

MEETING IN A BOX

Everything you need to conduct a meeting for:
Prioritizing Catalyst Projects Along the Evangeline Corridor



Revitalizing the Corridor: Your vision, your voice.

Thank you for your willingness to host a meeting with your neighbors, friends or business associates. The information and feedback you provide will help us complete a revitalization plan for the Evangeline Corridor: neighborhoods and businesses along the Evangeline Thruway that will be transformed by the I-49 Interstate connector.

The Evangeline Corridor Initiative began with neighbors, business owners and community leaders sharing their vision in small group meetings and community planning workshops. With the help of architects, planners and designers, that community vision is taking shape as a plan of action.

The Evangeline Corridor Initiative Team has identified 41 Catalyst Projects, community improvements that can bring about the kinds of changes residents and business owners are asking for.

The next step is to find out which Catalyst Projects rise to the top — and that's what this Meeting in a Box is for. We want to know which projects are most important to you.

We appreciate your help!



EVANGELINE CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

Funded in part by a federal **TIGER** grant

STEP 1

How to prepare
for your meeting



Host Instructions — Please read this packet in full.

- **Meeting Purpose: Understand the list of proposed Catalyst Projects, rank them by priority and provide feedback**
- **Time required: 1.5 - 2 hours**
- **Host will need to provide**
 - Pens or pencils

How to Host a Meeting

1. Find a location and set a date – Your meeting will include a group of 8 to 10 people. Select a location where all participants can comfortably sit around a table. You may wish to host a meeting in your home. Free meeting spaces are also available at area libraries and community centers.

2. Request a facilitator – Contact Neil LeBouef, ECI Project Manager, at 337-291-7196 or nlebouef@lafayette.la.gov to request a facilitator for your group. Facilitators are available to guide participants through the ranking process.

3. Invite – Identify 8 to 10 people to invite to your meeting. This is the best size for a small group discussion. Send out meeting invitations via email, call each of your invitees, or drop off the invitation in person. See sample invitation on page 4.

4. Remind – Call and/or email the people you invited a day or two before the scheduled meeting.



Sample Invitation

Use this template as a guide for your meeting invitations. You may want to include this language in e-mail invitations or reproduce this invitation to send by mail. For an electronic copy, contact ECI Project Manager Neil LeBouef at 291-7196 or nlebouef@lafayetteela.gov.

You're Invited

What: Meeting in a Box:

Give Your Input on Evangeline Corridor Initiative Projects

When:

Where:

Please RSVP by _____ to _____.

The Evangeline Corridor Initiative and Lafayette Consolidated Government are seeking your opinions on projects in the Evangeline Corridor. Please join us to share your thoughts with other attendees and enjoy good company! We're looking forward to hearing from you.



STEP 2

How to conduct
your meeting



Host Instructions

- 1. Set up** – Please provide pens and pencils for your guests. Put the sign-in sheet on the table. Put the Individual Feedback Forms (comment sheets) face up at everyone’s place.
- 2. Welcome and Introductions** – Take a few minutes at the beginning of the meeting to ask everyone to sign in. Welcome participants and make introductions, especially if people don’t already know each other.
- 3. Introduce your group’s facilitator** – The facilitator will lead the group discussion and exercises.
- 4. At the close of the meeting** – Thank your guests for attending and participating.
- 5. You (or your facilitator) may fill out the Project Catalyst Summary.** Some materials are to be returned to Lafayette Consolidated Government. Please see page 9 for more information.

Facilitator Instructions

Your role: Lead the discussion, making sure the meeting stays on topic and all questions included for discussion are answered. Try to make the meeting relaxed and enjoyable for all participants.

If you are serving as both host and facilitator, remember that you are also a participant and can share your opinions as an equal member of the group, but make sure everyone has a chance to voice their opinion.

- 1. Before the meeting, familiarize yourself with the exercise procedures and Catalyst Project Profile Sheets.**
- 2. At the beginning of the meeting, share the following Group Discussion Guidelines:**
 - Everyone should have an equal opportunity to talk and be present in the conversation.
 - Listen, be honest but avoid criticizing, and respect the time limits.
 - Keep an open mind and try to understand other viewpoints.
 - Be concise — express your ideas without making speeches.
 - Try not to interrupt the facilitator or other group members.
 - Avoid making things personal during the discussion.
 - Please silence your cell phone.



