



## Happy days are ahead for Oklahoma City Boulevard as Feds give thumbs up with FONSI

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Downtown drivers received some news of good cheer this week as the final approval of the environmental assessment for the Oklahoma City Boulevard was announced. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation received word late Tuesday that the Federal Highway Administration issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), marking the completion of the project's environmental planning phase.

This action means FHWA supports the transportation need for the Oklahoma City Boulevard, approves the analysis of its environmental impacts and mitigation efforts and concurs with the selected route alternative, Alternative C, for the Oklahoma City Boulevard.

The FONSI also provides federal authorization for ODOT to move the project forward from the planning phase to the implementation and construction phases.

This thumbs up allows final design work to progress on the middle section of the Boulevard, which runs from Western Ave. to E.K. Gaylord/ Shields Blvd. and will include four separate projects.

With a project complete on the west end connection of the boulevard and work progressing on the east end connection, the next phase of the boulevard construction will include railroad bridge work near the east end of the corridor and is currently scheduled to go to bid in January.

The FONSI as well as the final approved environmental assessment can be viewed on ODOT's website at [www.odot.org](http://www.odot.org).

The environmental assessment describes the project's purpose and need, the different design alternatives discussed in previous meetings as well as the selected alternative, Alternative C, with modifications from public input received in previous public meetings as well as comments and answers to questions from public hearings on the project.

Alternative C was chosen because it ranked the highest in providing the greatest access into downtown while also promoting opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists. This alternative was also consistent with the Core to Shore Plan and was supported by the City of Oklahoma City.

Serving as the final phase of the I-40 Crosstown relocation project, the purpose of the Oklahoma City Boulevard is to improve access to the downtown Oklahoma City Central Business District from the new I-40. The completed Oklahoma City Boulevard will serve as a low-speed city street running through the planned convention center and central park area, connecting on the east end to I-235 and I-40 near Bricktown and on the west end to I-40 near Pennsylvania Ave. and Western Ave.

Through extensive coordination with the City of Oklahoma City and other partners, a comprehensive public involvement process began in 1995 with the initial planning of the I-40 Crosstown relocation. Public engagement continued through the years culminating with ODOT and FHWA re-examining the alternatives for the Oklahoma City Boulevard due to new developments in the area over the last 12 years.

—[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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