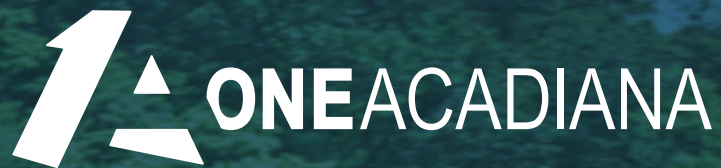


**Appendix Y – OneAcadiana Regional
Infrastructure Visioning Report**



RIVRA

REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE
VISIONING REPORT

JANUARY 2020



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*Check in on RIVR project progress, engagement,
and more at OneAcadiana.org/RIVR*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLOTTING A COURSE FOR ACADIANA'S FUTURE

Louisiana's infrastructure is at a crossroads, illustrated through bridge closures on critical routes; crippling delays on congested roadways; missed economic development opportunities through underserved road, port, airport, and railway facilities; and one of the highest traffic fatality rates in the country. We can either let our transportation system continue to deteriorate, or we can invest in a 21st century infrastructure system.

Business leaders understand that strong infrastructure networks drive growth and investment, and 1A consistently recognizes the need to invest in modernizing Acadiana's infrastructure as one of our top priorities. While our nine-parish region is a crucial hub for Louisiana, opportunities exist to improve and enhance our infrastructure assets to better compete to attract business, talent, and investment opportunities. This report serves as the regional business community's roadmap for progress toward creating the modern infrastructure network Acadiana needs and deserves.



KEY TERMS

1A	One Acadiana
APC	Acadiana Planning Commission
Corps	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
DOTD	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
LCG	Lafayette Consolidated Government
LED	Louisiana Economic Development
State	State of Louisiana
UL Lafayette	University of Louisiana at Lafayette

INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY PRINCIPLES

1A employs a holistic approach to infrastructure policy, recognizing that the quality and efficiency of a community's infrastructure affect all aspects of life and work. With that in mind, below are key principles that guide the course of 1A's infrastructure policy and advocacy work.

Infrastructure improvements are urgently needed for regional competitiveness

Job creators across Acadiana rely on robust market access to move their employees, goods, and services through the region, state, and country. Ensuring that Acadiana's infrastructure network can handle this job, while also allowing room for businesses to grow and expand, is critical to our region's ability to retain our current employers as well as effectively compete with peers to attract new business and talent.

Infrastructure investment will enhance regional mobility and commerce

1A's nine-parish region is strategically located between Houston and New Orleans, at the intersection of Interstates 10 and 49. Home to two commercial airports, five coastal ports, two inland ports, and multiple Class I and Class III railroads, our region must continue improving regional connectivity to ensure goods, services, and passengers can travel safely and swiftly throughout Acadiana.

Coordinated planning will maximize resources and development

Coordinated infrastructure planning efforts help to ensure that local, state, and federal resources achieve optimal impact, as well as enhance Acadiana's economic development and tourism profile by expanding access to local communities and development sites, making them more attractive to business prospects and visitors. Additionally, planning efforts must remain focused on safety, anticipated growth, and the importance of integrating transportation and land-use planning.

Quality infrastructure improves quality of life

Quality of life is a key factor in attracting and retaining business and talent. Enhancing our region's multimodal infrastructure to support safe and swift access to our schools, medical infrastructure, public parks and libraries, and the one-of-a-kind cultural activities that make Acadiana a unique place to call home is imperative to preserving and improving our region's already strong quality of life.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Louisiana currently faces a transportation funding backlog of more than \$14 billion in preservation and maintenance needs on the existing highway and bridge system, with an additional \$10.5 billion needed for Priority A and Priority B megaprojects, which are new major transportation improvements, such as completing I-49 South.

Created in 1990, the state Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) is the largest source of infrastructure funding Louisiana directly controls. It is a constitutionally dedicated fund generated by the 16-cent state gas tax, vehicle license taxes, weight and enforcement permits, and interest earnings. Permitted uses of TTF revenues include the costs for and associated with construction and maintenance of state and federal roads and bridges, the Statewide Flood Control Program, ports, airports, transit, the Parish Transportation Fund, and other bond obligations for transportation infrastructure.

Over the past 20 years, state gas tax revenues have declined while vehicle miles traveled on Louisiana roads have increased. Improved vehicle fuel efficiency continues to reduce consumer demand for gas, while inflation simultaneously erodes the purchasing power of the 16-cent fuel tax, set in 1984 – now worth a mere 7 cents in relative terms.

Growing project backlogs coupled with the loss of purchasing power of available revenues are contributing to the worsening condition of our state’s roadways and hindering economic growth and development in Acadiana. Louisiana must increase infrastructure investment if we are to make improvements necessary to keep our region and state competitive in the global economy.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1

Maximize current transportation funding levels and programs

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2

Find funding for transportation from other state funding sources

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3

Support a substantial increase in transportation revenue (e.g., fuel tax) to make a meaningful impact on infrastructure improvement, with a focus on accountability

View 1A’s complete Transportation Funding Guiding Principles at OneAcadiana.org/TFGP

While the need for infrastructure investment is clear, equally clear is the need for greater transparency and accountability in how infrastructure dollars are spent. 1A continues to push for policies such as SB 59, authored by Senator Page Cortez during the 2018 Regular Session. Approved by Louisiana voters in November 2018, this Constitutional Amendment (No. 4) helped to restore trust in the TTF by fully prohibiting diversions from the TTF to State Police for traffic control purposes. Other steps have been taken to strengthen transparency and accountability for DOTD spending and project delivery, but there is more work on the horizon.

Investing in infrastructure unlocks economic development opportunities that will pay dividends in Acadiana and across the state, while providing vital improvements to safety and quality of life for all users of the system. At this critical juncture, state leaders must work together to invest in a 21st century transportation system that will move Louisiana forward.

PROJECT SELECTION

The projects listed in this report were selected after consultation with stakeholders across the region – business leaders and economic development professionals that are keenly aware of the strengths of Acadiana’s infrastructure network and its most pressing needs for the future.