Exercise 1: Facilitator Instructions • Ice Breaker Discussion

The goal of this exercise is to ensure that all participants are informed about the Initiative and prepared to rank Catalyst Projects in Exercise 2.

Exercise Time: 20 minutes

1. Generate group discussion with the following questions:

▶ IS EVERYONE FAMILIAR WITH THE PLANNING OF THE FUTURE I-49 CONNECTOR TO REPLACE THE EVANGELINE THRUWAY?

The I-49 Connector is a new interstate project stretching from I-10 to the Lafayette Regional Airport (5.5 miles)

▶ DOES EVERYONE KNOW THE PURPOSE OF THE TIGER GRANT EFFORT?

Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG) was awarded a federal TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grant for community planning within the Evangeline Corridor, which is made up of neighborhoods along and adjacent to the path of the I-49 Connector. For planning purposes, the Corridor was divided into five districts.

The Evangeline Corridor Initiative was formed to create a revitalization plan based on input from residents and business owners. Based on that input, LCG and members of the ECI team (architects, designers and planners) identified Catalyst Projects for each district: improvements with the potential to enhance the quality of life and spark investment. Catalyst Projects can happen before, during, or after construction of the I-49 Connector.

▶ WHY IS CORRIDOR-WIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING IMPORTANT?

- Improved connections between neighborhoods makes access easier throughout the area.
- By completing Catalyst Projects in each district, neighboring districts also have access to features and services.
- Improvements benefit the Evangeline Corridor and the city as a whole, creating a stronger overall community.

Prompt: What areas of the Corridor affect you the most? What part of the Corridor do you frequent? What areas are important to improve?

▶ WHAT MAKES A GOOD CATALYST PROJECT? (Catalyst: a project that stimulates additional change)

- Provides neighborhood connections – brings people closer to services and one another.
- Stimulates business development and economic growth.
- Revitalizes neighborhoods, reduces blight, and provides a missing feature or service.
- Builds community pride and identity.

Prompt: What community benefits matter most to you?

▶ WHY DO WE CONSIDER DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROJECTS?

- Some projects can be accomplished quickly with local neighborhood efforts and low costs.
- Some projects are more complex and require more time, support, effort, and money.
- Projects of all shapes and sizes are important and can positively impact community growth.

Prompt: Would you rather see multiple small projects happen quickly or wait for a few larger “big bang” projects that might take longer to implement and have higher costs? Catalyst Projects vary in cost, time and resources. For example, some projects are short-term and expensive. What combination of short- and long-term projects are important to you?



Exercise 2: Facilitator Instructions • Prioritizing Catalyst Projects

In this exercise, participants will evaluate and prioritize the Catalyst Projects for their district, recording their preferences on their Catalyst Project Ranking Worksheets (one side of sheet) and the Individual Feedback Form (other side).

1. SHARE THE FOLLOWING WITH PARTICIPANTS: Evangeline Corridor Map, District Map (with Catalyst Projects identified by letter). Show them how their district relates to other districts and how Catalyst Projects are noted on the District Map.

2. EXPLAIN THE PRIORITIZATION/RANKING PROCESS:

A. REVIEW THE RANKING CRITERIA

COMMUNITY BENEFIT DESCRIPTIONS

Redevelopment / Reuse of Existing Sites

The project revitalizes blighted property and/or transforms the use of existing structures in a positive way.

Business Development / Economic Growth

The project stimulates growth potential through immediate commercial offerings and/or long-term investment return value.

Neighborhood Connections

The project makes the district better suited to those who walk or ride bikes and makes it easier to access other areas in the corridor by all modes of transportation, including vehicles and buses.

Neighborhood Beautification

The project improves the look of neighborhoods and streets and makes the area more welcoming to businesses.

Community Identity / Interaction

The project connects people through public spaces while building neighborhood ownership and pride.

