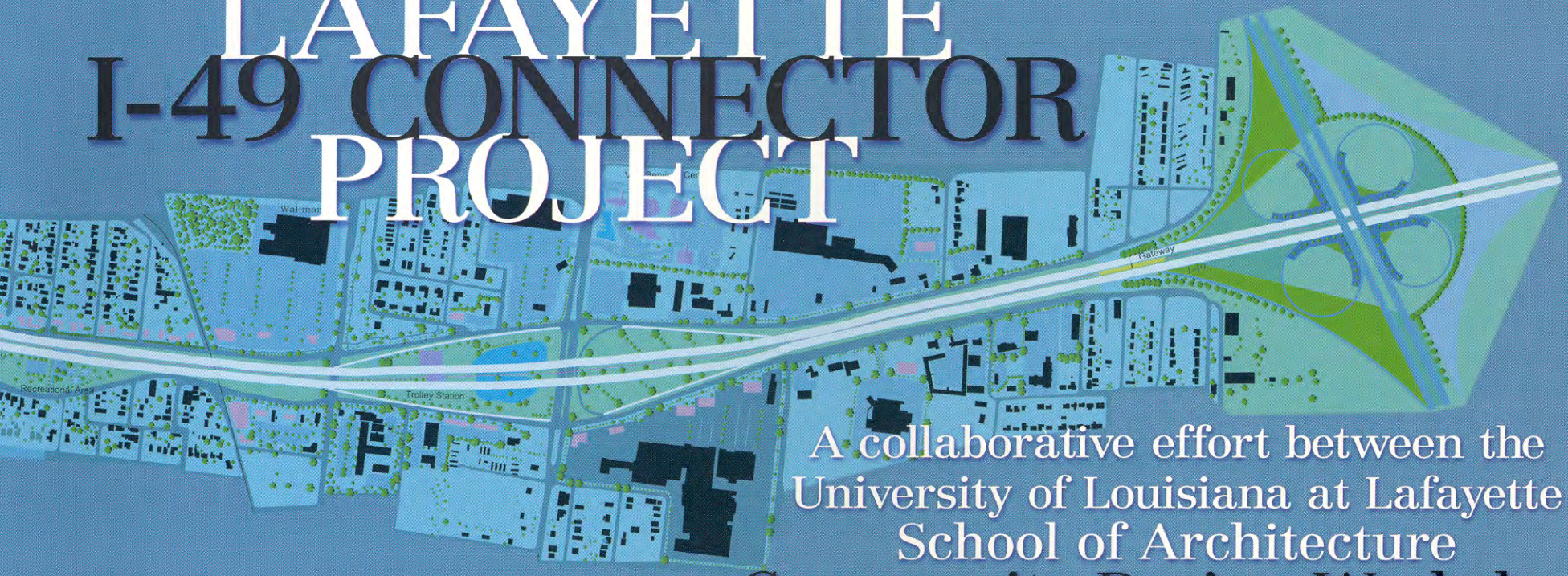
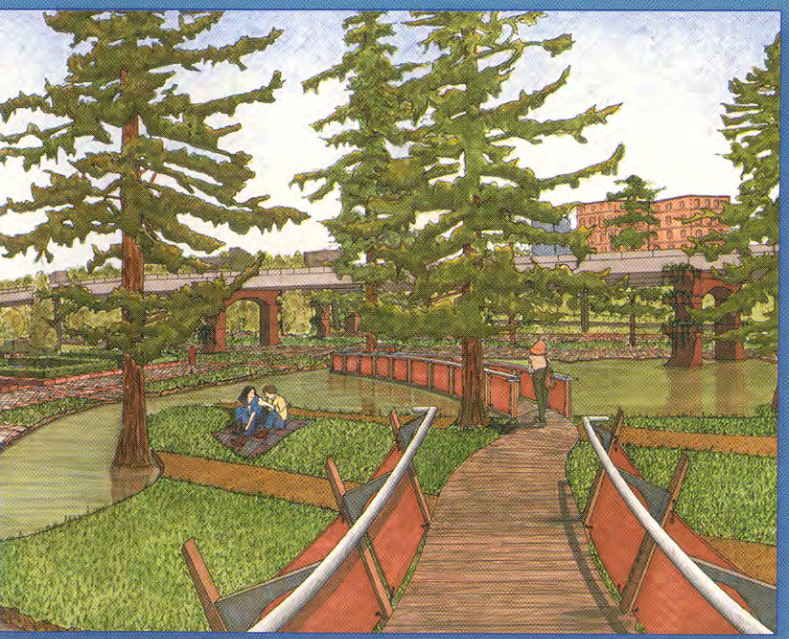
LAFAYETTE I-49 CONNECTOR PROJECT



A collaborative effort between the
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
School of Architecture
Community Design Workshop,
Lafayette Consolidated Government,
Metropolitan Planning Organization
and Neighborhood Pride



LAFAYETTE I-49 CONNECTOR PROJECT

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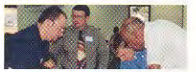

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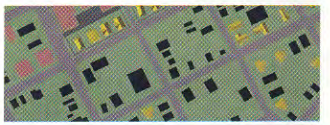

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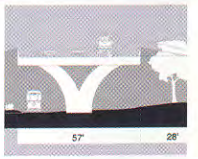

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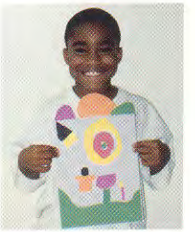

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Introduction

The Spectrum

The Lafayette Consolidated Government/ Metropolitan Planning Organization (LCG/MPO) is working in a comprehensive, coordinated and cooperative effort with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development and the Federal Highway Administration to design and build a long awaited and much needed freeway facility through the Lafayette Urban Area. Hurricane evacuation and economic development across south Louisiana have forced the issue of building this major transportation improvement at the earliest possible date.

There are differing attitudes about the planning and development of this project. One end of the spectrum represents and supports an underground "cut and cover" proposal, the other a "just pour six lanes of concrete" approach. We propose that the answer lies somewhere between the two. This major capital construction project is the largest in the history of Lafayette. The physical improvement and impact on the Lafayette community will be evident for a very long time. It is critically important and mandated that the project complies with current environmental laws. It is just as important and even more critical that the negative consequences of this major transportation construction project are mitigated to the best of our abilities.

The MPO's Citizen Advisory Committee, Transportation Technical Committee, and Transportation Policy Committee have identified items of concern they want addressed. To help work our way through these concerns, we have collaborated with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's Community Design Workshop. This team enterprise has produced intensive research, practical suggestions, neighborhood participation, and a comprehensive vision. This planning document provides the MPO with options to consider in its deliberation and evaluation of the design and anticipated construction of the I-49 Connector Project.

What is ultimately decided and accomplished will be a legacy to the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to this project and to the entire urban area. Transportation infrastructure projects of this magnitude must be sewn into the fabric of the community and not arbitrarily "slashed" through the preexisting environment. We believe that we have come a long way over the last 12 months in identifying and mitigating the concerns of most of the members of the community who will be affected. The challenge now is to resolve the remaining concerns and follow through with acceptable solutions to the greatest degree practical. The question is, "Are we up to the challenge?" We believe the Lafayette community will support this major historic project and work to see the design and plan implemented over a reasonable period of time.

▲ **Aerial views of Evangeline Thruway and the proposed I-49 Corridor, showing the corridor's relationship to Lafayette's downtown, neighborhoods, St. Genevieve church, Beaver Park, and airport.**

The I-49 Connector Urban Design Plan

The I-49 Connector Project is a part of a proposed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) highway which will run from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, to New Orleans, Louisiana. The connector is designed to intersect Lafayette, Louisiana, through the urban area adjacent to the center of downtown. This six-mile-long-corridor urban and neighborhood design project was funded in part by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOTD) and by the Lafayette Consolidated Government acting in its capacity as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, (MPO).

This interstate project brings opportunities for the region, but also causes disruption of everyday life and business. The Community Design Workshop was contracted by the Lafayette Consolidated Government/ Metropolitan Planning Organization to integrate their skills in architectural, landscape, and urban design, as well as housing and lighting, into the mechanics of roadway planning and development. The I-49 Connector Project relied on nine faculty members with different areas of expertise, working in conjunction with 20 students in the design process.

History of the I-49 Connector Project

The LaDOTD originally planned the Evangeline Thruway as a future interstate highway route in the 1960s. In 1992, the LaDOTD held a public hearing on this major freeway facility which was attended by approximately 200 individuals who opposed the project. The LaDOTD responded by terminating further work on the environmental document.

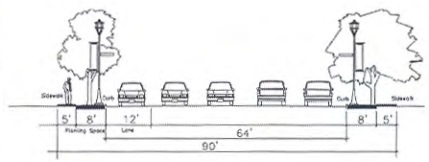
The Lafayette MPO, in cooperation with local governments, the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and concerned individuals, initiated a new study called the "North/South Corridor—The Path to Progress." This study evaluated five options for the extension of I-49 through Lafayette Parish: (1) Western Bypass, (2) Eastern Alignment, (3) Evangeline Thruway, (4) Eastern Bypass, and (5) No-Build. The Evangeline Thruway development proposal, which advocated cutting though the center of the city in relation to the Evangeline Thruway, was accepted. Within the Evangeline Thruway proposal various alignments were studied, including elevated structures, at-grade facilities, and a cut-and-cover proposal. The cut-and-cover proposal, i.e. sinking the highway into the ground 17 feet, was eventually rejected because LaDOTD and the FHWA considered the drainage too marginal. The decision to reject this proposal was further influenced by Hurricane Andrew, which hit southwestern Louisiana in 1992. This hurricane forced evacuation onto U.S. 90/Evangeline Thruway for most of the population of southwestern

Louisiana. During the evacuation, a trip that ordinarily would have taken 20 minutes took four to five hours. U. S. 90/Evangeline Thruway is the only major roadway between the Atchafalaya Basin (swamp) and the Gulf of Mexico. Hurricane Andrew underscored the urgent need for the I–49 facility. The Community Design Workshop was asked to weave the structure of the I-49 Connector Project into the fabric of the city. The MPO Advisory Committees instructed the Community Design Workshop to develop urban design strategies for two alternative alignments, (RR-4 and EA-1).

History of the Community Design Workshop

The School of Architecture provides expertise in urban planning and landscape design, as well as architecture, housing, and preservation. The Community Design Workshop, located in the School of Architecture at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, helps cities, small towns, and neighborhoods visualize their potential as communities. The Workshop has been operating for five years. It has completed a series of projects including urban design and planning strategies in Breaux Bridge and the transformation of Lafayette's Oil Center from a suburban office park into an urban pedestrian landscape. The Downtown Development Association collaborated with the Workshop in developing an urban code for the downtown area of Lafayette. The Workshop has completed the planning and redevelopment of the Simcoe Street Corridor Project for Lafayette. This project's aim was to repair and remake an African-American neighborhood ravaged by 20th century circumstances. The Workshop has also worked closely with the planning organizations of Lafayette in designing new streets, formulating a new arterial design program, and creating plans for a five-lane, north-south beltway for Lafayette Parish.

The Workshop's method is to establish a collaborative effort with the communities involved through public workshops and charrettes, and by opening an office ("squatting") in the neighborhood or downtown being studied. This process allows both faculty and students to be engaged in context. It also gives the community easy access to the Workshop on a day-to-day basis. By collaborating with public and private organizations, the Workshop is effectively able to integrate the ideas of the community with those of the larger realm.



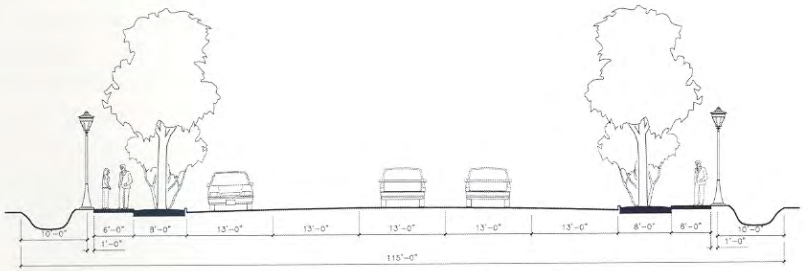
Breaux Bridge: Parc des Ponts de Pont Breaux Riverwalk on the Bayou Teche

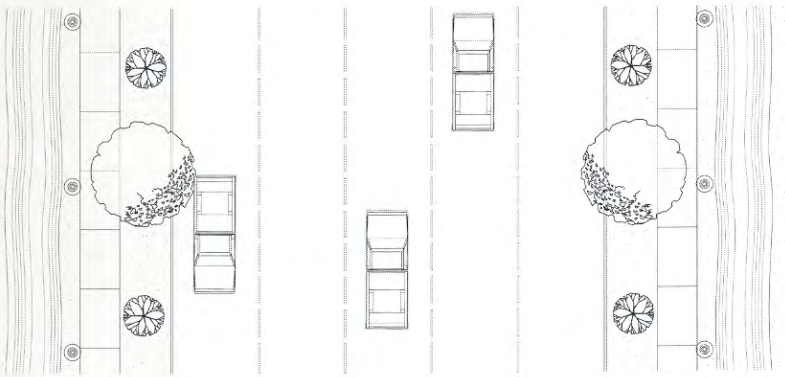
This Rees Street (Breaux Bridge) section illustrates a tree-lined street buffering pedestrians from automobiles.

▲ Simcoe Street neighborhood development housing prototypes: Craftsman Bungalow, Creole Shotgun, and Acadian Cottage inserted into vacant property.

The Workshop is committed to rebuilding neighborhoods and downtown areas, establishing within its projects clearly defined public spaces such as streets, squares, and parks. A high priority in the design process is integration of the pedestrian world with bike paths, community gardens, linear parks, and public art.

A main focus of the Workshop is to create a greener and more sustainable city. Whenever possible, a mass transit system is incorporated into a project. These systems add a certain level of density to the cities and decrease traffic problems.





▶ Lafayette Advanced Arterial Design Program: Moss Street section implements landscape as a buffer between the pedestrian and the automobile.

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

Public Process

Public Discussion and Education of a Community

Instituting a public forum is a common technique in all Workshop projects. This manifests itself in two types of discussions: charrettes and public meetings. Both charrettes and public meetings were used in the I-49 Connector Project to help educate the public on issues regarding architecture, urbanism, and planning strategies. The meetings provided a collaborative exchange between the Workshop, the planning staff, the three MPO Advisory Committees, neighborhood organizations, the general public, and state and federal agencies. The community members bring a wealth of knowledge regarding their neighborhood or city. Because of this, the Workshop has played the role of both educator and student through the exchange of information provided by these respective groups.

Charrettes

Charrettes are short design exercises that focus on a wide range of design issues. Charrettes were held for the I-49 Connector Project with a representative cross-section of Lafayette's population in attendance. Three groups had active roles during the charrettes: The Neighborhood Pride Organization, the planning staff of Lafayette, and the MPO Advisory Committees. The groups involved came to a consensus regarding the importance of the project to the community with respect to planning, architecture, and landscape. Each group brought a special, individual perspective to the project. Neighborhood Pride Organization, Citizens Action Council, McCombs-Veazey Neighborhood, Inc., and others were interested in the economic development that this project might generate. They were also concerned about the possible displacement of housing and the potential relocation strategies. Furthermore, the neighborhood groups were interested in a facility that could accommodate a variety of public activities and recreation. The planning staff brought policies and procedures of land use and land banking, as well as an interest in developing the space and the structures into an activated environment. MPO committees were concerned with structure, lighting and sound issues, overall aesthetic properties, and proper placement of exit ramps to major arterials. The origins of ideas presented in development drawings and meetings can be traced back through the design process. Many of these ideas were first suggested in charrettes.

Public Meetings

A series of public meetings provided a forum for presenting ideas about urbanism to the community and for listening to citizens' concerns. The community was represented by neighborhood groups (La Place des Creole), the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, real estate organizations, and the City-Parish Council. Public meetings encouraged the formal exchange of ideas between businesspeople, city officials, professionals, and residents. Armed with the information gleaned from the charrettes and from research on contemporary urban design and road construction, meetings were held to inform and educate the public regarding the process and progress of the project. These public meetings were presented to a variety of organizations and allowed the Workshop to stress concepts and procedures for urban design.

▼ Clockwise from below: Robert McKinney, Coordinator of the School of Architecture, presents housing prototypes to neighborhood groups.

▼ Thomas Sammons, Director of the Community Design Workshop, and students Amy Simpson, Amanda Rivera, Peter Johnson, and Dwayne Derouen present I-49 alignments to the FHWA, LaDOTD, MPO Advisory Committees, and staff in a public meeting.

▼ Michael Hollier and Tony Tramel with Lafayette Consolidated Government and staff; students Johnny Orgeron, Dwayne Derouen, and faculty from the Community Design Workshop collaborate with Joe Dennis, Floyd Delahoussaye, and other neighborhood representatives; Vernal Comeaux with the MPO Advisory Committees, and Blaise Carriere of HNTB in design charrette.

▲ **Solana, Texas – Highway 114: Colored concrete, fountains, and landscape are integrated into the grade separation and mark entry into the IBM complex.**

The Workshop also presented examples of work completed in other states to help express ideas. Included within these examples was Solana, Texas (outside Dallas off Highway 114), by Peter Walker and Ricardo Legorreta. This project used the grade separation to help make an entryway into the IBM complex. The use of materials (concrete, in particular) and the design of the landscape were presented to the public as examples of good highway design. Along I-10 outside of Phoenix, Arizona, another project integrates a textured concrete wall with indigenous landscape to reduce sound in this arid climate. A project in Santa Barbara, California, integrates a grade separation within the context of downtown. As Highway 87 moves through the Salt River Reservation in Arizona, it integrates Native American motifs into the infrastructure of the facility. The Parkway System in Kansas City was also studied as an example of integrating landscape, neighborhoods, and recreational facilities into roadway design.