Following outreach to nearly 100 stakeholders in all nine 1A parishes, projects were vetted based on benefit to the regional infrastructure network, in line with the following criteria:

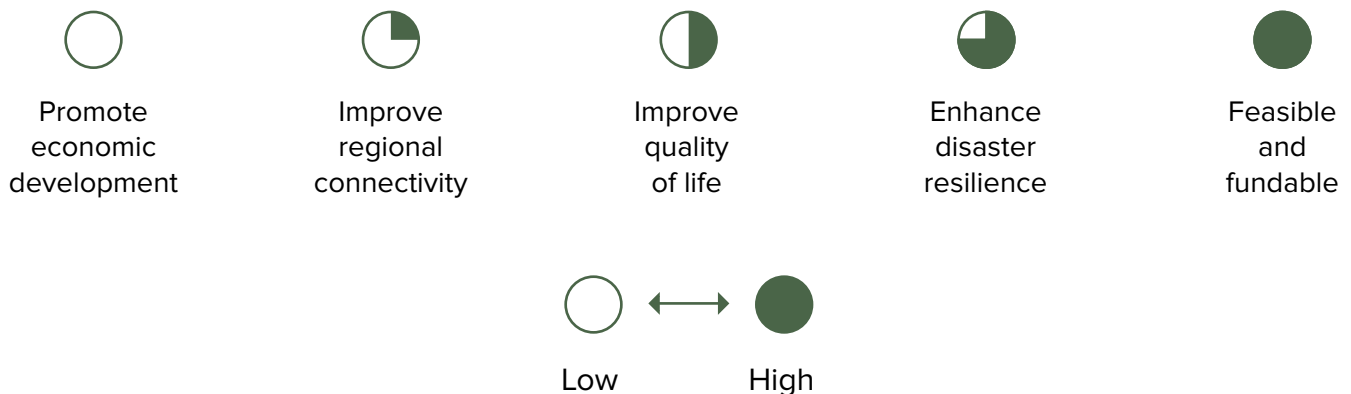
				
Promote economic development	Improve regional connectivity	Improve quality of life	Enhance disaster resilience	Feasible and fundable
Promote business investment / job creation, improve access to jobs	Connect municipalities / regional assets, facilitate freight movement	Reduce traffic congestion, improve mobility, beautify community	Mitigate flood risk, bolster evacuation capacity	Shovel-ready, funding identified, consensus support

Projects included are not ranked in order of presentation and are all considered top priorities.

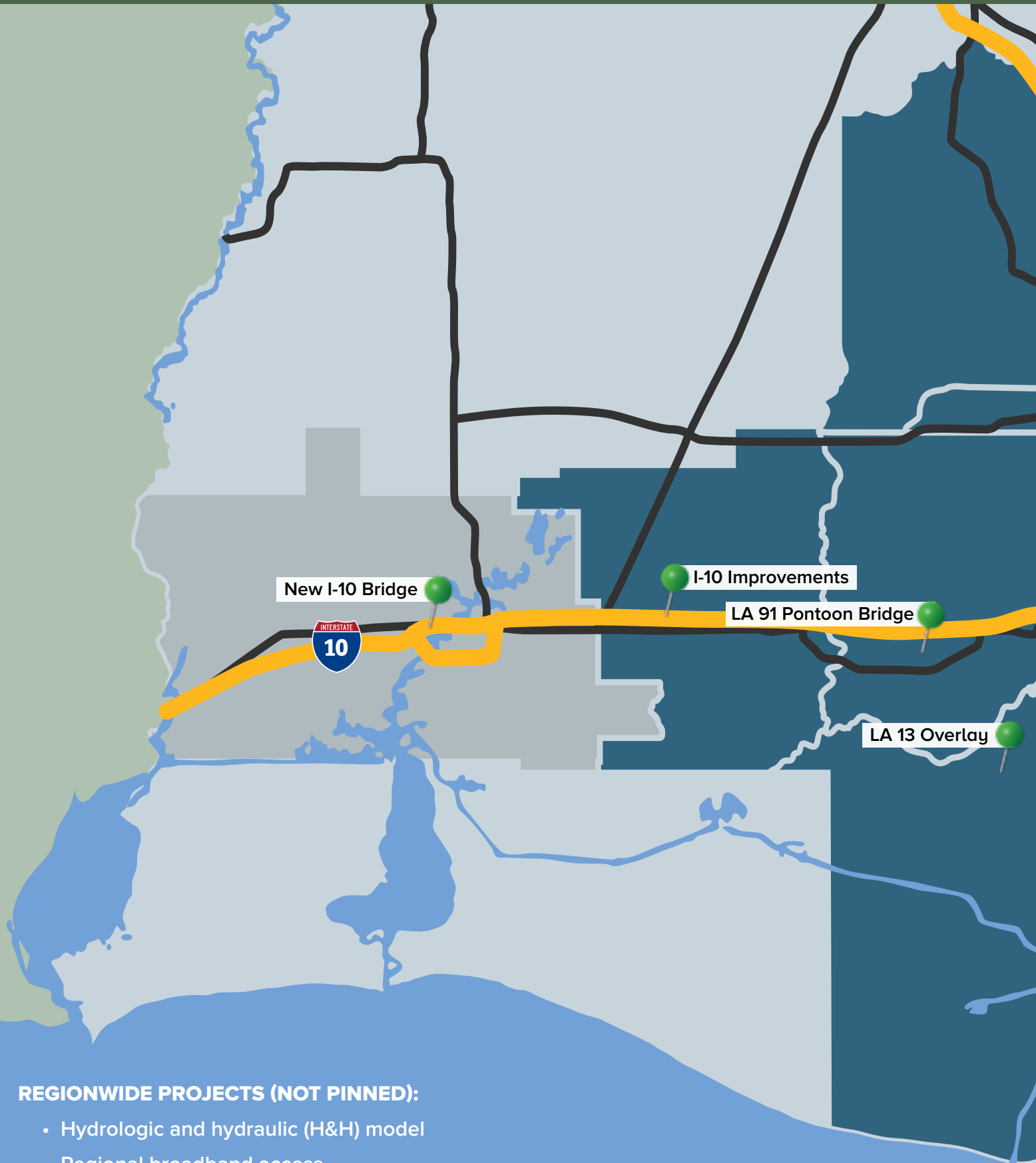
SPOTLIGHT PROJECTS

Several “spotlight” projects are featured throughout the report. These are projects that have been identified as regional in nature and / or are expected to require coordinated, multi-jurisdictional advocacy efforts to advance. Spotlight project profiles will include 1A’s assessment on how these projects ranked in accordance with the above criteria.

