only Fortune 500 company located in Louisiana, Lumen Technologies. Other direct beneficiaries with regional impact are the University and medical school with attendant opportunities for research and innovation to create new businesses and even industries such as the manufacture of PPE and medical equipment.

RECRUITING AND RETAINING COMPANIES AND EMPLOYEES FOR EQUITABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: The economic health and competitiveness of a community directly impacts the amenities and quality of life of the community which are critical for growing, recruiting and retaining the 21st century growth companies and workforce critical to the existence and prosperity of these globally competitive stakeholders. As previously noted, the University of Louisiana Monroe campus and the new Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine are located south and west of the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector. Both campuses, their students, faculty and staff will benefit greatly from the new roadway. It will provide an additional entrance from the northeast. It will have a positive effect on the surrounding area by reducing travel delays and providing safer driving conditions.

These impacts from the Project on infrastructure capacity, safety, equity and efficiency and resulting improved quality of life expand the competitiveness of the City of Monroe and its community partners. Such competitiveness is essential to retain existing companies, support their growth opportunities, and generate new corporate partnerships that can generate additional high quality jobs, enhance the attractiveness of the regional labor market and continue to grow high wage employment and equitably sustainable economic activity in the region.

⁹ <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publicroads/96winter/p96wi19.cfm>

In public-private partnership with the University of Louisiana Monroe, the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine opened with its first class in 2020. The new medical school will have 100 staff members and 720 students. This new campus will address a physician shortage in Louisiana, which currently ranks 39th in the U.S. for per capita primary care physicians. 81% of the state has been designated a health professional shortage area by the Louisiana Department of Health. This exciting new addition to Monroe’s educational hub creates further pressure to an already stressed transportation system. The improvements of the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector are critical to retain and attract jobs to Northeast Louisiana and will provide easy access and multi-modal options for commuters, student and commercial traffic.

REDUCED COST AND TRAVEL TIME SAVINGS: The Kansas Lane Extension will increase the efficiency of movement of goods and people in the city of Monroe and the surrounding areas by reducing travel time costs to both individuals and businesses. The proposed Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will provide connectivity and mobility improvements between points north along U.S. 165 and the growing service region surrounding the Interstate 20 Corridor and Millhaven Road. The new facility would decrease travel by two miles and five minutes from the existing route, and result in a more even distribution of traffic on the Monroe roadway network. This benefit is estimated in the quantitative benefit-to-cost analysis in the “avoided costs of travel time” and “avoided operational costs” calculations. These benefits are monetized by the Benefit Cost Analysis as \$39,052,049 in discounted travel time savings, and \$5,734,764 in operating cost savings at the end of the analysis period. See [Appendix F](#).

GOOD PAYING JOBS AND EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES: Infrastructure projects are often met with the anticipation of new, good paying jobs. The Kansas Lane Extension is no different. The city of Monroe addresses equity of opportunity through its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise policy and Minority Access Program (MAP). This policy and implementing program assure equitable opportunity for DOTD certified Minority Owned Businesses to participate in DOT contracts. This policy is implemented through all phases of procurement.¹⁰ This policy will ensure that equity is addressed during the construction phase of this project.

IMPROVED CONNECTIVITY FOR FREIGHT AND INDUSTRY: The area along U.S. 165, Kansas Lane and Interstate 20 has been identified for industrial growth. The Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector mobility and connectivity improvements will make this region more attractive for development. Kansas Lane Extension will provide freight efficiency with a direct route from U.S. 165 to US. 80 and I-20. The Regional Airport and the Industrial Park are located at the southern end of the project and current freight travel requires traveling south through Monroe and then east on U.S. 80 or I-20. The new roadway will improve

¹⁰ <https://monroela.us/government/departments-divisions/administration/purchasing/dbe>

connectivity for local, regional and national businesses.

DESIGNATED OPPORTUNITY ZONES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICTS: Considerable commercial office and industrial development is occurring in the area around the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector, due to the proactive approach taken by the City of Monroe and Ouachita Parish in marketing federal programs and state and local economic development districts that provide incentives to encourage economic growth. In 1994, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development designated Ouachita Parish as an Enterprise Community. When the Enterprise Community program ended, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development designated Ouachita Parish as a Renewal Community. These programs encourage public-private collaboration to generate economic development in distressed communities to help preserve and create jobs. The Enterprise Community and Renewal Community designations have helped to stimulate growth in the region. In addition, the City of Monroe has commissioned several studies to develop strategies to improve job growth.

