



September Commission Wrap-Up

Updated Eight-year Plan continues progress on highway bridges; \$33 million in contracts awarded

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Monday, Sept. 8 meeting includes approval of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's new Eight-year Construction Work Plan, presentation of the updated Four-year Asset Preservation Plan, information on a recently-announced rail crossing safety initiative and commission approval of contracts for bridge improvements on US-177 in Carter County and I-35 in Garvin County.

The commission approved the ODOT Eight-year Construction Work Plan for Federal Fiscal Years 2015-2022. Along with the State Fiscal Year 2015-2018 Asset Preservation Plan, also presented on Monday, ODOT is on track to address all remaining structurally deficient highway bridges by 2019. Along with bridges, the department plans to improve pavement quality and add paved shoulders to two-lane highways statewide. The Asset Preservation Plan is designed to extend the life cycle of highways and bridges through timely preventative maintenance, including resurfacing and rehabilitation projects.

"With the continued support of state leaders and the public, ODOT is moving closer to the point where we can address bridges through preservation, rather than reconstruction," Executive Director Mike Patterson said. "It is much more cost-effective to invest in preservation of our highways and bridges now than it is to completely rebuild them earlier than planned."

Patterson also recapped the recent announcement by Gov. Mary Fallin and transportation officials of a \$100 million ODOT initiative to improve safety warning signs at rail crossings statewide. The agency is currently identifying rail crossings for improvement and plans to have a complete list of projects finalized early next year.

The commission voted to award a more than \$6.5 million contract for replacement of the US-177 bridge over the Washita River near Dickson in Carter County and more than \$1.5 million contract for rehabilitation of the I-35 bridge over Red Branch Creek near Pauls Valley in Garvin County. They also approved a more than \$3 million contract for a bridge rehabilitation project on the heavily-traveled I-44 Belle Isle bridge in northwest Oklahoma City. The project will take approximately one year and includes financial incentives for early completion.

In all, commissioners awarded 23 contracts totaling nearly \$33 million to improve bridges, highways, interstates and roads in 19 counties. Contracts were awarded for projects in Atoka, Caddo, Carter, Choctaw, Delaware, Garvin, Grady, Grant, Le Flore, McCurtain, McIntosh, Oklahoma, Okmulgee, Pottawatomie, Pushmataha, Sequoyah, Tillman, Tulsa and Washita counties.

The 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 regular meeting is scheduled for **Monday, October 6 at 11 a.m.** in the R.A. Ward Transportation Building in Oklahoma City.

Before a project is awarded, ODOT researches, plans and designs the work to be done. Contracts are bid competitively, with the commission selecting the winning firm. Typically, work begins several weeks or months after contracts are awarded.

Contracts, bid information, the commission's monthly agenda and project details can be viewed at www.okladot.state.ok.us.

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(Editors and News Directors: The Eight-year Construction Work Plan and Asset Preservation Plan can be viewed at www.okladot.state.ok.us under News & Media. For more information, call the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)

INFORMATION RELEASE

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At their Monday, Sept. 8 meeting, members of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission voted to award a more than \$3 million contract with potential financial incentives for early completion for a bridge rehabilitation project on the heavily-traveled I-44 Belle Isle bridge in Oklahoma City, pictured here as it crosses over Northwest Expressway.