RANKING EXAMPLE



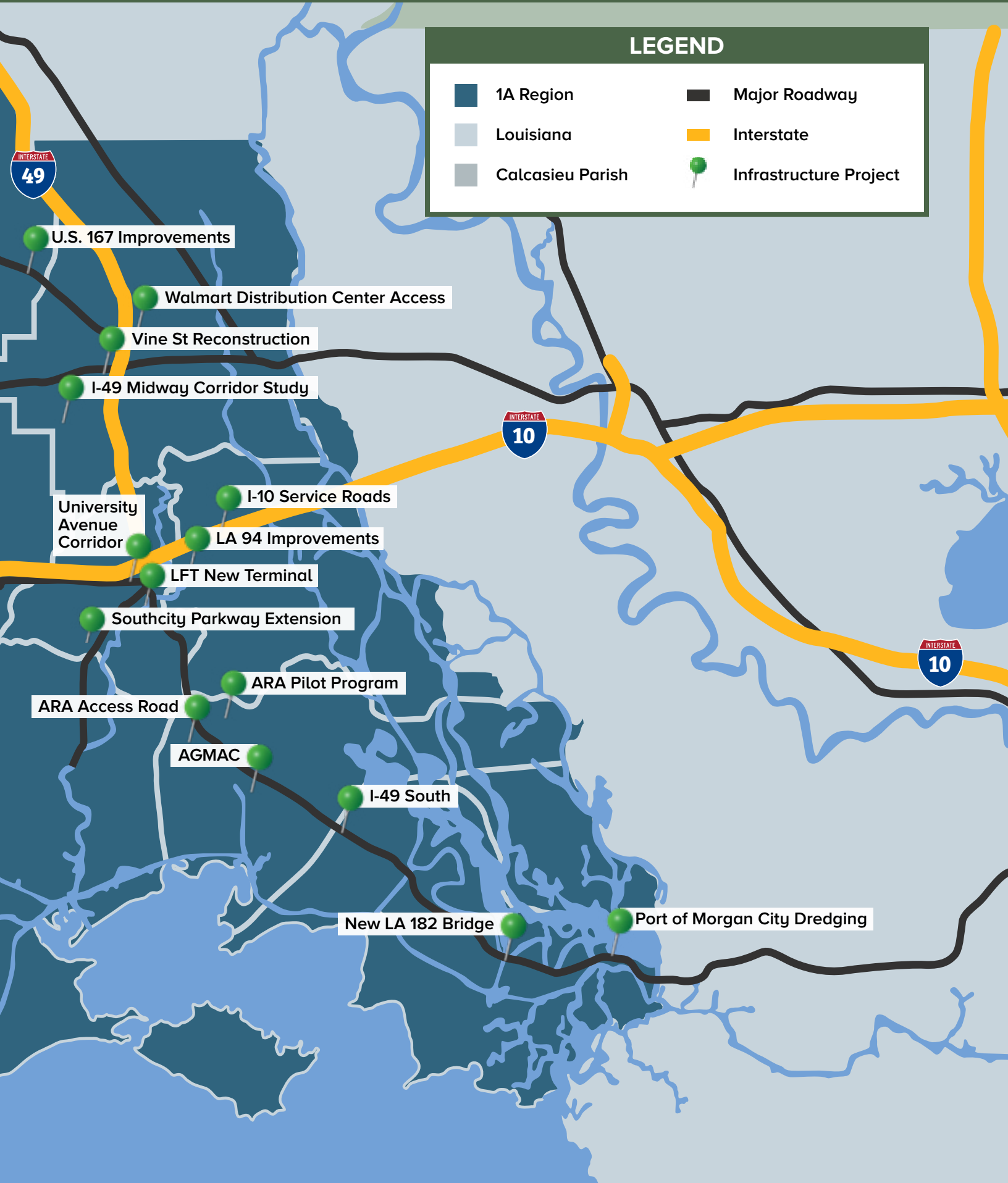
ONE ACADIANA REGION



REGIONWIDE PROJECTS (NOT PINNED):

- Hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) model
- Regional broadband access
- Regional stormwater retention / detention

1A's nine-parish region includes: Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Jeff Davis, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, and Vermilion parishes.



ROADS & BRIDGES

SPOTLIGHT ON I-49 SOUTH

In South Louisiana, business and community leaders and public officials are working hard to finally bring to fruition a highway project with the potential to stimulate tremendous economic growth and business investment: I-49 South. With **100 of 160 miles of the project already complete**, Louisiana is closer than ever to realizing the potential of I-49 South, known as “America’s Energy Corridor.” Completing I-49 South will provide a game-changing investment for Louisiana with substantial benefits for economic development, safety, evacuation, and traffic congestion relief.

I-49 SOUTH PROJECT STATUS



Sources: DOTD, One Acadiana
Updated: December 2019

In 2017, community partners in the Acadiana region commissioned an economic impact analysis of completing I-49 South. The study revealed significant economic gains and traffic efficiency benefits, including:

- **\$9.7 billion increase in Louisiana’s GDP** over a 21-year period following the project’s construction
- **27.2 million trip hours saved** by drivers by 2044
- **6,000 jobs created** statewide by 2044

This project doesn’t just benefit Louisiana – I-49 will provide connectivity from New Orleans all the way to Winnipeg, Canada, opening the door for economic development opportunities nationally and internationally.

DESCRIPTION

Fully upgrading the existing U.S. 90 to interstate standards from Lafayette to New Orleans.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Even while operating at competitive disadvantage due to the lack of a fully functional interstate, “America’s Energy Corridor” continues to serve hundreds of Louisiana companies. Upgrading to interstate standards will provide a catalyst for new growth and investment by connecting communities to national and international markets. Creating a limited-access interstate will also reduce fatal crashes and ensure families can evacuate quickly in a hurricane.

STATUS

More than 100 of I-49 South’s proposed 160 miles are complete. A design-build project to widen U.S. 90 from just north of Albertson Parkway to just north of Ambassador Caffery Parkway in Lafayette Parish was completed in August 2019. Also in 2019, State legislators secured \$150 million in dedicated funding to ensure continued progress on I-49 South (HB 578, 2019 Regular Session; became Act No. 443). These funds will likely be used to construct the Ambassador Caffery interchange project.

KEY PROJECTS REMAINING IN ACADIANA INCLUDE

- **Lafayette Connector** (\$850 million) – 5.5-mile project spanning from I-10 to just south of Lafayette Regional Airport. In early February 2018, the Executive Committee overseeing the design and planning processes for the project finalized end-to-end design alternatives to be evaluated as part of the project’s supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) process. A final supplemental record of decision (SROD) is expected in Spring 2022
 - **Evangeline Thruway revitalization** – In conjunction with the Lafayette Connector project, 1A supports efforts to revitalize the remaining portion of the Evangeline Thruway, such as through the proposed “Grand Boulevard” concept
- **Ambassador Caffery Interchange** (\$100-125 million) – constructing an interchange at U.S. 90 and Ambassador Caffery Parkway. DOTD is currently completing final design plans, and the project is waiting for funding
- **Railroad Intersection Removal near LA 85 in Iberia Parish** (\$20 - \$25 million) – replace existing rail intersection with pipeline; federal Rail Safety Program funds have been identified for the project
- **Wax Lake outlet to Berwick** (\$270-300 million) – upgrading now requires a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS). This process is estimated to take between three to five years

ESTIMATED COST

The estimated cost for completing all remaining projects along the corridor is approximately \$3 billion.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Remaining projects could be funded through a combination of federal grants, State funds, local match funds, and the possibility of public-private partnerships.

