

Public Open House Summary

**US-177: From 8.9 miles North of the Carter County
Line Extending North 2.3 miles
Murray County, JP 35162(04)**



OKLAHOMA
Transportation

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1.0 Executive Summary

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) held a public open house in Sulphur, Oklahoma at the Sulphur High School on September 30, 2025, from 5:00 – 7:00 pm. The subject of the open house was the US-177 project from 8.9 miles north of the Carter County line extending north 2.3 miles, just south of Sulphur in Murray County. The US-177 project proposes to widen the existing pavement with the addition of 8-foot shoulders and to correct geometric deficiencies in the corridor. ODOT completed an Alignment Study to compare multiple offset alignments. The purpose of the open house was to present the results of the study and the preferred option to the public and obtain public feedback.

A virtual public open house was also available on-line from September 16 through October 14, 2025. The website presented exhibits and an interactive map of the preferred option, information about right-of-way acquisition, and frequently asked questions. The website also included an on-line comment form. Postcards advertising both the on-line and in-person open houses were distributed via Every Door Direct Mail on or around September 15, 2025, to 1,170 addresses in two (2) postal routes within the project area. The postcard included project information and details of the on-line and in person public open houses. In addition, open house notification letters were mailed to elected officials, resource agencies, Tribal Nations, and utility and property owners on September 15, 2025.

Thirteen people signed in for the in-person open house. Thirteen people used the optional sign in page to sign in to the virtual public house. Two hundred twenty-two users accessed the open house website, generating eight hundred views. During the in-person public open house, ODOT and Garver personnel were available for attendees to ask questions about the project. There was also an opportunity for the public to provide written comments and feedback. The public comment period was open from September 16, 2025, to October 14, 2025.

Comments and questions from the meeting were primarily related to concerns about the safety of other sections of US-177, and the new alignment of US-177 affecting private property.

In total, there were two written comments from agencies and local governments, and four written comments from the public. These comments were similar to what was heard at the public open house. There were concerns about dangerous intersections along US-177 and the impact the project might have on private property. ODOT provided responses to all comments which are in this document. All supporting project information can be found in the appendices.

2.0 Introduction

This document summarizes the in-person public open house and virtual public open house conducted for the US-177 project south of Sulphur [JP 35162(04)] in Murray County. ODOT is studying the section of US-177 from 8.9 miles north of the Carter County line extending north 2.3 miles. An in-person public open house was held on September 30, 2025, in Sulphur, OK, and a virtual public open house was held from September 16 to October 14, 2025, at www.odot.org/US177Sulphur. The purpose of the open house was to present the preferred option for the US-177 project and to receive public input.

3.0 Public Open House

3.1 Public Involvement Plan

Public involvement for this project followed ODOT's Public Involvement Plan (February 2022). Data from the 2022 American Community Survey was investigated to determine the presence of low-income and minority populations in the US-177 project area. The project area includes Census Tracts 7908.01 and 7908.02 in Murray County.

Review of this data indicates that Murray County (County) has a slightly lower median household income (\$60,213) than the State of Oklahoma (State) (\$61,364). Census Tract 7908.01 has a lower median income (\$57,589) than the County and State, while Census Tract 7908.02 has a higher median income (\$69,470).

The racial demographics of the project area Census Tracts are similar to the State and County. The percentages of Hispanic populations in the project area Census Tracts were similar (8.7%- 11.5%), when compared to the State (12.1%) but higher than the County (7.6%). Percentages of American Indian (5.8%-10.9%) were similar to the State (8.3%) but lower than the County (13.5%).

Data for language spoken at home indicate 95.7-96.8% of households speak English. Translations were not considered necessary for this project.

3.2 Open House Notification

Initial open house invitation letters were mailed on September 15, 2025 to federal and state resource agencies, Indian Tribes, Chickasaw National Recreation Area, elected officials, local government officials, local school districts, law enforcement agencies, and emergency response providers. These letters provided a short project description, the purpose of the project, an invitation to the public open house held on September 30, 2025, and website links to the virtual open house materials. The letter requested recipients provide input by October 14, 2025. A copy of the letter and the mailing list is included in **Appendix A**.

Invitation letters to the public open house were also mailed to property and utility owners within the study area. Letters were mailed on September 15, 2025. A copy of the letter and the mailing list is included in **Appendix B**.

In an effort to provide maximum notification, especially to rented and leased properties, postcards with information about the in-person and virtual public open house were delivered by USPS Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) to all addresses on postal routes 73086-R001, and 73086-R003 in Murray County. In total, 1,170 postcards were delivered. A copy of the postcard and EDDM postal route map is included in **Appendix C**.

