



## **City of Frankfort, Kentucky**

Project: Holmes Street Corridor Planning

Classification: Rural

BUILD Request: \$616,000

Local Match: \$154,000

Total Project: \$770,000

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Frankfort, Kentucky, requests \$616,000 in U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Planning funds for a \$770,000 project to support the revitalization of its Holmes Street Corridor, an economically-distressed area that serves as a key entry to the community from the east and north. DOT assistance will help the City prepare for infrastructure improvements that will calm traffic, enhance pedestrian opportunities, improve safety, promote economic development, and connect with previous TIGER-funded upgrades. Grant funds will be used to study and design a Complete Street along Holmes Street, which will connect low-income households with downtown job opportunities. As a small, rural community as defined by DOT, the proposed project aligns with the Trump Administration's goals to improve infrastructure condition, address public health and safety, promote connectivity, and facilitate competitiveness. BUILD funding will also leverage the designation of Frankfort's Holmes Street neighborhood as an Opportunity Zone.

The Holmes Street Corridor encompasses 25 city blocks of the community's oldest infrastructure and is home to Frankfort's original commercial corridor adjacent to workforce housing and intact, historic neighborhoods. Approximately 2 miles in length, the area is extremely diverse, with a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, as well as the area's only elementary learning center. This area of disinvestment has significant potential, with large tracts of underutilized land that disconnect the neighborhood with nearby economic opportunities. Frankfort's comprehensive plan identifies reconstruction of Holmes Street as a top priority.

Holmes Street (State Route 2261) is not currently configured to support envisioned revitalization. Initiating at High Street in downtown and traveling generally east, the existing road is a two-lane urban roadway until Meagher Avenue with on-street parking on one side, no bike lanes, poor bus transit accommodations, and minimal sidewalks with obstructions restricting Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility. East of Meagher Avenue, the road transitions to a rural typical section with no sidewalk facilities. Current traffic is about 8,000 cars per day, with a high rate of crashes (two times the statewide average). Predominant crash types in the Holmes Street Corridor are rear-end and angle collisions. Holmes Street's high number of residential cross streets and commercial access points create conditions where traffic flow is interrupted by turning vehicles and, therefore, rear-end collisions occur. Angle collisions (often more severe than rear-end crashes) occur at intersections from left-turning vehicles entering or leaving a driveway or minor street.



*Frankfort's Holmes Street Corridor*

At several of the residential side streets along the corridor, limited sight distance is a problem. Commercial entrances to the mostly locally-owned businesses can also be troublesome for both patrons as well as delivery vehicles.

BUILD Planning resources will support Frankfort’s effort to encourage mixed-use development in the neighborhood. A 2007 *Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan* identified two alternatives for improving corridor infrastructure – a three-lane facility to accommodate future traffic demand and a two-lane street that would improve conditions for vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and businesses. Frankfort seeks DOT assistance to conduct a corridor study that evaluates hybrid street configurations that both manage for planned growth and calm traffic at difficult locations. This planning will analyze changing variables in the Holmes Street neighborhood. Specific corridor study elements will include:

- Conducting extensive community engagement to determine what features are desired with a typical Holmes Street section;
- Completing traffic and safety analysis to identify operational and safety impacts of a two-lane versus a three-lane street, including new trips that will be generated from the 16-acre Capital Plaza Tower redevelopment at the terminus of the Holmes Street Corridor;
- Performing a parking evaluation to determine existing on-street parking demands and assess neighborhood parking needs;
- Developing access management strategies to limit back-out parking and unrestricted-access commercial properties; and
- Preparing an environmental overview and evaluating potential environmental impacts of each typical section alternative.

The project will identify recommended Holmes Street Corridor improvements. Phase I (30% schematic) design will be completed, which will enable Frankfort to advance planning efforts and prepare for construction.

The planning process will enable Frankfort to:

High Street (from East Main to Holmes Street entry)

- Enhance the pedestrian realm;
- Connect with the Pinsky Trail, a former rail line and the latest addition to Frankfort’s existing 38 miles of trail that the City, Commonwealth of Kentucky, and Kentucky State University are converting into a recreational amenity that will provide students with an alternative route to downtown;
- Complete the design for connecting the Second Street



*Holmes Street's proximity to downtown should be a catalyst for redevelopment*

TIGER project to the Holmes Street Corridor; and

- Enhance the gateway, improve the transition at the head of the project (Capital Avenue & East Main), and calm traffic commuting into downtown on Holmes Street.

#### Holmes Street to Highway 127

- Calm traffic;
- Reduce and restrict access points that contribute to accidents along the corridor;
- Construct sidewalks and establish crosswalks for neighborhood residents;
- Determine the need for bike lanes or sharrows;
- Enhance bus stops and improve transit accessibility (many users must currently wait in yards to be picked up);
- Develop trailheads that connect to 38 miles of existing trails;
- Improve existing gateways from downtown to west and highway off/on ramps to the east/north;
- Upgrade lighting and signage;
- Install green infrastructure to manage stormwater runoff; and
- Encourage infill and redevelopment of approximately 22 acres at nine key areas along the corridor to create a live/work neighborhood.

Redevelopment of the Holmes Street Corridor will leverage key local, state, and federal investments:

- Working in partnership with the University of Kentucky, the City developed the 2007 *Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan*, with an emphasis on improving the appearance of the neighborhood, enhancing the quality of housing stock, and building the Holmes Street Corridor's image as a desirable place to live.
- In 2007, Frankfort secured a \$725,000 HOME Investment Partnership grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to rehabilitate dilapidated housing along Holmes Street.
- Frankfort received the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Greening America's Capitals assistance in 2012 to reimagine its downtown. A team of experts analyzed the area and developed design concepts for transportation improvements and green infrastructure.
- City and state funds supported cleanup of the Frankfort Scrap Yard along Holmes Street.
- In 2018, Frankfort received an \$8 million DOT TIGER grant to improve infrastructure adjacent to the Holmes Street Corridor.



***BUILD Planning funds will leverage TIGER investment in Frankfort's Second Street Corridor***

- Kentucky is planning a transportation study along Holmes Street to identify additional infrastructure needs.
- Frankfort and Kentucky are engaged in a collaborative effort to redevelop a 16-acre parcel at the terminus of Holmes Street, a prime location where the Capital Plaza Tower state office building was demolished in March 2018.



*Implosion of the Capital Plaza Tower has provided Frankfort with an opportunity to redevelop a 16-acre site on the Holmes Street Corridor*

- Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin recently designated the Holmes Street Corridor as an Opportunity Zone, which will increase private investment in the neighborhood.
- The City previously invested \$7.7 million in flood mitigation efforts for the neighborhood.
- Frankfort has spent \$3.5 million in sanitary and storm sewer separation projects to improve the health of the neighborhood and groundwater flowing into the Kentucky River, with \$8.5 million yet to spend in the Holmes Street Corridor.
- The City received \$600,000 in EPA Brownfield dollars to identify hazardous waste and petroleum pollution at more than 20 sites in the corridor.

Revitalization of the Holmes Street Corridor meets all of DOT’s BUILD criteria. The project will improve safety by calming local and commuter traffic on Holmes Street and creating pedestrian and biking accommodations where they do not currently exist. Proposed improvements align with DOT “State of Good Repair” goals by prioritizing investment in existing infrastructure. Economic development in the neighborhood is dependent on the proposed transportation measures. Transportation enhancements will promote environmental sustainability by encouraging alternative travel modes, reducing fuel consumption, curbing emissions, and decreasing stormwater runoff. Upgrades on the Holmes Street Corridor, with increased opportunity for walking and biking, will improve quality of life in distressed Census Tract 712, with low household median income (\$30,132), high poverty levels (35.7%), no household vehicle access (10.3%), and significant disability rates (22.0%).<sup>1</sup> The project will demonstrate innovation through its sustainable design, incorporation of green infrastructure, and coordinated signalization. BUILD funding will also leverage significant local, state, and private sector investment from partners, including support from the Commonwealth, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Franklin County, Frankfort Plant Board, Frankfort Independent Schools, Kentucky Capital Development Corporation, Columbia Gas of Kentucky, and local developers.

All BUILD funds will easily be obligated by DOT’s September 30, 2020 deadline.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey

## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Frankfort (population 27,621), the capital of Kentucky, is a small town bisected by the Kentucky River. Based on population, it is the fourth-smallest state capital in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Frankfort lies in a verdant landscape of bluegrass fields and forested hills. Located in the heart of bourbon, horse, and wine country, it is a major regional engine of economic growth. The city's population swells daily with 12,000 people commuting into Frankfort and Franklin County from surrounding areas for work.

Frankfort's Holmes Street (State Route 2261) is a critical local corridor located east of the historic downtown and north of the state capitol building. Holmes Street runs from High Street downtown for approximately two miles to Wilkinson Boulevard. It serves as a centerline in a small valley prone to flooding and bounded by steep ridges. The Holmes Street Corridor consists of a mix of commercial, residential, and civic uses. The state government is a major landowner along Holmes Street. The streetscape is scaled to people, consistent with its function as a neighborhood center.

The neighborhood flanking Holmes Street is very diverse – approximately 15% of residents are minority. According to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, Census Tract 712 experiences a much higher poverty rate (35.7%) and significantly lower median household income (\$30,132) than Frankfort (20.0%, \$43,275), Kentucky (18.8%, \$44,811), and the United States (15.1%, \$55,322). Education levels in Census Tract 712 are lower than state and national averages; 29.3% of residents in the area did not graduate high school, compared to 13.9% in Frankfort, 15.4% for Kentucky, and 13.0% across the country. Census Tract 712 households also strongly depend upon Food Stamp benefits (35.9%).<sup>3</sup>

The Holmes Street Corridor has the potential to be a vibrant gateway into downtown Frankfort. Currently, Holmes Street carries about 8,000 vehicles per day. The projected demand on the roadway is expected to reach approximately 10,000 vehicles daily soon with the redevelopment of the 16-acre Capital Plaza Tower site. The area is prime for revitalization and will be where Frankfort grows. The city's downtown is largely built out and constrained by geography (Kentucky River and limestone bluffs). No empty lots remain in downtown Frankfort for new commercial activity. By necessity, that development will extend up Holmes Street, where much of the population lives. Transportation investment is critical to help manage growth and improve the function and appearance of the streetscape.