RANKING



Promote economic development



Improve regional connectivity



Improve quality of life



Enhance disaster resilience



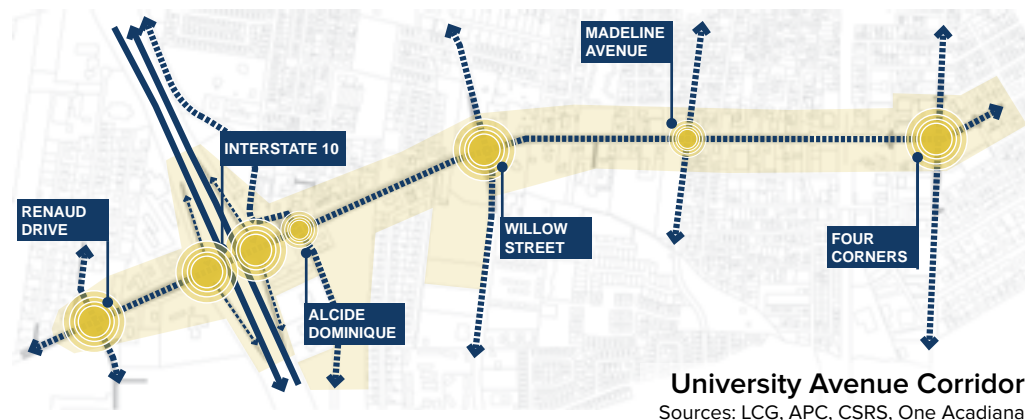
Feasible and fundable

SPOTLIGHT ON UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS

Improving the condition of key gateway corridors in Acadiana will dramatically enhance our community's economic competitiveness and quality of life, giving visitors, prospective new businesses, and residents alike, a more positive impression of our community, and demonstrate a civic pride of place that complements our rich cultural identity. Leading straight through the heart of Acadiana, **the historically-significant University Avenue corridor serves as a principal gateway to our community**, connecting I-10, downtown Lafayette, UL Lafayette, and Lafayette Regional Airport. However, this corridor is home to an underserved population and is not experiencing the same kind of growth and development as other areas of the city.

DESCRIPTION

Improvements to road, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure, and implementation of beautification and revitalization efforts along the University Avenue corridor from Cameron St. to just north of I-10.



PURPOSE AND NEED

Improvements are needed to enhance safety and connectivity, spur economic development, and ensure a positive impression of Acadiana for residents, visitors, and prospective businesses and talent.

STATUS

In 2018, LCG and the Acadiana MPO finalized a corridor plan for University Avenue that focuses on creating: 1) a safe and connected corridor, 2) a framework for revitalization, and 3) an inviting gateway to the community. Since finalizing the plan, LCG submitted Phase I of the project, which includes survey, engineering, and design along University Avenue from Jeanne Street to West Gilman Road and improvements to the intersection of University Avenue and Cameron Street. DOTD is reviewing project specifications to collect required approvals and advance the project to design and engineering. LCG has also completed work on a project to revitalize the railroad underpass on University Avenue just north of Cameron Street, and led a successful effort to create an overlay district and rezone nearly 200 properties to allow more opportunities for mixed-use development in the corridor.

ESTIMATED COST

Implementing Phase I of the University Avenue corridor improvement plan is estimated to cost \$7.3 million.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

LCG has set aside \$8.6 million for the project and is pursuing opportunities to secure federal funding. In the 2019 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, \$13 million was earmarked for future planning and construction through the State capital outlay program - \$3 million as Priority 2 funding and \$10 million as Priority 5 funding.

RANKING



Promote economic development



Improve regional connectivity



Improve quality of life



Enhance disaster resilience



Feasible and fundable

SPOTLIGHT ON SOUTHCITY PARKWAY EXTENSION

Traffic congestion is a daily frustration that reduces the quality of life and mobility of a community. Construction of the Southcity Parkway extension, including a new bridge over the Vermilion River, has been identified as one of the most impactful projects for reducing traffic congestion in Lafayette based on travel demand modeling.



DESCRIPTION

Extension of a four-lane boulevard (Southcity Parkway), including a new bridge over the Vermilion River, from Robley Drive to Kaliste Saloom Road in Lafayette, with construction of roundabouts at the intersections of Robley Drive and Southcity Parkway and North Cimarron Drive and Southcity Parkway.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Construction of the Southcity Parkway extension will help reduce traffic congestion by providing an alternative Vermilion River crossing to Ambassador Caffery Parkway. The project also has the potential to spur new economic development opportunities in the community.

STATUS

The U.S. Coast Guard approved LCG's plans to build a fixed-span bridge across the Vermilion River, and funding was secured for project design and engineering. LCG also hired a consultant to conduct an environmental assessment and has been working on acquiring right of way along the route.

ESTIMATED COST

The project is currently estimated to cost approximately \$23 million.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

During LCG's fall 2019 budget cycle, future funding previously planned for Southcity Parkway was directed for use on drainage projects throughout Lafayette Parish, and a new source of local funding must be identified.

RANKING



Promote economic development



Improve regional connectivity



Improve quality of life



Enhance disaster resilience



Feasible and fundable

SPOTLIGHT ON WALMART DISTRIBUTION CENTER ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

The Walmart Distribution Center in St. Landry Parish, with its almost 1,100 employees, services a network of 115 Walmart stores. Twice over the past five years, the center has been shut down for multiple days due to high water at the intersection of LA 744 and LA 743, preventing employees from accessing the center. This distribution center has a significant impact on the regional economy and is a critical post-storm supply chain anchor. Approximately 45 percent of the center's 1,100 employees reside in St. Landry Parish, with much of the remaining employee base spread throughout Acadiana.



DESCRIPTION

Elevating the intersection at LA 744 and LA 743 to facilitate high water drainage under the highway.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Flooding at the distribution center disrupts Walmart's distribution network. If this flooding issue is not alleviated, Walmart may have to consider moving the distribution center because it cannot effectively service its network in times of need.

STATUS

There has not been a formal engineering design on this project, but initial assessments have been done on project scope, design, and cost.

ESTIMATED COST

Preliminary cost estimates from 2019 range from \$680,000 - \$810,000.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Public-private partnership options and disaster grants are being considered to fund the project.

RANKING



Promote
economic
development



Improve
regional
connectivity



Improve
quality
of life



Enhance
disaster
resilience



Feasible
and
fundable



BAYOU PLAQUEMINE BRULÉ BRIDGE

DESCRIPTION

Replace the current pontoon bridge, located on LA 91 just outside Estherwood with a fixed structure with sufficient vertical clearance to allow for small vessel traffic under the bridge.

PURPOSE AND NEED

One of only a few pontoon-style bridges, it presents safety, evacuation, and economic issues to residents and businesses in Acadia, Vermilion, and Jeff Davis parishes. During high water, the bridge closes for extended periods of time, forcing residents to reroute up to 20 miles out of their way, and businesses to do the same with customers, vendors, and workforce. Weight, speed, and single-car restrictions for the bridge also hinder market access, especially for LeGros Airport and the Port of Mermentau.

STATUS

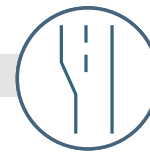
DOTD has conducted a Stage 0 and Final Alignment Study, and replacement of the existing bridge with a stationary bridge has been approved by the U.S. Coast Guard. During the 2019 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, \$900,000 in supplemental funding was appropriated for land acquisition, an environmental study, and engineering for the project. Additionally, \$4.2 million dollars was earmarked for future construction through the State capital outlay program as Priority 5 funding.

ESTIMATED COST

DOTD is estimating project cost to be around \$5 million, not including right-of-way acquisition.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Potential funding sources include the Delta Regional Authority, additional State capital outlay funding, and DOTD funding.