In addition, there are three federal opportunity zones that are in the area of the full project that includes all four portions of transportation improvements. These zones are located south of the Kansas Lane Extension but within the area of the Kansas Garrett I-20 Interchange project that is fully funded. These areas will benefit from the economic opportunities provided by increased connection to the educational, economic and industrial hubs of the city.¹¹

MONROE REGIONAL AIRPORT AND AIR INDUSTRIAL PARK: Located just off Kansas Lane is the Monroe Regional Airport, the birthplace of Delta Airlines. The airport constructed a new \$39 million terminal and invested over \$5 million for runway rehabilitation. The airport serves as the gateway to Northeast Louisiana and Southern Arkansas with a majority of passengers traveling for business purposes. Also located in the Kansas Lane-Monroe Regional Airport area is the Headquarters of the 528th Engineer Battalion of the Louisiana Army National Guard.

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM: The economic health and future of the City Monroe and Ouachita Parish are heavily dependent on the effective and efficient movement of goods and mobility of people throughout the community with the ability to connect effortlessly and efficiently to the national transportation system. The Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will improve economic competitiveness for Areas of Persistent Poverty by providing more reliable transportation options for the movement of goods and trade. The potential for increased economic development activity will be enhanced as result of the improved accessibility to the national, statewide and local transportation network and will facilitate the continued growth and development of new business and industry.

¹¹ <https://arcg.is/0HzejS>

Concurrent installation of Fiber – As previously noted, the City of Monroe is working to stand up a municipally owned fiber optic service provider to provide gigabit direct fiber-to-the-home broadband services to residential and underserved areas of the city and neighboring rural areas. Access to affordable, reliable broadband utility is as essential as electricity and telephone to a sustainable quality of life in the 21st century. Such access will enhance the ability of companies to recruit and retain the high performing workforce necessary to grow an equitable and sustainable economy.

State of Good Repair

The Kansas Lane Extension project is a new four-lane roadway that will contribute to the existing transportation system since its existence will result in a more efficient and equitable distribution of traffic on the local and regional roadway system.

This project will be adequately capitalized with the funding requested through this RAISE grant application. The March 2021 estimated cost to construct the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector is \$39 million. See [Appendix C](#). The City of Monroe has secured 62% of the overall project cost through a LA Capital Outlay Funding commitment. The \$15,200,000 million RAISE grant is the final funding needed to complete this transportation project.

The City of Monroe has a sustainable source of revenue for operations and maintenance for its transportation projects. In 2000, the City of Monroe passed a one-cent sales tax dedicated to infrastructure maintenance and improvement. As a new roadway, the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will initially require minimal maintenance. At the time maintenance becomes necessary, the City of Monroe will place the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Regional on a regular road maintenance schedule.

Secondary Merit Criteria

Partnership

The business community is and always has been the primary driver of the Kansas Lane Extension project. As previously described, it is the final section of a transportation plan that began with the business community in 1975. This project and its completed phases can be found in multiple planning documents in the last 35 years. These planning documents were published by local, city, regional and state governments and economic development organizations. The history of the planning and successful implementation of the multi-phase plan indicates this roadway has had strong collaboration among a broad range of stakeholders.

In addition, the numerous letters of support attached in [Appendix B](#) and summarized in the following table demonstrate the continued active support from multiple stakeholder groups for the Project.



Table 3: Planning Documents that include Kansas Lane Extension

Planning Document	Sponsor
Monroe Multi-Modal Plan (1975)	City of Monroe
City of Monroe Bicycle and Jogging Trails Plan (1986)	City of Monroe
City of Monroe Regional Airport Master Plan (1986)	City of Monroe
City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan (2013)	City of Monroe
Monroe Urbanized Area – MTP 2035	The Monroe Urbanized Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Louisiana Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (2019 - 2023)	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Connecting Ouachita 2045	North Delta Regional Planning and Development

Jurisdictional Stakeholders: All legislative approvals required to move this project forward are complete. The U.S. Delegation, the City of Monroe, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, the Ouachita Parish Police Jury and state Legislators officials strongly support the project.

