

Chapter 1 Introduction

The following chapter provides background on the *2010–2035 Oklahoma Long Range Transportation Plan (2035 Long Range Plan)*. It explains how it fits with other Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) planning and programming documents. It also gives an overview of public involvement activities utilized during the transportation planning process.

Background

The 2035 Long Range Plan presents recommendations and strategies designed to provide Oklahoma with a multimodal transportation system that offers the traveling public and businesses competitive, safe, convenient, affordable, reliable, and environmentally responsible mobility choices. This Plan presents the guiding transportation recommendations for ODOT for the next 25 years. Updated every five years to remain consistent with ODOT’s long-term vision, the Plan was last updated in 2005.

The federal Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), was signed into law in 2005. It requires each state to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process providing for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following planning factors:

- ▶ Support the economic vitality of the United States, states, and metropolitan areas
- ▶ Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non motorized users
- ▶ Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight

- ▶ Protect and enhance the environment, promoting energy conservation, and improving the quality of life
- ▶ Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes throughout the State for people and freight
- ▶ Promote efficient system management and operation
- ▶ Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system

Other factors that the Plan should consider include, but are not limited to, funding uncertainties, potential air quality concerns, and how best to address climate change and energy dependency. Also important are links between the 2035 Long Range Plan and the ODOT *FFY-2011 through FFY-2018 Construction Work Plan (8-Year Construction Work Plan)* and *FFY 2011-2014 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*. The latter two documents are project-oriented, whereas the Long Range Plan presents recommendations.

The 2035 Long Range Plan is being completed during a time when the current federal transportation law, SAFETEA-LU, has expired and is operating under continuing congressional resolutions. New federal legislation will not likely be passed until 2011 or later. The process of formulating elements of the reauthorization law has begun. This authorization effort is particularly complicated by the confluence of several different issues, including the insolvency of the Highway Trust Fund and the reports of two national commissions on the future of the nation’s transportation program and alternative finance strategies.

Coordination with Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Preparation of the 2035 Long Range Plan was coordinated with Oklahoma’s Metropolitan



Planning Organizations (MPO) through MPO representation on the Plan's Advisory Committees. Likewise, ODOT is involved in the development and review of the metropolitan area transportation plans to ensure that MPO long range plans will be consistent with the State's 2035 Long Range Plan. The Plan incorporates, by reference, the Long Range Transportation Plans for the Ft. Smith, Lawton, Oklahoma City, and Tulsa areas. A summary of these plans will be published along with the State's 2035 Long Range Plan. Separate plan documents will be available from each of these organizations.

The metropolitan area plans will be available at the following addresses:

- ▶ *Oklahoma City Regional Transportation Study*
Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
21 East Main Street, Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
www.acogok.org
405-234-2264
- ▶ *Tulsa Metropolitan Area Long Range Transportation Plan*
Indian Nations Council of Government
Two West 2nd Street, Suite 800
Tulsa, OK 74103
www.incog.org
918-584-7526
- ▶ *Lawton Metropolitan Area Long Range Transportation Plan*
Lawton Metropolitan Planning Organization
103 Southwest 4th Street
Lawton, OK 73501
www.lawtonmpo.org
580-581-3375

- ▶ *Bi-State MPO 2030 Transportation and Mobility Plan*
Bi-State Metropolitan Planning Organization
1109 South 16th Street
Fort Smith, AR 72902
www.bistate.mpo.org
479-785-2651

These metropolitan areas have varied schedules for their plans, and plan forecast years vary between 2030 and 2035. Updates are scheduled for 2010 in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Ft. Smith and Lawton are expected to release updated plans in 2011.

In addition to embodying compatible goals, the MPO long range plans share other common attributes and requirements:

- ▶ Multiple planning factors are addressed
- ▶ State and regional transportation improvement programs are consistent with long range plans
- ▶ Long range plans are intermodal
- ▶ Development of long range plans includes public involvement

Coordination with the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

During both series of public meetings on the 2035 Long Range Plan, residents had an opportunity to review and discuss the STIP. The STIP must be developed for all transportation expenditures expected during the following four years for projects involving federal funding. Transportation improvement programs prepared by the MPOs for the urban regions are included in the STIP. The public meetings held in November 2009, and August and September 2010 enabled participants to comment on the transportation projects scheduled by ODOT for the upcoming federal fiscal years.