VINE STREET RECONSTRUCTION

DESCRIPTION

Reconstructing Vine Street (U.S. 190) from the intersection at LA 104, where Vine Street and Landry Street merge, east to Wallior Street (near I-49). This project will require relocation of the main utility infrastructure for the City of Opelousas.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Vine Street is the main east-west thoroughfare in Opelousas, LA, providing direct access to dozens of businesses and homes in the downtown area and serving as an alternate route when portions of I-10 are closed. However, the roadway has deteriorated and is in need of complete reconstruction. Additionally, utilities underneath the road's surface are very delicate and need to be relocated to accommodate road reconstruction. These include the main line for Opelousas' wastewater, water lines, natural gas lines, telecom lines, and more.

STATUS

A Stage 0 Feasibility Study, completed in February 2017, identified potential utility relocation areas. DOTD is working to identify the ideal route for utility relocation so that a more accurate cost can be assessed.

ESTIMATED COST

Preliminary cost estimates range from \$17 - \$20 million for project construction, and \$7 - \$9 million for utility relocation and property acquisition.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Funding for the project would primarily come from DOTD. The Opelousas Downtown Development District may also partner in funding the project.



U.S. 167 IMPROVEMENTS IN EVANGELINE PARISH

DESCRIPTION

Improvements to U.S. 167 from Ville Platte east to Nuba (near I-49). Work would extend about 15 miles and include the addition of two lanes and shoulder improvements, with the possibility of interim improvements to include creation of left turn lanes at the intersection of U.S. 167 and LA 748.

PURPOSE AND NEED

U.S. 167 is a critical corridor for Ville Platte and surrounding communities in Evangeline and St. Landry parishes, linking travelers directly to I-49, serving as a hurricane evacuation route, and providing connectivity to U.S. military operations at Fort Polk. However, current traffic and shoulder conditions are hindering safety, access, and economic development opportunities. Widening U.S. 167 would increase safety and efficiency on the roadway by better accommodating traffic volumes and bolster economic development by enhancing access to the Evangeline Ward One Industrial Park, including a 96.5-acre LED Certified Site currently available for industrial development. Interim improvements would increase traffic flow and safety in the near term.

STATUS

Preliminary corridor study completed in 2011. In fall 2019, DOTD let a project to construct shoulder improvements along nearly 3 miles of the corridor east of Ville Platte to the St. Landry Parish Line.

ESTIMATED COST

The preliminary study estimates widening options could cost between \$49 - \$56 million, with interim safety improvements estimated at just over \$700,000.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

The project would likely be funded through a combination of State and federal funds.



I-10 IMPROVEMENTS IN JEFF DAVIS PARISH

DESCRIPTION

Improvements include pavement rehabilitation from Welsh / LA 99 to the Acadia Parish line and rehabilitation of an overpass on I-10 over U.S. 165 and the adjacent railway.

PURPOSE AND NEED

I-10 is a critical freight, commuter, and hurricane evacuation corridor for Acadiana. Improving pavement conditions and rehabbing the U.S. 165 overpass will improve safety and mobility conditions for travelers, benefiting commerce and economic development as well as hurricane evacuation.

STATUS

The pavement rehabilitation project was let in June 2018 and completed in October 2019. The overpass project is currently in the design / development phase and could let as early as July 2020.

ESTIMATED COST

The pavement rehabilitation project let for approximately \$13.8 million; the overpass is estimated to cost \$30 million.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

90% of the pavement rehabilitation cost was covered through the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP). The overpass project is also eligible for NHPP funding.



I-49 MIDWAY CORRIDOR STRATEGIC GROWTH INITIATIVE

DESCRIPTION

This project involves studying the I-49 corridor from the I-10 interchange north to Exit 27 (Lebeau) to identify challenges and opportunities. The scope of the study includes an inventory of resources – including road and utility infrastructure, land-use classifications, and comprehensive plans – and community visioning efforts to evaluate future growth and economic development potential. Assessments from the study will form the foundation for developing a strategic growth plan for the corridor.

PURPOSE AND NEED

I-49 forms the backbone of the infrastructure for growth and development in northern Acadiana. A comprehensive study is needed to proactively examine infrastructure needs, land-use planning, and transportation resilience for future growth in the region.

STATUS

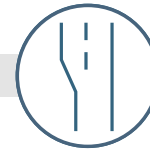
Funding for the initial phase of the project, up to \$150,000, was identified through local sources. St. Landry Economic Development also partnered with the APC to secure a USDA Rural Business Development Grant for an additional \$30,000 toward the project. The study is underway and a working group of local government leaders from the region is currently overseeing and participating in the data collection process, managed by the APC.

ESTIMATED COST

Rough cost estimates range from \$500,000 - \$600,000.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Additional funding for this project will likely be solicited through federal grant programs.



LA 94 IMPROVEMENTS

DESCRIPTION

Involves overlay of LA 94 in Lafayette and St. Martin parishes from LA 353 to Rees Street (LA 328). Additional suggested improvements include widening the road to four lanes to increase capacity, and extension of the road past where it intersects Rees Street to Doyle Melancon Road.

PURPOSE AND NEED

LA 94 is a critical route for regional connectivity and quality of life. St. Martin Parish to Lafayette is the largest home-to-work commute in the region, with between 5,000 - 10,000 people traveling the road each day. LA 94 allows travelers to bypass I-10, affording more direct access to the cores of both Lafayette and Breaux Bridge. Resurfacing the roadway will increase safety and reduce vehicle wear and tear. Widening the road would increase capacity and extending it past its current terminus at Rees Street would create opportunity for new mixed-use development in Breaux Bridge.

STATUS

The overlay project is included in DOTD's Highway Priority Program and is currently in the design / development phase. Studies are needed to explore widening and extending the route.

ESTIMATED COST

The overlay project is estimated to cost approximately \$3.2 million.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Funding for improvements would likely come from a combination of local, State, and federal sources. As a National Highway System (NHS) route, LA 94 is eligible for National Highway Performance Program funding.



LA 13 OVERLAY FROM KAPLAN (LA 14) TO I-10

DESCRIPTION

Project to resurface LA 13 from Kaplan (LA 14) north to I-10.

PURPOSE AND NEED

LA 13 is a critical freight route for agriculture and other industry traffic traveling from Vermilion and Acadia parishes, and elsewhere, to and from Intracoastal City, an entry point to the strategic Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. With frequent truck traffic on LA 13, pavement condition continues to rapidly decline.

STATUS

Currently, a project to resurface LA 13 in Vermilion Parish from 2.7 miles north of LA 14 to the Acadia Parish line is in the planning / environmental stage.

ESTIMATED COST

Construction costs for the Vermilion Parish portion (Kaplan to Acadia Parish line) are estimated at just over \$2 million.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Projects on LA 13 are eligible for funding through DOTD's Non-Interstate Pavement Preservation Program.



NEW LA 182 BRIDGE OVER WAX LAKE OUTLET

DESCRIPTION

Construction of a new LA 182 crossing over Wax Lake outlet, parallel to U.S. 90.