Government and Elected Officials

U.S. Senator Bill Cassidy, M.D.
 U.S. Senator John Kennedy
 U.S. Representative Julie Letlow
 Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
 City of Monroe, Louisiana
 Ouachita Parish Police Jury

Ouachita Council of Governments
 Louisiana State Representative Foy Gadberry - District 15
 Louisiana State Representative Francis C. Thompson - District 19
 Louisiana State Senator Jay Morris - District 35

Metropolitan Planning Organization

Ouachita Council of Governments

Education

University of Louisiana Monroe
 Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine
 Louisiana Delta Community College



Business Community

ATMOS Energy
Chase Bank
Chennault Aviation and Military Museum
Coast Professional, Inc.
Express Employment Professionals
Guaranty Bank and Trust
Holyfield Construction, Inc.
Home Builders Association of Northeast Louisiana

Homeland Bank
James Moore, III
Fox 14 KARD/NBC 10 KTVE
Mid-South Extrusion
Progressive Bank
St. Francis Medical Center
Vantage Health Plan

Transportation & Workforce Development

Monroe Chamber of Commerce
Monroe Transit System
Louisiana Small Business Development Center

Innovation

DESIGN TO REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: The route for the new Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector will pass through the Chauvin Swamp. As previously described in the Environmental Sustainability section of this narrative, this location required innovative design to allow for the adequate flow of water at intervals under the roadway as well as support various wildlife. This project includes the installation of large box culverts for the dual purpose of fish and wildlife passage and flood protection. This innovative dual purpose solution protects the environment and balances the interests of both motorists and wildlife.

INNOVATIVE SIGNALIZATION AND LIGHTING. The City of Monroe recently upgraded its signalization along U.S.165 with a closed loop signal system that is tied together with fiber optic cameras and uses live streaming video. This allows traffic engineers to monitor and manage the flow of traffic and to make real time adjustments to traffic lights as traffic begins to back up. The traffic light at U.S.165 and Forsythe Lane is in this system. This is the northern terminus of the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector, which will also be tied into the closed loop signal system. The intersection of Kansas Lane and U.S. 80 will be tied into the closed loop signalization system allowing for more efficient and coordinated traffic management. The project will also provide for some street lighting with cost efficient and LEDs with reduced adverse environmental and climatic impacts.

GREEN INITIATIVE IN PUBLIC TRANSIT: In 2009, the Monroe Transit System was the Recipient of the Department of Environmental Quality Environmental Leadership Award for Green Initiatives and was presented with the Environmental Leadership Program Municipality Achievement Award in Pollution Prevention as the first Transit System in Louisiana to purchase a



hybrid bus and to use soy-based bio-diesel fuel blended with ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel in all buses. The Monroe Transit System celebrated its 114th anniversary in 2020. It is the nation’s oldest publicly-owned transit system. Current ridership for the system is 677,036 passengers. Service is provided in and around the City of Monroe and to other modes of transportation including the Greyhound/Trailways terminal, the Monroe Regional Airport and the University of Louisiana Monroe Intermodal Transportation Center as well as the main office of the Monroe Transit System.

CONCURRENT INSTALLATION OF FIBER: Due to the strategic location of this project and the lack of conflicting infrastructure in the right of way, this project could facilitate the concurrent deployment of a fiber trunk as a key component for the initial startup of the service. Such installation is not an included project cost and would be pursued as a separate project. This innovative project element would provide access to affordable, reliable broadband utility is as essential as electricity and telephone to a sustainable quality of life in the 21st century.

INNOVATIVE FINANCING AND IN-KIND SUPPORT FROM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES: The Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector is supported by the regional business community and state and local elected officials. Due to the importance of the roadway to the area business community 1-20 Development Board has obligated funds to the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector project. This innovative commitment demonstrates the importance the regional business community places on the completion of the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector which will continue to facilitate additional growth. In addition, the Monroe Chamber of Commerce provided support in preparing the RAISE grant application.