▶ **Phoenix, Arizona – I-10: Indigenous landscaping and sound walls help buffer neighborhoods.**

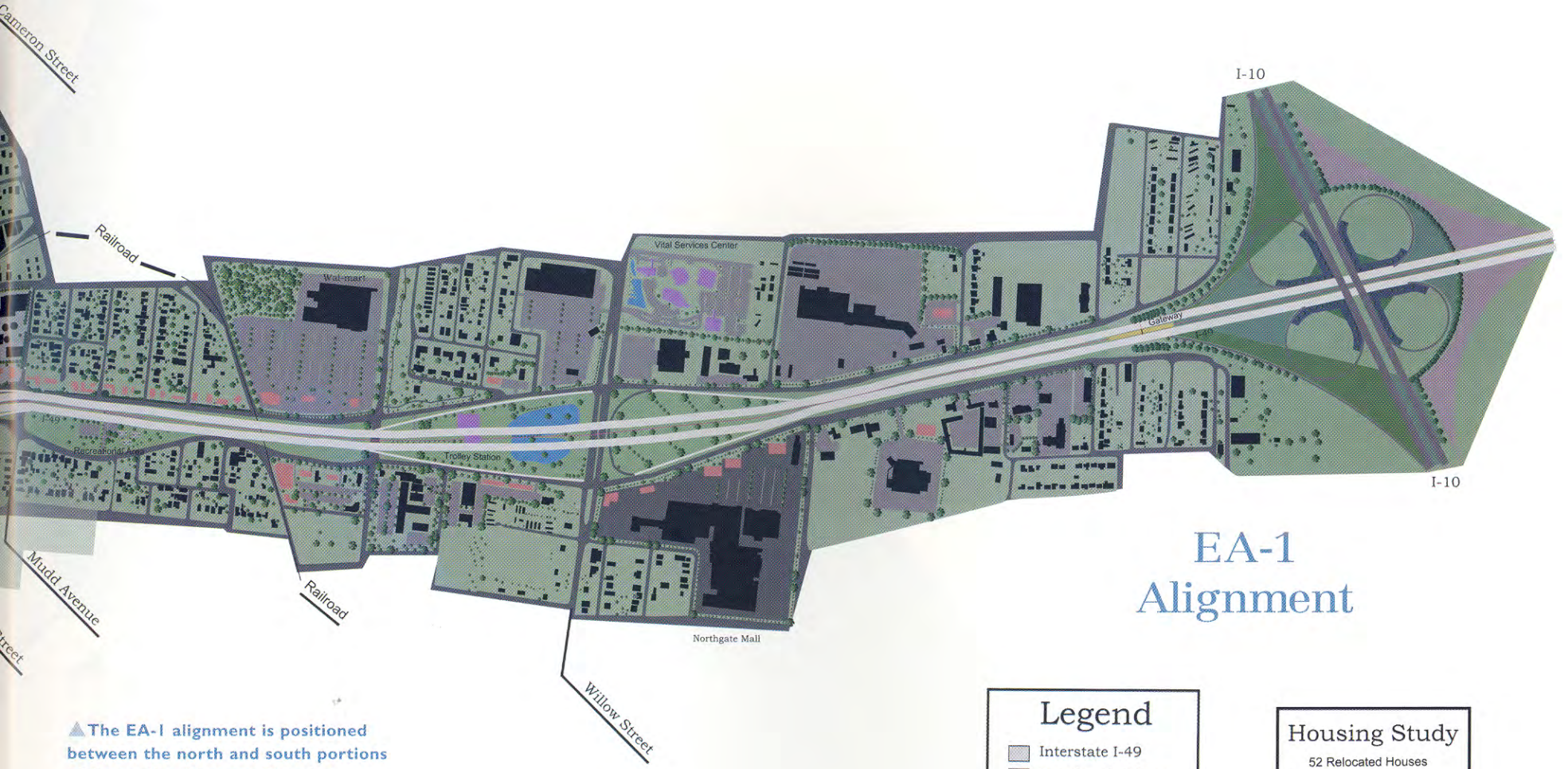
▶ **Salt River Reservation, Arizona – Highway 87: Native American motifs integrated into the facility mark grade separation and entryways into Scottsdale, Arizona.**

The Workshop also investigated international examples of highway and infrastructure design. Paris, France, uses linear parks to line the infrastructure of the metro transit system. Nantes, France, has a police station integrated into the underside of an elevated interstate. Each example presented design possibilities and infrastructure issues that could be incorporated into the I-49 Connector Project, demonstrating to the local population and LaDOTD that quality highway design exists elsewhere and can be designed for Louisiana. Providing examples of successful design for existing conditions elsewhere was a powerful tool for expressing these ideas, which helped the audience better understand the urban design strategies developed by the Workshop.

Urban Connections, Gardens, and the Architectural Wall

I-49 Connector Design

Through the public process, the Workshop realized that the design of the I-49 Connector was the most important urban design project for the City of Lafayette since the railroad entered the city and shifted the original grid. The Advisory Committees for the Lafayette MPO instructed the Workshop to investigate two alignments, EA-1 and RR-4. Both of these proposed facilities are elevated. EA-1 follows the alignment of the existing Evangeline Thruway. RR-4 follows the alignment of the existing Evangeline Thruway until it nears St. Genevieve Church at Simcoe Street. At that point, it bends toward the downtown area at the railroad track and Johnston Street. This curve toward the railroad continues approximately to Pinhook Avenue where it rejoins the



EA-1 Alignment

▲The EA-1 alignment is positioned between the north and south portions of Evangeline Thruway. The plan illustrates the I-49 facility embedded into a linear green space. The green space connects north end neighborhoods, downtown, and Beaver Park to the facility.

Legend

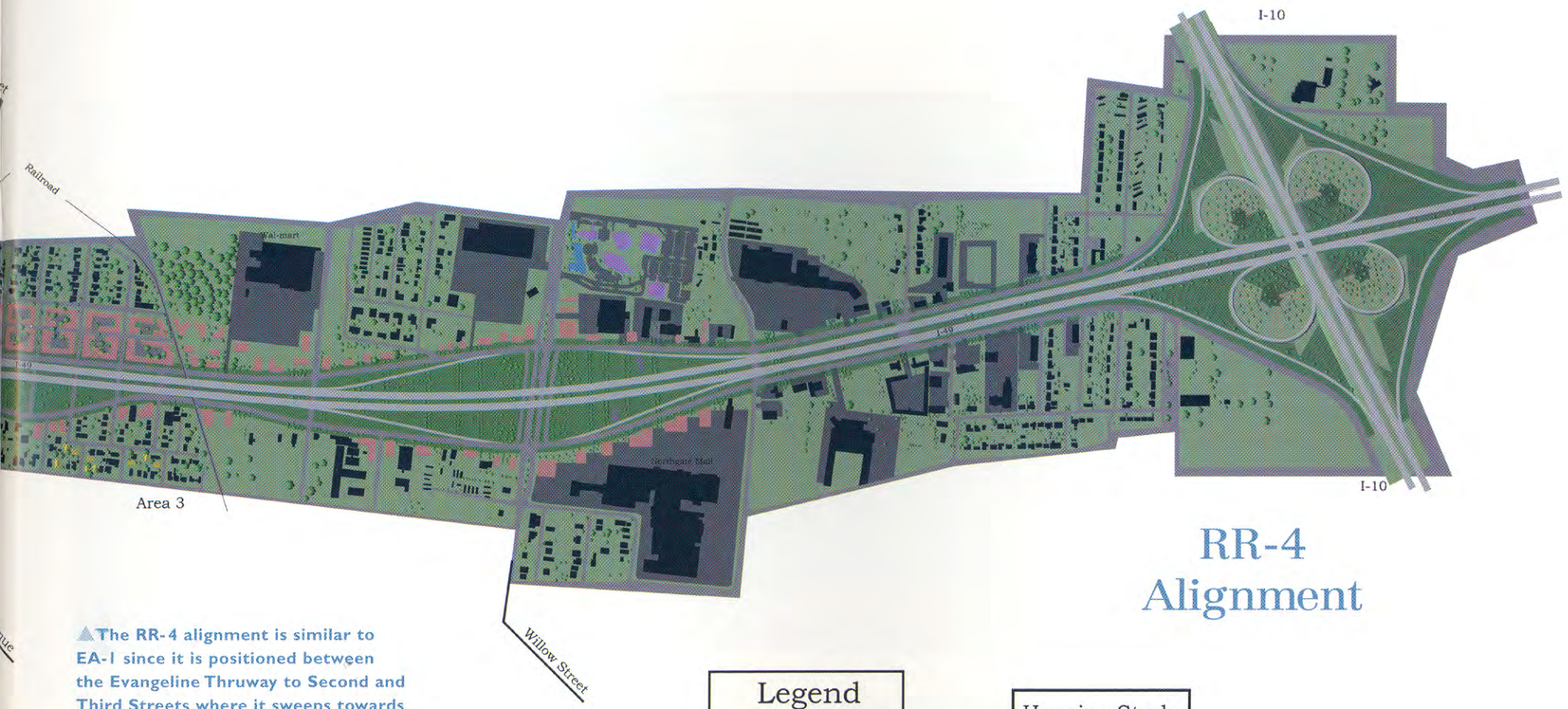
- Interstate I-49
- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Water
- Existing Water
- Proposed Residential
- Proposed Multi-Use
- Grass
- Trees
- Proposed Commercial
- Plaza
- Proposed Trolley
- Proposed Public
- Parking
- Streets

Housing Study

52 Relocated Houses
Proposed Houses as Required
Vacant Lots
190 Area 1
51 Area 2
10 Area 3

Scale

Evangeline Thruway. Keeping in mind the political and economic realities of the selected alignments, several goals were identified. One goal was to develop the I-49 Connector as a linear park system. Another goal included using the design process as an opportunity to continue developing the neighborhood design that had been started two years earlier in the African-American neighborhoods in the Simcoe Street Project. In addition, the Workshop realized that it must demonstrate to federal, state, and local officials, as well as the citizens of Lafayette, that highway design could be more comprehensively based on the three-dimensionality and materiality of the city. The public process revealed that the I-49 Connector Project needed a 10 to 20 percent increase in funding for enhancements.



RR-4 Alignment

▲The RR-4 alignment is similar to EA-1 since it is positioned between the Evangeline Thruway to Second and Third Streets where it sweeps towards the railroad track and the downtown area. The alignment rejoins the Thruway at Pinhook Road. The design is conceptually the same as EA-1 with a linear green space acting as a linking device to neighborhoods, downtown, and existing park space.

Legend

- Interstate I-49
- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Water
- Existing Water
- Relocated Residential
- Proposed Residential
- Proposed Multi-Use
- Grass
- Trees
- Proposed Commercial
- Plaza
- Proposed Trolley
- Proposed Public
- Parking
- Streets

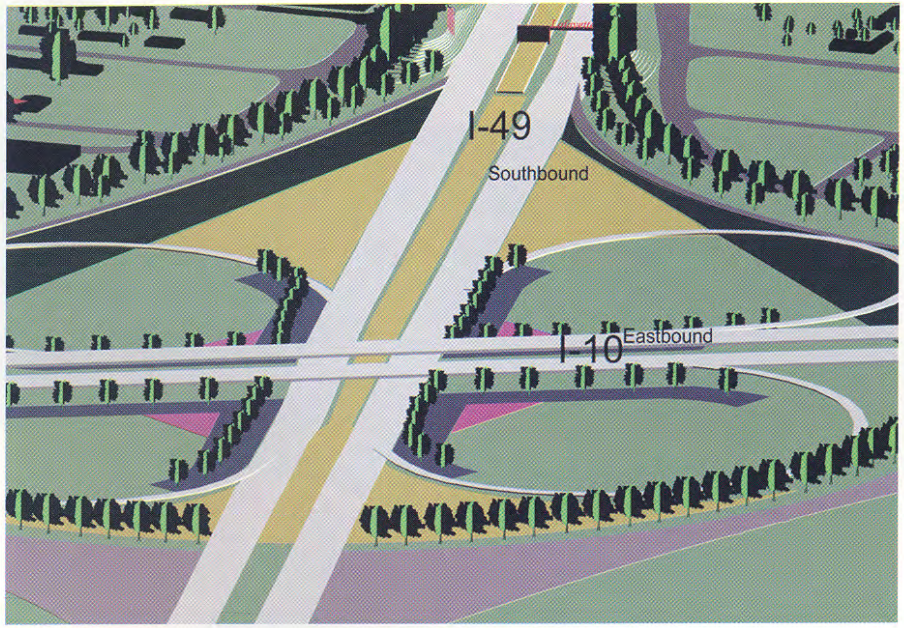
Housing Study

34 Relocated Houses
50 Proposed Houses
Vacant Lots
190 Area 1
51 Area 2
10 Area 3

Scale

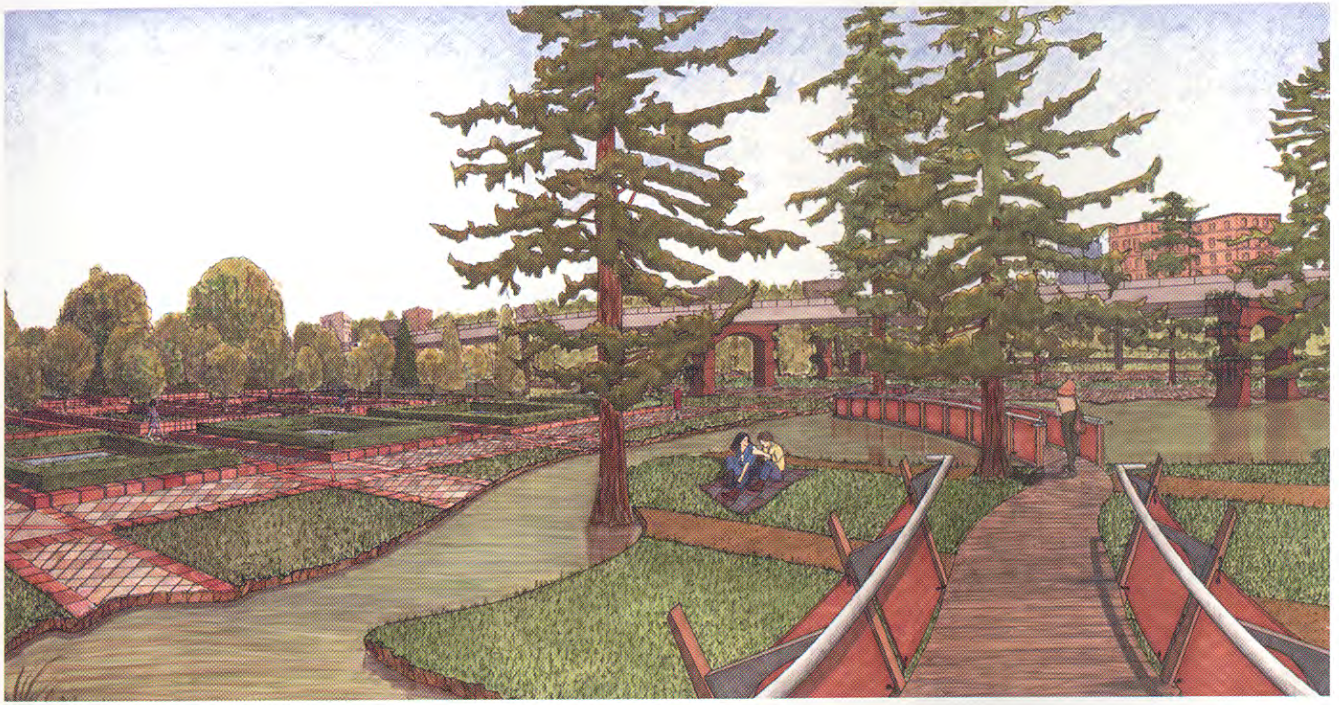
The Garden

The opinions expressed in the charrettes and meetings reinforced the role of this project as the new threshold into the city and parish of Lafayette. Each alignment focused on specific areas within the I-49 Connector including northside, downtown, and Beaver Park. Northside and Beaver Park became gate pieces for each alignment, signaling an entrance or exit for Lafayette. The project was approximately six miles in length and offered the opportunity to connect rural landscapes at Lafayette's northern and southern edges. These rural landscapes could be extended through the I-49 Connector, allowing linear green spaces to traverse the city. This would allow the garden to impact the city on territorial, urban, and pedestrian scales.



The cloverleaf design at the intersection of I-10 and I-49 helps mark a significant entry for Lafayette at two major national highways.

The gateway highlights arrival at Lafayette for northbound and southbound traffic lanes.



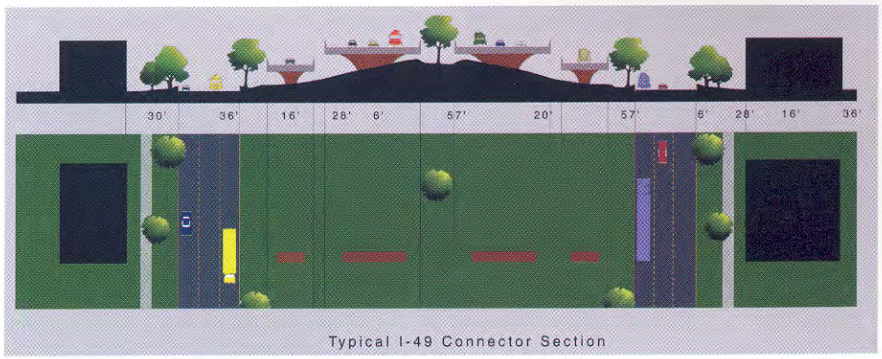
▲ A garden area between downtown and neighborhoods helps form the I-49 facility as part of the landscape and allows pedestrian activity on grade.

