



## **October Commission Wrap-Up:**

### **Eight-year construction plan adopted; \$98 million in contracts approved**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Monday, Oct. 3, include approval of an eight-year construction plan, discussion of a proposal by Gov. Mary Fallin to aim at eliminating all currently known structurally deficient bridges on state highways, authorization of numerous safety projects, and approval of contracts totaling more than \$98 million.

Commissioners approved the Federal Fiscal Year 2012-2019 Eight-Year Construction Work Plan, which includes more than 1,850 projects throughout the state totaling nearly \$4.7 billion from a variety of funding sources.

The plan addresses 799 bridges, more than any previous eight-year construction plan, and 587 miles of improvements to rural two-lane highways. It also provides full funding for a number of urban projects that are underway, including reconnecting I-40 to downtown Oklahoma City following Crosstown construction. It also includes projects to address 126 structurally deficient bridges, which represents the first phase of the governor's plan.

The plan reduces the number of structurally deficient bridges on the highway system to 167. Those bridges would be addressed in the second phase of a plan by Gov. Mary Fallin to eliminate nearly all of today's structurally deficient highway bridges, without raising taxes, fees or tolls. This phase would be funded through a \$15 million annual increase in state transportation funding.

Although structurally deficient bridges are not an immediate danger to the public, Oklahoma Department of Transportation Deputy Director Gary Evans said if the structures are not addressed, they could deteriorate to the point of having load carrying restrictions and possible closures.

"If you wait to the point where you have to load post the bridge, you restrict commerce in the state," Evans said. "That's not what a good transportation system should do."

Fallin's plan would also reduce the number of structurally deficient county bridges, also in two phases. The first would be to reuse as many as 1,800 beams from the existing I-40 Crosstown when it is dismantled. Evans said as many as 300 county bridges could be built using the beams. The second phase would be to direct additional funds to the county road system.

Commissioners approved a project to improve a two-mile stretch of I-244 in Tulsa near I-44 by reconstructing pavement and rehabilitating 10 bridges, and another to widen SH-18 south of Meeker.

They also approved three cable barrier projects: I-35 south of Purcell, I-40 near Sallisaw and I-240 in Oklahoma City. In addition, they gave the go ahead for the design of eight future cable barrier installations in northeastern portions of the state.

In all, commissioners awarded 47 contracts totaling more than \$98 million to improve highways, interstates and roads in 34 counties. Projects include bridge and highway construction and reconstruction; resurfacing and safety improvements.

Contracts were awarded for projects in Alfalfa, Beaver, Blaine, Bryan, Carter, Cherokee, Cleveland, Coal, Comanche, Cotton, Craig, Custer, Delaware, Dewey, Garvin, Grady, Grant, Greer, Greer, Haskell, Johnston, Lincoln, Love, Mayes, McClain, Nowata, Oklahoma, Okmulgee, Ottawa, Pushmataha, Seminole, Sequoyah, Tulsa and Woodward 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 11 a.m. Monday, Nov. 7, in the R.A. Ward Transportation Building in Oklahoma City.

Before a project is awarded, ODOT researches, plans and designs the 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](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us).

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(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](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us). For more information, call the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)



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



Attendees of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Monday, Oct. 3, meeting stop to look at a series of maps showing the locations of projects approved in the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's Federal Fiscal Year 2012-2019 Eight-Year Construction Work Plan. The maps are also available on ODOT's website at [www.okladot.state.ok.us](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us) under the "What's News" link.





This 1939 bridge, SH -79 over the Red River near Waurika, is one of 126 that Gov. Mary Fallin directed be added to the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's eight-year construction plan that runs through federal fiscal year 2019. Scheduling projects for the 126 bridges is the first phase of a plan by Fallin to eliminate nearly all structurally deficient bridges from the state's highway system.