



## February Commission Wrap-Up

### I-40 Crosstown westbound lanes to open soon, \$84.5 million in contracts approved

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 8, 2012

PR# 12-006

Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Monday, Feb. 6 meeting include a status report on the I-40 Crosstown, approval of 20 engineering contracts to replace 65 bridges, and an update on federal transportation funding legislation currently before U.S. Congress.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation Deputy Director/Chief Engineer Gary Evans again commended the efforts of contractors, suppliers, consultants and ODOT employees for effective traffic operations since the opening of the eastbound lanes of the I-40 Crosstown in Oklahoma City. Barring first-day glitches, eastbound traffic is now running smoothly. Evans announced that construction continues to progress ahead of schedule. "We are waiting on some additional work on the Robinson St. bridge so traffic can exit north," Evans said, "We should be opening the westbound section of the Crosstown in the next two to three weeks."

Director of Capital Programs Tim Gatz gave a brief summary of legislation currently before U.S. Congress that would provide much-needed federal funding for Oklahoma's transportation needs for the next five years. The legislation would also ease regulations by allowing states more flexibility and efficiency in planning new construction projects. Oklahoma Department of Transportation officials have visited with Sen. Jim Inhofe and Rep. James Lankford, who both support this legislation, but cautioned that passage of the bill would be a lengthy process.

Commissioners approved \$18 million in projects funded by the federal Broadband Technical Opportunity Program to improve broadband internet access across the state. Funds are earmarked for the installation of fiber optic cables to provide broadband internet connections to local schools, hospitals, libraries and public safety facilities. The commission approved BTOP projects for Atoka, Durant, Clinton, McAlester, Poteau, Seiling, Wilburton and Woodward.

Commissioners also approved 20 engineering contracts totaling \$16 million for bridge replacement design projects in 30 counties. Director of Engineering David Streb stated that out of the 65 bridges scheduled for replacement, 61 are structurally deficient. The bridge projects are part of Gov. Mary Fallin's long-term Bridge Improvement & Turnpike Modernization Plan. "Our goal is to have these bridge plans ready two years before the anticipated construction letting dates," said Streb.

In all, commissioners awarded 52 contracts totaling more than \$84.5 million to improve highways, interstates and roads in 37 counties. Projects include bridge and highway construction and reconstruction; resurfacing and safety improvements.

Contracts were awarded for projects in Atoka, Beaver, Caddo, Carter, Choctaw, Cleveland, Coal, Comanche, Creek, Custer, Dewey, Garfield, Harper, Jackson, Jefferson, Kay, Kingfisher, Kiowa, Latimer, Leflore, Lincoln, Logan, Major, Marshall, Mayes, Murray, Noble, Okfuskee, Oklahoma, Okmulgee, Payne, Pittsburg, Pontotoc, Pushmataha, Rogers, 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 **Monday, March 5 at 11 a.m.** 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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This bridge on SH-99 over Horse Creek south of Bowlegs in Seminole County is one of the 61 structurally deficient bridges addressed in Monday's Transportation Commission meeting. An \$18 million engineering contract awarded at the meeting includes redesign and replacement of the bridge.