



September Commission Wrap-Up:

Preparations approved for state rail plan; more than \$111 million in projects awarded

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Sept. 7 meeting include discussion of federal funding impacts on transportation, an update on stimulus-funded projects, approval of a four-year Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan, preparation for a statewide rail improvement plan, and approval of construction contracts totaling more than \$111 million.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley elaborated on discussions between Congress and the Administration regarding federal transportation funding. Ridley said he hopes any measure will address long-term needs in a way that is equitable to all states including Oklahoma.

"We would hope that any program Congress is looking at with the Administration would be focused to having a long-term bill that is funded at a level that will ensure we can make progress not only in Oklahoma but across the country," Ridley said.

Commissioners were updated about the status of stimulus funded projects. Work has been completed on 148 of the 274 projects with more than 80 percent paid to contractors.

Ridley said construction on many stimulus projects will continue into the fall. Some major projects are scheduled for completion in 2011.

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan was approved, which includes the first four years of projects from ODOT's eight-year Construction Work Plan, along with metropolitan planning organization plans and the Indian Reservation Roads Program. The STIP now will be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration for approval.

An engineering services contract to assist in creation of a statewide rail plan passed, which includes passenger and freight service. The plan will outline priorities and serve as the basis for state and federal spending on rail in Oklahoma.

Commissioners approved a pair of contracts, one to pave the new I-40 Crosstown from May Ave. to Classen Blvd. in Oklahoma City and another for a new bridge carrying SH-66 over the Turner Turnpike near Bristow.

Also approved were contracts for pavement rehabilitation and cable barriers along I-40 in far eastern Seminole County and for reconstruction of US-412, SH-412B and Admiral Place just west of the Verdigris River in Rogers and Wagoner counties.

In all, commissioners awarded 28 contracts totaling more than \$111 million to improve highways, interstates and roads in 27 counties. Projects include bridge and highway construction and reconstruction, resurfacing and safety improvements.

Contracts were awarded for projects in Alfalfa, Blaine, Bryan, Caddo, Canadian, Carter, Cimarron, Cleveland, Craig, Creek, Custer, Garfield, Grady, Jefferson, Kiowa, Latimer, Marshall, Mayes, McCurtain, Nowata, Oklahoma, Payne, Pottawatomie, Rogers, Seminole, Sequoyah and Wagoner.

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 meeting is scheduled for 11 a.m. Monday, Oct. 4, 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. 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.

—www.okladot.state.ok.us—

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

INFORMATION RELEASE

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Oklahoma Department of Transportation Deputy Director/ Chief Engineer John Fuller was recognized for his more than 39 years of service during the commission's Sept. 7 meeting. Fuller retired in September.



The most recent I-40 Crosstown paving project, awarded at the Transportation Commission's Sept. 7 meeting for \$29 million, can be seen here, pre-pavement, running under Pennsylvania Ave. bridge. This particular project will extend from May Ave. to Classen Blvd. Sept. 9, 2010