

Bridging the Gap: Multimodal Connections on I-35 over the Oklahoma River

Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Application
August 21, 2023



STATUTORY PROJECT REQUIREMENTS



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Statutory Project Requirements

As discussed in the **Project Description**, the Project has two components. Component 1 is the I-35 river bridge replacement project which includes the construction of two new mainline bridges on I-35, a new I-35 ramp bridge spanning the Oklahoma River and rehabilitating the I-35 bridge over the Stillwater Railroad. Component 2 includes a separate “shared use” multimodal bridge will be constructed west of the I-35 SB bridge, and it will connect to the recently constructed Oklahoma River trail system on both sides of the river. As discussed in **Table 1**, both project components meet the statutory requirements to receive Mega or INFRA grant funds.

Table 1. Statutory Selection Requirements

INFRA Requirements	Mega Requirements	Outcome
<p>The project will generate national, or regional economic, mobility, or safety benefits</p>	<p>The project is likely to generate national or regional economic, mobility, safety benefits</p>	<p>As discussed in the Outcome Criteria Narrative, the Project will generate both national and regional economic, mobility, and safety benefits. Economic benefits include improved freight movement and enhanced recreational opportunities. These are important at a national level, as the I-35 bridges in Oklahoma City are critically located at the crossroads of intercontinental goods movement, linking west and east coast ports to major urban areas throughout the country, and connecting to the major US-Mexican trade route. Mobility benefits include more reliable travel times and improved access for those without cars. Safety benefits include significant crash reductions as well as separate facilities for active transportation.</p>
<p>The project will be cost effective</p>	<p>The project will be cost effective</p>	<p>The Project yields an overall Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) of 1.31 and a Net Present Value of \$31.4 million.</p>

<p>The project will contribute to 1 or more of the national goals described under Section 150</p>	<p>No statutory requirement</p>	<p>Safety. The I-35 bridge replacement and roadway improvements would help enhance safety and operation, protecting motorized travelers by reducing the number of collisions in the I-35/I-40 interchange area by almost 50 percent. It would also provide a safe way for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the Oklahoma River.</p> <p>Infrastructure condition. Prior bridge maintenance improvements have improved the bridges from previously being rated as Structurally Deficient (SD), but over time, continued wear has put the bridges at risk of becoming SD again. In the 2022 NBI bridge inspection report, the deck, superstructure, and substructure had a condition rating of 5 (Fair). If any of the three ratings were to decrease to a rating of 4 (Poor), the bridges would become SD.</p> <p>Congestion reduction. The new I-35 NB, SB, and NB Ramp bridges would provide spacing for interstate traffic to have six 12-foot lanes in each direction with 12-foot inside and outside shoulders. Currently, the I-35 bridges have five lanes in each direction, but the shoulder widths are inadequate, causing both bridges to be considered functionally obsolete. The morning peak Level of Service (LOS) in 2020 on the I-35 NB and SB Bridges was LOS E and LOS C, respectively. In 2035, the morning peak LOS on the I-35 SB and NB bridges will be LOS F and LOS D, respectively. In 2020, the afternoon peak LOS on the I-35 NB and SB Bridges was LOS C and LOS E, respectively. In 2035, the afternoon peak LOS on the I-35 NB and SB bridges will be LOS D and LOS F, respectively. Adding an extra travel lane and inside and outside shoulders will improve the future LOS.</p> <p>System reliability. This Project addresses one of the worst freight bottlenecks in Oklahoma. The Truck Travel Time Reliability (TTTR) score for this segment is 2.49, nearly</p>
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		<p>double the ODOT’s TTR interstate target of 1.33. Replacing and widening the I-35 bridges will improve traffic flow and freight reliability.</p> <p>Freight movement and economic vitality. The Project improves the largest single North-South truck freight corridor in the Central United States. I-35 traverses six states and is on the NHS, STRAHNET, and the NHFN. I-35 is one of the most significant truck freight corridors in the U.S and the highest volume truck corridor in Oklahoma. There are nearly 18,000 trucks per day that cross the I-35 NB and SB bridges with average daily truck traffic at 10 percent.</p>
<p>The project is based on the results of preliminary engineering</p>	<p>No statutory requirement</p>	<p>The following provides the ODOT work history to address these challenges. Currently, the design status is at 30 percent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •August 2016: ODOT commissioned an Interchange Capacity Study. •September 2017: Interim I-35 ramp improvement plans developed. •October 2017: Preliminary river bridge concepts introduced to stakeholders. •December 2017: Stakeholder meeting to review bridge concept options. •August 2018: Began traffic operational analysis for bridge concepts. •Spring 2020: ODOT initiated a Long Span Bridge Study to evaluate bridge concepts to span the Oklahoma River. •October 2021: Long Span Bridge Study completed. •February 2022: Stakeholder Meeting #1 •November 2022: Stakeholder Meeting #2 •May 2023: Stakeholder Meeting with Oklahoma City Leadership and the Chickasaw Nation to discuss the multimodal bridge. •June 2023: Meeting with Oklahoma City Engineering Department to discuss the multimodal bridge.