3.3 Open House Information and Formats

The virtual public open house was held on-line at www.odot.org/US177Sulphur from September 16, 2025 through October 14, 2025. The virtual public open house included an introduction to the project and the following pages:

- Sign In and Handout
 - Optional sign-in sheet
 - Public open house handout available for desktop, mobile, and pdf viewing.
- Preferred Option
 - Preferred option maps (static and interactive) of the US-177 project showing present and proposed right-of-way, retaining walls and environmental constraints.
- Right-of-Way Information
 - ODOT Property Rights Brochure for pdf viewing.
- Frequently Asked Questions
 - Common questions and answers about the project.
- Submit a Comment
 - On-line comment form and PDF comment form with instructions.

Thirteen people signed in to the virtual public house using the optional sign-in form. Two hundred twenty-two users visited the virtual open house website, with a total of 800 views (see **Appendix D**). While the home page was the most visited section of the website, the 'Preferred Option' page ranked second. Materials from the virtual public open house will be archived at <https://oklahoma.gov/odot/about-us/public-meetings.html>.

The in-person public open house was held on September 30, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the Sulphur High School Cafeteria at 700 W Broadway St, Sulphur, OK. An interactive ArcGIS map of the US-177 project was available for the public to use. Thirteen (13) people signed in for the open house. Open house attendees included State House Representative Ryan Eaves (District 22), Brad Williams with the Chickasaw Nation, area businesses, and members of the public. Sign-in sheets are included in **Appendix D**.

ODOT and Garver staff were available during the open house for one-on-one and small group discussions with the public. Large roll-out maps of US-177 improvements were available for public viewing in two locations. A handout including the purpose of the project, proposed improvements, information summary, the project website, and a QR code was provided. A copy of the map displays and open house handouts is included in **Appendix E**. The public and agency comment period was open until October 14, 2025.

3.4 Questions/Comments Received at Open House

Comments and questions from the open house were primarily related to concerns about the safety of other sections of US-177, and the new alignment of US-177 affecting private property.

3.5 Summary of Written Comments

Two (2) written comments from agencies and local governments, and four (4) written comments from members of the public were received during the comment period. Copies of the written comments are included in **Appendix F**. ODOT responses to the comments are shown in italics after each comment.

3.5.1 Agency Comments

The **Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission** stated that based on the limited information provided in the letter and their cursory review, the project may require a permit from the Commission. Additional information concerning site elevation and total height of any installed fixtures are required for a more thorough review in order to make that determination. OAC goes on to state the project will require a 7460-1: Notice to Proposed Construction to be filed with the Federal Aviation Administration based on the FAA's Notice Criteria Tool.

Response: Thank you for your comment. ODOT will complete and file Form 7460-1 prior to project construction.

The **Southern Oklahoma Development Authority** stated that there were no concerns regarding the project and approved of the safety improvements to US-177.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

3.5.2 Public Comments

Four (4) written comment forms or letters from the public were received:

- **Q1:** The Cedar Blue Rd intersection just at end of proposed widening is dangerous. With the limited view turning out of Cedar Blue Rd into traffic, the hill to the north obscures oncoming traffic. They can't get stopped at 65 mph. Even with the turn lane, it is dangerous. Can the hill be flattened to allow more visibility?
 - **A1:** *ODOT will investigate options to improve visibility at the Cedar Blue intersection in the next stage of design.*
- **Q2:** Looks great, appreciate the effort on making that section of the SH-177 safer.
 - **A2:** *Thank you for your comment.*
- **Q3:** I am a landowner of one of the properties. The proposed changes cuts through my property to make a new road entrance. I hope it could be considered to move the road a little further south to not cut out as much property. The proposed change will make the southern piece of property unusable.

- **A3:** *In order to construct a safe intersection at Buckstitch Road, the new intersection will need to be shifted to the north of the existing intersection. ODOT will review the design to determine if right-of-way impact can be reduced.*

- **Q4:** I approve and support ODOT's US-177 South of Sulphur project. The aspect that I love about ODOT's US-177 South of Sulphur Project is that the shoulders on US-177 from 8.9 Miles North of the Carter County Line extending North 2.3 Miles will be widened to 8 feet which will improve safety and provide safe run off the road areas and stopping sites for OHP on US-177 in Murray County, OK.
 - **A4:** *Thank you for your comment*