



February Commission Wrap-Up:

Commission updated on recovery, stimulus; \$21 million in projects awarded

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 3, 2010

PR# 10-003

Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's Feb. 1 meeting include a report on recent snow and ice removal activities by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and approval of construction contracts totaling about \$21 million.

ODOT Director Gary Ridley said that early in snow storms, since road salt is shipped from out of state, ODOT stockpiled supplies last summer and still has enough to be fully equipped should another storm hit.

Ridley noted ODOT applied for nearly \$2 billion in grants to improve the state's passenger rail system through the federal stimulus program. He said information gleaned during the process will be helpful in coming years as ODOT continues working to improve Oklahoma's rail system. Although Oklahoma was not allotted any funds, grants were awarded to the Kansas and Texas departments of transportation that will lead to improvements to the *Heartland Flyer*. Those funds will be used to upgrade the route in Texas and to study its expansion to Kansas City.

Commissioners also were updated about projects funded through the economic stimulus package. To date, 94 percent of funds have been obligated for 248 transportation projects. Of those, 64 projects have been completed. Contractors have been paid \$240 million, or just over half of the funds set aside for transportation projects in Oklahoma.

As part of the stimulus program, contracts were approved to upgrade sidewalks in 18 communities. The improvements will meet provisions of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* on highways with sidewalks in small towns. Federal policies require compliance with the act before highways can be improved. The upgrades are planned in more than 40 communities.

Using regular funds, commissioners approved contracts to replace the SH-51 bridge over Billy Creek just west of Wagoner, to finish the Rock Creek Road bridge over I-35 in Norman and to install 10 miles of cable barrier along I-35 near Mulhall.

In all, commissioners awarded 41 contracts totaling just under \$21 million to improve highways, interstates and roads in 32 counties. Projects include bridge and highway construction and reconstruction, resurfacing and safety improvements.

Contracts were awarded for projects in Adair, Beaver, Beckham, Carter, Cleveland, Creek, Custer, Dewey, Garfield, Garvin, , Grady, Grant, Haskell, Kingfisher, LeFlore, Lincoln, Logan, Marshall, McCurtain, McIntosh, Muskogee, Oklahoma, Okmulgee, Osage, Ottawa, Pawnee, Payne, Pittsburg, Sequoyah, Wagoner, Washington 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 meeting is 11 a.m. Monday, March 1, in the R.A. Ward Transportation Building in Oklahoma City.

Before a project is awarded, ODOT researches, plans and designs 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 details about projects in your area and to view accompanying pictures, please visit the Web site www.okladot.state.ok.us. For more information, call the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)

INFORMATION RELEASE

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At their Monday, Feb. 1, meeting, members of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission, awarded contracts for pedestrian enhancements in 18 small towns. Using economic stimulus money, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation plans to have 46 such projects in communities across the state. The enhancements will help communities meet requirements of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* on sidewalks along state highways, a requirement for future road improvements. The pedestrian enhancements will be similar to the above ramp in Durant, which was built in 2007.



Road graders clear snow and ice following the season's second major winter storm. At their Monday, Feb. 1, meeting, members of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission were told that during summer, Oklahoma Department of Transportation officials fully stocked its salt sheds so that even after two major storms, the state has plenty in reserve.