B. REVIEW THE RANKING LEVELS

Each project will be ranked from one to five using the following scale:

5 = Highly transformative and a top priority

4 = Excellent and important

3 = Good and worthwhile

2 = Fair and somewhat helpful

1 = Low level and less impactful

C. SHARE THE FOLLOWING RANKING GUIDELINES:

- Based on the ranking exercise and group discussion, identify which Catalyst Projects are most important to you.
- Rank each project from 1 (low priority) to 5 (high priority).
- Even if you feel all projects are a priority, please rank them from 1 to 5, as resources are limited.
- As you evaluate each project, you may want to record your notes on your Individual Feedback Form.

3. SHARE EACH CATALYST PROJECT PROFILE SHEET WITH THE GROUP.

Allow time for questions and discussion.

4. HAVE THE GROUP RANK THE CATALYST PROJECTS.

Be prepared to answer questions on the ranking system.

5. COLLECT THE FOLLOWING COMPLETED DOCUMENTS:

Catalyst Project Ranking Worksheets/Individual Feedback Forms
(this is a two-sided document)



Return Completed Materials:

If you choose to return materials by mail, the envelope should be postmarked no later than May 24, 2017.
Please return the following:

1. SIGN-IN SHEET
2. CATALYST PROJECT RANKING WORKSHEETS/INDIVIDUAL FEEDBACK FORMS
3. CATALYST PROJECT SUMMARY – notes or observations from the Host or Facilitator

Please return materials by mail to:

Neil LeBouef, ECI Project Manager
Lafayette Consolidated Government
P.O. Box 4017-C, Routing Code 5901
Lafayette, LA 70502

via email:
nlebouef@LafayetteLA.gov

drop off materials at:
Rosa Parks Transportation Center
101 Jefferson Street, Suite 201





**EVANGELINE
CORRIDOR
INITIATIVE**

Funded in part by a federal TIGER grant

WELCOME • PLEASE SIGN IN

Host _____ Date _____
Facilitator _____

You may include as much — or as little — information as you like. Thank you for attending today's meeting.

NAME	PHONE	EMAIL	DO YOU LIVE, WORK OR OWN PROPERTY IN THE CORRIDOR? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)	HAVE YOU ATTENDED OTHER EVANGELINE CORRIDOR EVENTS? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)
			<input type="checkbox"/> LIVE <input type="checkbox"/> WORK <input type="checkbox"/> PROPERTY OWNER	<input type="checkbox"/> LEADERSHIP MEETING <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT WORKSHOP <input type="checkbox"/> CHARRETTE
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*Please return this page.

ADDENDUM

Background Information

(for review prior to Meeting in a Box)



About the Evangeline Corridor Initiative

The Connector and the Corridor

Lafayette's I-49 connector is underway. This federal transportation project, administered by the State of Louisiana, will transform a 5.5 mile segment of the Evangeline Thruway (between I-10 and the Lafayette Regional Airport) into an interstate highway.

The Evangeline Corridor is made up of the neighborhoods along the path of and adjacent to the planned interstate highway.

Neighborhood planning begins with the TIGER Grant

In 2015, Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG) was awarded a federal grant — a TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grant to fund the Evangeline Corridor Initiative: community planning to create a revitalization plan for the Evangeline Corridor. For planning purposes, the Corridor was divided into five districts.

LCG put together a team of professionals, including architects and urban planners, to help create the plan. In 2016, the Evangeline Corridor Initiative team began collecting information from those who live and work in the Corridor. In May, the ECI team hosted an intensive, week-long planning and design workshop, called a charrette. Architects, designers and planners created sketches to help citizens visualize neighborhood improvements.

Catalyst Projects for every District

Using the ideas and feedback they received, the ECI team identified Catalyst Projects for each district: revitalization projects designed to address specific needs and/or lay a foundation for needed improvements.

The team also created this Meeting in a Box, so that community members can evaluate these Catalyst Projects and suggest additional projects.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the TIGER Grant?

A: The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant is federal Department of Transportation funding awarded through a competitive process. Lafayette Consolidated Government applied for one of these grants and was one of only a few communities in the country to receive one. These funds are intended to help improve areas in the future interstate corridor: neighborhoods and businesses along the path of and adjacent to the planned interstate highway.

