



US-62 construction in Blanchard celebrated at ribbon cutting

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Officials Thursday, Sept. 25, celebrated the completion of a new five-lane stretch of US-62 through downtown Blanchard. The celebration came after nearly a year of construction and several years of planning and preparation.

The project widened the highway and improved curves from northeast of Blanchard to the west edge of town at the Grady County line.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley noted that when construction costs are combined with land acquisitions and utilities, the project cost more than \$18.2 million. He congratulated the town on general improvements it made as a result of the highway construction.

“City concerns about the highway led to its construction,” he said. “It certainly looks different, and Blanchard should be proud.”

District 5 Oklahoma Transportation Commissioner Loyd Benson said the project would benefit citizens beyond Blanchard, improving travel for the entire region.

Also on hand were Rep. Lisa Billy, R-Purcell, and Sen. Jonathan Nichols, R-Norman.

Billy said construction of the highway involved many, many people, including area citizens and town boosters, local officials, ODOT officials and legislators, as well as the contractor.

Calling the highway an \$18 million economic development investment, Nichols too noted citizens played a key role in encouraging officials to improve the highway. He said the improvement will be a benefit for generations, both in terms of the local economy and safety.

Construction on the 1.6-mile stretch of highway began last November with final inspection in mid-September. Construction cost \$9.5 million with another \$8.7 million in costs associated with utility removal and right of way acquisition.

Oklahoma City-based Haskell Lemon Construction Co. was the general contractor.

Currently, the highway carries over 9,000 vehicles daily, but it is anticipated to carry more than 14,000 over the next 20 years

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(Editors and News Directors: For media inquiries, contact the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)

INFORMATION RELEASE

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