PURPOSE AND NEED

A new bridge is needed to help ease congestion by pulling local traffic, including agricultural equipment, off of U.S. 90. It will also bolster hurricane evacuation capabilities, allowing residents in the area an additional east-west travel option over the outlet.

STATUS

FHWA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) in 2006 on the Wax Lake outlet to Berwick segment of future I-49 South. The ROD includes the addition of a new LA 182 bridge. Following several years without sufficient funding to make progress on the larger project, DOTD identified interim improvements to increase safety and efficiency, including the LA 182 bridge.

ESTIMATED COST

The total estimated project cost is \$12.7 million.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

The project would likely be funded through a combination of local, State, and federal funds.



CONSTRUCTION OF I-10 SERVICE ROADS IN ST. MARTIN PARISH

DESCRIPTION

Constructing service roads along I-10 in St. Martin Parish between Breaux Bridge and Henderson.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Several business and industrial development opportunities exist along I-10 in St. Martin Parish, but lack of service road access along the interstate is a deciding factor for many businesses considering available properties. I-10 is a high-traffic corridor with substantial freight movement, and properties along the interstate are some of the most visible and primed for development. The majority of these properties are farmland with minimal development and/or structures impeding future construction. Service roads would not only spur growth along I-10 and improve the regional economy, but they would also serve as alternative safety routes in case of evacuation, interstate closure, and emergency fire service.

STATUS

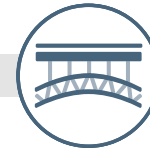
St. Martin Parish Economic Development Authority is working with local partners to outline the need and engage with DOTD on next steps.

ESTIMATED COST

Costs will be assessed after further consultation with DOTD.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Potential funding may come from DOTD, federal grants, local funding, or creation of an economic development district. Potential partners include St. Martin Parish Government, the Acadiana Planning Commission, LED, the City of Breaux Bridge, the City of Henderson, and the St. Martin Parish Economic Development Authority.



NEW I-10 BRIDGE OVER CALCASIEU RIVER

DESCRIPTION

This project involves replacing or improving the I-10 bridge over the Calcasieu River in Lake Charles. The study corridor is approximately 9 miles long, and the project limit runs along I-10 from the east and west interchanges with I-210.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Constructed in 1952, the bridge was originally part of the U.S. 90 highway system but was later integrated as part of I-10. The bridge eased congestion in the Lake Charles area by eliminating traffic delays caused by the previous drawbridge, as ships can pass freely beneath its 135-foot clearance. However, growth over the past 60 years has substantially increased traffic volumes.

STATUS


In 2019, President Donald Trump committed to replacing the bridge if reelected and Governor John Bel Edwards pledged to allocate \$85 million in the 2020 State capital outlay bill to serve as the State's match for federal funding. DOTD is in the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement and seeking a consultant to work on innovative delivery of the project.

ESTIMATED COST

DOTD estimates the bridge replacement project could cost as much as \$1 billion, though alternatives to full replacement are also being considered.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

The bridge could be positioned to move forward with federal grant funding or as part of a public-private partnership.



“ Infrastructure is critically important to Acadiana’s quality of life, the health of our regional economy, and our ability to compete with other regions to attract high-quality businesses and talent. The RIVR provides the business community’s blueprint for achieving infrastructure goals that will keep our region moving forward.

– **Ryan Pécot**

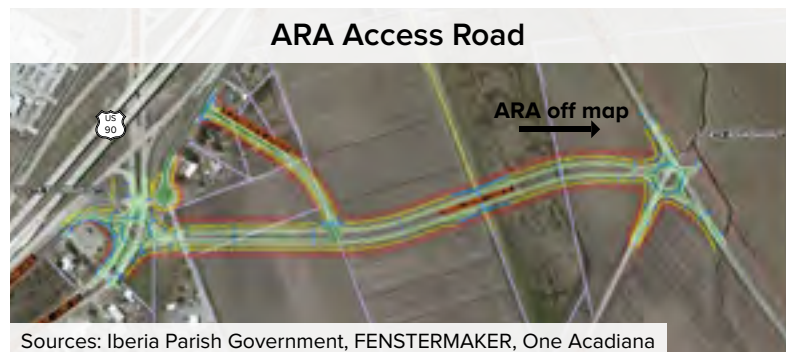
Senior Retail Leasing and Development Advisor, Stirling Properties
Former 1A Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Co-Chair

SPOTLIGHT ON ACADIANA REGIONAL AIRPORT (ARA) ACCESS ROAD

Highway access continues to be a top factor in business location decisions. A former Naval air station located near U.S. 90 and the Port of Iberia, and featuring direct rail access with a rail-to-truck offloading facility, Acadiana Regional Airport (ARA) is well-suited to facilitate heavy industrial and cargo business by air, water, rail, and ground. However, direct access to U.S. 90 is needed to more efficiently move cargo traffic and better position two LED Certified Sites available for industrial development, one located on airport property and one directly connected to the planned access road.

DESCRIPTION

Construction of a five-lane, industrial-grade access road directly connecting ARA to U.S. 90. The project will be carried out in two phases. Phase I involves constructing a roundabout at the intersection of U.S. 90 and LA 675, with a road from there to a second roundabout planned at LA 3212. Phase II involves extending Hangar Drive from the airport to the roundabout at LA 3212.



PURPOSE AND NEED

The planned access road is specifically designed to handle industrial traffic and will provide a quicker, dedicated route for cargo traveling to and from ARA, which will in turn reduce wear and tear on neighboring roads. Additionally, part of the new road will pass directly through an LED Certified Site, increasing the potential for further industrial and business development in the area.

STATUS

Funding has been identified to begin planning and construction of Phase I, and Iberia Parish has acquired all necessary right of way for the project. Letting of bids for construction to begin Phase I could occur as early as Q1 2020, with initial work involving construction of two of the five planned lanes.

ESTIMATED COST

The total estimated cost for Phase I is \$9 million.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Approximately \$8.54 million in State capital outlay and supplemental funds were allocated to begin Phase I, with additional funding provided by the Iberia Parish Government and a federal disaster grant.

RANKING



Promote economic development



Improve regional connectivity



Improve quality of life



Enhance disaster resilience



Feasible and fundable



ACADIANA GULF OF MEXICO ACCESS CHANNEL (AGMAC)

DESCRIPTION

Deepening, from 12 feet to 20 feet, a 53-mile channel from the Port of Iberia southwest along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, and south through Freshwater Bayou into the Gulf of Mexico.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Completing AGMAC will allow oil and gas fabricators located at the Port to service deepwater oil and gas exploration rigs. Materials needed for these rigs can weigh thousands of tons, and deepening the channel will support ships carrying heavy loads from the Port to the Gulf. AGMAC would benefit companies already doing business at the Port, as well as encourage new tenants to lease available land and take advantage of the deepened channel.