Environmental Risk/Project Readiness

Project Schedule

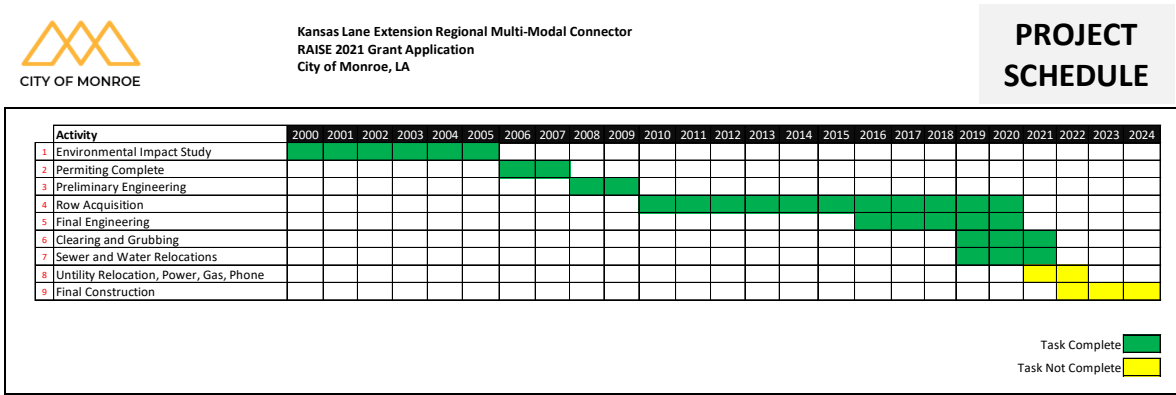


Figure 7: Project Schedule for Kansas Lane Extension (City of Monroe, LA)

A full size copy of the schedule is attached as [Appendix E](#). The schedule demonstrates that the



Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector has completed the environmental, permitting, preliminary and final engineering, right of way acquisition, and final design phases. Clearing and grubbing and the relocation of municipal water and sewer utilities were completed in March of 2021. Other utility relocations by power, gas and fiber are in progress and on schedule for completion in early 2022. The project will move quickly into the bidding phase immediately upon award of the RAISE funding. Based upon an anticipated award by federal fiscal year end in September 2021, it is estimated LaDOTD would let the project for bids in Spring of 2022 with construction to commence no later than May 2022. Construction is estimated to require 24 months.

Required Approvals

The National Environmental Policy Act Environmental process for the project was certified by the Federal Highway Administration in April, 2005. The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development completed the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Kansas Lane Connector on February 8, 2005 and found the project will have no significant impact. In 2019 the Environmental Impact Statement was Re-Approved by the Federal Highway Administration. Federal Highway Administration approved the Preferred Alternative for the Kansas Lane-Garrett Road Regional Multi-Modal Connector as described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and issued a Record of Decision for the Kansas Lane Connector in April 2005. In addition, on January 25, 2012 the Department of the Army Corps of Engineers approved a Request for Modification to their original permit number MVK-OD-FE-ASJ-2000-1263. The LADOTD has requested an extension in 2019 when it submitted EIS for reevaluation and is following up with USACOE. There are no additional actions by other agencies or permits required for the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector Project to proceed to construction. [Documents listed above can be found in [Appendix D](#)]

Environmental Approvals: As noted above, the Record of Decision for the Kansas Lane Connector was approved on May 9, 2005 (Federal Aid Project No. Hp-TO21 (018)). The Final Environmental Impact Statement was finished February 8, 2005. Re-Approval of the Environmental Impact statement was received in 2019. As previously noted, this project is strongly supported by local, state and federal elected officials.

State and Local Planning: The project is included in the Connecting Ouachita 2045: MTP; Monroe Urbanized Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2035, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan, the 2013 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan, and the Monroe Regional Airport Master Plan.

Technical Feasibility: The City of Monroe and Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development have extensive experience in managing large infrastructure construction projects



which is demonstrated by the construction of the \$39 million Monroe Regional Airport terminal. In addition, the City has a Professional Civil Engineer on staff to oversee this project.

Financial Feasibility: The \$15.2 million RAISE Discretionary Grant will complete the funding needed for the completion of the Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector.

Assessments of Projects Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Infrastructure projects are often faced with risks and uncertainties. However, many of those risks occur during right of way acquisition, utility relocation or initial clearing and grubbing. Because those phases are already completed, the Project faces fewer risks.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted supply chain reliability and access to qualified labor, many of those impacts are receding. It is anticipated that at the time of bid letting most COVID-19 impacts will have normalized.

Even so, the Kansas Lane Extension is likely face some uncertainties or issues as every construction project does. Successful projects are not the projects without problems. Instead, they are the projects with management and staff who proactively identify, manage and resolve small issues before they become problems. LaDOTD and the City of Monroe have both dedicated experienced and highly qualified engineering and project management staff to this project. The City of Monroe has a long history of successful project delivery in partnership with the LaDOTD.

The biggest risk to the Kansas Lane Extension Project is not receiving the grant funds to bridge the funding the City of Monroe has obligated through the capital outlay process. If the federal funds are not received the project will be delayed since the state funds are dependent on the RAISE grant. Delays will result in some increased project costs due to escalation of costs.