### *Frankfort's Transportation Challenges*

The Holmes Street Corridor is challenging for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Unsafe conditions on the roadway are particularly dangerous for children, the elderly, and disabled residents. Frankfort's key transportation challenges include:

- **Increasing Traffic:** Select intersections along Holmes Street impede traffic flow to the historic downtown and state capital complex. This creates unnecessary delays, costs time and money, and reduces efficiency. Transportation modeling of the corridor demonstrates that traffic is expected to grow exponentially along Holmes Street – from 8,000 to 10,000

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 population estimate

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey

trips daily, a 25% increase. The current roadway design will not meet that demand.

- **High Crash Rates:** The Holmes Street Corridor is one of the City’s most dangerous transportation facilities. Between January 1, 2013 and June 30, 2018, there have been 234 collisions on the roadway, with 34 injuries and 3 fatalities. The Holmes Street Corridor has twice



*The Holmes Street Corridor has twice the rate of crashes as the statewide average*

as many crashes as the statewide average. These accidents are primarily caused by unsafe intersections and multiple commercial access points.

- **Narrow Sidewalks:** Holmes Street’s narrow sidewalks impede walking. Existing residential and commercial building stock was built to the curb, contributing to poor line-of-sight for pedestrians and vehicles. These unsafe conditions are most worrisome for children who walk daily to the Thorn Hill Education Center.
- **Inadequate Pedestrian Crosswalks:** Intersections in the area are challenging to walk across safely because of poorly marked crosswalks and/or the lack of traffic signals.
- **No Bike Accommodations:** There are no bike lanes on the Holmes Street Corridor, limiting bicycle circulation.
- **ADA Non-Compliance:** Elderly and disabled residents traveling on the Holmes Street Corridor are threatened by narrow, uneven sidewalks and poor transit access.
- **Unappealing Streetscape:** The Holmes Street Corridor lacks identity without uniform street lighting and landscaping. The existing streetscape discourages people from walking through the area and works against the community’s goal of developing a vital commercial corridor.
- **Stormwater Runoff:** The Holmes Street Corridor is nearly 100% impervious. During major storm events, Frankfort’s combined sewer system has been overwhelmed, directly emptying untreated sewage into the Kentucky River.

### *Progress to Date*

In 2003, the City established the Holmes Street Task Force to “study needs, issues, and redevelopment options for the Holmes Street Study Area.” In partnership with the University of Kentucky School of Landscape Architecture, a community survey and visioning study were conducted to gauge public interest in revitalization measures. Fifteen recommendations were presented to the Frankfort Board of Commissioners, including the development of a master plan for the Holmes Street Corridor as well as roadway improvements such as traffic islands, roundabouts, and other aesthetic control devices.

Based upon the recommendations of the Holmes Street Task Force, Frankfort contracted with the

planning firm Jordan, Jones and Goulding, Inc. in 2006 to create the *Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan*. The objective of the study were to:

- Enhance the physical appearance of the corridor;
- Build consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals that have a role in the revitalization process; and
- Strengthen the corridor’s existing economic base.

A public engagement process occurred between May 2006 and January 2007 to gather community input. The *Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan* identifies a number of transportation and housing improvements necessary to promote public and private investment in the neighborhood. Among the transportation alternatives presented, the plan suggests either a three-lane facility to accommodate future traffic demand or a two-lane street that would improve conditions for vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and businesses.

Many of the *Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan*’s proposed actions have already been initiated. Frankfort received a \$725,000 HUD HOME Investment Partnership grant to address substandard housing in the corridor. EPA Brownfields dollars have supported the assessment and cleanup of contaminated sites. The City has invested millions of dollars in the corridor for flood mitigation and storm/sanitary sewer separation. Located at one end of the corridor is Cove Springs Park and Wetlands that, with improved access, could provide outdoor recreational opportunities for residents of Holmes Street and the low-income students of the Thorn Hill Education Center. The Holmes Street neighborhood is also home to Frankfort’s most historic park, Fort Hill, which overlooks the entire city. The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet is planning traffic counts along Holmes Street to prepare for future investment. Economic investment in the corridor will also soon be boosted by Governor Matt Bevin’s recent designation of Census Tract 712 as an Opportunity Zone, which will provide capital gains tax benefits for Holmes Street redevelopment projects.

A major driver of economic activity along Holmes Street will be the March 2018 demolition of the 28-story Capital Plaza Tower and 102,000-square foot Frankfort Convention Center in Census Tract 712. The City and the Commonwealth will manage redevelopment of the area. This proposed economic development is intended to spur downtown tourism and improve connectivity with nearby Buffalo Trace, the oldest continuously operating bourbon distillery in the United States. Buffalo Trace received over 200,000 guests in 2017 and is projected to continue growth at 18-20% per year.



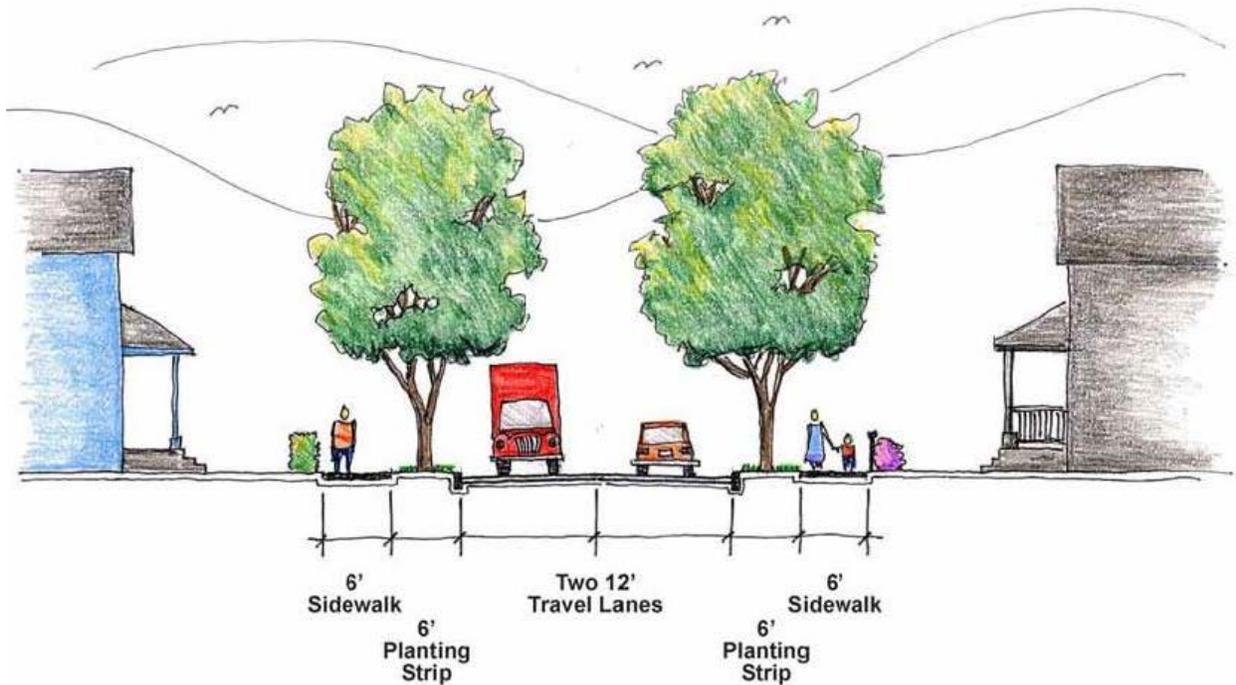
*Holmes Street improvements will improve connectivity with Frankfort’s Buffalo Trace bourbon distillery, a major tourist attraction*

Revitalization of the Holmes Street Corridor is also timely due to the receipt of a TIGER grant in Frankfort. The City is constructing a Complete Street and other transportation improvements along Second Street that will terminate at Holmes Street. The proposed BUILD Planning project will maximize DOT's previous TIGER investment by extending access to distressed residents along Holmes Street. The two interconnected projects will improve safety, promote economic development, and enhance livability across both sides of the Kentucky River.