On a territorial scale, the cloverleaf intersection of I-49 and I-10 could be a national marker for the city of Lafayette. I-10 runs from Jacksonville, Florida, to Los Angeles, California. I-49 is a NAFTA highway and will run from New Orleans, Louisiana, to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Lafayette sits at the intersection of these two highways. On a city scale, the garden could become a green corridor marking the transition from highway to city, making this civic space the "living room" for the city of Lafayette. The garden would integrate existing vegetation in the connector with new indigenous landscaping. Beaver Park, located on the southernmost end, was viewed as a catalyst for this original panorama. The facility was designed with three distinct levels for experiencing the green space at different heights and speeds. The traveler passing through Lafayette on the I-49 Connector would view the green space from above, gliding through the tree canopy and seeing special

▶ The riverwalk design at Beaver Park and the Vermillion River connects existing park and natural resources with the linear green space of the I-49 facility.

vistas of the city beyond. The traveler on the Evangeline Thruway, engaging the garden at grade at a reduced speed, would be offered views of the park and events. And finally, the pedestrian, separated from the automobile, would experience the green corridor leisurely on foot. This corridor could be programmed with community vegetable gardens, a farmers' market, walkways, recreational facilities, and running and bicycle paths. Beaver Park could be expanded as a recreation facility with a riverwalk and cultural functions. It could also connect to the City Park by an underground walkway and the riverwalk. To break up the flat terrain and the potentially overscaled size of the 22-foot highway, the landscape could be molded with berms, hills, and valleys. Where the interstate's alignment intersects with

▲ **A farmers' market integrated underneath the interstate facility. The light rail system connects downtown, neighborhoods, airport, and the university.**



Typical I-49 Connector Section

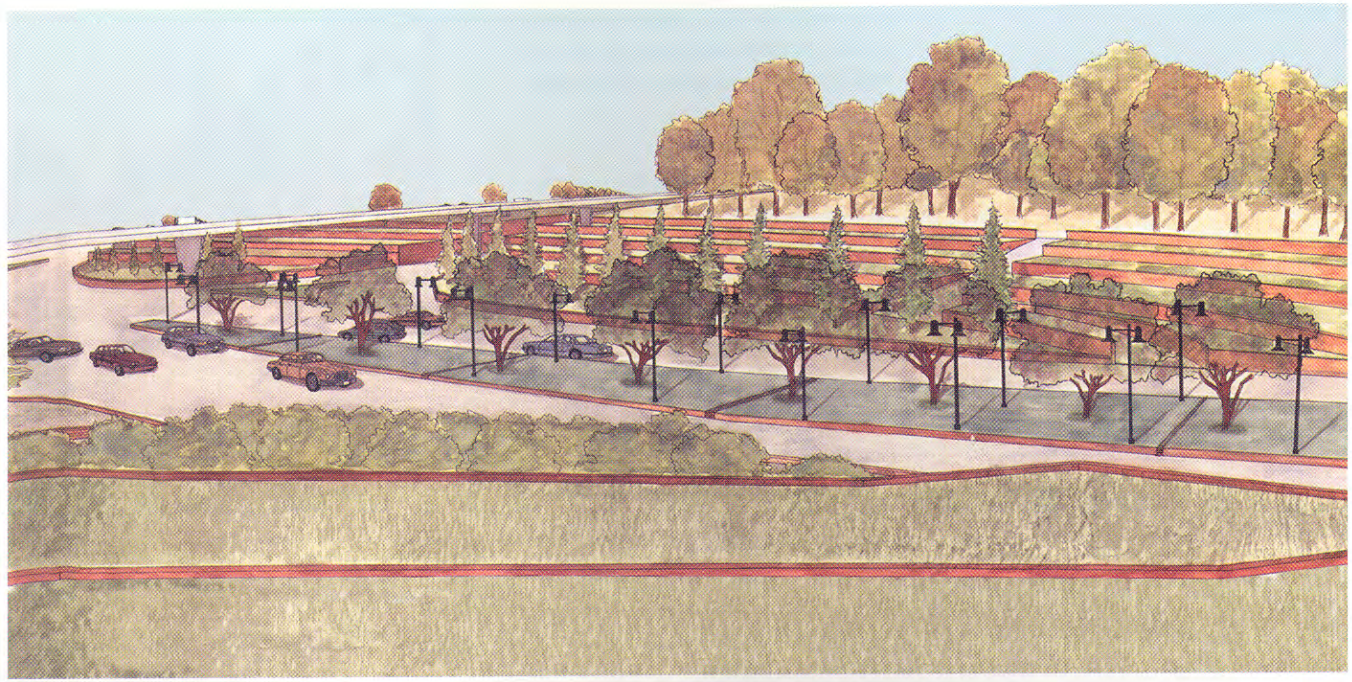
▲ **A typical section of facility showing how landscape and topography connect the elevated I-49 facility with Evangeline Thruway and reduce the scale of the elevated highway.**

▶ An advertising and art wall shield parking underneath the I-49 facility and buffer the commercial district.

▼ A public plaza at St. Genevieve Church becomes an important urban element in the linear green space design. The design integrates sound walls, fountains, and landscape into the plaza.

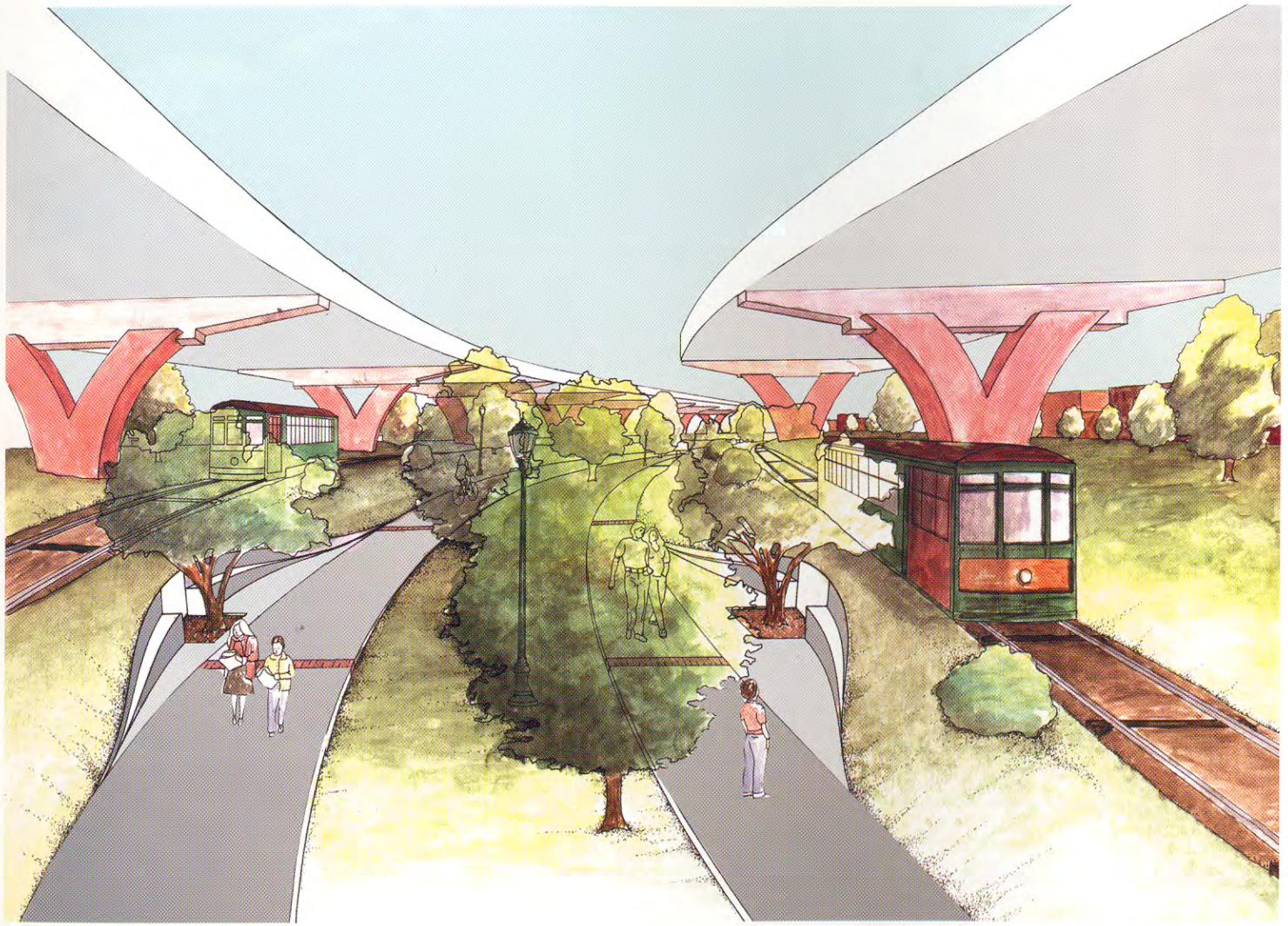
particular places and notable architecture, other integration strategies would be employed. At St. Genevieve's Church and in certain commercial districts, walls and berms would be used to mask the interstate and to negotiate the transition between highway and architecture. In addition, public spaces were designed with landscape and fountains as buffers for noise. Many of the walls constructed as buffers around the city would also provide a backdrop for other purposes, such as advertising and public art. On-grade parking could be housed beneath the I-49 structure.

The proposed north and south entries will be marked by gate pieces signifying Lafayette. Exits from the facility would serve as special markers indicating a transition from the linear park into the city. Within the RR-4 alignment the underpasses at Johnston Street, as well as the underpass at Second and Third Streets, have



Depression at Johnston Street

◀ ▲ **Underpasses at Johnston and Second and Third Streets use a terraced landscape as a transition from elevated highway to neighborhood and downtown streets.**



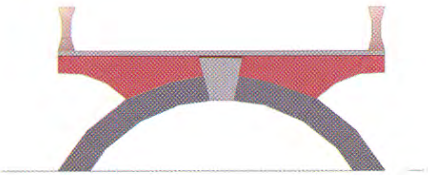
▲ A park system with bike and walking trails share right-of-way with light rail transportation and the elevated highway.

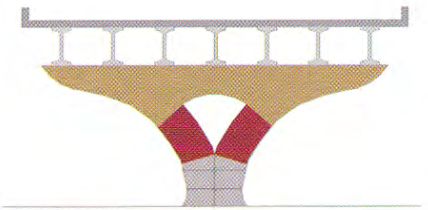
been designed as special entry spaces with terraces and landscaping. Major arterials and local streets were redesigned with boulevards and landscaping to join the I-49 Connector to the fabric of the city. The I-49 Connector also allows Johnston Street to become a tree-lined boulevard that could become a major entry to the downtown area. A local and regional light rail system sharing the same right of way as the interstate could also be integrated into the infrastructure.

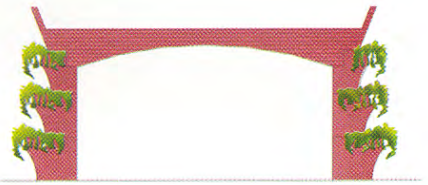
The elevated structure presented an opportunity for the Workshop to explore other alternatives of structural support. The Workshop collaborated with a structural engineer and studied a variety of forms and materials. Designs for the structural supports also included the use of color and different textures for the concrete surfaces. Structural

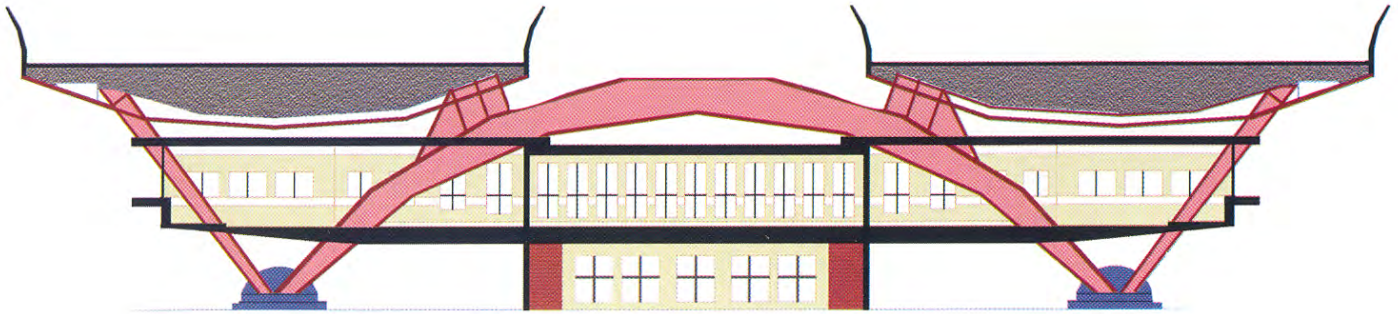
forms were investigated that could contain landscape elements and accommodate mass transit facilities. The public charrettes revealed that an interest existed in incorporating a variety of structural forms, including those resembling crawfish. Integration of architecture within the facility was also explored with the Intelligent Transportation Systems building incorporated into the structure.

▶ A typical boulevard street section at Johnston and Congress Streets provides an extension, framed by architecture infill, of green space into the city.

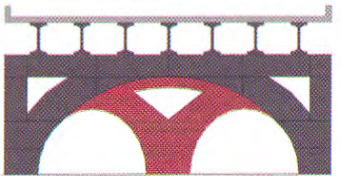




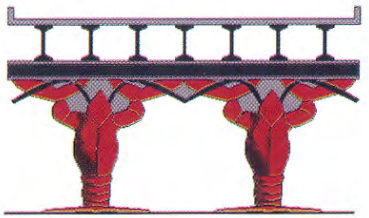


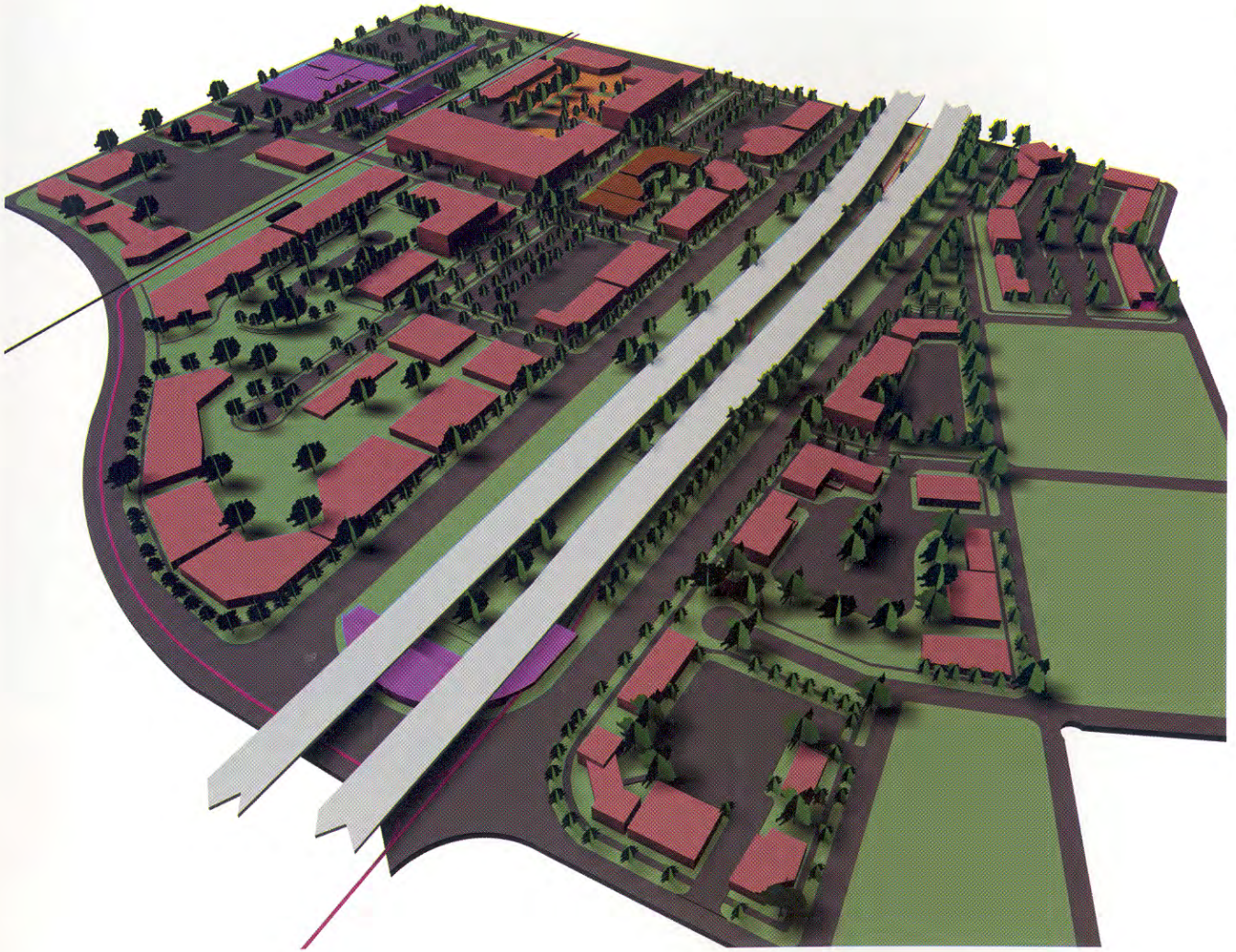


▲ A section of the Intelligent Transportation Systems building incorporated underneath the I-49 facility.



▶ Elevated structural studies investigated alternative forms, textures and colored concrete.





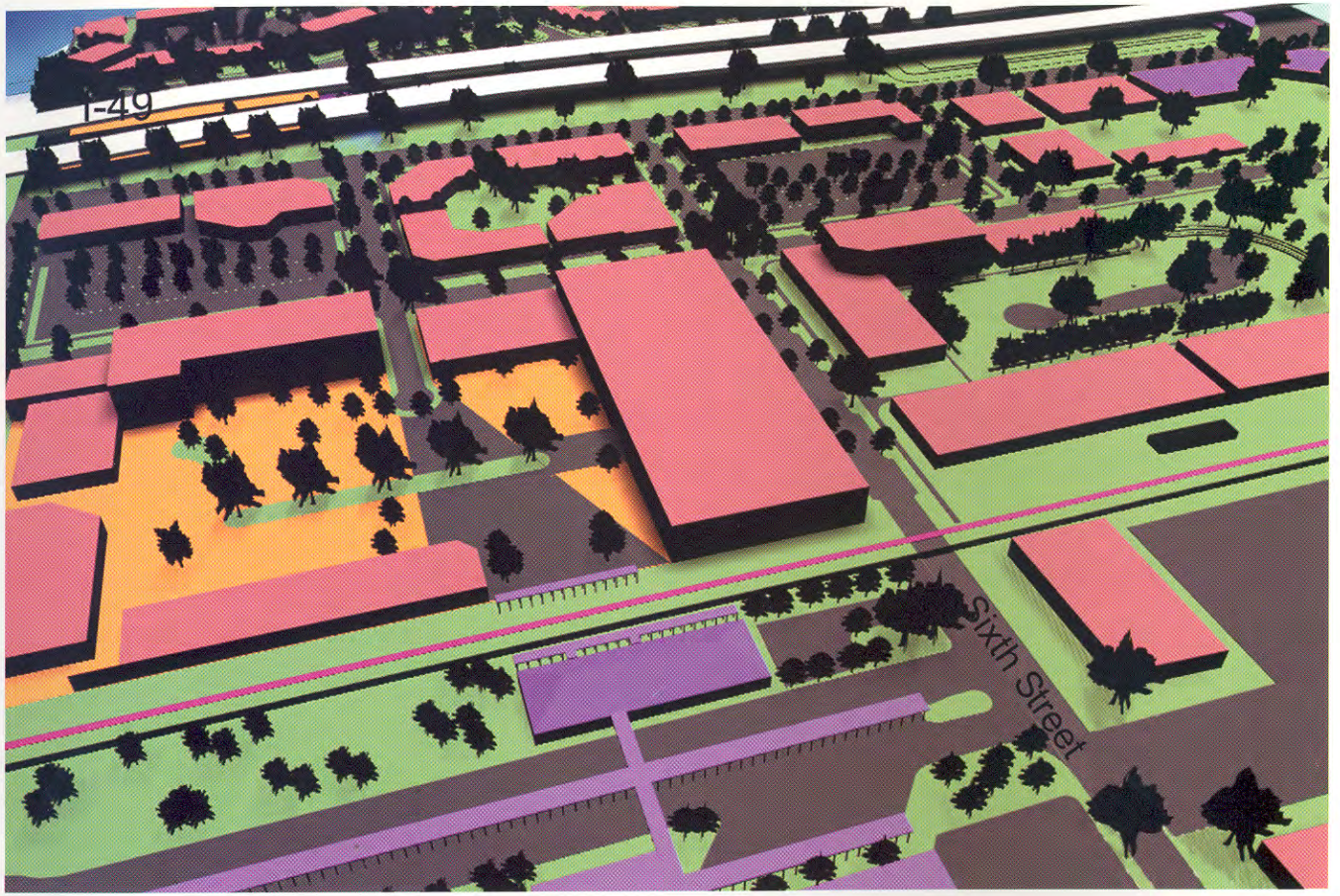
▲This EA-1 Alignment study between Johnston and Jefferson Streets redevelops a commercial district from I-49 to the railroad and multi-modal facility with infill building, parking, and gardens.

Urbanism and Architecture

The urbanism and architecture of the I-49 Connector in both alignments, RR-4 and EA-1, operate in several ways. The general rule was to clearly define the urban field of the city from the linear green space. The Workshop proposed an "architectural wall" of buildings that clearly delineates the city's fabric from the gardens. This architectural wall was used as a buffer to the neighborhoods with a commercial district between the connector and the residents. This buffer would include a 30-foot setback of green space from the service road. In the downtown area, constructed architecture has a minimum height of three stories and a maximum of four. This restriction allows the architectural edge to become a visual barrier and sound deflector for the I-49 Connector. Where distance or circumstances denied this zone, sound walls were designed for sensitive sites such as churches and schools.

Other areas of urban design were needed in the downtown area and the north end. Downtown, efforts were focused on linking the I-49 Connector to the downtown are by building up the definition of major street walls, including Jefferson, Johnston, and Congress Streets. The I-49 Connector's linear green space would be joined with tree-lined streets to Jefferson Street and the new parks planned for downtown. This linear green space also established a connection to the new Multi-Modal Depot, which ties all of Lafayette by public transportation. Near this zone is a proposed new entertainment district, building on the atmosphere generated by Grant Street Dance Hall. Where space allowed, the Workshop used a layered system of buildings, open spaces, or gardens to set up a buffer zone between the I-49 Connector, downtown, and the traditional Lafayette neighborhoods.

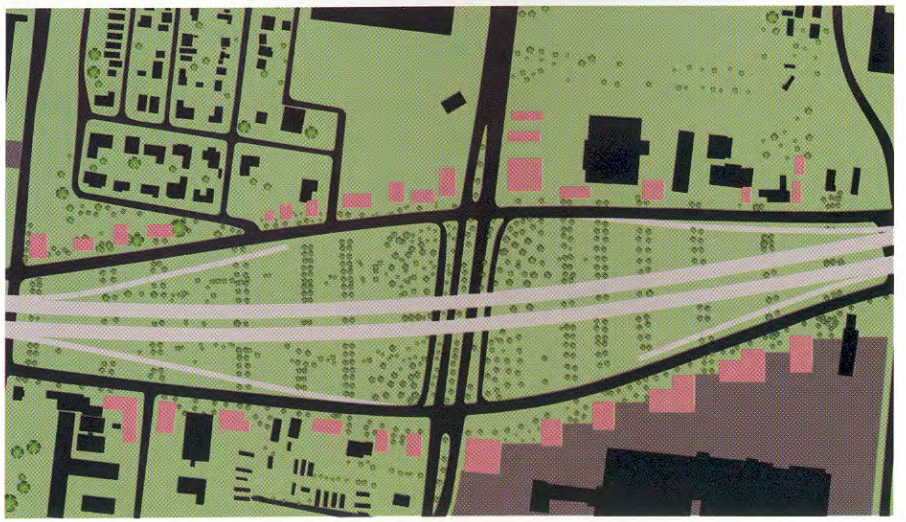
New commercial district adjacent to the I-49 facility.



The Northgate Mall and suburban development are located in the northern portion of Lafayette. Here, object-oriented (stand-alone) buildings provide challenges for the continuity of the city's fabric. By orienting parking to the rear of the buildings and controlling access to service roads, the Workshop could develop the space between the buildings as green space. In this flat and object-driven landscape, a rhythm of buildings and gardens will establish an abbreviated architectural wall.

▲ A model view of I-49 facility and new commercial district at Sixth Street and the multi-modal

▶ Ramp and landscape design for Willow St. exit

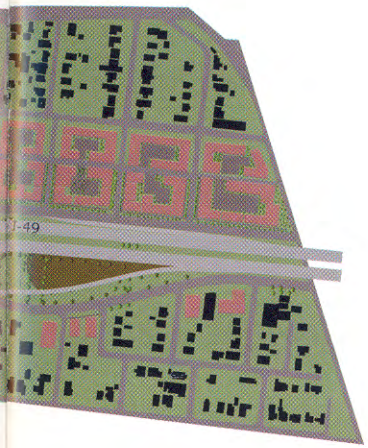


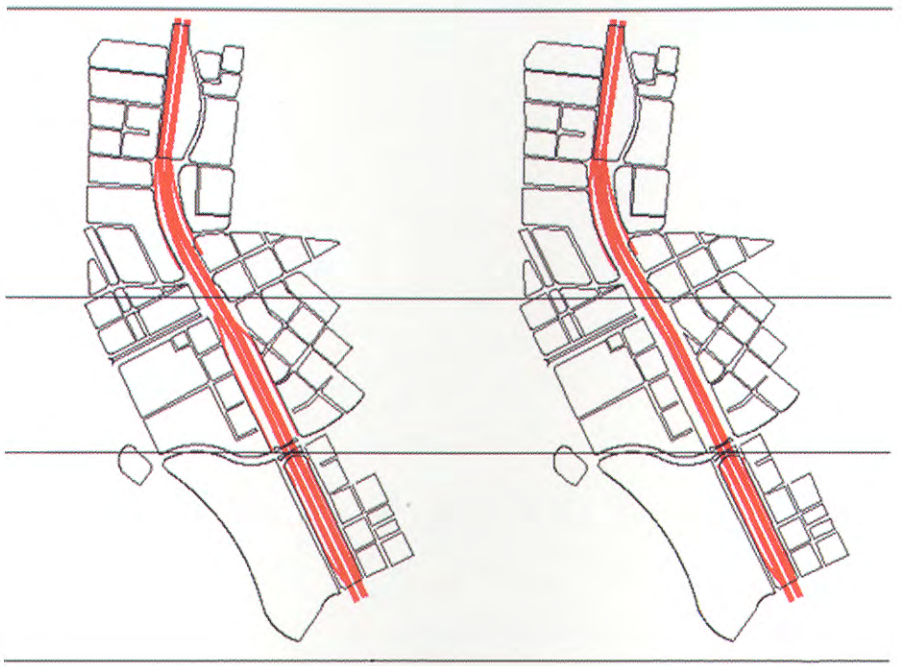
Alternative Street Connections

Through the public process, the Workshop investigated alternative street connections for the downtown area. It was suggested in the charrettes that the RR-4 alignment would consolidate North and South Evangeline Thruway into a boulevard design located between Taft and Simcoe Streets. This boulevard would anchor a commercial and residential district with service from a light rail system. The EA-1 alignment studied four different ramp arrangements between Second and Third Streets and Johnston Street. These ramp configurations used Evangeline Thruway as a slip ramp. Other alternatives allowed for entrance and exit ramps on Johnston Street to accommodate both northbound and southbound traffic. The Second and Third Street ramps would only allow southbound exit and northbound entry. Certain alternatives used Evangeline Thruway as a slip ramp with a southbound exit to downtown at Second Street and a northbound exit. In another, the northbound exit and southbound entry is at Johnston Street. The other two arrangements studied were the inverse of the two alternatives above.

RR-4 alternative street design for Evangeline Thruway. This design incorporates Evangeline Thruway into a boulevard and commercial district.

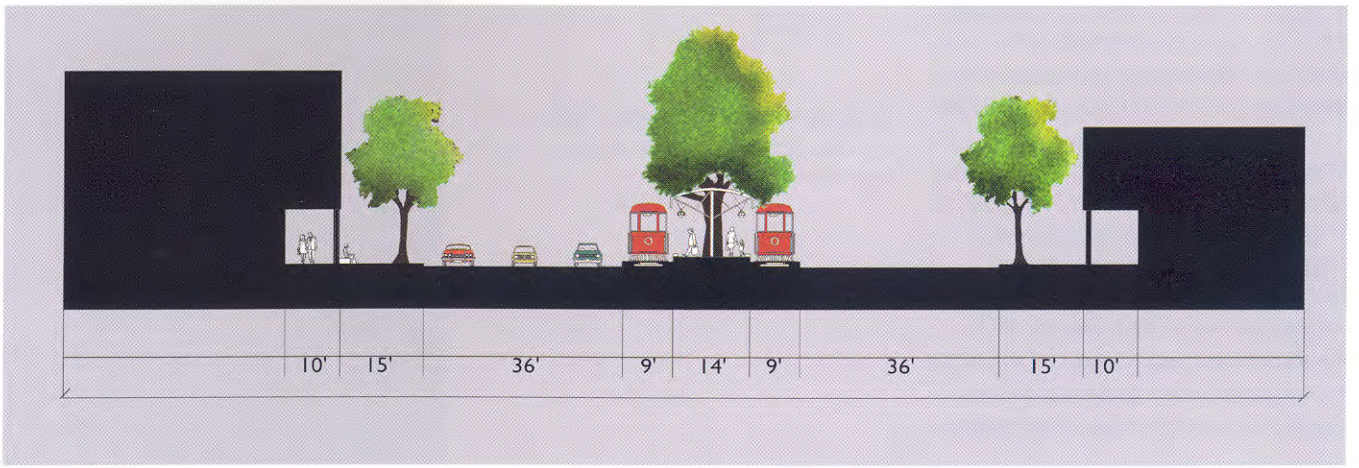
EA-1 alternative ramp egress and ingress strategies for Johnston and Congress Streets





Reestablishing the Public Realm

Historically, large-scale infrastructure projects like the I-49 Connector have excluded the design of the public realm. The Community Design Workshop—informed by the charrettes, public meetings, research, and design process—focused on infusing public space into the project. The inclusion of public space allows the I-49 Connector to become the "front door" and "living room" for Lafayette. This linear garden, framed by commercial districts, helps buffer existing neighborhoods from both visual impact and noise intrusion. The Community Design Workshop, in collaboration with the community, developed this urban design project as an instrument that weaves together the fabric of the city.



Typical boulevard section of Evangeline Thruway

Neighborhood Redevelopment

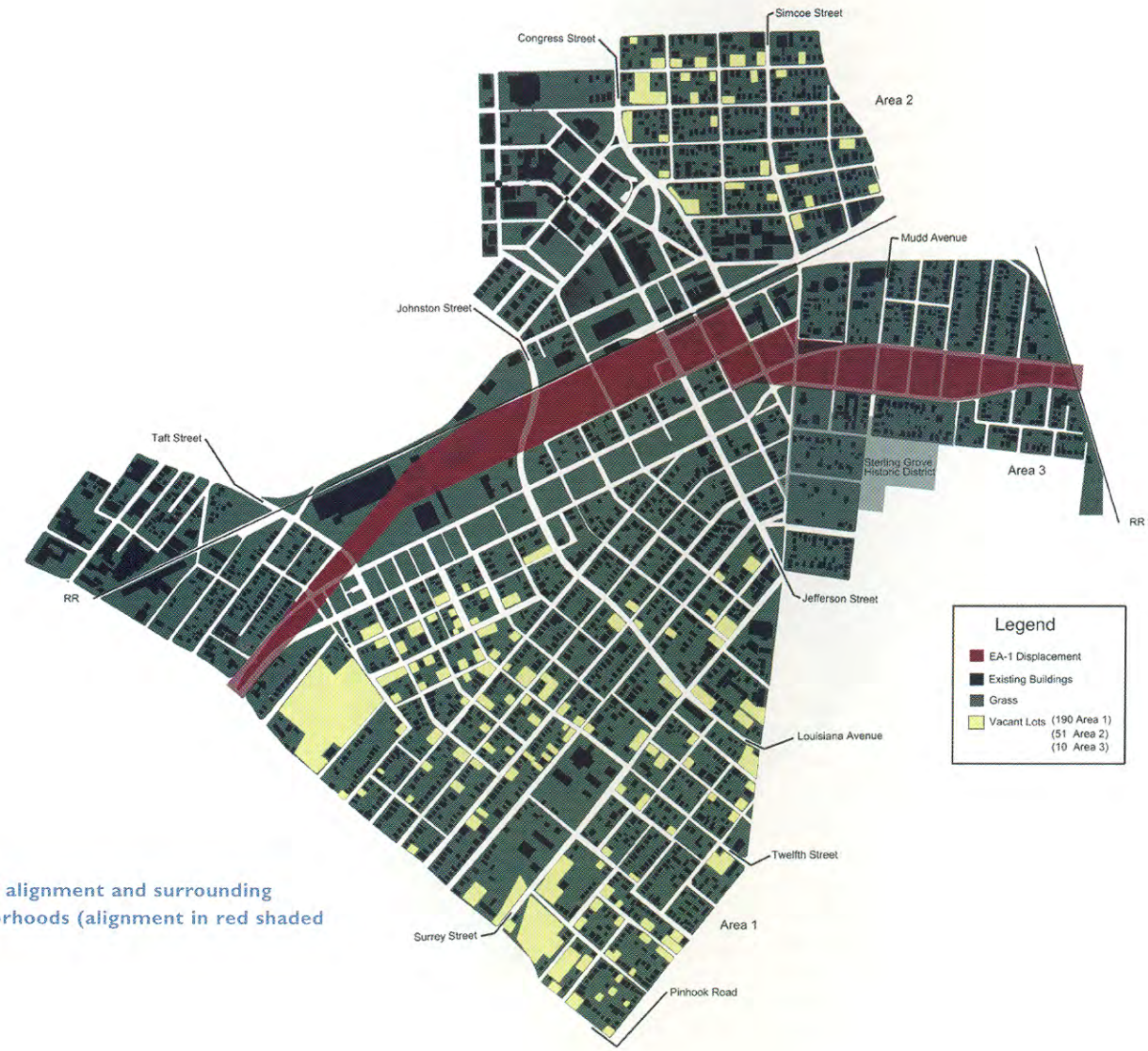
Housing and Understanding Neighborhoods

The neighborhoods and residences that the I-49 Connector bisects were shaped by the railroad as it ran through Lafayette in the late 1800s, and the automobile as the Evangeline Thruway cut through the area in the 1960s. Fragmentation of the residential neighborhoods occurred as a result of the thruway, railroad, industry, and the aging of residential stock. As one economic, social, and cultural group replaced another through cycles of exodus and migration, displacement has long been a factor in the area. This has been further intensified as each progress in transportation resulted in individual family removal and relocation. The I-49 Connector cuts through four distinct neighborhoods composed of a mixture of income levels from low to upper middle class, along with a cultural mix predominately of African-American, Creole, and Acadian heritage. Each of the four residential areas in the study has a different mix, requiring solutions that address the specific needs of its residents.

Several previous studies by the Lafayette City Council and Parish government have identified the I-49 Connector area as the location of housing problems including substandard housing, among others. The 1990 U. S. census statistics for metropolitan areas identified housing problems including age and size of housing, as well as low proportion of home ownership. It was essential to document the

▲ Proposed aerial I-49 Corridor, Evangeline at Taft/Fourteenth Streets

▶ Steve Romero conducts a field survey of existing houses within proposed corridors



RR-4 alignment and surrounding neighborhoods (alignment in red shaded area)

existing housing stock to assess conditions and develop strategies addressing the housing needs of the area while minimizing the impact of the facility. If properly considered, the I-49 Connector should lead to redevelopment of the surrounding neighborhoods.