STATUS

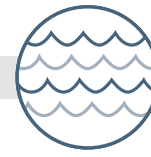
Congress authorized AGMAC in 2007, but the project was suspended by the Corps in 2010 due to high cost. Changes to the authorizing language in 2014 reduced the estimated cost, and a re-evaluation is needed to confirm the project's economic justification. A project management plan (PMP) defining the scope of the re-evaluation was completed in 2016, and \$1.9 million is needed from the Corps to carry out the re-evaluation as outlined in the PMP. In preparation for future dredging, the Port is currently working to lower a set of pipelines to required depth at the Commercial Canal between the Port and the Intracoastal Waterway. The pipeline relocation is expected to begin in July 2020.

ESTIMATED COST

Total project costs are estimated to be around \$163 million.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Majority funding for the project will come from the Corps. DOTD has committed to providing the non-federal cost share and has already committed more than \$30 million toward the project. The Port of Iberia has also made significant investments to ensure continued progress.



DREDGING AT PORT OF MORGAN CITY

DESCRIPTION

Funding to maintain the Atchafalaya River navigation channel at its authorized depth of 20 feet and width of 400 feet.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The Atchafalaya River is the primary channel to and from the Port of Morgan City and the Gulf of Mexico. Since 2012, operations and maintenance (O&M) funding has not been adequate to consistently maintain the channel. Consequently, vessels have not been able to come into the Port since early 2015, disrupting commerce by halting movement of goods and preventing offshore rigs and platforms from being moved in to the Port for repairs and safe harbor. Without a fully-functioning channel, economic opportunities will continue to be lost.

STATUS

With \$45 million in funding since 2018, the channel was set to be dredged back to its authorized depth and reopened for business in 2019. However, dredging efforts were unsuccessful due to record levels of shoaling caused by historic rainfall, sustained flood stage from the fall of 2018 through the summer of 2019, and the arrival of Tropical Storm Barry. Remaining funds will be used to dredge portions of the channel, but additional funding will be needed to complete the channel restoration.

ESTIMATED COST

The Corps estimates \$39 million is needed annually to maintain the channel, using traditional dredging methods. The Port and the Corps are exploring alternative dredging methods to potentially reduce annual costs.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Future funding will likely come from several sources, including Corps O&M funding, possible federal supplemental funding, a possible partnership with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), and contributions from the Port itself.



NEW TERMINAL PROJECT AT LAFAYETTE REGIONAL AIRPORT (LFT)

DESCRIPTION

Constructing a new passenger terminal and ancillary facilities with updated amenities for travelers.

PURPOSE AND NEED

LFT's current terminal is past its useful life. The new 120,000 square-foot terminal will offer additional boarding gates, the latest in HVAC and lighting controls, larger holding areas, and more, while providing the ability to grow and expand as demand increases.

STATUS

Construction of the new terminal began in November 2018, and substantial progress has been made since, including completion of the structural steel. Construction is slated to be completed by September 2021, with the new terminal expected to open in 2022.

ESTIMATED COST

Total project cost, including ancillary facilities, is approximately \$130 million.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

A temporary parishwide sales tax approved by Lafayette Parish voters raised more than \$32 million for the project over eight months in 2015. This local funding is being supplemented by State and federal funding, including \$10.2 million in Priority 1 State capital outlay funding dedicated in 2019 and \$35 million in FAA funding contributed to the project so far. Additional funding sources include Passenger Facility Charges, Customer Facility Charges, DOTD's Airport Construction and Development Priority Program, and the U.S. Economic Development Administration.



PILOT PROGRAM FOR NOISE EXEMPTION AT ACADIANA REGIONAL AIRPORT (ARA), INCL. FOREIGN TRADE ZONE DESIGNATION

DESCRIPTION

Securing a pilot program for a long-term noise exemption allowing older aircraft to fly into the airport, followed by seeking designation of a Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) to facilitate international trade at the airport.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Located near the Gulf Coast, and with plenty of land available for expansion, ARA could serve as an import-export hub for niche markets traveling into the U.S. from Central and South America. However, current federal noise regulations prohibit older aircraft, that are common in many other countries, from entering U.S. airspace without a noise waiver for each flight. Securing a long-term noise exemption and designating ARA as an FTZ will bolster commerce in Acadiana by enabling uninterrupted business from new markets.

STATUS

Language authorizing a pilot program was included in H.R. 302, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, enacted in October 2018. ARA is working with the FAA to understand when rulemakings associated with the pilot program will be issued and determine whether ARA can participate in the program. FTZ designation will be pursued following ARA's approval for the pilot program.

ESTIMATED COST

Estimated costs associated with implementation of the pilot program and FTZ designation are unknown. Both projects are expected to involve administrative expenses, and FTZ designation may also involve associated application fees.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Funding sources will be identified once costs are assessed.



“ The RIVR serves as a tool for Acadiana’s business and economic development community to communicate our support for priority projects, leveraging our collective voice and maximizing our advocacy efforts to make progress on our region’s critical infrastructure needs.

– **Charles Fenstermaker**
President, FENSTERMAKER
1A Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Co-Chair

FLOOD MITIGATION

SPOTLIGHT ON REGIONAL HYDROLOGIC AND HYDRAULIC (H&H) MODEL

The historic flood of August 2016 produced 20-30 inches of rainfall across South Louisiana in just a few days, resulting in more than \$10 billion in damages to property and even resulting in loss of life. **Experts have indicated that capacity-building around monitoring and modeling can improve regional resilience** in the wake of these events. In 2018, the State created the Louisiana Watershed Initiative (LWI) to coordinate floodplain management responsibilities across all levels of government and develop long-term solutions for sustainability and resilience. LWI consists of officials from several State agencies involved in the planning and execution of watershed management solutions, and local officials throughout Acadiana and UL Lafayette's Louisiana Watershed Flood Center are working with LWI to address the need for additional data to adequately address our region's stormwater and flood-risk management needs.

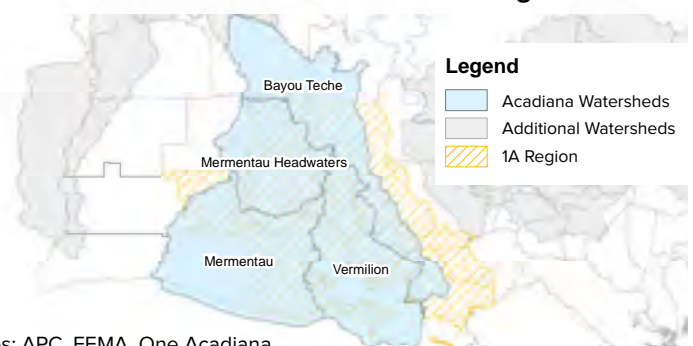
DESCRIPTION

Fund and develop a regional hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) model to produce needed, actionable data on Acadiana's watersheds.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Developing an H&H model would produce data on Acadiana's watersheds that would inform decisions on which drainage and flood-control improvements would have the greatest regional impact, helping to mitigate impacts of future flood events.

