



October Commission Wrap-Up:

Preservation of existing assets discussed; nearly \$84 million in projects awarded

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Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Oct. 4 meeting include presentation of a four-year Asset Preservation Plan, approval of the first in a series of construction contracts for Port of Entry stations across the state and approval of contracts totaling nearly \$84 million.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley presented to commissioners the agency's \$376 million, four-year plan for preservation of existing roads and bridges. He noted tools such as the Asset Preservation Plan and the recently adopted Construction Work Plan have proved effective in targeting resources to do the most good.

"This plan sets guidance as to how we're going to spend our asset preservation funds," Ridley said. "It does indeed ensure that our assets will be preserved well into the future to either meet or exceed the design life."

Another asset preservation tool garnered the attention of commissioners when they approved a \$7.5 million contract for construction of a new Port of Entry station in Kay County. This is the first in a series of nine planned throughout the state at a total cost of \$61 million.

The Port of Entry stations, formerly known as weight stations, are being built through a partnership with the Oklahoma Corporation Commission and the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority. They will be geared to assist in preserving existing infrastructure and improving public safety by reducing the incidence of overweight vehicles, which prematurely age highways and bridges. In addition to weighing commercial vehicles, the modern ports will include truck inspection facilities.

Ridley also noted department personnel have been speaking at meetings across the state to explain accomplishments brought about by a commitment to transportation by state leaders and by using such planning tools to pinpoint and focus on the most critical needs.

Members thanked the I-40 Crosstown group for their hard work on the project as it now moves into full operation in the field. The project is expected to be open to traffic in 2012.

Commissioners also approved construction of the state's first single point urban interchange, which is designed to move traffic quickly by reducing the number of stopping and turning points. The interchange is slated for I-40 and Morgan Rd. in eastern Canadian County. They also approved a contract for construction of a more than five-mile stretch of US-70 between Sawyer and Fort Towson in southeast Oklahoma.

In all, commissioners awarded 37 contracts totaling nearly \$84 million to improve highways, interstates and roads in 24 counties. Projects include bridge and highway construction and reconstruction, resurfacing and safety improvements.

Contracts were awarded for projects in Adair, Beckham, Blaine, Caddo, Canadian, Carter, Choctaw, Cimarron, Comanche, Ellis, Jackson, Kay, Kiowa, Latimer, Marshall, Muskogee, Okfuskee, Oklahoma, Ottawa, Payne, Pittsburgh, Pottawatomie, Rogers and Tulsa 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 meeting is scheduled for **10 a.m. Monday, Nov. 8**, 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 website www.okladot.state.ok.us. For more information, call the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)

INFORMATION RELEASE

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS DIVISION
200 N.E. 21st St. OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105-3204 PHONE 405-521-6000



Members of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission listen as Jeff Cloud, vice-chairman of the Oklahoma Corporation Commission, discusses the importance of new Port of Entry stations planned at nine locations across the state. Corporation Commissioner Dana Murphy is also pictured, at left. At its Monday, Oct. 4 meeting, the commission approved a more than \$7.5 million contract for a Port of Entry in Kay County; the first of nine planned facilities, the formerly known as weight stations.



At their Monday, Oct. 4 meeting, members of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission thanked the I-40 Crosstown group for their work on the project as it now moves into full operation in the field. The project is expected to be open to traffic in 2012. From left are: John Bowman, assistant manager of the agency's Planning Division; Gary Evans, chief engineer; Jackie Cooper, OTC member; Dan Overland, OTC chair; Teresa Stephens, traffic safety engineer; Jim Hatt, with ODOT's Rail Programs Division; David Streb, director of engineering, and Gary Ridley, secretary of transportation.