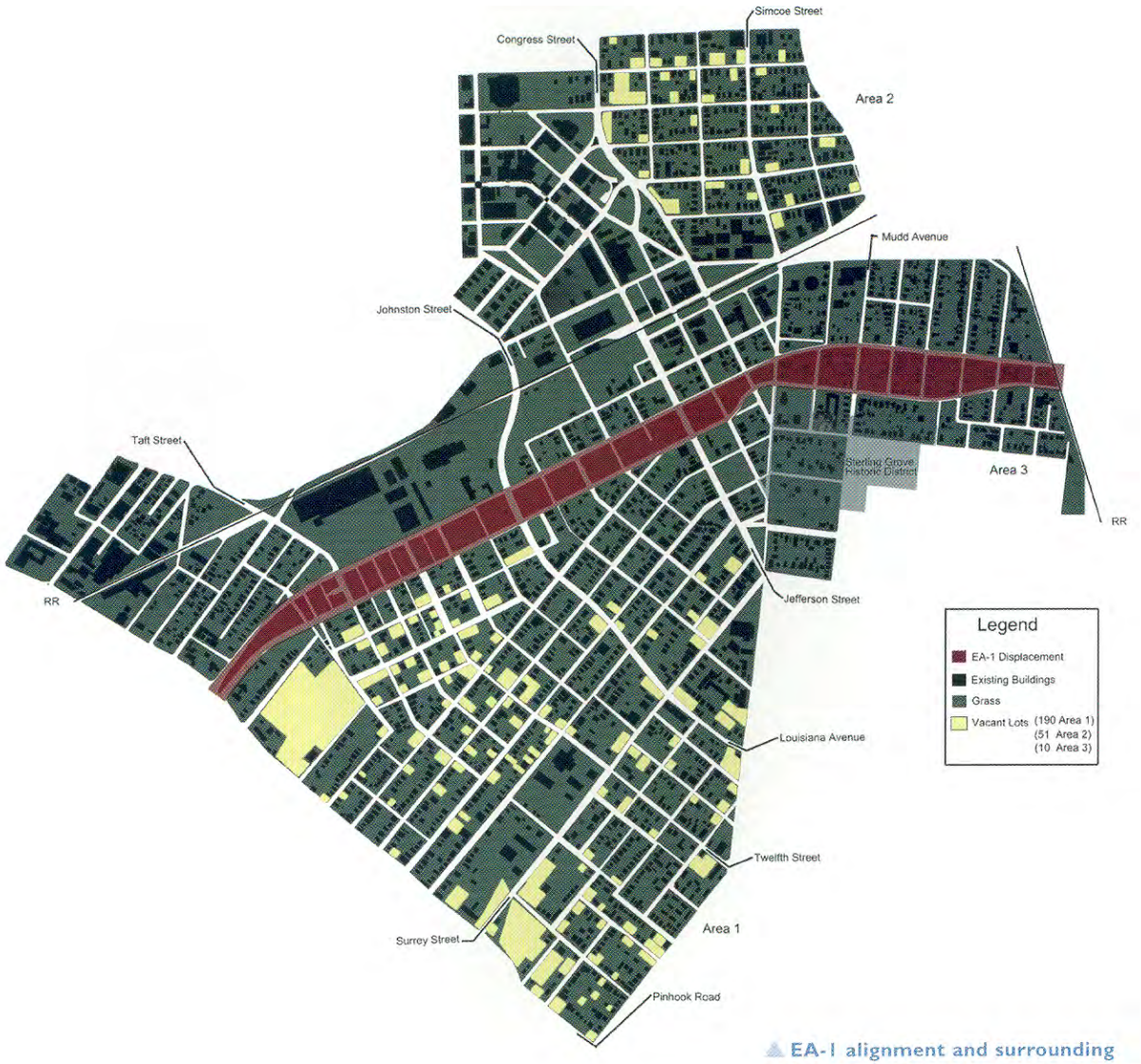
A survey form was developed to assess the current housing stock in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses and to determine projected needs within the proposed I-49 Connector. This form surveys the existing residential stock located in the I-49 Connector from Willow Street to Pinhook Road to provide information regarding the current context of each structure and its existing conditions. It provides a general description of the property, neighborhood, residential conditions, residential typologies, and observations regarding the potential to relocate the structure. The survey also provides criteria for replacement housing. These guidelines require that replacement housing have equal and comparable uses. This includes types of rooms and the activities that occur within and about the house. Through varying the combination of patterns, unique houses are formed meeting the particular needs of owners or occupants. The survey revealed that residences in the area represent architectural types ranging from cottage to ranch and styles from folk Victorian to Craftsmen bungalows. These structures are examples of regional, vernacular adaptations of national styles that form an architectural and cultural heritage.

The field survey and charrettes serve two roles: they provide the Community Design Workshop with a direct understanding of the

area and provide residents with a forum to express their concerns and ideas regarding the interstate corridor. Primary concerns were their need to relocate and find affordable housing without incurring debt, as well as the timetable for implementation. Ideas gathered through the fieldwork focused on economic development and cultural identity. Proposals included cultural centers, job training and opportunities, and a railroad history museum. The data from the initial housing survey provided the basis for studies identifiing vacant properties and areas requiring new development. These studies then generated a model of each neighborhood, allowing a complete mapping of the project area that defined the existing conditions and provided basic strategies for development. To redevelop housing, the studies were essential to illustrate the location of vacant properties and the locations for infill houses. For a neighborhood to be a viable community, it must be complete. Each vacant lot is an opportunity for decay. The first component of the housing proposal was to fill the vacant lots with single-family residences and, where appropriate, small multi-family housing.

Neighborhoods

A current trend in residential planning is a return to the design, scale, and characteristics of traditional houses and neighborhoods at the turn of the century. Much of the existing project area is characterized by tree-lined streets, porches, and an architectural vocabulary that is being rediscovered by the neo-traditional and new urbanism movements in design and planning. The houses typically present a well-proportioned front, one that responds to the scale of an individual. This



EA-1 alignment and surrounding neighborhoods (alignment in red shaded area)

▲ An existing house in the corridor

◀ Moving houses within proposed corridor

housing type emphasizes a vertical orientation rather than the horizontal orientation found in later ranch style houses. Vertical orientation lends itself to having the houses relate to each other, rather than standing as isolated objects. These houses also follow the design patterns of vernacular houses of the area. Houses raised on piers, wood construction, and lap siding all emphasize and express the skill of the carpenters who constructed the houses. It is the consistency of this vernacular vocabulary that builds an overall coherency that ties the neighborhoods together.

Housing Relocation Strategies

In developing strategies to replace the approximately 107 residential units displaced in the RR-4 alignment and the 181 displacements for the EA-1 alignment, the primary concern was to minimize the impact of relocation. The project will impact residents before, during, and after its implementation (Gramling 1999). The Community Design Workshop has strived to minimize the impact before implementation by engaging the residents in the planning process and by providing visualization of their ideas and concerns. A case study, such as the relocation of residents and neighborhoods after the flooding in Grand Forks, further emphasized the need to minimize the impact after implementation by maintaining the relationships with friends, churches, schools, and other community-defining connections that residents have established over a lifetime. This concern to minimize the impact on the residents, as well as the need for affordable housing which was revealed by the assessment survey, provided the basis for the Workshop's intervention strategies. These were to move existing houses where feasable, to provide new, affordable single-family houses where necessary, and to plan new micro-neighborhoods to meet the specific requirements of residents in the project area.

Moving Houses

The first strategy is to relocate existing houses in the planned path of the new interstate to existing vacant lots in the surrounding neighborhoods. This plan achieves three benefits: maintaining family connection to home, using existing residential stock, and infilling the vacancies of the surrounding neighborhoods. Allowing residents to remain in their existing home on a new site minimizes the impact when compared to moving the resident into a completely new environment. Because the home is often the center of a family, maintaining this connection is especially important for the elderly. It is further recommended that the houses of long-term neighbors be relocated adjacent to each other.

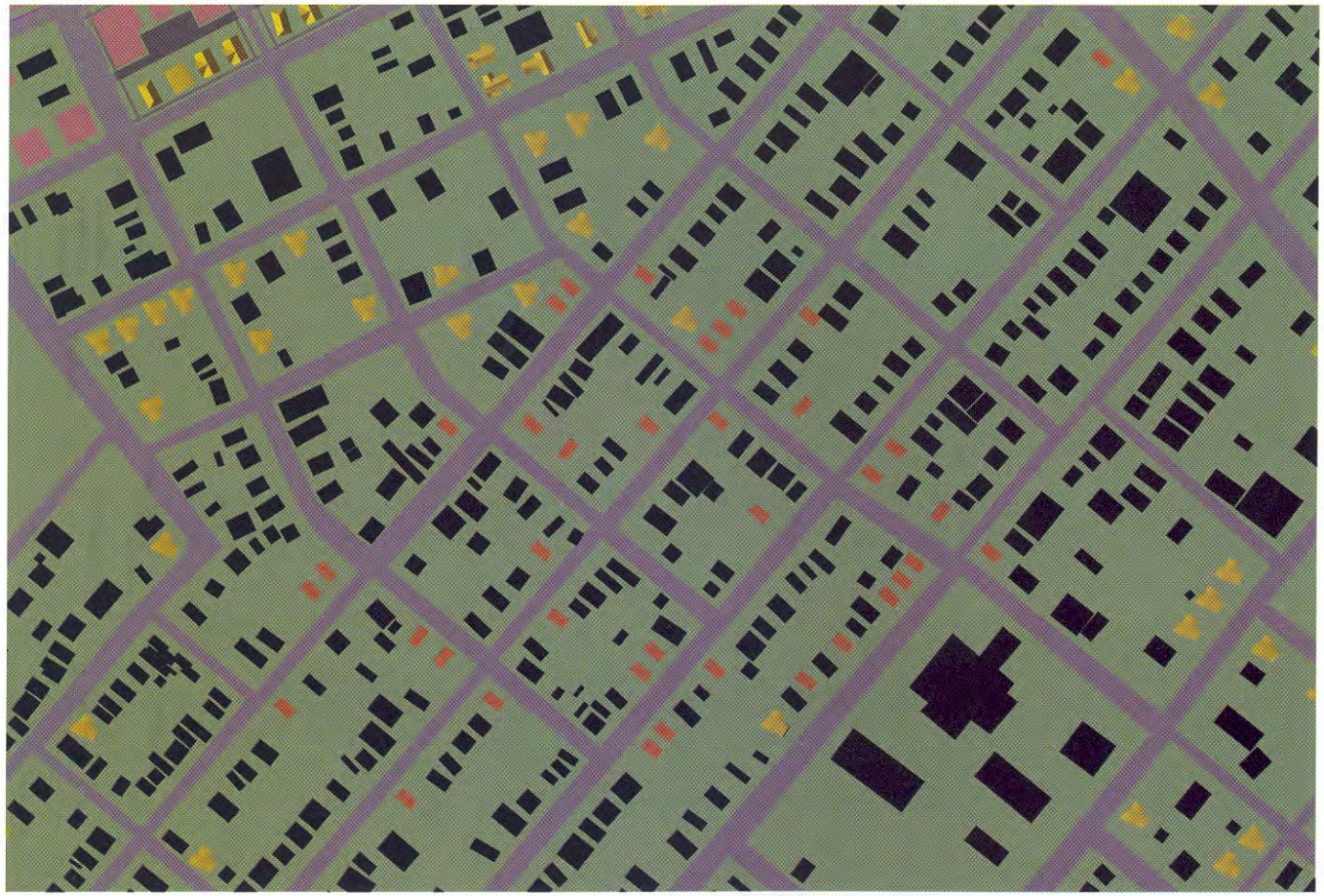
The assessment revealed that 54 of the existing houses within the EA-1 corridor could be relocated, with the possibility that an additional 18 might be relocated contingent upon further inspection. The RR-4 alignment contains 36 houses in good condition and 14 additional houses that could possibly be moved. The cost of moving the good stock of the existing houses, combined with making the necessary renovations to bring the houses up to current standards (not including property), provides a very affordable alternative at a potential savings

of over 50 percent of the cost of new construction. The City/Parish government has acquired a large number of lots in the area, making its cooperation essential to addressing the housing demand. Relocating the existing stock will accommodate 30 to 40 percent of the required housing.

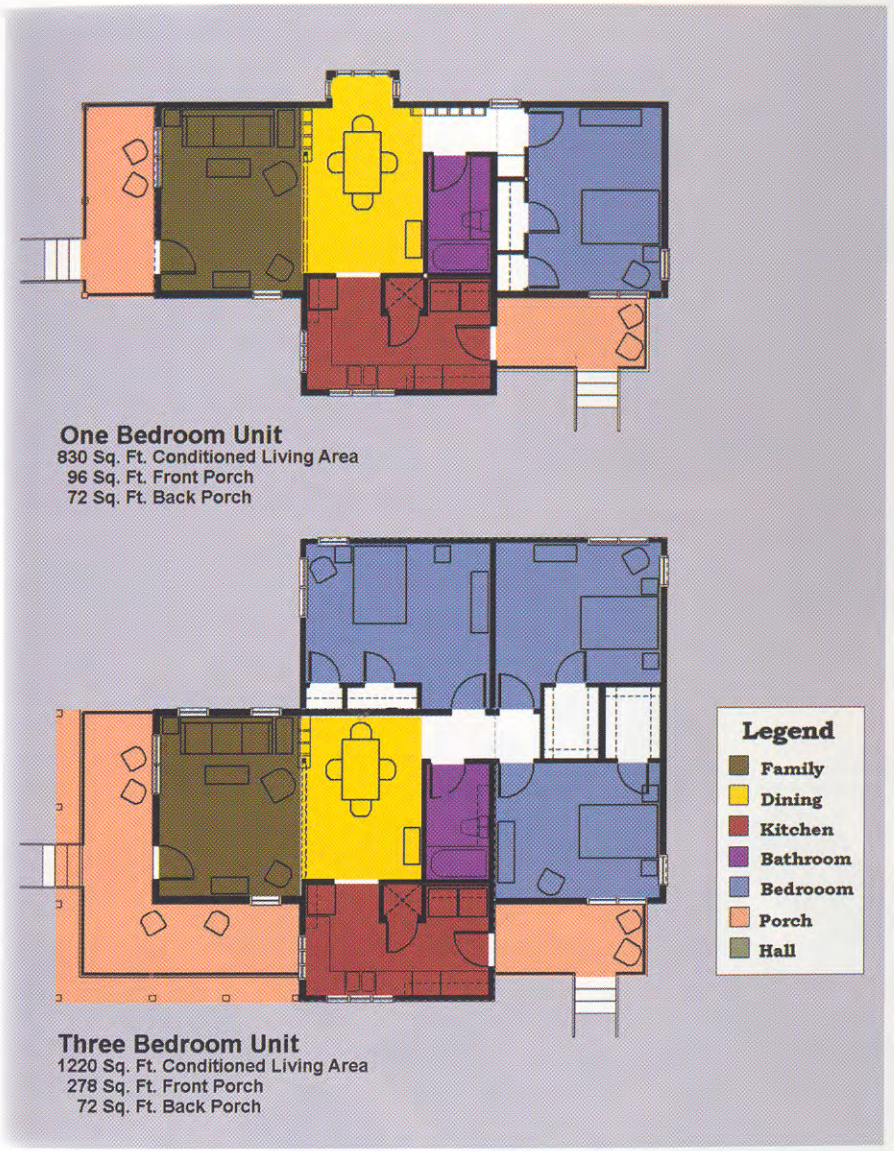
Housing Prototypes

When infilling an existing neighborhood, primary goals are to avoid the repetition of designs by responding to the character of the existing neighborhood. To achieve this, each type is reduced to its component pieces, which focus on stylistic elements of form. The component elements are identified as living patterns. Each of the vernacular stock types documented by the assessment was examined with respect to its uses. The shotgun, Creole cottage, and Craftsman's bungalow are archetypal examples of housing common to the Acadian region and to the project area. The houses include porches, wood construction on piers, and composite roof profiles. Also identified were those features that make a residence a personal reflection, such as color, texture, windows, and other additions.

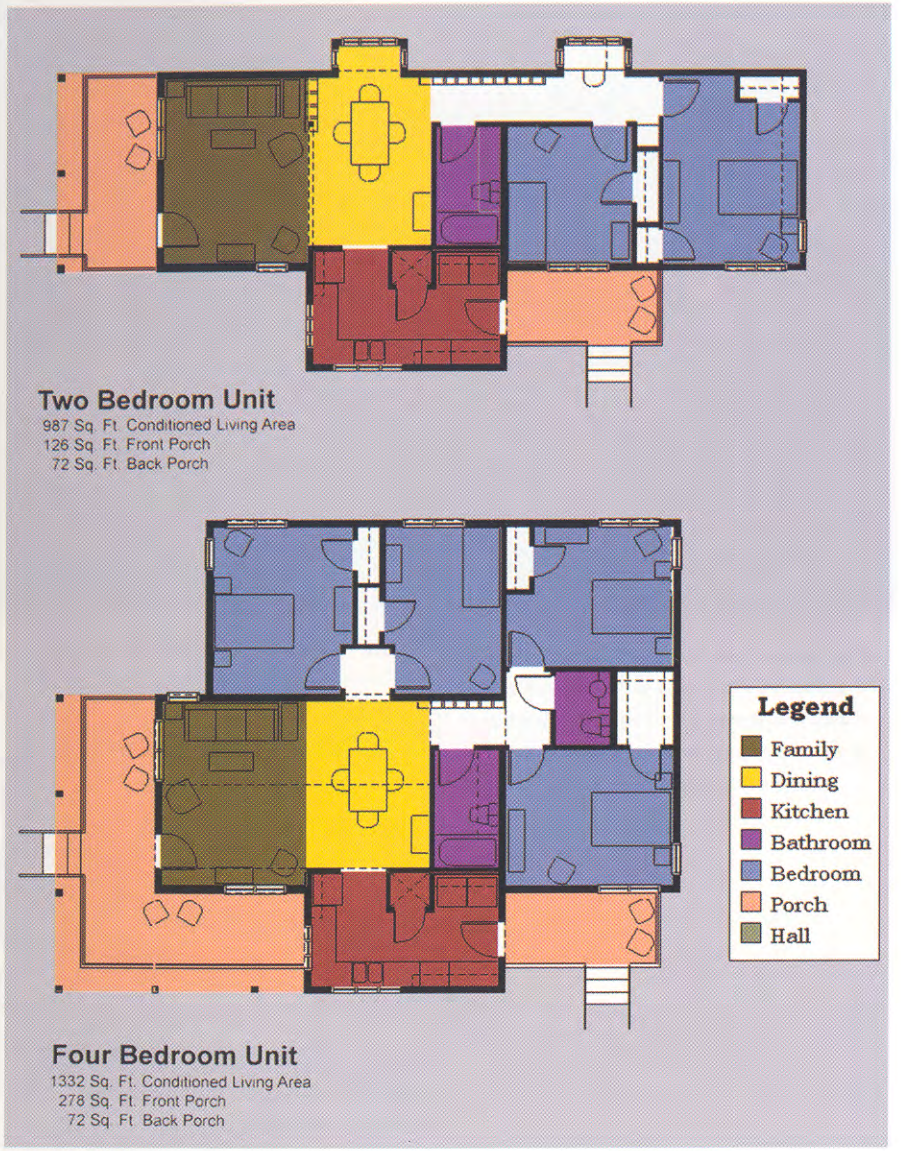
Use of the porch as a primary living space is common to 95 percent of the existing stock in the survey. Using the definition of "equal and comparable," the porch is now considered an essential component of all replacement housing for the connector project. This expands the size of the home physically, fosters a greater sense of neighborhood identity by bringing the residents out of their homes, and allows them space to interact with other residents.