Coordination with the 8-Year Construction Work Plan

ODOT administers an eight-year construction program which assists the Department in scheduling and conducting the complex engineering, environmental, and right-of-way processes necessary to complete construction projects in a timely fashion. The first four years of the 8-Year Construction Plan are represented in the STIP.

The final round of public meetings in 2010 also provided residents with an opportunity to receive information on ODOT's 8-Year Construction Work Plan. Division engineers from throughout the State were available to answer questions from meeting participants about the Plan.

Public Involvement Activities

An early task in the long range planning process was the development of a Public Involvement Plan customized for this plan. The Public Involvement Plan was developed after consideration of the general ODOT's Public Participation Plan and is consistent with that Plan. The public involvement activities included using an advisory committee structure, as well as other formal and informal gatherings and mass media approaches. Chapter 2 covers additional information about this topic.

Organization of this Plan Document

The 2035 Long Range Plan includes the following chapters:

Chapter 2 Public Involvement Activities and Results describes ODOT's public involvement plan which included a broad-based public outreach to diverse audiences and stakeholders across the State to meet federal participation requirements and to help ensure the 2035 Long Range Plan reflects the needs and concerns of ODOT's constituencies. This chapter sum-

marizes the results of public meetings and Advisory Committee sessions as well as input from surveys and the project website.

Chapter 3 Policy Content describes the policy context for developing the 2035 Long Range Plan. It not only includes potential changes in federal transportation and related policies, but also new directions in key elements of ODOT's transportation services provision, such as possible changes in financing strategies. This chapter provides a sense of the dynamic environment within which ODOT officials find themselves when working to provide the State's residents, freight carriers, and travelers with a strong transportation system.

Chapter 4 Socio-Economic, Demographic, Land Use, and Travel Characteristics summarizes the demographic and socio-economic characteristics for Oklahoma, primarily focused at the county or ODOT division level. This chapter presents data on current population and employment, identifies trends that have developed over the past five to fifteen years, and discusses future projections to 2035. The chapter also discusses land use in Oklahoma and concludes with a summary of the State's travel and vehicle fleet characteristics.

Chapter 5 Oklahoma Economic Conditions and Freight Transportation identifies logistics opportunities and improvements necessary to sustain the State's future economic development; and describes economic trends that should be considered when making decisions about freight transportation investments. This chapter includes a summary of the State economy by geographic area and industry, current and projected freight and commodity flows by mode, and identification of key growth sectors that would benefit from improvements to the State's intermodal transportation system.



Chapter 6 Transportation Mode Inventory and Utilization is an integral component of the 2035 Long Range Plan. This chapter provides an inventory of transportation modes and current transportation conditions throughout Oklahoma. This Plan element focuses on both person or passenger and freight transportation facilities. The chapter also discusses the State’s Intelligent Transportation System (ITS).

Chapter 7 Current System Strengths and Weaknesses addresses major strengths and weaknesses of statewide intermodal transportation, defined by current conditions, anticipated future needs, funding, and other resource challenges. The chapter also considers the institutional and policy environment within which continued construction, operation, and maintenance of transportation infrastructure and services are provided. The strengths and weaknesses assessment was developed through consultation with various model experts from ODOT, other agencies, and industry representatives. Interview data from Advisory Committee members was also utilized. The assessment provides a baseline for developing future policy concepts and implementation strategies.

Chapter 8 Long Range Plan Development identifies recommendations and strategies that can enhance Oklahoma’s intermodal transportation system, maximize the State’s comparative logistics advantages, and support the State’s economy and opportunities for economic development. The strategies cited in this chapter are described in the context of the policy framework outlined in Chapter 3.

Continuing Efforts

The Plan represents the culmination of an effort to outline important State transportation priorities and recommendations to guide Oklahoma as the State moves ahead through the next 25 years. The completion of the plan development process also marks a beginning for transportation professionals and users to renew efforts in service of the ODOT mission “to provide a safe, economical and effective transportation system for the people, commerce and communities of Oklahoma.” ODOT looks forward to meeting the transportation challenges of the decades ahead and appreciates the participation and interest of the people of Oklahoma in developing the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan.