



July Commission Wrap-Up

Oklahoma better than national average for structurally deficient highway bridges;

\$61 million in contracts awarded

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 3, 2013

PR# 13-025

Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Monday, July 1 meeting include a report on the state's structurally deficient highway bridges, recognition of Oklahoma Department of Transportation workers who assisted with recent tornado cleanup efforts, presentation of an award for the grand opening event for the I-40 Crosstown and approval of contracts for the final phase of the Durant Bypass and two major Oklahoma City metro area highway projects.

Director Mike Patterson addressed a recent study released by a national advocacy group detailing the nation's structurally deficient bridges. While the organization's report was based on information from 2011, ODOT's most recent inspection data from 2012 submitted to the Federal Highway Administration shows that the number of structurally deficient bridges on the highway system decreased from 634 in 2011 to 556 in 2012. The number of structurally deficient bridges owned by cities and counties decreased from 4,636 in 2011 to 3,552 in 2012.

"ODOT has reduced the number of structurally deficient highway bridges by more than half since 2004 and for the first time, Oklahoma is better than the national average," Patterson said. "Our gratitude goes to the legislature and the governor for putting a plan together to move us toward our ultimate goal of getting that number close to zero by the end of the decade."

Chief Engineer Casey Shell praised the efforts of ODOT crews from all eight field divisions and the central office who helped clear storm debris and coordinate cleanup efforts in the Carney, El Reno, Moore, Oklahoma City and Shawnee areas affected by the destructive tornadoes that struck in May and June.

"We had over 800 ODOT employees assisting other agencies clear highways and city streets to help folks get home and start putting their lives back together," Shell said. "The work of everyone that was out there is very much appreciated by the public."

In a special presentation, the Central Oklahoma Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators honored the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division with a Bronze Quill Award of Excellence for the I-40 Crosstown grand opening event held in January 2012. Each year, IABC recognizes the best strategic communication and marketing efforts in the private, public and nonprofit sectors.

The next phase of construction on the Durant Bypass will soon be underway thanks to the commission's approval of a \$24 million construction contract that includes financial incentives for early completion. This project will connect the west portion of the bypass at SH-78 and extend to US-70. Two contracts for major construction projects to improve traffic in the Oklahoma City metro were also awarded. The commission approved a nearly \$9 million contract for construction on the west end of the I-40 Crosstown to reconnect the new interstate to the future downtown Oklahoma City Boulevard. Once complete in about a year, a new exit for eastbound I-40 drivers will provide additional downtown access from the Boulevard to Virginia Ave. and Klein Ave. It will also provide a westbound I-40 on-ramp from the Boulevard. A \$3 million contract was awarded for an interim project to improve traffic movement on SH-74 (Portland Ave.) in northwest Oklahoma City by constructing multiple right-turn lanes at three city streets.

Continued...

INFORMATION RELEASE

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

In all, commissioners awarded 27 contracts totaling more than \$61 million to improve highways, interstates and roads in 22 counties.

Contracts were awarded for projects in Atoka, Bryan, Carter, Choctaw, Comanche, Dewey, Ellis, Grady, Hughes, Kingfisher, Kiowa, Lincoln, Logan, Muskogee, Oklahoma, Pawnee, Pontotoc, Seminole, Texas, Tillman, Tulsa and Washita 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 special meeting is scheduled for **Monday, August 12 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.

—www.okladot.state.ok.us—

(Editors and News Directors: For more information, call the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)



Drivers can expect improved access to and from the I-40 Crosstown in downtown Oklahoma City thanks to the approval of a nearly \$9 million contract by the Oklahoma Transportation Commission. This interim project will reconnect the west end of the Crosstown near Pennsylvania Ave. to the future Oklahoma City Boulevard. The new Boulevard flyover on and off ramps will provide access to the downtown area from eastbound I-40 and will also allow drivers to leave downtown and access westbound I-40.



The next phase of construction on the Durant Bypass connecting SH-78 and US-70 on the east side of Durant is set to begin soon. At their Monday meeting, the Oklahoma Transportation Commission awarded a \$24 million construction contract that includes financial incentives for early completion of this project, which is expected to reduce congestion by allowing a large amount of truck traffic from US-75/US-69, shown above, to bypass the city on the south.