



**LAFAYETTE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**  
**RESOLUTION**  
**PROPOSAL TO LAFAYETTE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT**  
**FOR ITS FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 BUDGET**  
**JUNE 18, 2025**

**WHEREAS**, the Lafayette Centre Development District d/b/a Downtown Development Authority (“DDA”) has a mission to coordinate public and private investment in Downtown Lafayette to foster revitalization, economic development, cultural activity, and improved public infrastructure;

**WHEREAS**, the Lafayette City Council plays a central role in governing public investment downtown through its authority over the budgets of LCG, the DDA, and the Downtown Lafayette Economic Development District (“EDD”);

**WHEREAS**, aligning capital investments across these public entities is essential to eliminating duplication, leveraging funding, building public trust, and delivering visible, impactful results for the people of Lafayette;

**WHEREAS**, the DDA, in consultation with community partners, has developed a coordinated, revenue-neutral capital request for inclusion in the FY25–26 LCG capital budget, with proposed reallocations from underutilized or outdated budget lines to fund high-priority downtown projects;

**WHEREAS**, the DDA has prepared a detailed capital budget request package to be submitted to the Lafayette City Council, including:

A formal cover letter from the CEO of the DDA (Exhibit A); and

A budget spreadsheet identifying requested and offsetting changes (Exhibit B).

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors of the DDA hereby formally approves and endorses the submission of the capital request package described herein to the Lafayette City Council;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board authorizes its CEO, Kevin Blanchard, to transmit this request on behalf of the DDA and to represent the DDA in all communications, presentations, and negotiations related to the coordination of FY25–26 public capital investments in Downtown Lafayette;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution shall be transmitted to the Lafayette City Council, together with the cover letter and exhibits referenced herein.

All ordinances or resolutions, or parts thereof, in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

The foregoing resolution was read in full, was duly motioned and seconded, and the Resolution passed upon the following votes:

YEAS: 5

NAYS: 0

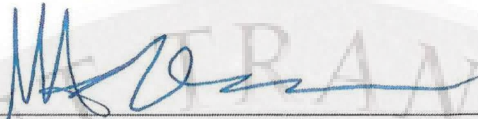
ABSTAIN: 1 ABSENT

CITIZENS FOR A  
*New* Louisiana

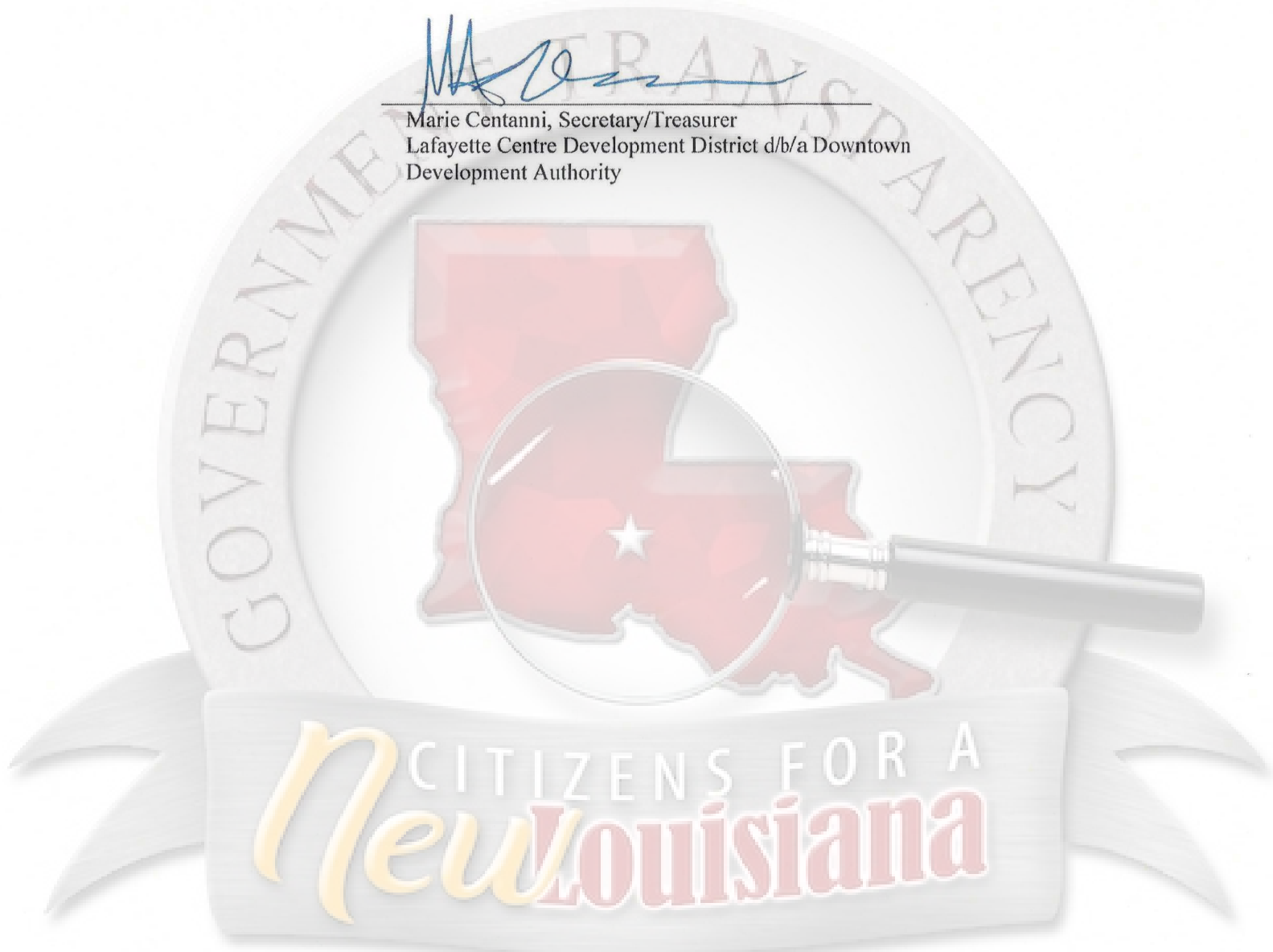
CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of the Resolution adopted at a meeting of a quorum of the DDA board held on June 18, 2025.

Lafayette, Louisiana, this 18<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2025.



Marie Centanni, Secretary/Treasurer  
Lafayette Centre Development District d/b/a Downtown  
Development Authority







June 18, 2025

To: Lafayette City Council  
c/o Kenneth Boudreaux, City Council Chair  
705 W. University Avenue  
Lafayette, LA 70506

From: Kevin Blanchard, CEO  
Downtown Development Authority  
735 Jefferson Street  
Lafayette, LA 70501

RE: Request to Coordinate Capital Budgets for Downtown Projects in LCG FY25-26 Budget

Councilman Boudreaux, City Council members:

On behalf of the Downtown Development Authority Board, I am writing to formally request that the City Council help align the LCG capital budget with existing plans already approved by the DDA and the Downtown Lafayette Economic Development District. Because the Council governs all three budgets, the upcoming LCG Budget process presents a unique opportunity to coordinate and prioritize funding across agencies—ensuring we avoid duplication, build trust with the public, and deliver real results downtown.

The City Council is the common denominator decision-maker in the public sector's capital investments in the downtown.

- The City Council ratifies the DDA's annual budget.
- The City Council, acting as the Downtown EDD Board, approves all EDD projects, with DDA Board ratification.
- The City Council approves LCG capital budget.

Thanks to the leadership of the City Council, the DDA budget and EDD budget are very much aligned and coordinated today. I thank you for that. The Downtown Ambassador program and Lee Avenue design work are good examples of this coordination. When we are coordinated, we can avoid confusion, duplication, and waste. And a coordinated, transparent budgeting process allows our constituents to hold us accountable for results. That is how we will build trust over the long term.

This summer's budget process presents an excellent opportunity to get aligned across the board. History shows that the City of Lafayette does best when we are all working together.