Acadiana Watersheds Affected by 2016 Severe Storms and Flooding



Sources: APC, FEMA, One Acadiana

STATUS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently allocated \$1.2 billion to Louisiana for long-term disaster recovery efforts in parishes affected by the 2016 floods. LWI has submitted an action plan to HUD detailing how funds will be spent and is working to administer contracts for regional H&H models across the state. A firm has been selected to begin developing the model in the Acadiana region, and APC and LWI will support this work. A related regional gauge network project that would produce data that could be incorporated into an H&H model is fully funded through a combination of FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding and match funding provided by the Teche-Vermilion Freshwater District.

ESTIMATED COST

Approximately \$20 million will be spent on the LWI Region 5 model, which will encompass 16 parishes in Acadiana and beyond.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

This project will be funded through the \$1.2 billion in HUD Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds recently allocated to Louisiana.

RANKING



Promote economic development



Improve regional connectivity



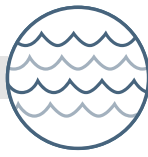
Improve quality of life



Enhance disaster resilience



Feasible and fundable



REGIONAL STORMWATER RETENTION / DETENTION

DESCRIPTION

Advance stormwater retention / detention projects throughout the region, including those identified by the APC for funding.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Following the historic flood of August 2016, Acadiana was allocated \$25 million in FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding to help mitigate flooding impacts in the region. Parish Presidents pooled this funding and worked together to identify the most regionally impactful projects to fund, including several retention / detention projects.

STATUS

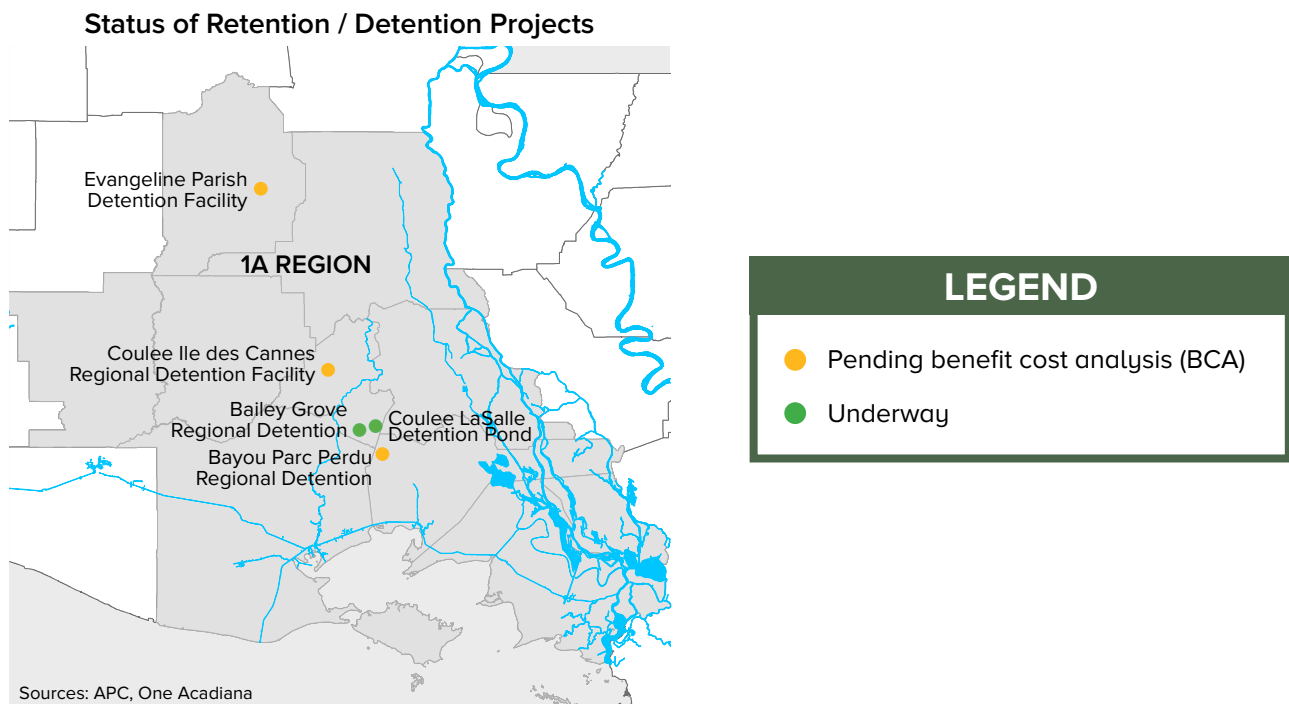
The APC is currently working with local governments in the region to advance the following retention / detention projects that were identified through a rigorous selection process: Coulee LaSalle Detention Pond; Coulee Ile des Cannes Regional Detention Facility; Bayou Parc Perdu Regional Detention Project; Bailey Grove Regional Detention Pond; and Evangeline Parish Detention Facility Project.

ESTIMATED COST

FEMA funding for projects listed totals approximately \$15.5 million. Remaining HMGP funds were allocated to non-retention / detention flood-control projects throughout the region.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

FEMA's HMGP funds 75% of project cost, with a 25% match requirement. Match funding will come directly from local entities, with possible assistance from other sources, such as DOTD's Statewide Flood Control Program.



ADDITIONAL NEEDS

SPOTLIGHT ON RURAL BROADBAND

Broadband applications and services have the power to transform our regional economy by catalyzing innovation in e-commerce, education, telecommuting, healthcare, entertainment, government services, and more. However, the "digital divide" between rural and urban communities presents challenges to economic competitiveness and quality of life. In 2018, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) estimated that just over 30 percent of rural Americans lack access to broadband services available to their urban counterparts. Businesses increasingly rely on broadband connectivity to develop tools and applications, streamline operations, and reach consumers instantaneously. Communities without reliable and affordable broadband access will suffer to compete in retaining and growing businesses and attracting new jobs.

DESCRIPTION

Encourage reliable and affordable broadband access in rural areas throughout the Acadiana Region.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Access to high-speed internet is critical to innovation and economic growth for both large and small businesses and enhances quality of life for our citizens.

STATUS

While parts of Acadiana boast access to a variety of broadband services, many rural communities in the region lack reliable and affordable access to broadband. In July 2019, APC was awarded a USDA Rural Development grant to conduct a regional rural broadband assessment, which will help to identify broadband infrastructure needs in seven parishes within Acadiana.

ESTIMATED COST

Costs associated with broadband infrastructure vary based on the location and service needs of specific communities.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES AND PARTNERS

Potential funding sources include federal grant programs such as the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) BUILD Grant, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Community Connect Grant, Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program, and Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan and Loan Guarantee Program, as well as the FCC's Connect America Fund. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) and Delta Regional Authority (DRA) have also listed broadband among their project priorities. Innovative financing methods, such as public-private partnerships and tax increment financing (TIF) districts could also be used to support rural broadband access initiatives.

RANKING



Promote economic development



Improve regional connectivity



Improve quality of life



Enhance disaster resilience



Feasible and fundable

OUR VISION

To make our region one of the most sought-after places in the South for emerging businesses and professional talent. We call ourselves One Acadiana because we believe it takes a united region to create the best region.