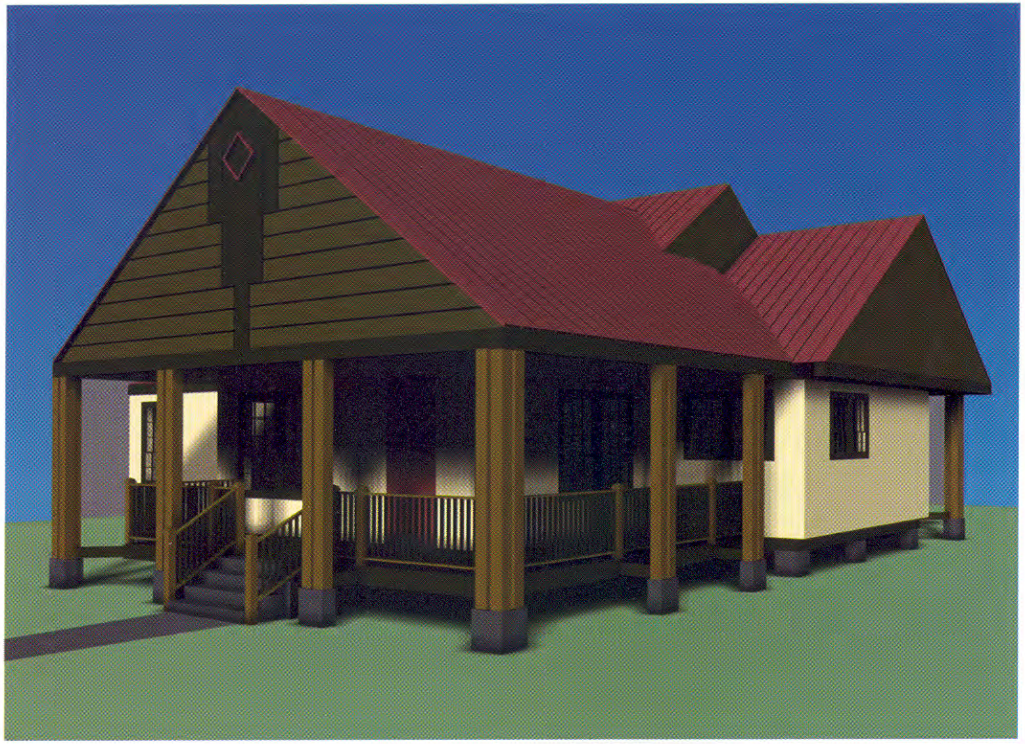
▲ Neighborhood development: identify vacant lots and infill with relocated houses or new construction



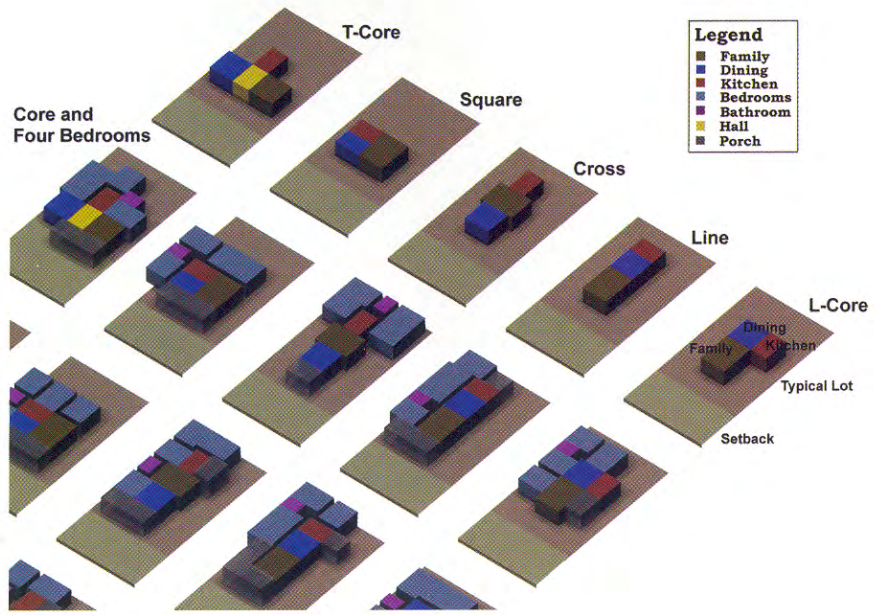
▲ Affordable new construction: one and three bedroom houses



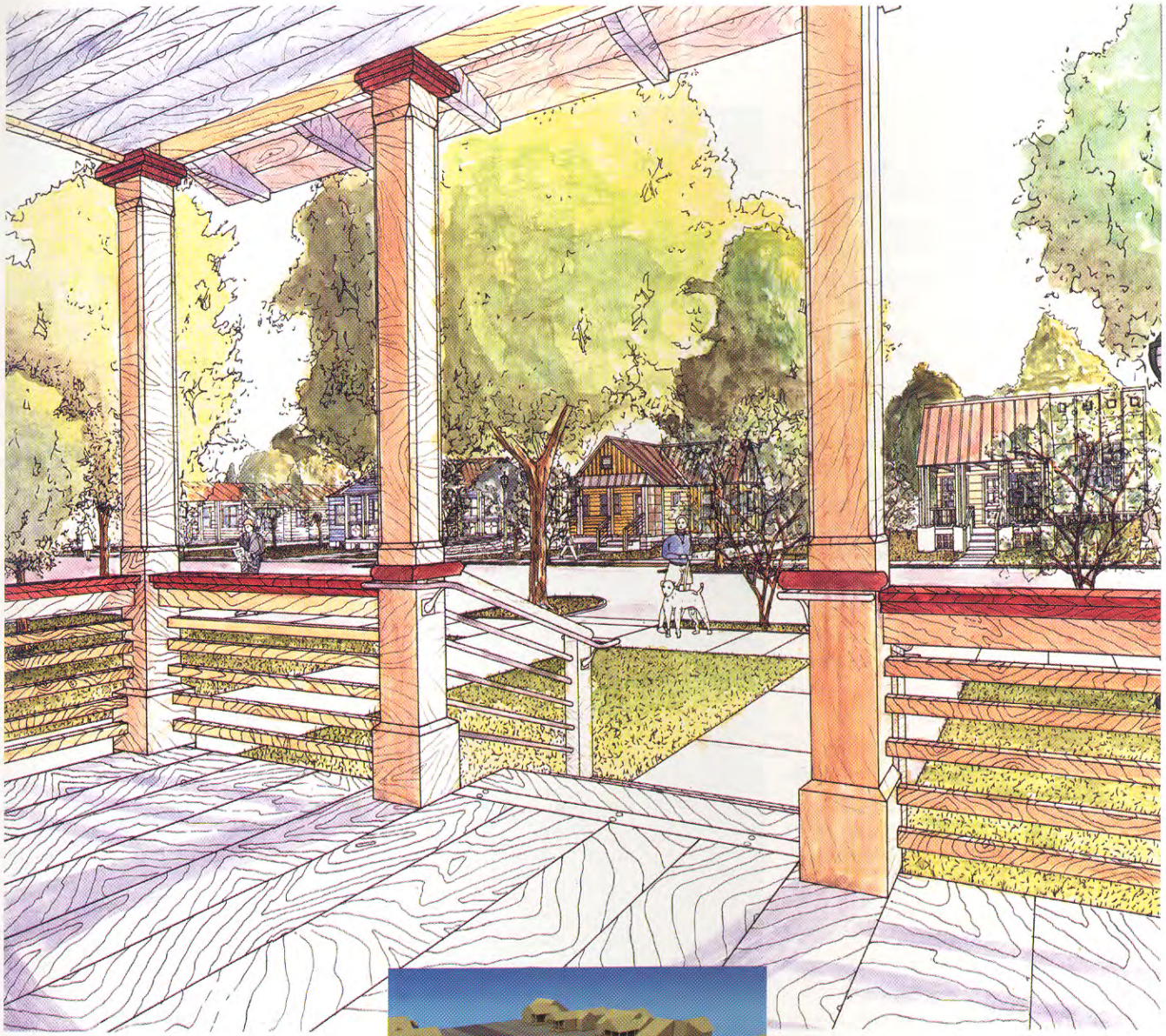
▲ Affordable new construction: two and four bedroom houses



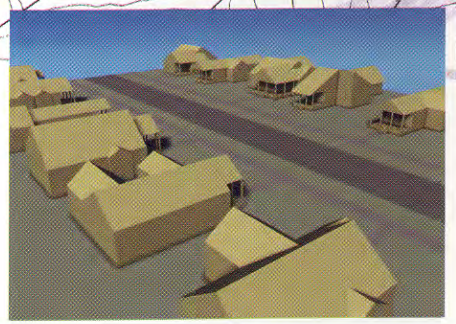
▲ New construction: view of four bedroom house



▶ Core types: Combinations of living cores and bedroom cores provide variation and identity.



▲ View from porch: central to neighborhood development



◀ Redeveloped neighborhood showing infilled vacant lots and porches

Transitional Housing

Relocating existing houses dictates that, first, transitional housing be constructed to accommodate the residents while their houses are being moved and renovated. This transitional housing will used by residents whose houses are being relocated or for whom new houses are being constructed. There are three basic types of transitional housing proposed: townhouses or row houses, micro-neighborhoods, and mixed-use development. The transitional housing presents an opportunity to address other issues of the project, including sound and the conjunction of the I-49 Connector to the Central Business District (CBD) of Lafayette. Since a three-story building can effectively reduce sound levels, townhouses are used to form a buffer and transitional zone between proposed commercial areas adjacent to the interstate and the existing residential neighborhoods. The mixed-use developments allow for infill in the CBD and introduce a residential element to the downtown area to further stimulate its development. The third-type of transitional housing is the micro-neighborhood.

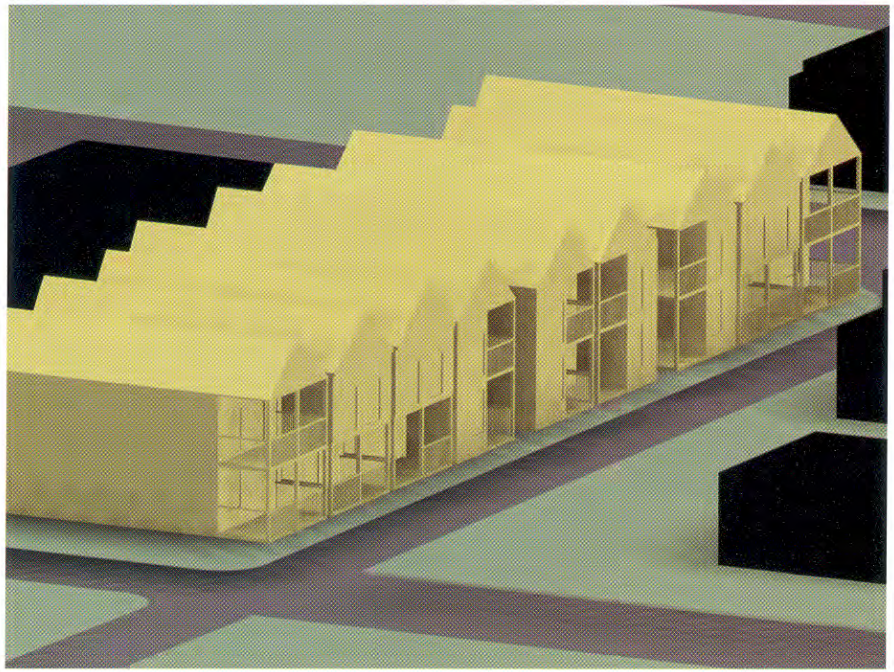
Micro-Neighborhoods

Micro-neighborhoods employ such strategies as zero lot lines and linear footprints to form smaller neighborhoods on larger vacant lots. The zero lot line shifts the house to one side, providing for a more usable side yard. The linear footprints organize the house with the short side facing the front, which fosters a greater sense of community through the close proximity of the porches. Both of these strategies provide economy, thus making these houses very affordable. The micro-neighborhoods are initially used as transitional housing, then later used to provide housing for the elderly or as starter housing as residents move from renting to owning a home. These neighborhoods have traditional characteristics, pedestrian scale, porches, and a community center, which can be used for after-school programs and community development.

Implementation

The housing study was part of the collaborative project between the university, community, and government entities to address the needs of the neighborhoods affected by the I-49 Connector Project. The Community Design Workshop compiled the initial documentation of the study area, recorded the existing physical conditions, and documented the goals and concerns of the community. This documentation provided the basis for establishing a vision for the redevelopment of this fragmented yet distinctive district into a socially, culturally and economically thriving community. The implementation of the two primary relocation strategies (moving existing stock and the construction of new residential stock) will require a combination of state government, local government, and private development. The moving and renovation of existing houses should be coordinated between the state and local governments to take advantage of property controlled by local government within the surrounding areas. The housing prototypes can aid state or local governments in constructing replacement houses for relocated residents. The development of micro-neighborhoods could be a collaborative effort between local government and private businesses to develop larger tracts of property. With the collaboration of residents, government, and businesses, the housing needs of a family could be met, while the redeveloped neighborhoods enhance the community as a whole.

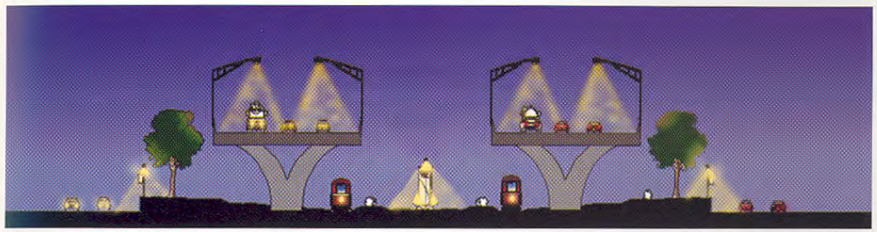
▶ **Transitional housing: micro-neighborhood**



▶ **Transitional housing: townhouses**

Illumination Considerations and Proposed Solution for the I-49 Connector

▼ Energy efficient sources provide required light levels on the roadway.



▲ Period lighting fixtures provide safety, security and identification.

The main goals of the illumination study were to: (1) uncover the relevant issues, (2) determine their importance in the eyes of the community and the experts, (3) consider the available resources, and (4) propose a solution that would be responsive and appropriate. Background research was done to help to achieve the aforementioned goals. Resources such as the *Illuminating Engineering Society of North America Handbook* as well as *General Electric Lamp Catalog* and *Osram Sylvania Lamp Catalog* were studied. Textbooks on fiber optic illumination were reviewed. Numerous issues of *Lighting Design and Application* and *Architectural Lighting* magazines were scanned for projects that implemented successful solutions to similar issues and challenges. Vendor-produced lighting fixture catalogs and manufacturers' representatives were also consulted. Operable samples of relevant lighting technology were procured and demonstrated.

For the illumination study, one UL Lafayette architecture student provided ongoing support in the area of research and arrangements. Several UL Lafayette architecture students provided assistance in the preparation of visuals for presentation. Lighting concerns and proposed solutions which were developed during the Community Design Workshop were compiled into a booklet which outlined all of the considerations and strategies for this project.

Considerations

The major issues for the lighting design for the I-49 Connector included safety, security, maintenance, energy consumption, sense of identity, and aesthetics. A viable solution was anticipated to be one that could successfully address all of these issues.

SAFETY: Various applicable recommendation practices for lighting were consulted. Lighting level recommendations, in foot-candles, are referenced in the *Illuminating Engineering Society of North America Handbook*. Adequate Illumination to negotiate pedestrian paths and roadways was identified.

SECURITY: Perceptions of personal security were considered to be important. Lighting solutions that could help deter crime and increase the "feeling of well-being" were studied. Community members' concerns of unwanted light infringement were also considered.

MAINTENANCE: The lamp life of various light bulbs and the ease of relamping by service personnel were considered when determining possible lighting solutions. The durability of fixtures' housings, finishes, connections, mounting devices, etc., while impacted by age, use, weather, vibration, and vandalism were also weighed.

ENERGY CONSUMPTION: For an energy conscious design, light sources that could

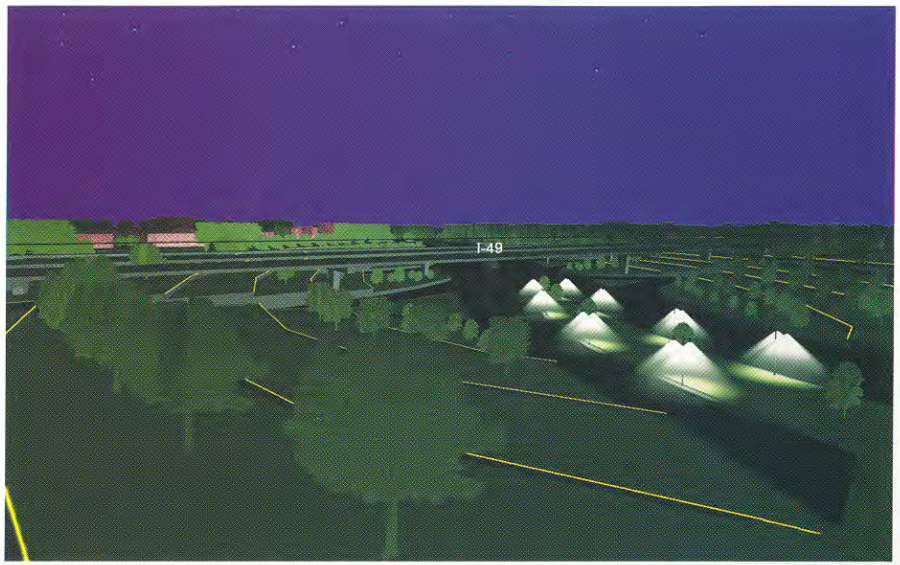
maintain the desired aesthetic, maintenance schedule, and safety and security levels were considered. Light sources which would produce higher lumen levels while consuming lower amounts of energy were favored.

SENSE OF IDENTITY: Throughout the charrettes and presentations to community representatives, it became apparent that illumination could support and enhance the facility's goal of establishing a sense of place and identity. It was found desirable to select lighting effects that would help to identify the facility as belonging to Lafayette. An attempt was made to include lit images within the facility associated with identifiable Lafayette places and culture.

AESTHETICS: Lighting fixtures were selected that would enhance the beauty of the facility and the beauty of Lafayette. Consideration was given to style, material, mounting location, overall brightness level, detailing, and various other aesthetic considerations. Further, it was determined that the lighting could add to the excitement of and interest in the facility and the city of Lafayette, especially when viewed at night. Lighting tasks (human needs requiring illumination) were determined to include walking, driving, way-finding, identifying, providing information, establishing boundaries, socializing, arousing curiosity, and providing delight.