<p>With respect to related non-federal financial commitments, 1 or more stable and dependable sources of funding and financing are available to construct, maintain, and operate the project, and contingency amounts are available to cover unanticipated cost increases</p>	<p>With respect to non-federal financial commitments, 1 or more stable and dependable sources are available to construct, operate, and maintain the project, and to cover cost increases</p>	<p>To cover the 20% match, ODOT will contribute \$29,142,000 of state funds and the City of Oklahoma City will contribute \$4,000,000. The source of the \$29,142,000 million in state funds is the Rebuilding Oklahoma Access and Driver Safety (ROADS) Fund created by Title 69, Section 1521, Oklahoma Statutes. This state funding has no limit or conditions to satisfy. The source of the \$4 million in local funds is from the City of Oklahoma City MAPS 4 program. The MAPS 4 resolution includes \$25 million in beautification funding for various projects along major corridors, including the I-35 interstate bridges over the Oklahoma River. Oklahoma City voters approved the sales tax to fund MAPS 4 in a special election on Dec. 10, 2019, moving forward with a unique and ambitious plan to transform our community.</p>
<p>The project cannot be easily and efficiently completed without other Federal funding or financing available to the project sponsor</p>	<p>The project is in significant need of Federal funding</p>	<p>If the Project does not receive MPDG funding, construction would begin in 2028 rather than in 2026 and the Project scope would change as funding would not be available to construct the multimodal bridge and connections to the Oklahoma City River trails. The Project construction cost would increase since it would add two years to the Project schedule.</p> <p>If the Project does not receive MPDG funding and other federal funding, both Project components could not be constructed.</p>
<p>The project is reasonably expected to begin construction not later than 18 months after the date of obligation of funds for the project</p>	<p>No statutory requirement</p>	<p>ODOT anticipates that the obligation of funds will occur in spring of 2026. ODOT intends to authorize and let the Project in the spring of 2026. Construction is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2026 and be completed in spring 2029. The Project is sufficiently advanced to begin plan development in a timely manner and construction completed within the funding deadlines for the MPDG program.</p>

<p>No statutory requirement</p>	<p>The applicant has, or will have, sufficient legal, financial, and technical capacity to carry out the project.</p>	<p>Specific to competitive federal grant funding, ODOT has legal, financial, and technical capacity experience with multiple large infrastructure projects funded in part by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), such as INFRA, RAISE, BUILD, CHBP, and TIGER grants.</p>
<p>No statutory requirement</p>	<p>The application includes a plan for the collection and analysis of data to identify the impacts of the project and accuracy of forecasts included in the application.</p>	<p>ODOT's Mega Data Plan included with this application provides the methodology and process to measure and report progress toward targets for the following outcome criteria, as detailed in the Mega Data Plan: Safety; State of Good Repair; Economic Impacts, Freight Movement, and Job Creation; Climate Change, Resiliency, and the Environment; and Equity, Multimodal Options, and Quality of Life.</p>