### *Frankfort's BUILD Solution*

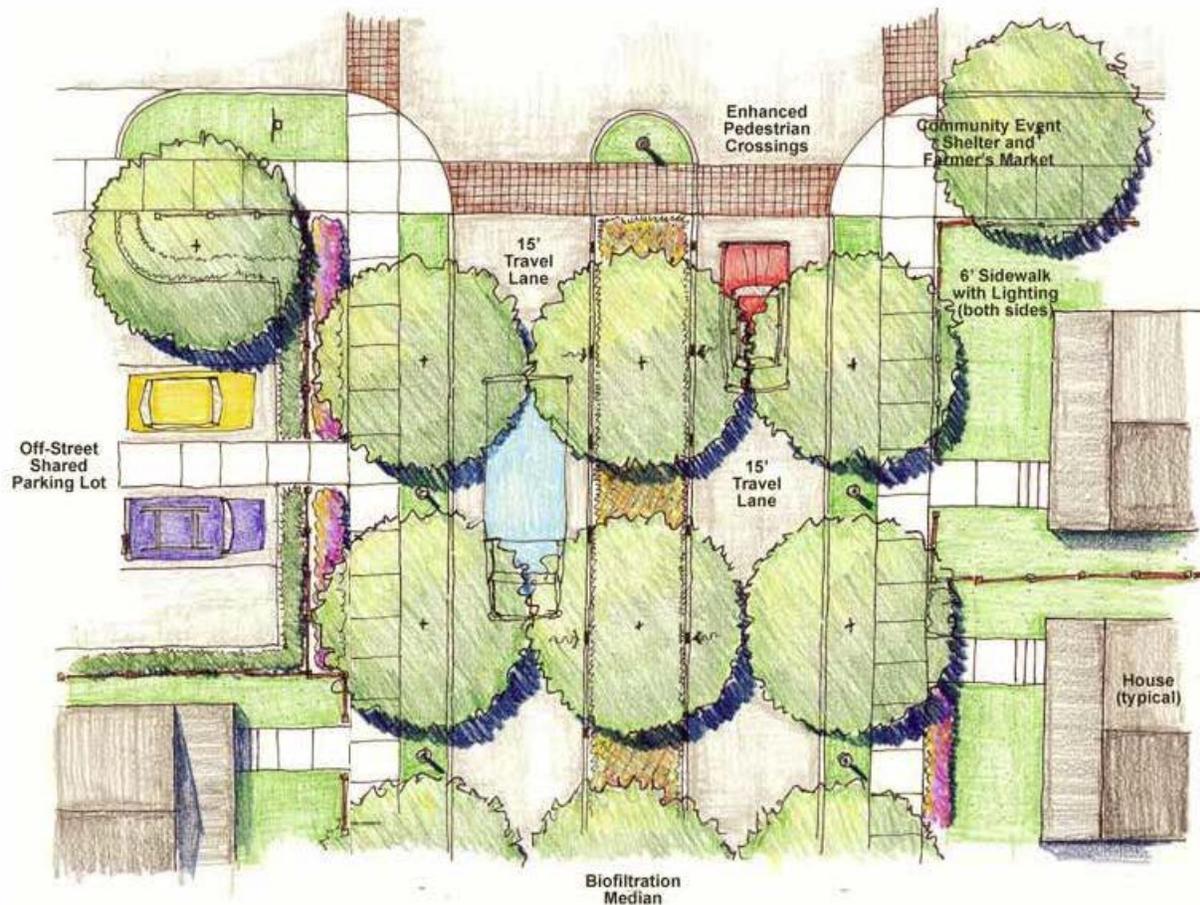
Revitalization of the 2-mile Holmes Street Corridor is critical to Frankfort's economic vitality. A Complete Street with new opportunities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, as well as improved access to the downtown, will help connect low-income Frankfort residents with jobs. Specifically, Frankfort seeks BUILD Planning resources to conduct a corridor study that will assess two recommended transportation alternatives and determine an appropriate typical section:

- **Two-Lane Street:** This streetscape concept enhances the existing two-lane street by widening the pavement and adding curb and gutter to create a more well-defined street edge. To improve the appearance of the corridor and provide a variety of environmental benefits, this concept recommends a 6-foot planting strip with street trees on both edges of the road. In addition, 6-foot sidewalks will improve the safety and walking experience of pedestrians along Holmes Street. Frankfort will gather community input to determine how to incorporate bike accommodations and improve bus stops along Holmes Street.



**Section: Two-lane Street with Sidewalks and Street Trees**

- **Three-Lane Street:** This concept improves the safety, function, and appearance of Holmes Street by providing two generous travel lanes and a third turn lane incorporated into landscaped medians that double as stormwater biofiltration and storage features. In addition to creating attractive landscaped areas, these medians can collect stormwater runoff, store it, cleanse it of pollutants, and allow some portion of the water to infiltrate back into the groundwater. Curbs define the street edges, and 6-foot planting strips allow street trees to be installed, providing shade and other environmental benefits. The concept shows 6-foot sidewalks on both sides of the street that increase pedestrian safety and comfort. Bike accommodations and improved bus stops will also be considered.



**Plan: Three-lane Street with Biofiltration Median and Sidewalks**

Each of the two proposed alternatives will be evaluated to determine practicality for the Holmes Street Corridor. A hybrid approach will also be explored to both accommodate more users and calm traffic to ensure the safety of neighborhood residents. Specific corridor study elements will include:

- Conducting extensive community engagement to determine what elements are desired with the typical Holmes Street section;

- Completing traffic and safety analysis to identify operational and safety impacts of a two-lane versus a three-lane street, including new trips that will be generated from the 16-acre Capital Plaza Tower redevelopment at the terminus of the Holmes Street Corridor;
- Performing a parking evaluation to determine existing on-street parking demands and assess neighborhood parking needs;
- Developing access management strategies to limit back-out parking and unrestricted access commercial properties; and
- Preparing an environmental overview and evaluating potential environmental impacts of each typical section alternative.

BUILD Planning funds will be used to identify the preferred option and advance the project to 30% schematic design.

### *Expected Users*

Frankfort’s proposed transportation improvements will benefit a number of populations, including:

- Frankfort residents who will benefit from increased economic development along the Holmes Street Corridor;
- Commuters who routinely walk and bike to work downtown, including residents who will seek jobs at the planned Capital Plaza Tower redevelopment site at the terminus of Holmes Street;
- Economically-disadvantaged residents who do not own a vehicle and depend upon safe streets and sidewalks to travel within the community;
- Frankfort Transit System users with poor access to bus facilities;
- Senior citizens and disabled residents who cannot effectively travel the Holmes Street Corridor;
- School children who currently travel upon unsafe sidewalks;
- Developers and business advocates who insist upon transportation improvements along the proposed corridor; and
- Tourists and other visitors who currently cannot easily access Frankfort’s downtown or the state capitol.

### *Project Outcomes*

DOT Secretary Elaine Chao has placed an emphasis on using federal transportation investment as a tool to help small and rural communities “improve infrastructure condition, address public health and safety, promote regional connectivity, or facilitate economic growth or competitiveness.” Frankfort’s proposed transportation project will repair a broken corridor, stimulate economic development, help residents improve the quality of their lives, and create pathways to expand the region’s middle class. BUILD Planning investment will produce a variety of desired outcomes in Frankfort, including:

- Increased Transportation Choices: BUILD funding will enable Frankfort to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and increase the number of commuters who bike or walk to work along the Holmes Street Corridor.
- Safer Streets & Sidewalks: Essential repairs of streets and wider sidewalks will help reduce vehicular and non-vehicular accidents, making Frankfort a safer place.
- Increased Density: Revitalization will encourage development and help the City build

density.

- **Economic Growth:** BUILD investment will help unleash significant economic growth and create jobs along the Holmes Street Corridor, as well as connect low-income Frankfort residents to good-paying employment opportunities at the redeveloped 16-acre Capital Tower Plaza site.
- **Rural Resurgence:** BUILD funding helps support rural America, where infrastructure investment has been lacking.
- **Improved Environment:** Investments in walkability will help to improve air quality, decrease stormwater runoff, and generate other significant environmental benefits.
- **Healthier Community:** Providing opportunities for increased walking and biking, as well as reducing environmental pollution, will help Frankfort become healthier.

### *Local, Regional, and National Significance*

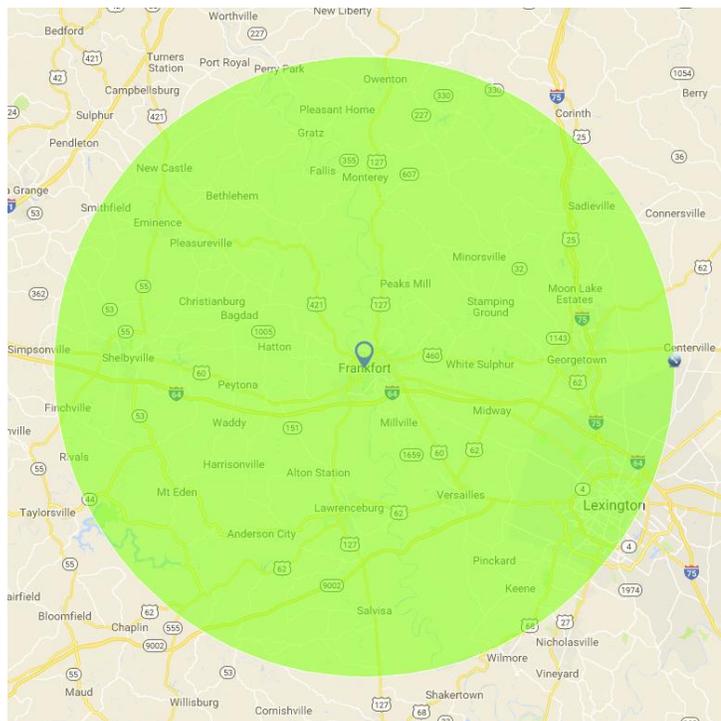
The project is of local, regional, and national importance. Locally, the project will help the City revitalize a struggling neighborhood disconnected from downtown. The *Frankfort/Franklin County Comprehensive Plan Update 2016* encourages development of small area overlay plans for high priority areas, including Holmes Street. The City is actively working with landowners and developers to attract Opportunity Zone investment along the corridor in Census Tract 712. Transportation investment supports these planning efforts and will promote further revitalization in this part of the city.

Regionally, Frankfort is a major economic center of activity in Kentucky. As the economy of Frankfort improves, residents across rural Bluegrass country will benefit from new job opportunities. While larger cities across the country bounced back quickly from the nation's recession, small and rural towns like Frankfort have struggled to recover. BUILD investment will support Frankfort as it rebuilds critical infrastructure, revitalizes distressed neighborhoods, and helps lead regional growth.

The project will also have significant national implications. As a state capital, visitors from across the nation regularly visit Frankfort. The City seeks to adopt a sustainable design for the Holmes Street Corridor that can serve as a model to other small places.