- Mitigation – The City of Monroe is committed to completing the Multi-Modal loop that Kansas Lane Extension completes. If federal funds are not awarded in the 2021 grant cycle, the city will continue to pursue funding to complete the project. The city may also consider phasing construction of the project, although this estimated to add an additional \$4 million to the construction costs.

Benefit Cost Analysis

The City of Monroe has dealt with traffic congestion and inadequate traffic capacity for many years. The anticipated outcome of the completion of the Multi-Modal loop that Kansas Lane Extension completes is that it will provide more direct alternative transportation routes between the economic hubs in the region. A detailed Benefit Cost Analysis and



technical memo were prepared in accordance with the Notice of Funding Opportunity and it was determined that the proposed improvements will have a Benefit- Cost Ratio of 1.83 over the 30 year life of the project. Assumptions used to prepare the BCA are described below, further explanations can be found in [Appendix F](#).

A BCA analysis was computed for a new 2.5 mile connector by computing the anticipated maintenance and capital costs of the proposed project and comparing them to the monetized benefits obtained in time travel, vehicle operation, safety, and reductions of emissions benefits. The analysis shows that the new connector will have a benefit-to cost ratio (BCR) of 1.82 over a 30-year period of analysis. These benefits **include reducing an average of 4 crashes per year and travel time by 8 minutes** in the network with the addition of the new connector. Figure below shows that the **benefits overcome the costs between project year 11 and 12** using a discount rate of seven percent and is inclusive of over \$69 million in anticipated benefits versus a \$37 million capital investment. [[Appendix F](#)]

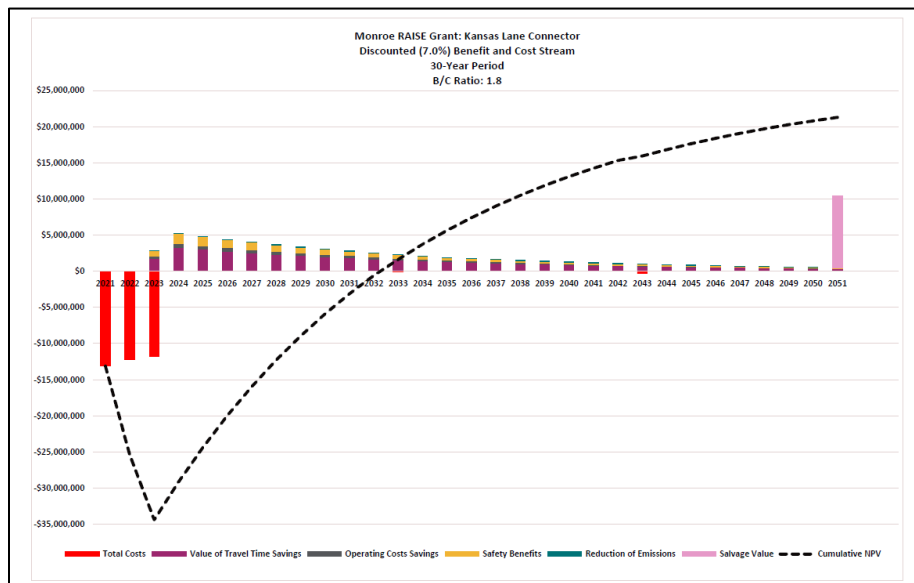


Figure 8: Discounted (7.0%) Benefit and Cost Stream. Full size figure in [Appendix F](#)

Additional non-quantified benefits resulting from the new connector are:

Property values of the surrounding areas would increase due to the new infrastructure investment, and the creation of access to property that is currently undeveloped or under-utilized.

Decreased traffic on the LADOTD routes would minimize the regular maintenance currently required.

Decreased traffic on the LADOTD routes would minimize the noise pollution around residential area.

Improved in quality life of local and regional residents and visitors by improving accessibility to local businesses and communities.

Travel time reliability of the corridor and the surrounding corridors would improve.

A racial equity impact analysis conducted on the corridor did not show any adverse impact on underserved.

Appendix

The primary web address for Kansas Lane Extension Multi-Modal Connector: Equitable Connections for Growth is <https://monroela.us/raisegrant>. The Appendices for this grant narrative are located on the website as follows:

[Appendix A: Maps](#)

[Appendix B: Letters of Support](#)

[Appendix C: Budget and Funding Documentation](#)

[Appendix D: Environmental, Permits and Planning](#)

[Appendix E: Project Schedule](#)

[Appendix F: Benefit-Cost Analysis](#)