Q: What is this project called?

A: The Evangeline Corridor Initiative (ECI) — based upon early neighborhood input we received "to preserve and enhance our unique cultures" while envisioning the future along the Evangeline Corridor, which includes neighborhoods along and adjacent to the path of the I-49 Connector.

Q: How has the Evangeline Corridor Initiative unfolded?

A: LCG put together a team of professionals, including architects, designers and planners, to create a revitalization plan for the Corridor. For planning purposes, the Corridor was divided into five districts.

In the spring of 2016, ECI team members collected information from those who live and work in the Corridor. People met in small groups and participated in workshops focused on each district. In May, the ECI team hosted an intensive, week-long planning and design workshop, called a charrette. Architects, designers and planners created sketches to help citizens visualize neighborhood improvements.

Using the ideas and feedback they received, the ECI team identified Catalyst Projects for each district: revitalization projects designed to address specific needs and/or lay a foundation for needed improvements. The team also created a set of materials and instructions, a Meeting in a Box, so that community members can meet to evaluate proposed projects and suggest additional projects.

Q: What will happen next?

A: An upcoming Open House will continue the project review process and help create the final list of possible Catalyst Projects. At that event, draft district design manuals as well as a draft of the final report will be available for community review. The final step of the process will be the completion of the revitalization plan, district design manuals and the final report that will be presented to Lafayette Consolidated Government for implementation.

Q: Who is holding these small group, workshop, and charrette meetings?

A: Lafayette Consolidated Government with the ECI team are leading the community outreach and planning efforts. The outreach team is composed of and led by local planners at Architects Southwest. Communication is being handled by Right Angle, a marketing and public relations firm. Both are located in downtown Lafayette.

Q: What kinds of things can be done within the Evangeline Corridor Initiative?

A: Planners can recommend a wide variety of things based upon community needs and neighborhood requests. These could include projects to encourage civic activity and commercial growth, such as landscaping, pedestrian and bicycle paths, parks, amphitheaters, transportation and security improvements, attracting new businesses to the area, and much more. Sources for funding of each of these ideas will also be identified in the plan.

Q: I live near the I-49 Connector. How can I find out if my property will be acquired?

A: Contact Neil LeBouef with Lafayette Consolidated Government at 337-291-7196 or nlebouef@lafayettela.gov.

DEFINITIONS

I-49 Connector: The 5.5-mile stretch of Interstate Highway between I-10 and Lafayette Regional Airport.

I-49 Corridor: Is both the Interstate itself and the neighborhoods adjacent to the Interstate.

Environment Impact Study (EIS): A document prepared to describe the effects for proposed activities on the environment. "Environment," in this case, is defined as the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment.

Record of Decision (ROD): the formal court decision document, which is recorded for the public.

U.S. DOT: Federal Department of Transportation in Washington, D.C.

FHWA: Federal Highway Administration: A department in the U.S. DOT focused on highways.

LaDOTD: Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development in Baton Rouge, LA.

Lafayette Connector Partners team: A team led by an international engineering firm based in Edmonton, Canada, which was awarded the I-49 Connector project.



Vision Statement

We Envision an I-49 Corridor That:

Repairs the division caused by the Evangeline Thruway.

Restores connections between neighborhoods and people throughout the Corridor, including downtown and the surrounding areas.

Reverses the decades of disinvestment in Lafayette's urban core, stimulates urban revitalization and drives investment along the Corridor and in adjoining neighborhoods through smart design, careful planning, and best practices.

Remediates environmentally contaminated properties and returns them to safe, productive use.

Establishes a new national standard for excellence for the design and implementation of a context-sensitive urban interstate, and gets it right the first time.

Improves local and regional traffic safety, increases access to transit, provides meaningful recreational opportunities, and implements crime prevention through environmental design strategies.

Encourages civic and commercial activity in people-friendly, desirable spaces below the elevated spans and along the footprint of the Connector.

Provides creative, three-dimensional solutions for an alternative Connector design that the entire community can embrace.

Demonstrates an exemplary approach to community engagement and collaboration, where all parties place their trust in the process.

Concludes with a plan that provides such remarkable overall value that it drives community consensus.