### *Benefit to Rural Communities*

DOT defines Frankfort as rural. The proposed BUILD improvements will showcase how an important rural community can prosper economically with Complete Streets, improved



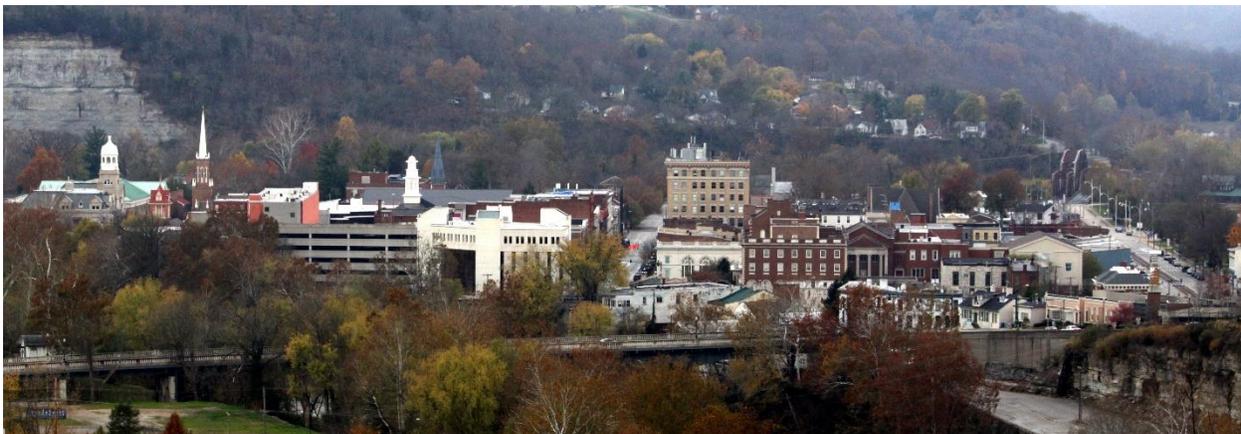
*Frankfort's rural region (25-mile radius)*

streetscapes, and green infrastructure. Furthermore, Frankfort is surrounded by rural Kentucky counties. Within a 25-mile radius of Frankfort sits Anderson (population 22,544), Franklin (population 50,485), Henry (population 16,006), Owen (population 10,765), Scott (population 54,873), Shelby (population 47,421), and Woodford (population 26,368) counties.<sup>4</sup> Holmes Street is a gateway into Frankfort. BUILD resources will help to improve rural access to economic, educational, and health care opportunities in Frankfort.

## II. PROJECT LOCATION

Frankfort, located astride a double curve in the Kentucky River in the central portion of the state, is the capital city of the Kentucky. As the seat of state government, Frankfort's workday population increases significantly with a large number of commuting employees. Known for its iconic capitol building, bourbon distilleries, and small town charm, Frankfort is awash with history. *Forbes* magazine rated Frankfort as one of the best small cities in the United States to raise a family, and *Livability* ranked the city in the top ten places for African Americans.<sup>5,6</sup> The city enjoys a business-friendly environment, skilled workforce, and extraordinary quality of life. Not surprisingly in the state capital, public administration is the city's largest industry. Education, health care, manufacturing, and retail trade are also significant sectors of Frankfort's economy.

Frankfort is a compact, dense community with 27,621 people, 11,140 households, 6,053 families, and 1,746.3 people per square mile.<sup>7,8</sup> The city is ethnically-diverse (24.8% minority), with a significant African American population (16.4% compared to 12.6% nationally). Approximately 14% of Frankfort's population is school age (5-17) and 15.5% of residents are 65 years or over. A large proportion of Frankfort's elderly population suffers with a disability (46.4% compared to 35.7% within the United States). Between 2012 and 2016, the median household income in Frankfort was \$43,275 (compared to \$44,811 in Kentucky and \$55,322 nationally) and 20.0% of



*Frankfort, Kentucky's capital city*

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 population estimate

<sup>5</sup> Forbes, "2010 Best Cities for Families," 2010

<sup>6</sup> Livability, "Best Cities for African Americans," 2016

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 population estimate

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey

the city’s residents lived below the poverty line (compared to 18.8% statewide and 15.1% across America). More than 50% of housing units in Frankfort are renter-occupied, compared to 33.2% in Kentucky and 36.4% throughout the country. The housing stock is older, with 50.9% built before 1970. No vehicles are available to 8.1% of Frankfort’s population.<sup>9</sup>

The Holmes Street neighborhood (located in Census Tract 712), which the proposed BUILD project directly supports, is more low-income than the city as a whole. The median household income in Census Tract 712 is \$30,132, significantly below national, state, and local levels. Approximately 36% of Holmes Street Corridor residents live in poverty and 35.9% of the population receives Food Stamps and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Housing in Census Tract 712 is blighted, with 81.5% built before 1970 and 26.9% constructed in 1939 or earlier. The *Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan* indicates that roughly 43% of structures in the neighborhood require demolition and 31% need some type of rehabilitation. Vacancies in the area exceed 16%. More than 10% of the area’s housing units do not own a vehicle, limiting the mobility of occupants. Almost 15% of the Holmes Street Corridor’s population is school age (5-17) and 11.7% of residents are 65 years or over. Exactly 22.0% of the neighborhood’s population is disabled (36.0% of residents 65 years and over).<sup>10</sup>

	<b>Census Tract 712</b>	<b>City of Frankfort</b>	<b>Kentucky</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Minority</b>	14.0%	24.8%	12.5%	26.7%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$30,132	\$43,275	\$44,811	\$55,322
<b>Poverty</b>	35.7%	20.0%	18.8%	15.1%
<b>Food Stamps/SNAP Benefits</b>	35.9%	16.2%	16.9%	13.0%
<b>Did Not Graduate High School</b>	29.3%	13.9%	15.4%	13.0%
<b>Housing Built 1969 or Earlier</b>	81.5%	50.9%	35.2%	39.7%
<b>Vacant Housing Units</b>	16.3%	12.3%	11.9%	12.2%
<b>Renters</b>	50.7%	50.7%	33.2%	36.4%
<b>No Vehicle</b>	10.3%	8.1%	7.8%	9.0%
<b>School Age (5-17)</b>	14.8%	13.7%	16.8%	16.8%
<b>Age 65 and Over</b>	11.7%	15.5%	14.8%	14.5%
<b>Disabled</b>	22.0%	18.4%	17.2%	12.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

Approximately 3% of Holmes Street Corridor individuals 16 years and over commute by walking, compared to 2.4% statewide. In addition, 0.7% of neighborhood residents bike to work, compared to 1.3% in Kentucky. Alternative transportation options are particularly important to schoolchildren, low-income residents, and people who do not own vehicles in Frankfort.

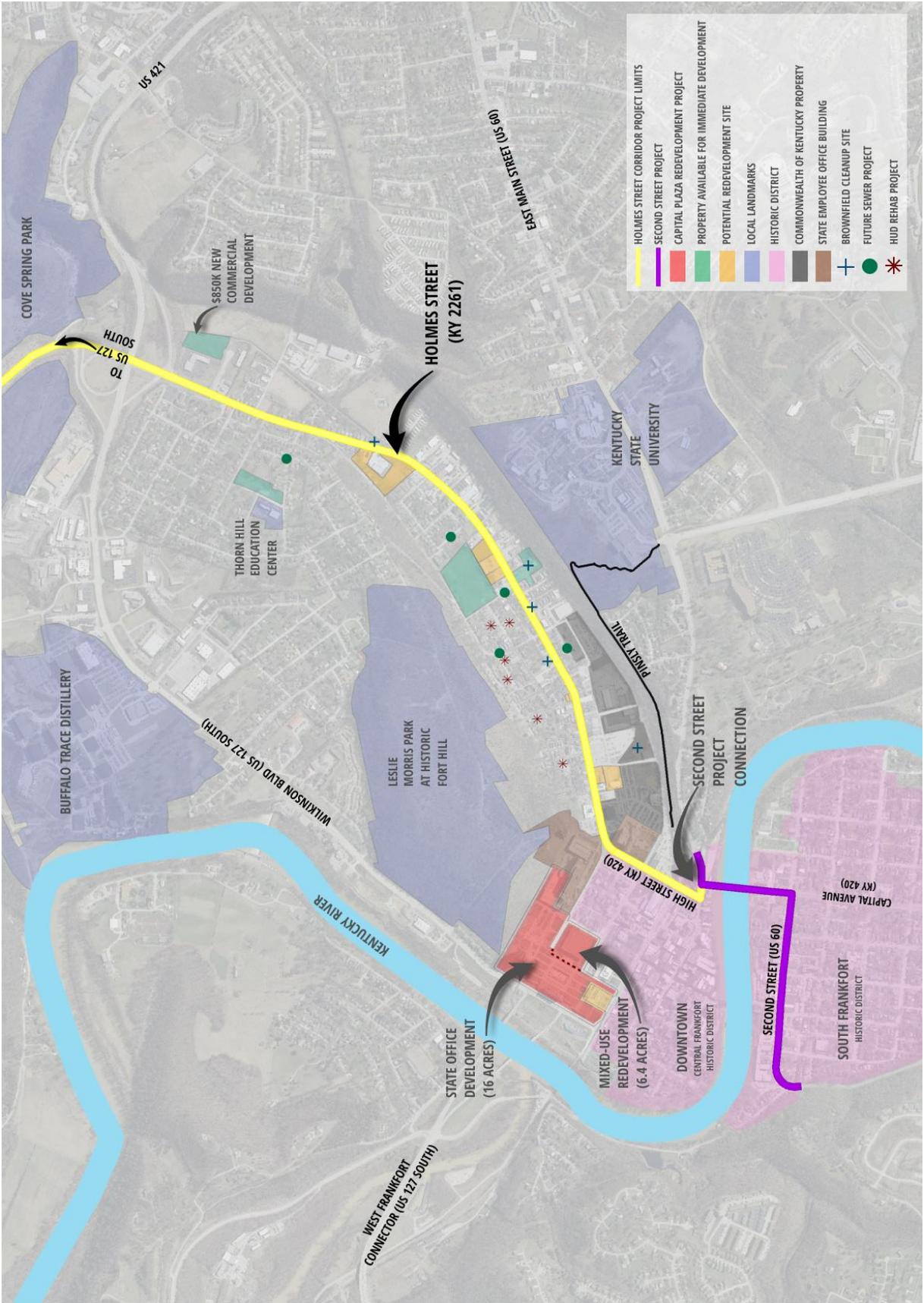
The Holmes Street Corridor project is critical to a major revitalization effort in downtown Frankfort. A 16-acre site is being redeveloped by the City and Commonwealth following the demolition of the Capital Plaza Tower and Frankfort Convention Center. Significant mixed-use development is envisioned for the area, to be supported with Opportunity Zone tax benefits. BUILD support is critical to serve this new economic activity.



