



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 30, 2025

CITY OF RIDGELAND AWARDED \$15.653 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT TO TRANSFORM WEST JACKSON STREET INTO A SAFER, MORE WALKABLE CORRIDOR

The City of Ridgeland has been awarded a \$15.653 million Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Implementation Grant to advance a transformative safety project along West Jackson Street, one of the City's busiest and most historic corridors.

The funding, administered by the Federal Highway Administration, will support the West Jackson Street/Railroad District Project, a comprehensive initiative designed to reduce crashes, improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, and strengthen Ridgeland's growing Railroad District.

West Jackson Street serves as the primary east–west connection between Interstate 55 and U.S. Highway 51, carrying more than 17,000 vehicles daily while also supporting pedestrian activity, nearby schools, medical offices, churches, and local businesses. In its current configuration, the corridor has experienced a high frequency of crashes and lacks adequate infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists.

“This grant represents a major investment in the safety and future of Ridgeland,” said Mayor Gene McGee. “West Jackson Street is a gateway into our City and our historic Railroad District. With this funding, we can reimagine this corridor as a place that protects lives, supports local businesses, and reflects the kind of connected, livable community we want Ridgeland to be.”

The project will apply the Safe System Approach, a nationally recognized framework that prioritizes proactive design strategies to prevent serious injuries and fatalities. Planned improvements include a road diet to reduce conflict points, wider buffered sidewalks, dedicated bicycle lanes, enhanced pedestrian crossings, traffic-calming features, improved lighting, and upgraded signalization at key intersections.

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Gene F. McGee, cmo - mayor • Angela E. Richburg, mmc - city clerk / chief financial officer

board of aldermen: D.I. Smith, cmo, mayor pro tempore - at-large • Ken Heard, cmo - ward 1 • Chuck Gautier, cmo - ward 2
Kevin Holder, cmo - ward 3 • Brian P. Ramsey, cmo - ward 4 • Bill Lee - ward 5 • Wesley Hamlin, cmo - ward 6



“These improvements are about fundamentally changing how this street functions,” said Public Works Director Alan Hart. “This project allows us to implement improvements to slow traffic, improve visibility, and create a safer environment for drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and nearby neighborhoods, all while supporting economic revitalization of the Railroad District.”

The project corridor has been formally identified as a high-priority safety location in the regional Safety Action Plan developed by the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, the metropolitan planning organization for the Jackson area. Crash data and public engagement consistently highlighted West Jackson Street as one of the City’s most urgent safety needs.

Ridgeland officials emphasized that the grant would not have been possible without strong federal leadership and advocacy. *“The City of Ridgeland is grateful for the leadership of the Federal Highway Administration and for the continued support of Mississippi’s Congressional Delegation,”* Mayor McGee added. *“We especially thank Cindy Hyde-Smith, Roger Wicker, and Michael Guest for their commitment to transportation safety and infrastructure investment in Mississippi communities.”*

In addition to improving safety, the project is expected to serve as a catalyst for continued redevelopment within the Railroad District by calming traffic, improving walkability, and encouraging mixed-use growth along a corridor where many properties remain underutilized.

The total project cost is estimated at \$19.5 million, with the SS4A grant covering 80 percent of eligible expenses. The City of Ridgeland has committed the required local match and is prepared to move forward with design and construction. Preliminary engineering and environmental review are expected to begin upon execution of the grant agreement, with construction anticipated to be completed by spring 2028. In addition, the City is expected to implement a Demonstration Project in the summer of 2026 to illustrate further and test the planned improvements.

“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to fix a dangerous corridor and do it the right way,” Hart said. *“The result will be a safer street, a stronger district, and a better Ridgeland for decades to come.”*

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