



## **January Commission Wrap-Up:**

### **Transportation history, awards dominate Transportation Commission meeting**

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The year started in a great way for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation with many awards and the beginning of the agency's centennial celebration during the Monday, Jan. 3, meeting of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission. Commissioners also approved engineering contracts and a joint venture with the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority for the installation of changeable message boards in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa areas.

Speaking about ODOT's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, ODOT Director Gary Ridley used early-1900s maps to highlight Oklahoma's progress in transportation since statehood. Information relating to Oklahoma transportation history, including maps, can be viewed at [www.odot.state.ok.us/odot100](http://www.odot.state.ok.us/odot100).

"During this next year we will be celebrating in a lot of different ways what's taken place over the last hundred years," he said.

At the meeting several awards were presented for work with various ODOT endeavors.

The American Concrete Pavement Association honored ODOT and two contractors on three projects with national Excellence in Concrete Pavement Awards.

Along with ODOT, Duit Construction Co., Inc. of Edmond received Gold and Silver awards for work on two projects. The Gold award was for the US-59 Wildhorse Mountain project in Sequoyah County, which was completed on budget and ahead of schedule. The Silver award was for work on the Okarche Bypass, a county road in Kingfisher County. Englewood, Colo.-based, Interstate Highway Construction Inc. also won a Silver award for an overlay project on US-69 in Bryan County.

ODOT also noted the 2010 Zach D. Taylor Jr. Clean Cities Vision Award for Public Sector Alternative Fuel Leadership. The award was for ODOT's use of biodiesel in its maintenance vehicle fleets, in the *Heartland Flyer* train and for its partnership in a grant application for two biodiesel school buses, along with 21 months of fuel, for the Crutchcho Public School District.

Ken LaRue, head of ODOT's Transit Programs Division, was honored with a national award for his leadership in public transit issues with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

Ridley honored a long-time supporter of transportation improvements with a brick from the original Route 66. The honor was given to Paul Matthews on the occasion of his retirement from the Highway Users Federation after 48 years. His work has been instrumental in the construction of major projects such as Lake Hefner Parkway and the I-40 Crosstown, both in Oklahoma City.

Commissioners approved engineering contracts to develop plans for projects in Alfalfa, Texas and Caddo counties. They also endorsed a joint project with the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority to install a series of permanent changeable message boards near Tulsa and Oklahoma City. Ridley noted the message boards are helpful in notifying the traveling public of what to expect ahead, particularly during inclement weather, during road construction or in the case of a collision.

Ridley noted that ODOT works with the turnpike authority and various entities on joint projects and said such cooperation is an important aspect for moving the state forward.

Customarily, weather-related projects may not be let in December – as was the case this year. Therefore, no construction contracts were awarded at the January meeting.

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, Feb. 1, in the R.A. Ward Transportation Building in Oklahoma City.

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

(Editors and News Directors: *For pictures of award winners from your area, please visit the Web site [www.okladot.state.ok.us/public-info](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us/public-info). For more information, call the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.*)

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Using historical state maps, Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley highlighted highway history during the Monday, Jan. 3, meeting of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission. ODOT celebrates its centennial in 2011. This 1916 map shows Oklahoma roads that were in good enough condition that they could be smoothed with a grader.





Decades of work for better roads. Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley, right, gives Paul Matthews a brick from Route 66 at the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Monday, Jan. 3, meeting. Matthews, who has been supportive of several ODOT initiatives, retires this month after 48 years with the Highway Users Federation.