*The former Capital Plaza Tower site has been cleared and is ready for development at the end of the Holmes Street Corridor*

The project area is located in northern Frankfort. The Holmes Street Corridor is a gateway into the city. Holmes Street runs from High Street downtown for approximately two miles to Wilkinson Boulevard. The proposed planning is not located in an Urbanized Area and is considered rural by DOT BUILD standards.

Geospatial coordinates for the project area are -84.861, 38.204 decimal degrees.



### III. GRANT FUNDS AND SOURCES/USES OF PROJECT FUNDS

Frankfort seeks \$616,000 in BUILD Planning funds to support multimodal improvements on the Holmes Street Corridor. The total cost of the project is \$770,000. BUILD support represents 80% of the total project. Frankfort and its partners have committed to match BUILD funds with \$154,000 in non-federal money, which represents 20% of the total project. Local match includes \$124,000 from the City (including the Frankfort Sewer Department), \$10,000 from the Frankfort Plant Board, and \$20,000 from Columbia Gas.

Description	Cost	BUILD Request	Other Federal Support	Non-Federal Match	Matching Source
<b>Holmes Street Corridor Study</b>					
Traffic & Safety Analysis	\$40,000 (5.20%)	\$35,000 (87.50%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$5,000 (12.50%)	City of Frankfort
Community Engagement	\$25,000 (3.25%)	\$20,000 (80.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$5,000 (20.00%)	City of Frankfort
Alternatives Analysis	\$90,000 (11.69%)	\$90,000 (100.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	
Environmental Overview	\$45,000 (5.84%)	\$40,000 (88.89%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$5,000 (11.11%)	City of Frankfort
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$200,000 (25.98%)</b>	<b>\$185,000 (92.50%)</b>	<b>\$0 (0.00%)</b>	<b>\$15,000 (7.50%)</b>	
<b>Holmes Street Utility Planning</b>					
Combined Sewer (Sanitary/Storm)	\$90,000 (11.68%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$90,000 (100.00%)	City of Frankfort - Sewer Department
Water/Electric/Communications	\$10,000 (1.30%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$10,000 (100.00%)	Frankfort Plant Board
Gas	\$20,000 (2.60%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$20,000 (100.00%)	Columbia Gas of Kentucky
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$120,000 (15.58%)</b>	<b>\$0 (0.00%)</b>	<b>\$0 (0.00%)</b>	<b>\$120,000 (100.00%)</b>	
<b>Holmes Street Phase I Design</b>					
Survey	\$80,000 (10.39%)	\$80,000 (100.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	
Design	\$350,000 (45.45%)	\$336,000 (96.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$14,000 (4.00%)	City of Frankfort
Public Involvement	\$20,000 (2.60%)	\$15,000 (75.00%)	\$0 (0.00%)	\$5,000 (25.00%)	City of Frankfort
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$450,000 (58.44%)</b>	<b>\$431,000 (95.78%)</b>	<b>\$0 (0%)</b>	<b>\$19,000 (4.22%)</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$770,000 (100.00%)</b>	<b>\$616,000 (80.00%)</b>	<b>\$0 (0%)</b>	<b>\$154,000 (20.00%)</b>	

<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$770,000</b>
<b>Total Local Match</b>	<b>\$154,000</b>
<b>Total BUILD Funds Requested</b>	<b>\$616,000</b>
<b>Percentage of BUILD Funds in Project</b>	<b>80.00%</b>
<b>Percentage of Local Match in Project</b>	<b>20.00%</b>

There are no restrictions on the use of any of Frankfort’s matching funds.

## **IV. MERIT CRITERIA**

### **A. Safety**

A key goal of Frankfort’s proposed BUILD project is to ensure the safety of all citizens utilizing the Holmes Street Corridor. The City seeks to improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along the route. There are currently several points of conflict between cars and people in the public realm of Holmes Street and its intersecting streets. Holmes Street is a two-lane road with no turning lanes. There are also four primary intersections along Holmes Street and dozens of side streets, curb cuts, and business ingress/egress that slow traffic, create turning conflicts, and contribute to a very challenging pedestrian and bicycle experience.

Traffic studies have reported a volume of 8,000 vehicles per day along the Holmes Street Corridor. Congestion occurs in the morning and late afternoon hours. New economic activity along the roadway is expected to increase these trips to 10,000 vehicles per day. The current road is not adequately designed to meet the needs of vehicular, bicyclist, pedestrian, and transit users.

Holmes Street already has some of the highest rates of crashes in the Frankfort area. Between January 1, 2013 and June 30, 2018, 234 accidents were reported along the corridor with 33 injuries and 3 fatalities. Crashes on Holmes Street are twice the statewide average. Predominant crash types in the Holmes Street Corridor are rear-end and angle collisions, and mostly involve property damage only. There were, however, a number of recorded crashes that involved pedestrians and cyclists.

“Everything is so tight on Holmes that there is no room for evasive action,” says Captain Kenneth Hopkins of the Frankfort Police Department. “If a cat runs out in front of you or there is something on the road, you’re going to hit something – a light pole, a fence, or someone’s flower pot.”

Hot spots in the corridor over the last five years include:

- Holmes Street, High Street, and Mero Street
- Holmes Street and Collins Street
- Holmes Street and Henry Street

Rear-end crashes are synonymous with varying speeds in the traffic stream. With only two traffic signals in the corridor (at Mero/High Streets and Wright Street), traffic should flow in a nearly continuous stream. The high number of residential cross streets and commercial access points creates a condition where traffic flow is interrupted by turning vehicles and, therefore, rear-end collisions occur. Angle collisions occur at intersections from left-turning vehicles entering or

leaving a driveway or minor street. These crashes are often more severe than rear-end collisions; they cause greater damage to the automobile and present a higher risk of injuries to vehicle occupants. New economic activity in the area will bring more traffic and conflicts without the proposed BUILD improvements.

The planning project will help the City avoid surface transportation-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities, and achieve significant safety benefits. Frankfort will employ Access Management strategies to reduce rear-end and angle collisions, including:

- Reducing access points (i.e., sharing of commercial entrances by adjacent businesses);
- Restricting access points (i.e., right-in/right-out);
- Realigning access points (i.e., offset driveways will be rebuilt to become four-way intersections); and
- Defining access points (i.e. wide-open street frontage becomes a standard driveway).

The proposed improvements will also help Frankfort shift traffic modes from personal vehicles to even greater walking, biking, and transit activity. The existing conditions create unsafe conditions for bikers and pedestrians, and impede other services such as city refuse collection, snow removal, and street patching/cleaning. Safe sidewalks, visually-enhanced crosswalks, bike lanes, improved lighting, and better connectivity to trails will reduce areas of conflict. Essential street repairs on Holmes Street will also reduce damage to vehicles, including deployed airbags, popped tires, damage to vehicle struts, as well as people reporting pedestrian harms from trip hazards.

## **B. State of Good Repair**

The conditions on the Holmes Street Corridor have not been modified in decades. Sidewalks, street amenities, and lighting are much the same as they were decades ago. Much of Holmes Street has fallen into extreme disrepair. Revitalization of the Holmes Street Corridor will improve the conditions of existing transportation facilities and infrastructure. The project is in complete alignment with DOT's "fix it first" approach. If left unimproved, the poor condition of the asset will threaten the efficiency of Frankfort's transportation network and constrict the mobility of people to the downtown employment center.

Frankfort seeks BUILD Planning funds to improve a key corridor in the community. The road is located in an economically-distressed portion of the city, with 35.7% of the neighborhood living in poverty. The proposed improvements will help move traffic efficiently through the area and minimize wear and tear of the roadways. Frankfort seeks to develop Complete Streets on Holmes Street. The Holmes Street Corridor currently serves pedestrian, bike, transit, and personal vehicle traffic. However, it was not designed for these mixed uses. Sidewalks are narrow with utility poles impeding pedestrians and unmarked crosswalks threaten safety. Planning elements include reconstruction of the roadway, wider sidewalks and new bike lanes, appropriate pedestrian-scale street lighting, improved crossings, and better design of intersections and access points. Complete Street improvements will provide better functionality on Holmes Street, improve mobility along this thoroughfare, and help the City save money by matching the needs of the roadway with its actual design. Proposed upgrades invest in existing infrastructure, help to minimize deterioration of the roadway, and extend the life cycle of Frankfort Transit System's rolling stock investments.

