

February Commission Wrap-Up:

Inspection stations discussed;

\$44.6 million in projects awarded

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Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's February 4 meeting include an update on a program to build nine port-of-entry inspection stations, approval of an eight-year railroad maintenance plan, approval of cable barrier installation in I-35 in Kay and Oklahoma counties and projects to improve US-277 in Comanche County and SH-15 in Woodward County.

Oklahoma Transportation Secretary Phil Tomlinson reported on a \$61 million project to build new commercial vehicle inspection stations at locations on I-35 in Love and Kay counties, I-40 in Beckham and Sequoyah counties, I-44 in Cotton and Ottawa counties, US-69 in Bryan County, US 271 in Choctaw County and US-412 in Delaware County.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley noted the stations will be equipped to weigh trucks as well as inspect brake systems, manifests and cargo, in many cases without stopping the vehicles. Oklahoma Corporation Commissioners Jeff Cloud and Jim Roth also attended, noting that in addition to meeting public safety concerns, the new inspection stations will help reduce the number of overweight trucks on state highways.

Commissioners approved a \$28.1 million eight-year plan for maintenance of the nearly 870 miles of state-owned rail lines throughout the state. Under the state's Railroad Revitalization Act of 1978, ODOT has acquired 869 miles of lines and leases them to rail operators. Funding for the program comes from the leases and from a tax on freight cars passing through the state.

Commissioners also approved two cable barrier projects on I-35, one in Kay County near the Kansas border and another near Edmond in Oklahoma County. Also approved was a \$4.1 million project to improve US-277 through Fletcher in Comanche County. Approval was also given for an engineering contract to begin survey work on SH-15 in Woodward County. Construction on the \$7.7 million project is scheduled to begin in six years.

In all, commissioners awarded 38 contracts totaling \$44.6 million to improve highways, interstates and county roads in 24 counties. Projects include bridge and highway construction and reconstruction, resurfacing and safety improvements.

Contracts were awarded in Adair, Alfalfa, Beaver, Cherokee, Cimarron, Cleveland, Comanche, Creek, Ellis, Harper, Greer, Johnston, Kay, Latimer, McIntosh, Muskogee, Oklahoma, Okmulgee, Pittsburg, Pontotoc, Pushmataha, Sequoyah, Tulsa and Wagoner counties.

The commission - an eight-member panel appointed by the governor to oversee the state's transportation development - awards project contracts for road and bridge construction every month. The panel's next meeting is Monday, March 3, 2008, at 11 a.m. in the R.A. Ward Transportation Building in Oklahoma City.

Before a project is awarded, ODOT researches, plans and designs work to be done. Contracts are bid competitively, with the OTC selecting the winning firm. Contractors have a grace period to begin work, typically six weeks after a contract is awarded, unless a later start date is specified. However, weather or other factors can delay a project.

Contracts, bid information, the commission's monthly agenda and project details can be accessed at <http://www.okladot.state.ok.us>.

– www.okladot.state.ok.us –

(Editors and News Directors: For details about projects in your area and to download accompanying pictures, please visit the Web site www.okladot.state.ok.us/public-info. For more information, call the ODOT Media and Public Relations Office at 405-521-6000.)

State Owned Rail Routes

The Oklahoma Transportation Commission on Monday, Feb. 4, approved a \$28.1 million, eight-year maintenance plan for state-owned rail lines. Under the state's Railroad Revitalization Act of 1978, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation has acquired 869 miles of lines and leases them to rail operators. The program is funded through the leases and a tax on freight cars passing through the state. Including privately owned track, more than 3,770 miles of rail are operated in Oklahoma.



AOK: Arkansas-Oklahoma – AT&L: Austin, Todd and Ladd – B&NR: Blackwell Northern Gateway – FMRC: Farmrail, Inc. –SLWC: Stillwater Central – SK&O: South Kansas & Oklahoma – WT&J: Washita, Tillman & Jackson – UP: Union Pacific



Oklahoma Corporation Commissioner Jim Roth; Oklahoma Transportation Secretary Phil Tomlinson; Marchi McCartney, director of the Oklahoma Corporation Commission's Transportation Division; Corporation Commission Chairman Jeff Cloud; Brooks Mitchell, corporation commission general administrator; and Gary Ridley, director of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, take time to show where new inspection stations will be located. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation, the Oklahoma Corporation Commission and the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority are collaborating to replace 1960s-era weigh stations with modern, high-tech facilities that will weigh and inspect commercial vehicles as they enter the state.