



## Smarter highways to help metro area drivers choose their route

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Testing will begin today on a new tool to help metro area drivers avoid long lines of standstill traffic, work zones and accidents: smarter highways. Thanks to technology upgrades by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation to its Oklahoma Pathfinder system, drivers will soon see real-time information on traffic conditions displayed on overhead message boards along busy metro area highways and interstates. The Pathfinder interactive map, message board locations and traffic camera displays can be viewed by the public at [www.oktraffic.org](http://www.oktraffic.org). Drivers are reminded not to use their phones to access the website while driving.

Display of up-to-the-minute traffic information on message boards will be tested by ODOT at select locations on I-35 and I-40 in the Oklahoma City metro area beginning today, and will occur intermittently throughout the day, possibly during peak traffic times. There are currently 21 highway message boards in the Oklahoma City metro area and 19 in the Tulsa area. If testing is successful, ODOT plans to fully implement the system on all message boards in the Oklahoma City in November and the Tulsa area in the next few months.

Traffic data to support this system is collected through a contract with a third-party provider and allows ODOT to calculate the estimated time it will take drivers to travel between different points along a highway and display that information on overhead message boards on the corridor. The Pathfinder website operated by ODOT is also being improved to display more real-time traffic information on an interactive map that users can access by computer or smart phone.

The message boards are used in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety to provide information on Amber Alerts, Silver Alerts, weather emergencies and lane closures due to accidents. Drivers should continue to give their attention to these alerts, which will be displayed instead travel time information during emergencies. The Oklahoma Turnpike Authority is also partnering with ODOT to provide traffic information to drivers on the turnpike system.

Since 2001, ODOT has invested more than \$10 million in Intelligent Transportation Systems infrastructure primarily in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa areas. A contract to install message boards at all major ports-of-entry at the state's borders is scheduled to go to bid in Summer 2015. These improvements are part of a national initiative to provide current traffic information to drivers on interstates and other major highways in metropolitan areas.

—[www.okladot.state.ok.us](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us)—

**(Editors and News Directors: For more information call the ODOT Media & Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)**

INFORMATION RELEASE

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The Oklahoma Department of Transportation will begin testing the display of real-time highway information on several overhead message boards in Oklahoma City. For example, drivers southbound I-35 between 15<sup>th</sup> St. and 33<sup>rd</sup> St. in Edmond can expect to see the travel time information pictured here.