Solution

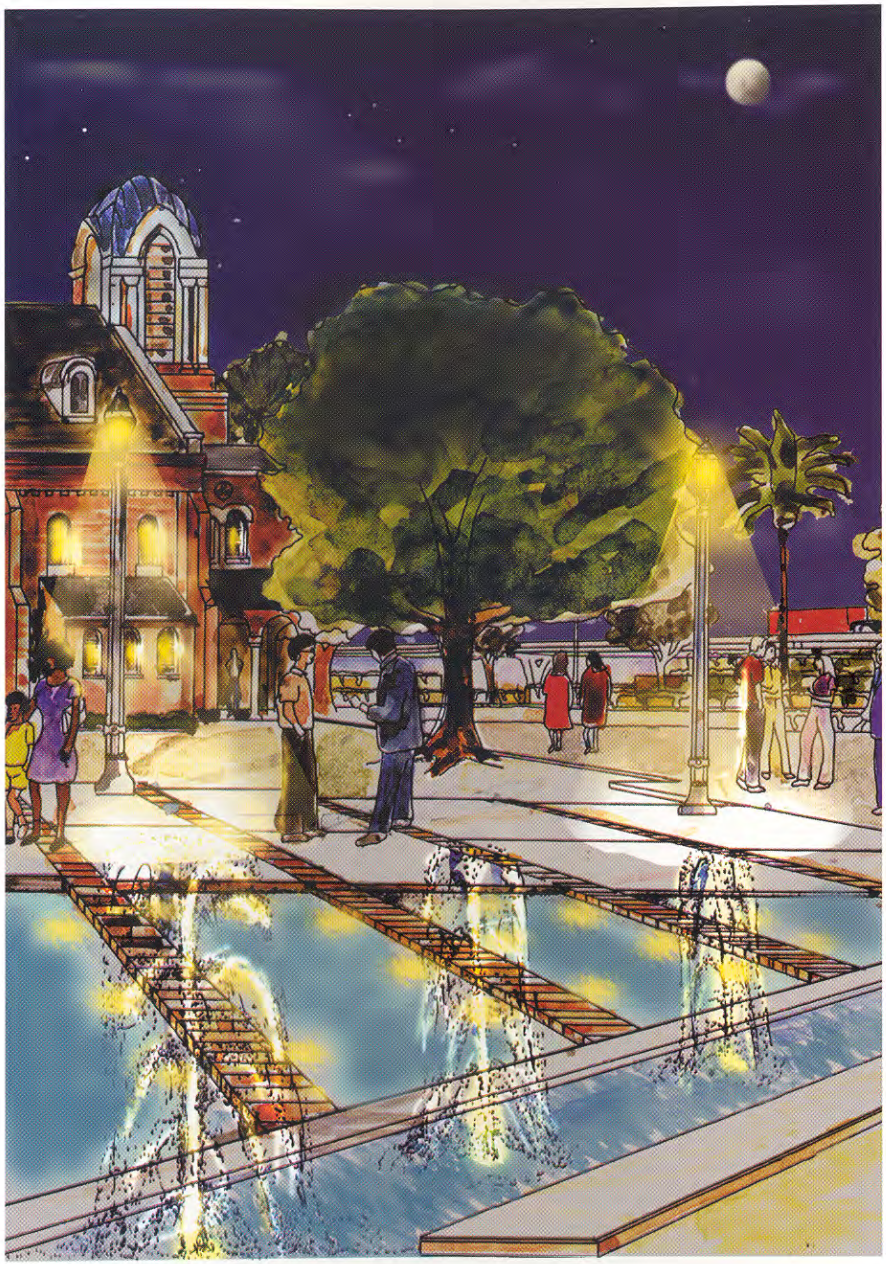
The proposed solution for the illumination of the I-49 Connector includes a system of "lighting layers." It was determined that several different fixture types, with a variety of lampings and mounting heights/styles, would be



◀ Fiber optics in coves outline the earthworks pattern created for I-49.

▼ The projection of colored light patterns announces and reinforces Lafayette's cultural identity to travelers.

Special features under the facility, such as fountains, are enhanced by multiple low-level fixtures which give a sense of pedestrian scale and create a "sense of place."



used to respond to the wide variety of lighting issues and tasks.

The proposed solution encompasses two distinct layers in relation to the actual roadway facility. They are "Over" and "Under" lighting. This choice of "over" and "under" aided the designers in creating a solution that was responsive to the needs of those using the facility, as well as those living near or visiting the vicinity of the facility.

It is proposed that over the facility, illumination would include standard roadway lighting fixtures. The roadway illumination itself would be provided by fixtures designed for delivering the required safety and security illumination for drivers and pedestrians on roadways. These fixtures would be pole mounted, utilize metal halide sources, and be mounted to the perimeter of the roadway at required distances.

Several more creative lighting fixture types and applications would accomplish the tasks of aiding people in visual identification and aiding the facility by providing impact and interest. Components of this part of the solution include the announcement of "visual events" along the path of the facility through specialty lighting effects. Examples of this type of illumination include lighting the following:
(1) The ***earthworks*** below, through a system of linear cove type lighting that would provide a lit outline. The suggested light source is fiber optics.
(2)The proposed ***celebratory gates or pylons*** along the facility, with colored light pattern projection of fleur de lis, bulldogs, seasonal symbols, etc. The suggested lighting fixture

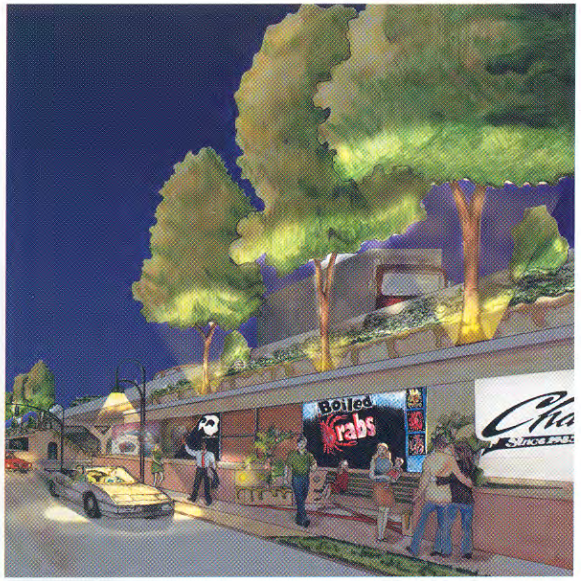
is a theatrical projector with a quartz source-produced by a manufacturer such as Martin and designed for exterior use.

(3) ***Important nearby buildings*** to facilitate the view from the elevated roadway. The suggested light fixture is a floodlight, lamped with metal halide.

These types of effects would allow increased pleasure and information for those who use the I-49 Connector. The proposed decorative effects may even create a reason for people to travel to the facility.

Under the Facility

A more "gentle" illumination is planned for the lighting of selected pedestrian paths, signage, and fountains located in the park areas below the facility. Period or contemporary styled light poles, supplemented by close-to-the-ground, low-level illumination, are suggested. Lighting fixtures harmonious with surrounding architectural features should be selected. Light sources may vary from incandescent to fluorescent to metal halide. By varying the light source, visual zones with unique moods can be established. These individualized zones can also help to heighten awareness of particular sections of the parks below the facility. This heightened awareness can increase way-finding ability or foster pride in particular areas. By using a variety of lighting fixtures capable of different effects (including, but not limited to, silhouette, uplighting, downlighting, backlighting, sparkle, structural lighting, beam play, and shadow play) further visual interest can be created.



▲ Concealed-source uplighting on trees and decor period-style downlighting create layers of interest.

◀ The character of the lighting fixtures reflects the character of the community and its architecture.

I-49 Connector Traffic Noise Study and Abatement Options

In public meetings and design charrettes, the citizens from the neighborhoods bordering the proposed I-49 Connector expressed concerns that traffic noise levels from the highway would create unpleasant and unwanted sounds for their neighborhoods. The Workshop developed a sound study for the new highway that would identify areas of potential adverse noise impact, and evaluate measures to mitigate the impacts.

Areas of Potential Adverse Noise Impact

Noise levels are constantly changing depending upon the number, type, and speed of vehicles which produce noise. Statistical descriptors are almost always used as a single number to describe varying traffic noise levels. For this study we used the descriptor Leq (equivalent noise level) which states the constant, average sound level, over a period of time, contains the same amount of sound energy as the varying levels of the traffic noise.

A traffic noise impact occurs when the predicted sound levels are unacceptably high (FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria) or when a proposed highway project will substantially increase the existing noise environments. The FHWA established values for noise abatement criteria based on land uses close to highways. Traffic noise negatively impacts residential areas when the exterior noise level exceeds 66 decibels (dBA), in commercial areas when the level exceeds 71 dBA, and when noise levels exceed 51 dBA for public institutions. Noise may impact sites adjacent to the proposed highway that have uses as schools, churches, libraries, playgrounds, nursing homes, and motels and hotels. Recommended exterior noise levels for these types of areas do not exceed 66 dBA. To provide an indicator of this sound level, a speaking voice is approminately 60 to 65 dBA.

Currently, adjacent to the proposed path of the I-49 Connector are sites that include residences, schools, churches, and playgrounds. Some of the structures in this path will be displaced due to the construction; however, some of the sites with noise-incompatible uses will remain. Among those sites examined are St. Genevieve Church and School, LeRosen School, playgrounds, and residential developments along either side of the path.

Measures to Mitigate Impacts of Noise

For the I-49 Connector Project Traffic Noise Study, the Workshop examined two broad options for noise mitigation: those based on administrative techniques for land use control and those based on physical methods of highway planning and design that reduce noise impact.

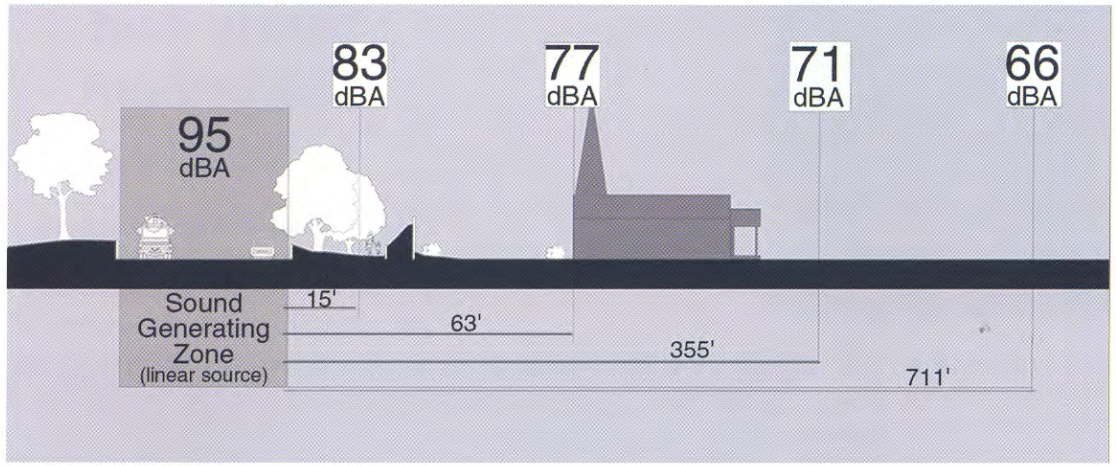
▼ **Figure overlay zone: A "Noise Impact Overlay Zone" is a special purpose zone that would require exterior noise levels to be less than 66 dBA.**

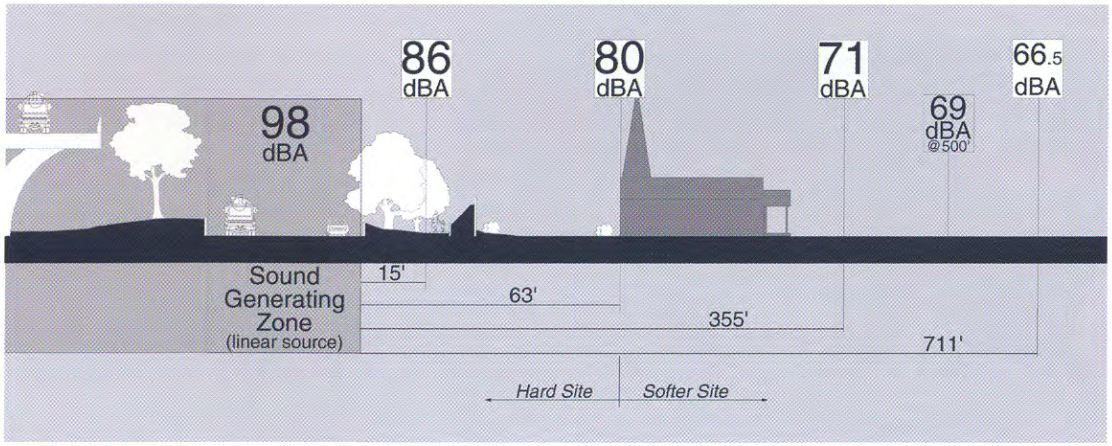
Administrative Techniques for Land Use Control

Administrative techniques are available to local governments to encourage noise-compatible land use near highways. These techniques include zoning and other legal restrictions. Zoning is a common local administrative technique to direct land use in accordance with a plan for orderly community growth. Zoning has been used to control signage, lot size, parking, and maximum building height. These precedents make zoning a useful tool for noise control in many communities. One method of controlling noise within an existing neighborhood where impact of excessive noise may occur is through the use of a new noise impact zone on existing zoning maps. A Noise Impact Overlay Zone (*Figure, overlay zone*) is a special purpose zone which is superimposed over the regular zoning map. The overlay zone could be for those exterior sites which are exposed to noise over a certain level, such as 66 dBA, or it could be defined as all land within a certain distance from the highway, perhaps 200 to 500 feet. Land that falls in such a zone would be subject not only to regulations pertaining to the regular zone, but also to regulations for the overlay zone.

If the existing Evangeline Thruway generates a 95 dBA sound level at St. Genevieve Church, then how far from the Thruway would one travel to reach an acceptable noise level? Since a 66 dBA exterior sound level is the goal, this diagram (*Figure, existing sound level*) shows the distance from the Thruway required to reach that level is 513 feet. If noise from the proposed I-49 Connector raises the sound level to 98 dBA (*Figure, proposed sound level*), then

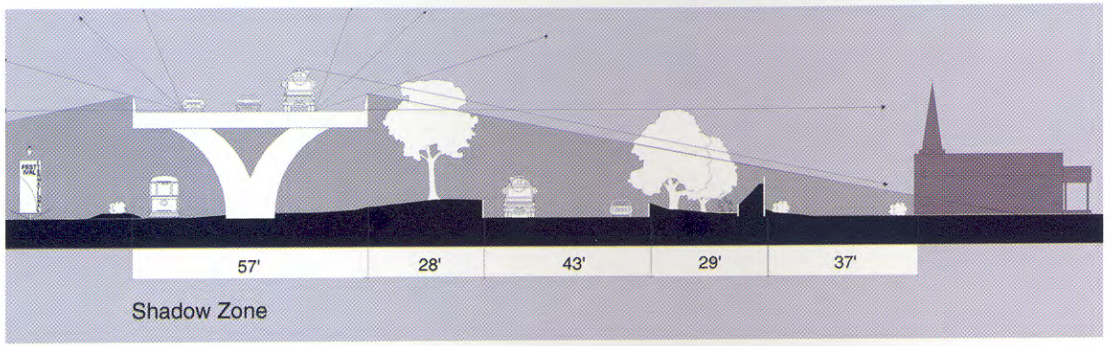
▼ **Existing sound level: Diagram illustrates 513 feet for the decibel level to drop from 95 dBA to 66 dBA, an appropriate exterior sound level.**





▲ **Proposed sound level: Diagram illustrates that with the proposed elevated highway, 700 feet is needed for the decibel level to drop from 98 dBA to an appropriate exterior sound level of 66 dBA.**

▼ A sound shadow zone is created under the elevated highway. The mass of the concrete construction of the elevated highway buffers the area below and adjacent and reduces the dBA levels.



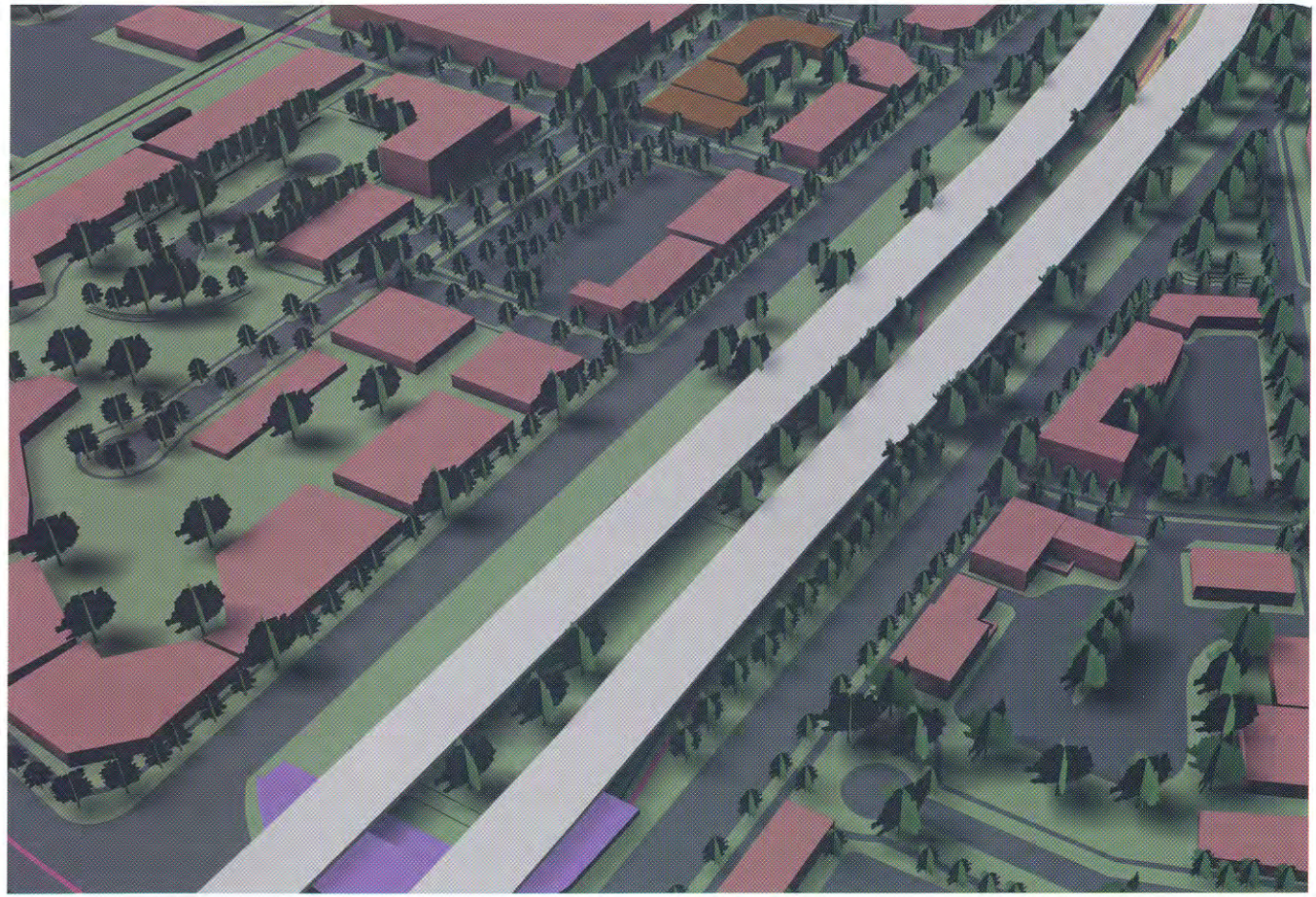
the distance to the 66 dBA sound level is more than 700 feet. These diagrams show that for a Noise Impact Overlay Zone to be effective at the St. Genevieve site, the zone required would be more than 700 feet on either side of the proposed I-49 Connector. Zoning of this sort would insure that future development be compatible with nearby noise sources; it may also exclude future construction of incompatible uses such as residences, churches, schools, and nursing homes. This zoning may have the effect of encouraging commercial development as new residential construction near the I-49 Connector is reduced. For a meaningful Noise Impact Overlay Zone to be used along the path of the I-49 Connector, existing and proposed noise levels during peak traffic conditions would be obtained. From those readings, the local administration could determine an appropriate method for determining the limits of such a zone.