The Holmes Street Corridor project is consistent with existing local and regional plans to maintain

transportation facilities and systems in a state of good repair. BUILD funding will complement other efforts in Frankfort to focus investment in the Holmes Street neighborhood. The *Frankfort/Franklin County Comprehensive Plan Update 2016* encourages development of small area overlay plans for high priority areas, including Holmes Street. Holmes Street revitalization aligns with the comprehensive plan by:

- Encouraging mixed use and the re-use of vacant and underutilized land;
- Implementing development principles that encourage alternate modes of transportation, connectivity to other uses and walkable neighborhoods; and
- Preserving neighborhoods while enhancing the community quality and character.

Improved pedestrian and bike access supports Frankfort's investment in multi-use trails. The project will provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to the Pinsky Trail, a former rail line that the City, Commonwealth, and Kentucky State University are currently constructing. Planning for new trailheads along Holmes Street will also expand use of 38-miles of existing trails in the area and improve connections to historic Fort Hill, home to Civil War sites, as well as access to Cove Springs, the city's largest outdoor park and trail system that lies on the fringe of the corridor.

Coordinated traffic signalization will reduce congestion and minimize impacts. The introduction of smart transportation tools will enable Frankfort to improve the reliability of its transportation system.

Future construction will be appropriately capitalized up front. Frankfort has considered how the project's long-term operations and maintenance costs will be met. Economic growth along the corridor will create significant additional fees and tax revenues that can offset costs associated with maintaining the Holmes Street Corridor infrastructure. Transit improvements will also increase Frankfort Transit System ridership and associated fares, and create efficiencies that will save money.

### **C. Economic Competitiveness**

Two key outcomes of the proposed transportation improvements are to:

- Create jobs along the Holmes Street Corridor; and
- Connect low-income neighborhood residents to good-paying employment opportunities downtown.

Holmes Street was once one of Frankfort's key economic centers. Now, light industrial uses mix throughout Frankfort's residential Holmes Street Corridor. It is common for automotive repair shops, gas stations, dry cleaners, coal yards, bulk oil terminals, and small manufacturing facilities to abut low-income housing. When it rains, the stench of petroleum fills the air from contamination seeping into the sewers. The corridor's commercial decline began with construction of the highway bypass. Many sites now lie vacant, unfenced, and vastly underutilized.

Empty buildings and idle lots detract from the continuity of the Holmes Street Corridor. Most residents and tourists utilize the Holmes Street as a throughfare, never slowing or stopping to patronize the local businesses. Redevelopment of these underutilized areas is hindered by a lack of pedestrian traffic.

The proposed BUILD project will help to unlock the Holmes Street Corridor's economic potential. Less than a mile from downtown, Complete Street improvements will help to grow foot traffic and bicycle use in the area. This area is prime for revitalization; there are nearly 22 acres across nine areas along the corridor that represent an immediate opportunity for infill development. Job potential on those 22 acres is estimated at 350 to 396 employees. Downtown Frankfort is built out with no remaining empty lots. Economic development is expected to shift to Holmes Street as the downtown is constrained by limestone bluffs and the Kentucky River. Traffic calming measures will enable drivers to slow down and appreciate new commercial and retail opportunities in the Holmes Street Corridor. Low-income residents will enjoy employment opportunities in their backyard. Land values will also rise along the improved corridor.

In addition, BUILD-supported planning will help connect unemployed and underemployed workers along Holmes Street to downtown job and educational opportunities. This is particularly true for the redevelopment of a prime 16-acre site in the core of Frankfort. In March 2018, the Commonwealth demolished the 28-story Capital Plaza Tower and 102,000-square foot Frankfort Convention Center. For decades, these two ramshackle structures depressed development in central Frankfort. Now, the City and Commonwealth are working jointly to redevelop the property. Proposed projects include the construction of a recreation facility and other sightseeing attractions. More than 1,500 new jobs will be created on the redeveloped site. This new economic development is intended to boost tourism and improve connectivity with the nearby Buffalo Trace distillery, which received over 200,000 guests in 2017.

One of the economic activities that transportation improvements will serve is the opening of the Sig Luscher Brewery at the entry of Holmes Street. Frankfort's first brewery of the modern era will help fuel the downtown revitalization of the city. A vibrant entertainment and dining scene is fundamental to making a commercial district thrive outside of daytime business hours. If Frankfort wants to attract young adults to visit and live downtown, it must offer them things to do after work and on weekends. The Luscher brewpub will be one such option. This development will serve as a critical revitalization link between the downtown and Holmes Street Corridor.

Opportunity Zone designation of Census Tract 712 provides an additional economic development tool to attract private sector interest in Frankfort. While larger cities across the country bounced back quickly from the nation's recession, small and rural towns like Frankfort have recovered more slowly. As the economy of Frankfort improves, residents across rural Bluegrass country will benefit from new job opportunities. The City is confident that being named an Opportunity Zone will help to jumpstart the Holmes Street Corridor's renewal. Frankfort is actively reaching out to local landowners, developers, tax experts, and wealth advisors to promote the new capital gains tax benefits. Partners include the Kentucky Capital Development Corporation, Downtown Frankfort, and the Frankfort Area Chamber of Commerce. New tax incentives targeting the distressed area will demonstrate how federal and state support can help struggling communities grow, generate employment, and improve quality of life.

The surge of economic development that BUILD funding will help Frankfort to unleash will also create significant local fees and taxes. New economic development on the 22 acres of developable property along Holmes Street is expected to generate approximately \$500,000 in new annual City tax revenues. Several of these projects are contingent on transportation improvements, including

a mixed-use development that includes commercial and 30+ housing units at the entry of the corridor. Local developers have indicated that they will not proceed without better access.

Finally, the Holmes Street project will help residents and commuters avoid the cost of owning a car, particularly low-income households in Frankfort. According to AAA, owning and operating a car costs \$8,469 per year.<sup>11</sup> Each vehicle that the project helps an individual avoid owning or using means significant funds are available for other expenses. Providing transportation choices such as improved transit, better walkability, and bike lanes helps residents decide to forgo owning a personal vehicle and generates significant local purchasing power.

#### **D. Environmental Sustainability**

Another important goal of the Holmes Street Corridor improvements is environmental protection. The project will demonstrate how investing in pedestrian improvements and biking can generate multiple environmental benefits, including reduced dependence on foreign oil, curbed emissions, improved air quality, decreased stormwater runoff, brownfields redevelopment, smart growth, and green infrastructure enhancements.

Holmes Street will be redesigned to improve the flow of traffic, thus reducing fuel consumption. Making sidewalks and streets safer for biking and walking will also increase the number of residents who use non-vehicular modes to commute to work. This shift of trips in the city from single-occupancy vehicles to bus transit, walking, and biking will further decrease Frankfort's oil dependence. Frankfort will model the recommended alternative to determine how many fewer gallons of gasoline the community will use annually. Those energy savings will generate meaningful reductions of carbon and other air pollutants.

Frankfort lies within the Ohio River watershed. The Kentucky River, a key tributary of the Ohio River, bisects the city. The river has carved a deep channel through the limestone of the region, creating a steep, 30-foot river bank on the south side. The city lies on a relatively flat plateau flanking the river. The stormwater runoff from Holmes Street drains to a combined sanitary and stormwater sewer system. During normal conditions, the majority of runoff is pumped through sewer lines to a treatment plant. However, during major storm events, overflow pipes convey some of the runoff directly into the river, along with untreated sewage.

Reducing the amount of stormwater entering the combined sewer system is critical to mitigate this health hazard and improve the river's water quality. Frankfort proposes to separate its combined sewer lines on Holmes Street, as well as plant green infrastructure to capture rainwater where it falls. New street trees, rain gardens, and porous paving will reduce runoff volume and filter water as it percolates into the ground. This helps to protect federally-endangered species such as the gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*), Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalists*), Northern Long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), Braun's rockcress (*Arabis perstellata*), and running buffalo clover (*Trifolium stoloniferum*).

The majority of Holmes Street does not have shade trees. The lack of trees increases temperature of the developed area relative to its surroundings, creating heat islands and discouraging walking during hot weather. This is particularly concerning for vulnerable populations, including the area's

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<sup>11</sup> AAA's 2017 *Your Driving Costs* study

higher than average elderly and transit-dependent residents who have to wait in the heat to catch the bus. Increasing the tree canopy along Holmes Street will not only improve the aesthetic character of the corridor but also improve local air quality by reducing ozone and particulate matter pollution.

The Holmes Street Corridor also has several brownfield sites that threaten the health of residents and the general economic development of Frankfort's core. Environmental Site Assessments conducted along Holmes Street have identified serious environmental contaminants. Unknown exposure pathways may be putting neighborhood residents at risk for cancer and non-cancer health hazards. Key brownfield targets include:

- A previous furniture refinishing and repair facility at 344 Holmes Street. Likely contaminants include methylene chloride and solvents such as toluene and methanol. Mixed-use development is planned for the 0.1-acre property.
- A former gas station located at 421 Holmes Street. Petroleum contamination is expected on the 0.14-acre parcel. Planning exercises have identified the site's potential reuse as park and civic space.
- A vacant shoe factory located at 501 Holmes Street. Expected contaminants at the 1.6-acre site include toluene, benzene, metals, VOCs, and solvents. Reuse opportunities include commercial or light industrial activities.
- An auto repair shop located at 731 Holmes Street. Potential pollution includes metals and metal dust, various organic compounds, solvents, paint and paint sludges, scrap metal, and waste oils. Retail is envisioned as a site reuse.
- The abandoned 2.3-acre Regan Street railyard. Expected contaminants include petroleum hydrocarbons, VOCs, BTEX, solvents, fuels, oil and grease, lead, and PCBs. Light industrial reuse is planned for the property.

Brownfields cleanup, supported with EPA grants, is already underway in the community. BUILD investment will help to encourage additional remediation of contaminated sites.

The project will also plan for the replacement of existing incandescent street lights on the rebuilt Complete Streets with energy efficient LED street lights, which will save electricity, reduce costs, and curb emissions.

