



OKLAHOMA
Transportation



Hochatown Community Access and Pedestrian Safety Project

Project Readiness

Daniel Nguyen, P.E., MBA
ODOT Project Management, Division Manager
dnguyen@odot.org

FY23 RAISE Grant Application

RAISE Grant Request: \$20 million

Project Readiness

This section provides an overview of the Hochatown Community Access and Safety Project (Project) project readiness.

Environmental Risk

As the project sponsor, ODOT has decades of experience with receipt and expenditure of federal transportation funds and a long history of delivering projects of a similar level. ODOT is committed to improving traffic conditions and safety on Oklahoma bridges and roads. Additionally, this Project will align with ODOT's progress-to-date of addressing safety and capacity improvements.

ODOT manages a large portfolio of Federal funds that are programmed within the ODOT Eight-Year Construction Work Plan (CWP). Specific to competitive federal grant funding, ODOT has experience with multiple large infrastructure projects funded in part by the USDOT, such as INFRA, RAISE, BUILD, CHBP, and TIGER grant. ODOT has a successful history of partnering with other agencies including local governments and tribal nations to complete projects.

A Reconnaissance Data Collection Report was developed in May 2021 for the department to review the potential environmental constraints to the project area. Some of the constraints include potential impacts to streams and wetlands, protected species and habitats, the Hochatown Cemetery, Federal properties and Tribal ownership. ODOT does not anticipate any major challenges or risks associated with the Project resulting in a clear and concise schedule. A complete Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Statement will be completed as part of this project as well.

Project Schedule

ODOT has proposed an aggressive schedule to complete the Hochatown project as shown in Figure 1. The initial design began in the early months of 2022 and preliminary engineering plans and estimates are currently being reviewed by ODOT staff. Completion of 65 percent engineering plans and estimates are scheduled for October 2023 followed by the completion of a thorough environmental assessment by the end of December 2023. Relocating and modifying utilities will be completed by January 2024 and final Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) and project permitting will be completed six months later. Target construction letting is August 2024 and construction will commence in December. The Hochatown Project is anticipated to open and be fully operational by May 2026.

Figure 1: Project Schedule

Project Tasks	2023												2024												2025												2026				
	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY		
Finalize Preliminary Engineering	◆																																								
Preliminary Design Plans																																									
Environmental Review																																									
Right-Way & Utilities																																									
Final Design Plans																																									
404 Permit																																									
Final PS&E Plans																																									
Construction Letting Process																																									
Construction																																									

◆ - Task Completed; ✓ - Project Opening

Based on this timeframe and sequence of events, ODOT is in position to complete this project before the initial grant funds obligation date of June 30, 2027. ODOT is committed to improving safety and operational performance by establishing a project schedule that gives the Hochatown area immediate relief from the concerns they are currently experiencing.

Required Approvals

Environmental Permits and Reviews

ODOT capital projects demonstrate receipt of all environmental approvals and permits necessary for the project to proceed to construction on the timeline specified. The aggressive design schedule and accompanying environmental review schedule will be documented and completed well in advance of the final plans and construction begin.

ODOT will be preparing an Environmental Assessment and an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to NEPA in Fall 2023.

Permitting

This Project is expected to fall under USACE Section 404 Nationwide Permit 14. Work will be within ODOT ROW and is not anticipated to require an Individual Permit. Additionally, ODOT has agency liaisons in place at the USACE which will accelerate and improve the consistency of permitting reviews for approval.

Right-of-way Acquisition

Relocations and right-of-way acquisitions will not be required for the Project. The US-259 corridor has a minimum of 65 feet of right-of-way from the centerline of the roadway with some variations in offset reaching 130 feet. This large right-of-way footprint the department owns minimizes the challenges associated with residents and business owners as it relates to property impacts.

Use of retaining walls, rural curb and gutter, drainage structures, and access management will be considered throughout the design of the project to resolve potential issues around right-of-way constraints along US-259.

Public Engagement

ODOT held a community outreach event on October 27, 2022, at the Broken Bow Senior High School’s auditorium to present the Project. The presentation included a brief background and existing conditions of the Project area, Project goals, interim improvements, current operational traffic volumes, and the findings of the level-of-service analysis. ODOT will continue to engage with the community throughout the Project development process.

State and Local Approvals

The Project is currently programmed in ODOT’s 8 Year Construction Work Plan. The Project has a widespread of community support. All letters of support are provided in the Appendix of this application.

Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning

This project occurs along a designated high-truck volume corridor. ODOT recognizes the high truck volume corridors as crucial to the movement of goods. Identifying these corridors allows Oklahoma to focus investment, maintenance activities and enforcement efforts.

- **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP):** The ODOT STIP incorporates the first four years of the ODOT 8 Year CWP. Construction is included in the STIP.

Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Potential risks and mitigation strategies to minimize the potential impact of those risks are summarized in Table 1. ODOT will continue to evaluate the potential project risks and adjust the mitigation strategies as coordination and design advance.

Table 1. Project Risk and Mitigation Strategies

Project Risk (Probability of Occurrence)	Mitigation Strategies
Cost Increases (Moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ODOT has included the project in its 8 Year Work Plan and remains committed to adjusting as needed to meet all RAISE and statutory deadlines for funding obligation and expenditure. ▪ Construction estimates will contain a 20% contingency allowing for a margin of increase.
Public Consensus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ODOT has been in close coordination with the community and will continue to engage the public as design advances ▪ The Project will improve safety and provide additional connectivity and mobility which will benefit the local community and tourists ▪ Public comments have been largely in support of the project’s purpose and need and finalizing scope details to address all stakeholder and public concerns.
Utility Relocation and Right of Way Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business and visitor use of ODOT-owned right-of-way presents community engagement challenges as the project progresses. ▪ ODOT will continue to work collaboratively with the community to develop creative, community-driven solutions to meet the needs of roadway users and protect Hochatown’s thriving business and economic growth.