The first decade of the DDA's existence saw quite a few large-scale projects that were a result of a strong collaborative relationship between the City of Lafayette (later LCG) and the DDA. Those well-coordinated projects included the Jefferson Streetscape, the Acadiana Center for the Arts, the

Lafayette Science Museum, and the Downtown Parcs Network. Each one of these projects took many partners and involved a lot of moving parts. Those types of projects are tougher to manage and coordinate, but that is the DDA's role. As a political subdivision of the state, the DDA has the necessary tools to help manage and coordinate projects.

I have attached a spreadsheet (Exhibit A) that contains more detail, but I will summarize our request as follows:

Downtown is requesting \$2.45 million in the FY 25-26 LCG Budget. We are proposing a corresponding cut of \$2.45 million from downtown projects that are either over-funded or not current downtown priorities. We understand that you get many requests for funding across the City General Fund, so this is a **REVENUE NEUTRAL** proposal. The projects we seek to push forward with new or additional funding are:

- **Downtown-Urban Core Redevelopment Plan: \$500,000**
  - Companion budget request to Downtown EDD: \$500,000
  - DDA match: \$50,000
  - Working with a host of partners, including the Downtown EDD, LCG, UL, DLU, LEDA, LCVC, Aca, LPTFA, Festival International, as well as local philanthropies and business to develop key sites, locate and improve much-needed venue space for future Festival International growth, develop a new parking plan, and working on improved mobility across the urban core to build connectivity from City Park to Moncus Park.
  - The DDA will manage this project through a CEA with the EDD, LCG and others.
- **Vermilion Garage Bathroom Upgrade: \$500,000**
  - This is a modernization and expansion of the existing bathrooms under the Vermilion Garage, which have been closed to the public for years.
  - Project design complete - funded through ARPA.
  - Major safety and public health priority - there are no public restrooms downtown, which means that we are constantly cleaning up human waste in public areas
  - Even more necessary with the addition of our popular children's playground at Parc Sans Souci
  - With the Downtown Ambassadors, we now have the ability to clean on a regular basis, which is necessary in a public setting like this. The new design is also easy to clean, with doors that lock on timers, and other family-friendly features.
  - The DDA will manage this project through a CEA with LCG, including an ongoing maintenance agreement with the Downtown Ambassadors.
- **Downtown Security Infrastructure: \$50,000**
  - Building on success of the downtown police cameras--which have been a key tool in reducing crime downtown--by supplementing existing cameras and implementing ID verification for downtown nightclubs
  - DDA match: \$10,000
  - The DDA will manage this project through a CEA with LCG and others.



- **Cypress Tree Pruning / Root Work: \$50,000**
  - Much-needed deferred maintenance for our unique Cypress shade canopy
  - DDA match: \$10,000
  - The DDA will help coordinate this project with Public Works
- **Cathedral Pedestrian Safety: \$50,000**
  - Immediate safety intervention at key St. John crossings
  - DDA match: \$10,000
  - The DDA will help coordinate this project with Public Works
- **Music Museum Streetscape Design - Vermilion @ Buchanan: \$100,000**
  - Coordination with AcA for museum entrance. The entrance for this world-class museum will be off the intersection, at the back of the current property, off Buchanan. This will require a lot of utility relocation and additional sidewalk/plaza space, and an upgrade of the overall intersection.
  - EDD match: \$25,000
  - The AcA and DDA will help coordinate this work with Public Works as part of the ongoing museum project
- **Vermilion Streetscape Phase 1a: Vermilion/Lee/Taylor: \$1,200,000**
  - This additional funding would allow us to move forward with sidewalk improvements and the construction of a new plaza in connection with Hotel Lafayette - at the old Don's site.
  - Current EDD funding: \$325,000 (earmarked for Taylor Street Plaza, will be combined with this project into one construction project). Total project estimated project cost of \$1,525,000.
  - Current LCG funding: \$300,000 for Vermilion Street DESIGN (ARPA). These funds were encumbered for design services to Mader Engineering, so they are unavailable for construction. NOTE: the DDA has also secured the services of Mader Engineering for the Taylor Street Plaza, ensuring a smooth, one-piece project, designed as a unit, built in component parts to keep up with economic development projects like Hotel Lafayette.
  - Project delivery on time and under budget is key. We would suggest that the DDA manage the project through a CEA with LCG that would allow us to meet the necessary timelines in a coordinated construction schedule with the hotel developers and not disrupt them with construction.