## **E. Quality of Life**

The Holmes Street Corridor project is the result of a comprehensive planning effort. Residents along Holmes Street seek more home ownership, fewer vacant structures, improved infrastructure, and neighborhood-level amenities. The project's elements were identified through a series of planning processes, including the *Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan* and the *Frankfort/Franklin County Comprehensive Plan Update 2016*. Community participation in these planning processes included numerous public meetings, surveys, and interviews with stakeholders. Approximately 4,000 residents participated in contributing ideas (nearly 14% of Frankfort's population) for the new downtown master plan. Key concerns included:

- Multiple intersections and business access points create dangerous driving conditions;
- Crossing Holmes Street is challenging for pedestrians;
- Many tourists come through the area to visit the state capitol building, but wayfinding

- signage is poor and could be improved;
- Poor access to bus transit facilities is challenging for low-income residents, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities;
- Due to lack of investment, the Holmes Street Corridor has fallen victim to the broken window syndrome with a higher percent of crime and calls for service to this area as compared to the rest of the city;
- Better lighting, benches, and street furniture would make the area more appealing for pedestrians; and
- Safe bike routes throughout Frankfort are important for making biking a viable transportation option.

Frankfort's planning project will improve quality of life in the region by:

- Providing transportation choices: The project was conceived to provide safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices. Complete Streets and pedestrian improvements along Holmes Street will provide safe opportunities for walking and biking. ADA compliance measures will provide access opportunities for seniors and persons with disabilities and build on efforts already underway in downtown and the Second Street Corridor. Transportation modeling of the recommended alternative will be conducted to determine the mode shift from vehicles to alternative means. That shift will significantly decrease household transportation expenses. By expanding transportation choices, more Frankfort households will be able to forego car ownership, or maintain one vehicle rather than two or more. For residents with low- and moderate-incomes in particular, the cost of car ownership is a significant economic burden.
- Improving connectivity to jobs, health care, & other critical destinations: BUILD investment is critical to helping connect people with employment, education, health care, and other important destinations. The economic prosperity of a community is dependent on its ability to move people and goods. However, that mobility is constrained in Frankfort by narrow sidewalks, poor crosswalks, ADA non-compliance, and limited bike accommodations. The proposed improvements will enable rural Frankfort residents to safely move about the community, and save time and money along busy streets.
- Lowering transportation costs: The Center for Neighborhood Technology, which urges families to spend no more than 45% of a household budget on housing and transportation costs, measures the Frankfort region at 46% on its Housing + Transportation Affordability Index. Car ownership is expensive and often unaffordable to lower income populations. Eliminating the need for personal vehicles has the potential to drastically reduce the cost of living in Frankfort.
- Promoting neighborhood revitalization: The project has the potential to completely revitalize the struggling Holmes Street Corridor. The majority of homes along Holmes Street are in poor condition and the publicly-owned lots are typically not well-kept. Currently, Holmes Street is a food desert, with only one convenience store along the corridor. Transportation improvements will help to leverage planned mixed-use development.
- Saving time & money: Travel time savings contribute to quality of life. Less time spent behind the wheel will provide residents with greater opportunities to enjoy leisure activities.

- Supporting rural connectivity: Frankfort is the central hub of a region ringed by rural counties. As the employment core, many residents from small communities travel to Frankfort for work. The city also provides education, health care, and other services. BUILD resources will help to improve access for rural residents traveling the Holmes Street Corridor gateway into Frankfort.

## **F. Innovation**

Within Frankfort’s plans for the Holmes Street Corridor, the City intends to help the community better manage increasing traffic and extend the life cycle of infrastructure assets. Coordinated signalization will minimize congestion and improve traffic flow. This smart technology will help Frankfort manage growth along the corridor.

As turns into traffic on Holmes Street are a major cause of accidents, Frankfort will also employ best practices to improve the safety of the corridor. Access Management strategies will help the City to reduce rear-end and angle collisions. Access Management will involve changing the roadway design and land use development pattern along Holmes Street to limit the number of driveways and intersections. A center median will also be considered to control turning movements. These actions will create a more pedestrian-oriented streetscape.

Other project innovations include:

- Complete Streets: The City will transform poorly functioning streets and implement streetscape improvements along the Holmes Street Corridor. Sidewalks, bike accommodations, bus stops, and other streetscape improvements will support transit, walking, and biking for the residents and working population in this area.
- LED Street Lighting: The project will plan for the replacement of existing incandescent street lights on the rebuilt Complete Street with energy efficient LEDs, which will save electricity, reduce costs, and curb emissions.
- Green Infrastructure: Green infrastructure approaches will be used to improve water quality and manage the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff from road surfaces while improving quality of life.
- Leveraging Opportunity Zone Designation: The Holmes Street Corridor’s recent designation as a federal Opportunity Zone creates enormous potential for equity investment in the neighborhood. The City is working with economic development stakeholders to make Frankfort attractive to Opportunity Fund managers. BUILD support will be seen as a sign that the area is open for business.
- Public-Private Partnership: Frankfort will seek funds from private sectors sources to support reconstruction of Holmes Street. This private sector support for a rural public works project will serve as a model for revitalizing American infrastructure.

Additionally, Frankfort will engage with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and regional Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to adopt innovative strategies to expedite project delivery using Special Experimental Project No. 14 (SEP–14) and Special Experimental Project No. 15 (SEP–15). Under SEP–14 and SEP–15, Frankfort will seek waivers of Title 23 statutory and regulatory requirements.

## G. Partnership

Frankfort has worked with many key partners to develop the project. Partners crucial to the implementation of the proposed BUILD elements include:

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Project Roles</b>	<b>Match/Leverage</b>
City of Frankfort	<p>Frankfort will administer the BUILD project. The City's project roles will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracting with transportation planners;</li> <li>• Supporting public engagement;</li> <li>• Assessing design options; and</li> <li>• Shifting to project implementation upon design completion.</li> </ul>	\$124,000 match committed
Commonwealth of Kentucky	The Commonwealth of Kentucky has been a key supporter of the project and will contribute state resources for traffic count studies on Holmes Street. Kentucky Transportation Cabinet officials will also work with the City to move the project expeditiously into construction following design and engineering.	Leveraged transportation investment
Frankfort Sewer Department	The Frankfort Sewer Department operates the wastewater treatment plant and sewer system. The department will conduct a study of the capacity available in the existing system, including the Willow Street pump station and possible future capacity needs for continued growth. The study will help determine the required size of a proposed wet weather storage basin near the existing pump station as well as identifying any upgrades needed for existing infrastructure. The department will also study opportunities to further separate combined sewer flow in the area. This planning will ultimately result in a positive environmental impact by reducing Combined Sewer Overflows at the one permitted overflow location in this corridor.	Included in City match
Frankfort Plant Board	The Frankfort Plant Board, the area's water and electric utility, will complement project efforts with planning for the replacement of water, electric, and telecommunication utilities on the Holmes Street Corridor. While currently functional, the existing infrastructure is older and does not provide incentives for economic development. The planning will investigate replacing, improving, or upgrading utilities to promote and support economic opportunities and quality of life along the corridor.	\$10,000 match committed
Columbia Gas	Columbia Gas, Frankfort's natural gas provider,	\$20,000 match

	will complement project efforts with planning for the replacement of gas utilities on the Holmes Street Corridor.	committed
Frankfort Transit System	The Frankfort Transit System will work with the City to plan for improved access to bus stops along the Holmes Street Corridor.	Leveraged transit funds
Kentucky Capital Development Corporation	The Kentucky Capital Development Corporation, the region’s economic development agency, will market the development of sites served by better transportation infrastructure on the Holmes Street Corridor.	Leveraged marketing efforts
Holmes Street Neighborhood Association	The Holmes Street Neighborhood Association will be reformed to engage with the project. Community leaders will participate in the planning process, including sharing information with residents.	Leveraged community time
Local Developers	BUILD investment along the Holmes Street Corridor will be leveraged with revitalization efforts of private developers.	Leveraged business investment

The project enjoys strong intergovernmental support from Mayor William May, the Frankfort City Board of Commissioners, the Franklin County Fiscal Court, Governor Matt Bevin, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, State Representatives Derrick Graham and James Kay, State Senator Julian Carroll, Representative Andy Barr, Senator Rand Paul, and Senator Mitch McConnell.

The Commonwealth is invested in Frankfort’s planning for Holmes Street improvements. The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet will soon conduct traffic counts on the corridor and is prepared to support road upgrades. BUILD investment will leverage these resources.

The City has also coordinated closely with its federal partners on the project. FHWA has been briefed on Holmes Street’s needs and will be consulted throughout the planning process. The community received EPA Brownfields Assessment funding in 2014 to remediate contaminated properties in the corridor. Frankfort is seeking support from the EPA to conduct brownfields reuse planning on Holmes Street. Frankfort also plans to pursue additional technical assistance from EPA’s Office of Water to implement green infrastructure improvements to reduce stormwater runoff and is seeking an Art Works grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to install public art downtown.

**H. Non-Federal Revenue for Transportation Infrastructure Investment**

The private sector is a key supporter of the proposed BUILD improvements. Long-term, non-federal revenue will be pursued to support the construction and maintenance of BUILD-planned infrastructure. Frankfort is pursuing a tax increment financing (TIF) district to surround the Capital Plaza Tower redevelopment. TIF dollars from new development on the site could be used by the City to maintain infrastructure in a state of good repair.

The potential for private sector investment in Holmes Street Corridor infrastructure is also strengthened by Census Tract 712’s Opportunity Zone designation. Equity investors will be

pursued for mixed-use development projects in the neighborhood. During development review, the City will negotiate terms that contribute to the transportation system’s long-term sustainability.