Physical Methods to Reduce Noise Impact

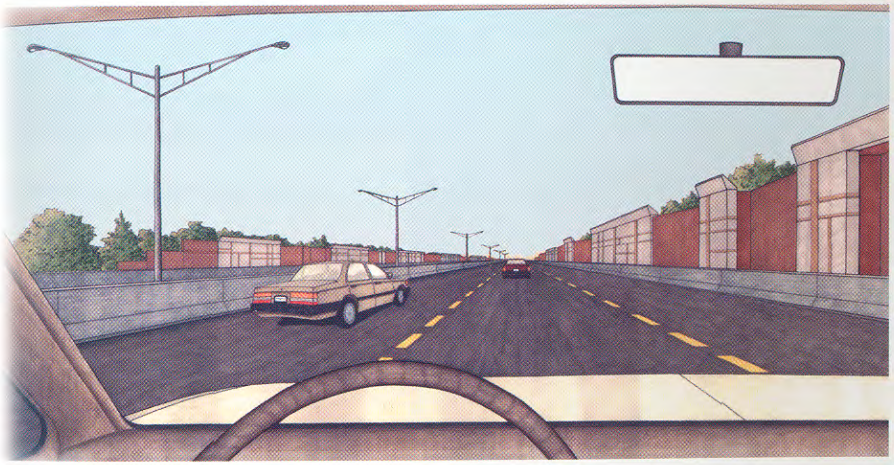
Traffic noise mitigation may also occur using physical methods that mask or minimize unwanted sounds. These methods include: (1) acoustical site planning, (2) acoustical architectural design, (3) acoustical construction, and (4) construction of noise barriers. Although neither the FHWA nor the LaDOTD specifically require any of the above strategies for noise mitigation, they do require that if noise impacts are expected, that noise-reduction be practicable, reasonable, and acceptable to the public within the community where they are incorporated. Therefore, the strategies that are suggested here (excluding noise barriers) would likely be accomplished through a local agency. Acoustical site planning uses arrange-

ment of buildings on a tract of land to minimize noise impacts. This may be accomplished by: (1) placing distance between the noise source and noise sensitive activities; (2) placing noise-compatible activities such as parking lots, open space and commercial facilities between the noise source and sensitive activities; (3) using buildings as barriers, and (4) orienting noise-sensitive buildings to face away from the noise source. In each of the above cases the I-49 Connector is the source of noise to minimize. A strategy proposed by the Workshop recommends placing three-story buildings adjacent to the proposed highway to act as a sound barrier for the surrounding residential neighborhoods. In moving away from the I-49 Connector into the neighborhoods, there would be a layering of these three-story buildings followed by parking lots, open space, and low-rise commercial development that would place distance between the proposed highway and the surrounding residents.

Acoustical architectural design incorporates noise-reducing concepts in the details of the individual buildings. These details might include: (1) building height; (2) room arrangement; (3) window size, number, and placement, and (4) balcony and courtyard design. A specific example that illustrates the way these details might be incorporated into a building would be the previously mentioned three-story buildings adjacent to the proposed highway. Three-story buildings act like a wall and prevent some of the most severe traffic noise from intruding on the surrounding residential area. Within these three-story buildings, noise-compatible activities (storage, laundry, and restrooms) could be placed on the side adjacent to the



Three-story buildings adjacent to the elevated highway act as sound barriers to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Buildings, parking lots, gardens and open spaces add distance between elevated highway and neighborhoods. This distance reduces the decibel levels as sound moves away from elevated highway.



▲ **Sound walls can be constructed between noise sources and noise sensitive areas. The design incorporates textured and colored concrete.**

I-49 Connector, while rooms with noise-sensitive activities (social) could be placed opposite the connector. Reduction in the number of windows and window area would minimize sound transmission of traffic noise into the spaces. Placement of balconies and courtyards on the side of the building opposite the I-49 Connector would add distance to the path of travel of the traffic noise. This distance would also provide spaces for outdoor activities that use the structures to block traffic noise.

Along with acoustical architectural design, acoustical construction comes into play. Acoustical construction is the treatment of various parts of a building to reduce interior noise impacts by increasing the building mass, increasing the rigidity of materials used in construction, and providing air spaces in walls, floors and ceilings. These methods fall within the concept of "soundproofing." The "soundproofing" of public-use institutional buildings may be incorporated into federally-aided highway projects to abate traffic noise, but the use of federal funds for soundproofing commercial buildings or private dwellings is not normally permitted.

Noise Barriers

Finally, noise barriers can be erected between noise sources and noise-sensitive areas. Noise barriers are solid obstructions built between the highway and the homes along the highway. Effective noise barriers can reduce noise levels by 10 to 15 dBA, cutting the loudness of traffic noise in half. These barriers may take the form of berms made of sloping mounds of earth or walls and fences. Earth berms have a very natural appearance and are usually attractive, but can require a lot of land if they are high. Noise walls take less space and can be built from a range of material that are visually pleasing and blend with their surroundings.

The FHWA also has barrier design guidance, which is used to size and locate the noise walls. Noise walls are most effective for noise-affected sites within approximately 200 feet of the highway. The barrier length should be at least eight times the distance from the barrier to the affected site. For example, a home approximately 50 feet from the noise wall would require a sound wall at least 400 feet in length. Openings in noise walls for driveway connections or intersecting streets destroy the effectiveness of barriers. For the I-49 Connector Project, this eliminates the option of placing the noise walls at ground level and requires that they be at the interstate height to reduce noise transmission effectively. The noise walls of I-49 through Shreveport are perforated metal, with an acoustic core and rigid metal backing that comes in a range of colors. This wall is mounted directly to the elevated interstate to provide noise reduction.

Noise reduction goals for noise walls influence acoustical considerations and, in conjunction with non-acoustical considerations such as maintenance, safety, aesthetics, physical construction, cost, and community participation, determine various barrier design options. Lafayette may take the opportunity to introduce symbols of local or regional identity to the walls in terms of aesthetics, relying on such things as materials, form, surface treatment, and color—even murals and signage. Traffic noise mitigation for the I-49 Connector

will require no single measure, but a range of measures both administrative and physical, to minimize noise impacts. The options recommended for the sites that border the proposed highway include a Noise Impact Overlay Zone, acoustical site planning, acoustical architectural design, acoustical construction, and construction of noise barriers.

Public Art

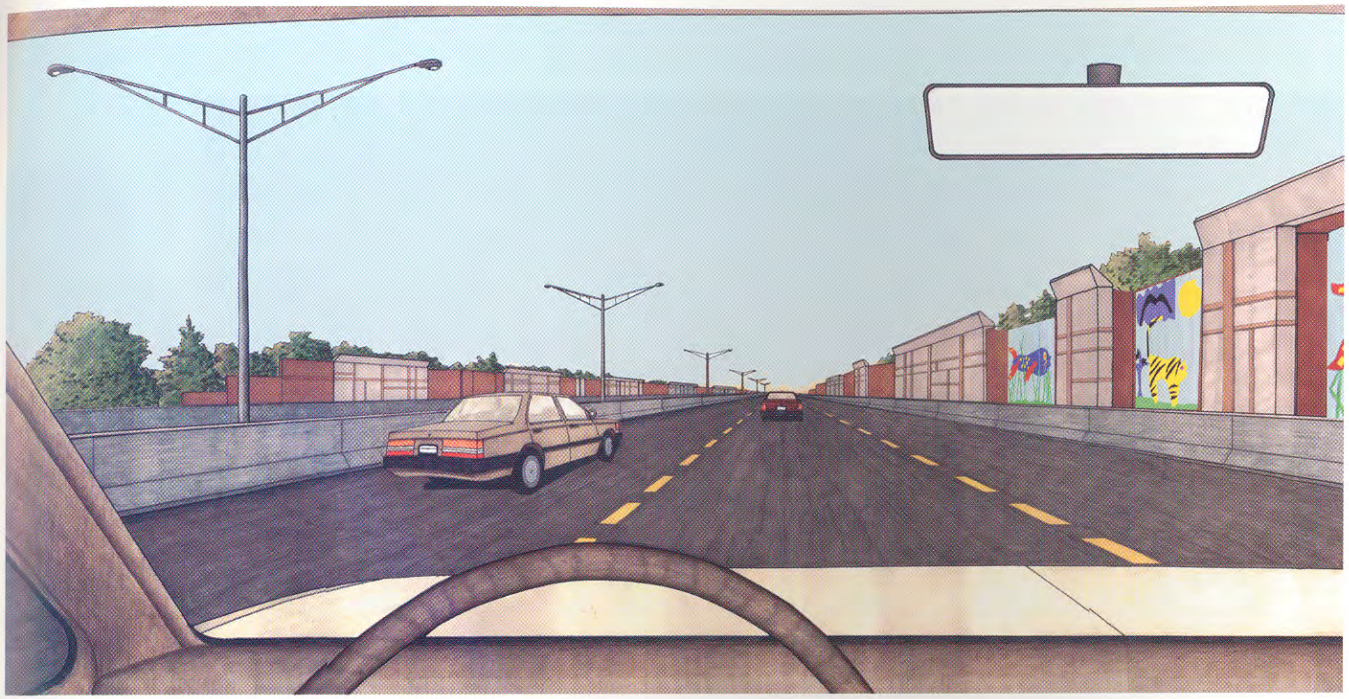
Art in the Public Realm

Ever since the 1980s controversy over Richard Serra's Tilted Arc in Federal Plaza, New York City (a "public" art piece that was generally detested by the people who regularly used the space), there has been an increasing awareness of the need to more effectively engage the affected community in the generation and selection of the art. This awareness has lent support for a more integrated planning approach to public art, as opposed to the "plop" art approach where individual works of art are simply planted in a space without regard to context. An integral part of this planning process is the meaningful participation of the community.

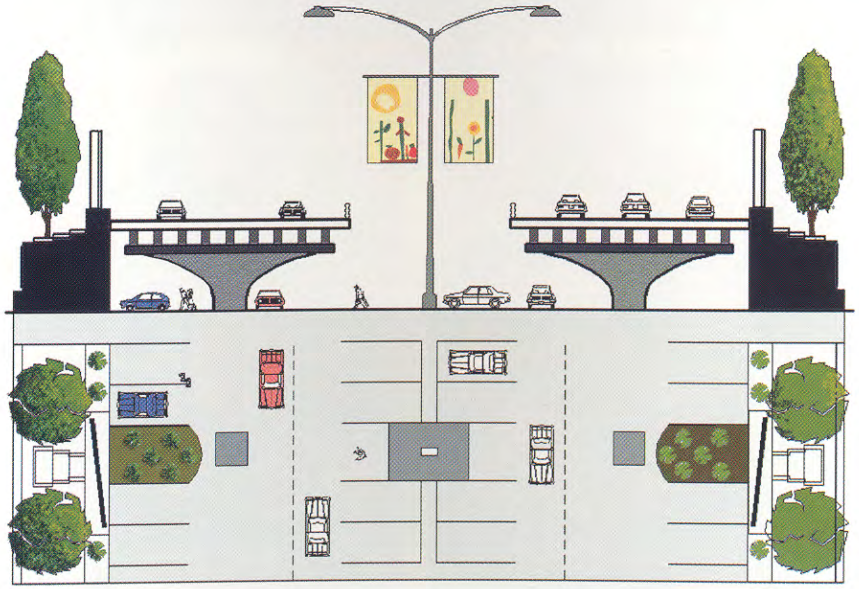
What Public Art Can Do

Community participants in the predesign charrettes indicated a desire for the introduction of public art into the I-49 Connector Project. In response to this interest, one of the charges for the Community Design Workshop was to identify opportunities for artists' interventions along the I-49 Connector within the context of the larger plan being developed. A priority was the integration of the art into the overall design proposals for the area.

View of Richard Serra's Tilted Arc, 1981, in Federal Plaza, New York City



▲ Proposed sound wall murals



▶ Proposed banners for site and parking identification

A review of public art precedents revealed that public art, when supported by the community, could help to successfully establish and define the identity of a place. It can provide both cultural and historical orientation along with spatial orientation, helping to transform undifferentiated space into meaningful place. Art also can humanize public space that might otherwise intimidate and overwhelm. By providing opportunities for tactile, visual and metaphoric interaction between people and place, public art allows for moments of surprise, revelation, and aesthetic pleasure. These opportunities promote a higher quality of life that, in turn, can engender greater economic success for the community.

Sites for Public Art

The sites identified as the most amenable to the intervention of some form of public art are along the sound wall, the farmers' market/transportation areas, the gateway into Lafayette, St. Genevieve's Church and Community Center, and the walkway of the green space

Strategies for Community Participation

The planning process, so far, has identified the following strategies for eliciting community participation in the development of public art:
(1) Involve area artists, residents, and students through participation in existing programs sponsored by the regional arts council.
(2) Through the arts council and its constituencies, develop a set of criteria for art interventions in the project.
(3) Locate funding sources to sponsor a competition based on the established criteria.

(4) Continue interactions with various community organizations throughout the design development and implementation phases.

In an effort to initiate community participation in the development of images for public art, workshops with community children were conducted under the auspices of the Acadiana Arts Council's summer arts program in the park and recreational centers. Children in the program made paper collages in response to various themes presented at each session (these themes included such ideas as "My House," "Neighborhood Garden," and "Acadian Wildlife"). These images have been adapted for use in the murals and banners that appear in the presentation drawings of the project.

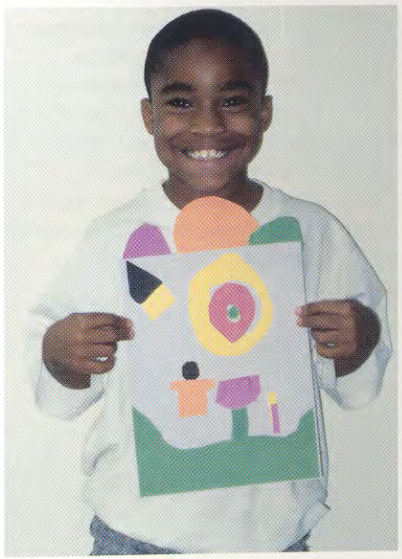
Green space walkway: A site where public art could invigorate the experience of place.

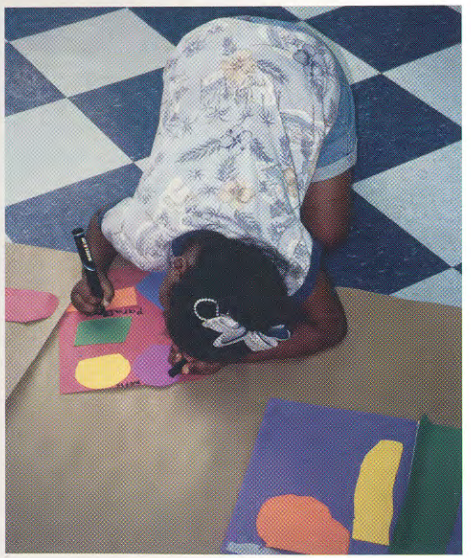
Conclusion

At the public meetings, planners, residents and community groups have all expressed enthusiasm for the inclusion of public art in the I-49 Connector Project. The challenge is to generate funding for an art competition and for various community projects that can engage residents in the development and selection of art for their community.

Meanwhile, the planning process continues. This project is long term, and may take as long as 10 years for full implementation. In that time, all opportunities for community participation should be explored and encouraged.

Children at the Domingue Center create theme collages to develop community images for banners and other forms of public art.





Conclusion

Placing an emphasis on the value of public welfare and societal needs, the UL Lafayette School of Architecture's curriculum is contrasted by the inclusion of theoretical and real-world design issues which form the genesis and the development of the student's experiential education. The importance of this didactic duality becomes evident when reviewing the history of the School's Community Design Workshop and the partnerships formed with the Lafayette Consolidated Government/ Metropolitan Planning Organization. The collaborative research by these organizations represent five years of intense investigation which manifested itself in the I-49 Connector Project. This study provided a cityscape for solving the problems and needs of a growing metropolis. The rich cultural diversity of the city and its people required careful, thoughtful study to comprehend the nature and direction of investigation and planning.

The public process, which consisted of public discussions and the education of the community through meetings and charrettes, proved to be highly successful in identifying community needs. This process also provided viable design solutions for the regeneration of neighborhoods while mitigating potential problems.

The success of this research study could be further attributed to the dedication and hard work of the faculty and students of the School of Architecture, Lafayette's citizenry, the MPO Advisory Committees, and members of the Lafayette Consolidated Government. The study represents the dynamics and the spirit of the community.

▲ **Developing housing strategies for neighborhoods during design charrette are Lynne Guy, Lois Andrus, Anna Broussard, and other area residents representing various neighborhood pride groups; Kirk Trahan and Miki Briggs of Lafayette Consolidated Government, and Peter Johnson and Casey Haley, students in the Community Design Workshop.**

▲ Professor Eddie Cazayoux, Dean Gordon Brooks, students Jenness Lasater and Amanda Rivera with the Community Design Workshop, and Dr. Jean Kreamer and Gene Waguespack with MPO Advisory Committees address planning issues in a design charrette.

▼ Professor Hector Lasala, with students Amy Simpson, Tjiau Meliala, and Laura Himel present ideas regarding land use in a design charrette.

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I-49
Beaver Park
Beaver Park