



## **November Commission Wrap-Up**

**More than \$900 million going to county road and bridge projects over the next five years;  
\$88 million in contracts approved**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 7, 2012

PR# 12-045

Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Monday, Nov. 5 meeting include the approval of a more than \$900 million five-year plan for county road and bridge improvements, recognition of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's efforts to streamline and shorten the delivery of projects and the awarding of two major projects on I-35 in Norman.

Transportation Secretary Gary Ridley accepted an award from Gary Corino, Oklahoma Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration, recognizing ODOT's national leadership in implementing the FHWA's Every Day Counts initiative. Through executing programmatic agreements with resource agencies like the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the State Historic Preservation Office, as well as many tribal governments, ODOT has worked to streamline the project approval process and shorten the delivery of transportation improvements to the public.

"When Victor Mendez became the Federal Highway Administrator, he understood the need for state DOT's as well as the FHWA to speed up the process," Ridley said. "This initiative tries to look at different things that would help speed up the process, both the approval as well as the actual construction."

"It's a win-win situation for everybody," Corino said. "ODOT can move forward much more expeditiously and the different resource agencies get what they need for their programs."

The commission approved ODOT's Five-year County Improvements for Roads and Bridges plan for State Fiscal Years 2013-2017. The latest CIRB program provides more than \$900 million in dedicated state and federal funds for nearly 700 county road and bridge construction projects in all 77 counties. In May, the state legislature approved House Bill 2249, which increases the allocation of state motor vehicle excise tax, fee and registration revenues to the CIRB fund from 15 to 20 percent by July 2014.

"This plan includes the additional funding made available to the counties by the state legislature and governor," Director of Capital Programs Tim Gatz said. "It is also the first CIRB program to implement Gov. Mary Fallin's plan to use recycled bridge beams from the I-40 Crosstown on county bridge replacement projects."

Ridley also provided an update on the emergency repair of the I-244 bridge over Charles Page Blvd. and 3<sup>rd</sup> St. in Tulsa that was damaged in a trucking accident in mid-October. Commissioners were pleased to hear that the bridge was successfully repaired and reopened to traffic in 15 days, rather than in the 30 days originally expected. Ridley said the department's legal division is in the process of seeking financial compensation from the party responsible for damage to the bridge.

The I-35 corridor in Norman will receive major attention next year, as commissioners approved a nearly \$29 million contract to construct the state's second Single Point Urban Interchange at I-35 and Main St., and a more than \$15 million contract for bridge rehabilitation work on the I-35 bridge over the South Canadian River. Additionally, they awarded a \$20 million contract for a highway reconstruction and bridge replacement project on US-177 in Perkins in Payne County and a nearly \$6 million contract to perform bridge rehabilitation work on the I-40 bridge over the North Canadian River in western Oklahoma City.

**INFORMATION RELEASE**

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In all, commissioners awarded 29 contracts totaling \$88 million to improve highways, interstates and roads in 17 counties.

Contracts were awarded for projects in Beckham, Bryan, Caddo, Canadian, Cleveland, Comanche, Creek, Jackson, Logan, McClain, Oklahoma, Osage, Ottawa, Pawnee, Payne, Pottawatomie and Wagoner 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, Dec. 3 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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A plan approved by the Oklahoma Transportation Commission on Monday will put more than \$900 million toward nearly 700 county road and bridge construction projects in all 77 counties over the next five years. Increased funding levels approved by the state legislature and governor for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's Five-year County Improvements to Roads and Bridges plan will allow more counties to use recycled bridge beams from the old I-40 Crosstown on bridge replacement projects.



At their monthly meeting Monday, Oklahoma Transportation Commissioners praised the quick repair work that reopened the I-244 bridge over Charles Page Blvd. and 3<sup>rd</sup> St. in Tulsa in only two weeks following mid-October a truck accident that damaged a structural beam. Financial incentives were paid to the contractor for completion of the emergency repairs nearly three weeks ahead of the Thanksgiving week deadline.