## **V. PROJECT READINESS**

### **A. Technical Feasibility**

The Holmes Street Corridor project will easily meet the deadline to obligate funds by September 30, 2020. Planning is ready to commence upon project award. The proposed budget is based upon recent estimates and previous experience with Compete Streets/streetscape improvements. Frankfort has the technical capacity to implement the proposed statement of work, as demonstrated by its on-time, on-budget construction of similar projects like the Wilkerson Boulevard Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities funded through Transportation Enhancement funds. The project will be overseen by Frankfort Public Works Director Thomas Bradley and Community Relations/Grants Manager Rebecca Hall, who have extensive experience managing transportation infrastructure projects and meeting federal funding requirements.

As the project is planning-focused, there are no barriers to implementation. Construction of Holmes Street improvements will also move expeditiously as the project area is primarily located in the public right-of-way. Frankfort has evaluated whether any aspects of the natural, social, or economic environment would be affected by the project. As the activities that comprise the project are largely replacement in-kind of existing facilities, no impacts are anticipated.

Frankfort has a AA credit rating for its General Fund and AA- status for its Sewer Fund. Furthermore, planned and proposed development in the community is expected to strengthen the City’s finances. In combination with the Holmes Street Corridor’s Opportunity Zone designation, BUILD funding will spur significant private investment. This economic growth will create additional fees and tax revenues that can offset additional costs associated with maintaining the proposed infrastructure.

Frankfort has an exemplary record of managing federal grants, having received numerous EPA, HUD, and other federal grants over the years. Key to this effort is the development of a detailed work plan with clear milestones and responsibilities. Performance measures will be established in order to track progress. The City has never been cited for an adverse OMB Circular A-133 audit finding and has never been required to comply with “high risk” terms or conditions under OMB Circular A-102.

### ***Statement of Work***

Following is a summary of the anticipated major tasks to implement the BUILD project:

#### **1. Overall Project Management**

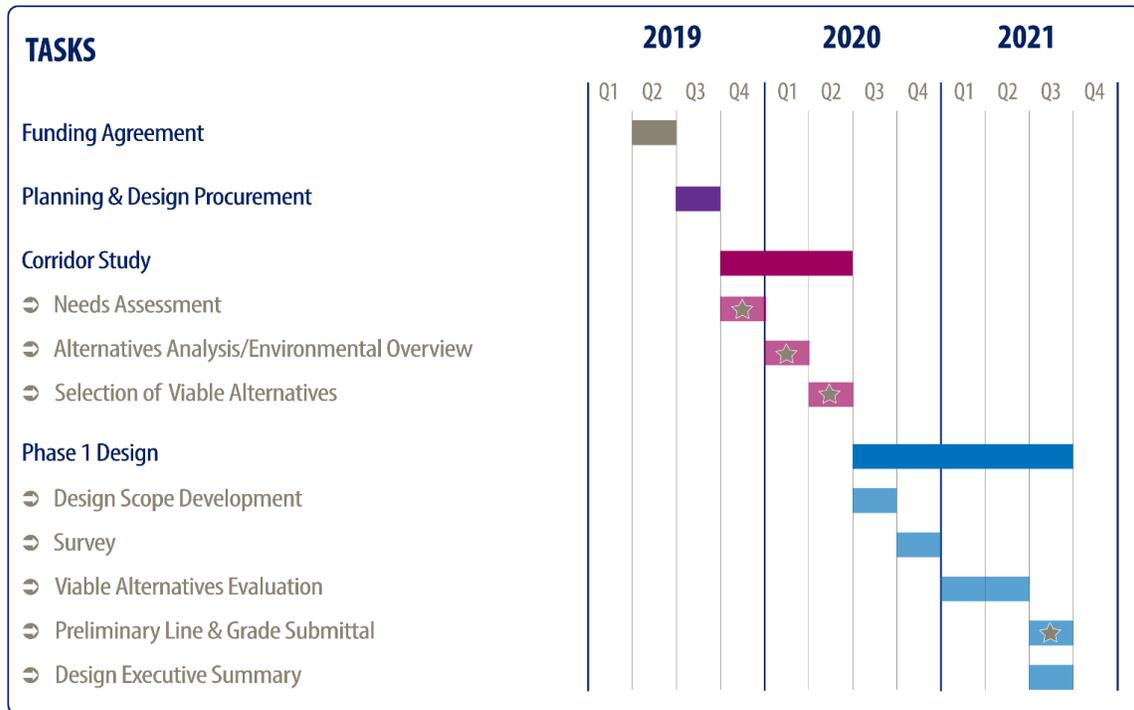
- **Designate Project Manager:** The City will identify a BUILD project manager to supervise and implement the planning project. Duties will include public outreach, project coordination, planning management, reporting, and compliance with all funding requirements.
- **Execute Funding Agreement:** Execute binding funding agreement with Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.

## 2. Holmes Street Corridor Planning

- Procurement: Advertise and select planning and design consultant.
- Contract: Negotiate corridor study scope and execute contract.
- Planning:
  - Corridor Study on Holmes Street
    - Complete needs assessment of the corridor.
      - Inventory existing corridor facilities and environmental resources.
      - Collect and analyze data on crash history, land use, and traffic volumes.
      - Project future land use and traffic volumes along corridor, including planned improvements to downtown.
      - Evaluate existing parking needs along the corridor.
      - Identify and involve current and potential corridor users and the neighborhood.
      - Identify and involve regulatory agencies and area utilities.
      - Articulate current and future corridor needs.
    - Develop range of alternatives to meet current and future corridor, including the following elements:
      - Multiple lane configurations will be provided ranging in level of service to manage future congestion while balancing the need to maintain a neighborhood street.
      - Multiple bicycle and pedestrian facility types.
      - On-street parking facilities.
      - Access management components.
      - Landscape areas.
    - Preliminary assessment of possible environmental impacts that may result from the project.
      - Cultural, historic, and archaeology.
      - Environmental justice.
      - Endangered species.
  - Utility Planning
    - Incorporating planned utility upgrades.
    - Evaluate utility relocations necessary to facilitate roadway improvements.
    - Evaluate need for utility improvements to meet community redevelopment needs.
  - Phase I Design
    - Conduct field survey and right-of-way determination.
    - Advance preliminary design on viable alternatives identified in corridor study.
    - Continued community engagement.
    - Right-of-way impact assessment.

### B. Project Schedule

Frankfort can begin the proposed project quickly upon award of a BUILD Planning grant and all funds will be spent expeditiously.



★ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## C. Required Approvals

### 1. Environmental Permits and Reviews

#### i. NEPA Status

No environmental clearance is required to conduct planning for the Holmes Street Corridor. When the project is ready to construct, a Categorical Exclusion is expected as it falls primarily within the existing right-of-way and no adverse environmental impacts are anticipated.

#### ii. Other Reviews, Permits, or Approvals

No additional reviews are necessary to commence planning on the Holmes Street Corridor. The project poses no risk to cultural or environmental resources. As previously stated, Frankfort expects to receive a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Categorical Exclusion when the City is ready to construct. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will also need to confirm that historic resources will not be affected and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will have to uphold that no rare/endangered species are likely to be harmed.

#### iii. Environmental Studies

No environmental studies are necessary to initiate and complete the proposed planning project.

#### iv. NEPA Discussions

Upon planning completion, Frankfort will initiate discussions with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to advance the proposed project’s readiness. A NEPA Categorical Exclusion is expected.

#### v. Public Engagement

The project is the result of extensive public outreach, led by the City. The community has hosted

numerous public meetings gathering input on ways to improve pedestrian, bicycling, and transit uses on Holmes Street. Local leaders, businesses, and residents attended planning workshops and provided feedback on proposed transportation solutions. These comments helped to shape the alternatives that BUILD resources will help to study. Additional public engagement will be conducted as a preferred option is selected.

## **2. State and Local Approvals**

No state or local approvals are required to conduct planning on the Holmes Street Corridor. The project is consistent with local and regional plans to maintain transportation facilities and systems in a state of good repair. BUILD funding will complement other smart growth efforts in Frankfort that focus investment on the Holmes Street Corridor, including the *Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan* and the *Frankfort/Franklin County Comprehensive Plan Update 2016*.

## **3. Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning**

Upon planning completion, Kentucky's *State Transportation Improvement Plan* (STIP) will be amended to include the Holmes Street improvements.

## **D. Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies**

Frankfort's BUILD Planning project is both timely and low-risk. The effort complements the City's current TIGER project on Second Street and will provide an opportunity to maximize DOT's previous investment. There are no issues in conducting the proposed planning.

Long-term, the project poses few construction barriers. Most of the improvements are located within existing right-of-way. Only minor temporary and permanent easement acquisition is anticipated. Potential construction mitigation strategies might include:

- NEPA delays: The City will consult with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, which administers NEPA reviews on behalf of DOT for federal aid projects. The project will likely receive a Categorical Exclusion, pending SHPO documentation that historic resources will not be affected and notice from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service confirming that no rare/endangered species will be harmed.
- Cost overruns: Contingency costs will be built into a future construction budget.

## **VI. RESULTS OF BENEFIT-COST ANALYSIS**

As a planning project, a Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) is not required. A BCA will be performed if Frankfort pursues DOT funds in support of construction. Qualitatively, there are several benefits that the project is expected to produce, including:

- Safety – Holmes Street is one of Frankfort's most dangerous corridors. Traffic calming improvements will help to save lives and property in the targeted neighborhood.
- Redevelopment Opportunities – The project is expected to have a significant impact on economic development. Coupled with Opportunity Zone designation in Census Tract 712, BUILD investment will help to spur economic activity in a distressed neighborhood.
- Health & Recreation Benefits – Wider sidewalks and trail connections will enhance safe recreation, walking, and biking opportunities for residents and workers in the project area. This will generate positive health outcomes.