These projects capitalize on our many ongoing private, catalytic investments downtown, including Hotel Lafayette and the Louisiana Music Museum. These projects also tackle our immediate downtown clean and safe priorities. We are building a family-friendly downtown; our combined and coordinated public investment should reflect those priorities.

My final request is about budget transparency. The current LCG capital budget contains several generically labelled line items that make it difficult for the public, or even the DDA staff, to understand what's in the budget. We would ask that those line items be amended to more specifically reference a

particular project or, as this request lays out, that funds from those generic line items be placed into named line items.

“Downtown Infrastructure Improvements” is an example of this type of generic line item. Originally intended for a new parking garage during the last administration (a project that has been dropped) there is still \$1.45 million appropriated to that line item. Because the original intended purpose of those funds is gone, we strongly suggest that those funds be repurposed for this request.

The attached spreadsheet includes this and two other “generic” projects that we are proposing for repurposing in the upcoming budget.

**Downtown Infrastructure Improvements:** Reduce from \$1,450,000 to \$300,000. We believe that this is the line item that the administration would like to use for improvements to St. John Street, and so we would request that if that is the administration’s plan, that the line item be given that name in the FY25-26 Budget. To date, we do not have confirmation one way or another. We are proposing to keep \$300,000 in the remaining “St. John Streetscape” line item, which is more than adequate to pay for planning and design work for the entirety of St. John Street—from University to Congress. Our proposed budget also includes a small amount of funds for small scale, quick-to-implement, low-cost intersection improvements that could immediately improve pedestrian safety at the church and school, as well as testing out concepts in a low-cost way before we commit to what could ultimately be a \$6 million+ construction project.

**Downtown Transit Access / Main Street Match:** Reduce from \$690,000 to \$0. This project has lingered for years. The current design is costly and not worth the cost of construction, and the cost of construction is several times more expensive than what is available. Our strong recommendation has been to shelve this project and wait until a viable jail/sheriff site redevelopment plan is put in place. That redevelopment plan, which will be here soon enough, is what should drive improvements on this portion of Main Street.

**Downtown Drainage:** Reduce from \$1,500,000 to \$890,000. We are proposing that these funds supplement the cost of Vermilion Streetscape Phase 1A, which will include upgrades to that area’s stormwater capacity. There are no current plans on how to utilize these funds for drainage downtown. This is a more than adequate amount to fund this line item for any future work. We are actively seeking a collaborative approach to stormwater management downtown. This line item was originally funded for \$12.5 million through ARPA. \$4.8 million was spent for three projects. The remainder of the funds were transferred to other projects. The remaining \$890,000 can play a crucial role in coming up with an actionable drainage infrastructure plan for Downtown, Freetown, McComb, and LaPlace.

We have made this request **REVENUE NEUTRAL** in the interest of keeping our ask reasonable in what we understand will be a tight budget year. This proposal would allow all of us to move forward together on projects that more accurately reflect downtown priorities and meet more immediate needs for a greater number of taxpayers. That is a win-win.

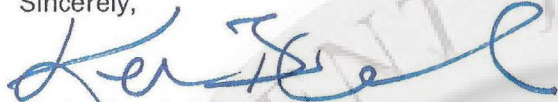
I am happy to answer any questions you may have on this request. We will communicate this budget proposal to our stakeholders and ask them to plan on attending all appropriate budget hearings this



summer to show their support. I am also happy at any time to brief the City Council on this request or on any other issue facing the downtown area.

A growing, thriving downtown and urban core pays dividends for the whole city, whether it's through increased tax revenue, more tourism, or by supporting our local culture and university. Because we are in many ways "landlocked" as a city, investing in our downtown and urban core is an important part of our city's future growth strategy. On behalf of the residents, businesses, and property owners downtown, I thank you all for your continued partnership and willingness to coordinate for the betterment of the City of Lafayette.

Sincerely,



Kevin Blanchard

CEO, Downtown Development Authority & Downtown Lafayette Unlimited

cc: Rachel Godeaux  
Joseph Gordon-Wiltz  
Karen Fontenot  
Warren Abadie

