



January 28, 2016

# Public Meeting Summary And Responses to Comments

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Oklahoma Department of Transportation

I-35 over Waterloo Road Interchange  
Oklahoma & Logan Counties, JP 29843(04)

Prepared by:



6450 S. Lewis Ave., Suite 300  
Tulsa, OK 74136

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Garver Project No.: 14037270



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### Executive Summary

This document summarizes the public meeting conducted for the I-35 over Waterloo Road Interchange project in Oklahoma and Logan Counties, Oklahoma. The purpose of the public meeting was to present information about the proposed alternatives to the public and obtain input.

The public meeting was held on January 28, 2016 at 6:30 PM at the Waterloo Road Baptist Church. Three hundred seventy-five attendees signed in for the meeting. The meeting included a presentation on the project from the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) engineering consultant, Garver. Representatives from ODOT and Garver were available for discussion before and after the presentation. The comment period was open until February 11, 2016 with a total of thirty-two (32) written comments received, including five (5) from agencies and twenty-seven (27) from members of the public. Agency responses are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1: Agency Comment Summary**

Agency	Comment
National Park Service	No objections.
Bureau of Land Management	No objections.
Oklahoma Conservation Commission	One stream is within the project area; no wetlands. Comment also included general recommendations to minimize impacts on stream and riparian areas.
Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality	Comment included general recommendations to ensure environmental compliance throughout the project.
Oklahoma Department of Commerce	Supports solutions to allow growth of manufacturing and industrial development in the area. Congestion hinders this growth.

Public comments included a few primary issues. Many supported the diverging diamond concept presented at the meeting and appreciated the efforts of ODOT. Many felt the improvements were too far in the future and suggested interim improvements at the interchange. Others requested that ODOT consider additional interchanges along I-35. Table 2 summarizes the comments received. Note that the total number of comments is greater than the number of comments submitted. This is because several people made more than one comment.

**Table 2: Public Comment Summary**

Comment	# of Comments
Request for Interim Improvements at I-35 & Waterloo Road	15
Request for Alternate/Additional Interchanges	15
Support the Current Plan/Diverging Diamond	12
Project is Too Far in the Future/Start Sooner	9
Concerns about Congestion on Waterloo Road Beyond the Interchange	7
Thanks for the meeting/meeting was informative	6
Widen I-35 to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street	5





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Concerns with Safety at Existing Interchange	3
Project is Too Costly	3
Project is More Extensive/Elaborate than Needed	3
Traffic Questions	3
Other	15





## 1.0 Introduction

This document summarizes the public meeting conducted for the I-35 over Waterloo Road Interchange project in Oklahoma and Logan Counties [JP 29843(04)]. The purpose of the public meeting was to present information about the proposed alternatives to the public and obtain input.

## 2.0 Agency Solicitation

Initial agency solicitation letters were mailed on January 4, 2016. These letters provided the purpose of the proposed project and a short project description with an enclosed project location and proposed alternative map. The letter requested recipients provide input by February 11, 2016 and included an invitation to the public meeting. This letter was sent to federal and state resource agencies. Copies of the letter and mailing list are included in **Appendix A**.

## 3.0 Public Meeting

### 3.1 Meeting Notification

Notice of the public meeting was sent by letter to the Governor's office, elected officials (federal and state), Logan County & Oklahoma County Commissioners, the Cities of Edmond and Guthrie, local school districts, emergency service providers, and medical facilities in the study area. The letter provided a brief description of the purpose and need for the project, and an invitation to the public meeting. The letter was accompanied by a project location map. Letters were mailed on January 13, 2016. Copies of the letter and list are included in **Appendix B**. Notice of the public meeting was also sent by postcard to all property owners in the study area according to Oklahoma and Logan County Assessor information. Postcards were mailed on January 14, 2016. Copies of the postcard and mailing list are included in **Appendix C**.

### 3.2 Meeting Information and Format

The public meeting was held on January 28, 2016 at 6:30 PM at the Waterloo Road Baptist Church, 3100 E. Waterloo Road in Edmond, OK. Three hundred and seventy-five (375) people signed in for the meeting, including representatives from ODOT, Garver, Oklahoma County, Logan County, City of Edmond, City of Guthrie, Guthrie Public Schools, Armstrong College, several business owners, media, and members of the public. Copies of the sign-in-sheets are included in **Appendix D**.

Mr. Brian Taylor, ODOT Division 4 Engineer, opened the meeting with some general remarks. Garver then gave a presentation about the project, followed by an open question and answer period. ODOT and Garver staff were then available for one-on-one and small group discussions. Display boards showing the proposed alternative and environmental constraints were placed in two locations for public viewing. Videos of a diverging diamond, including the traffic simulation video performed for the project, were also shown after the presentation. A handout with project information and a map of the proposed alternative was provided to attendees. English, Spanish, and Vietnamese versions of the handout were available. A copy of the presentation is included in **Appendix E**. Copies of the handouts and displays are included in **Appendix F**.





The presentation covered:

- Purpose of the Meeting
- Purpose and Need for the Project
- Project Development Process
- General Project Information & Project Area Constraints
- Development of Alternatives
- Evaluation of Alternatives
- Proposed Alternative
- Impacts of Proposed Alternative
- Next Steps

### 3.3 Summary of Comments

Five (5) written comments from agencies and twenty-seven (27) written comments from the public were received both before and after the public meeting.

#### 3.3.1 Agency Comments

The **National Park Service** had no comments on the project.

The **Bureau of Land Management** had no comments or objections to the project. No BLM land or federal minerals will be affected.

The **Oklahoma Department of Commerce** supports solutions to help the I-35 & Waterloo Road area develop its full potential for manufacturing and industrial growth. Continued congestion could impede this development.

The **Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ)** attached a list of recommendations for general construction/improvement projects including following regulations related to plumbing codes, lead-based paint, asbestos, fugitive dust, solid waste, and OPDES permitting.

The **Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC)** provided a response stating hydric soils and wetlands are not present in the study area. The OCC listed several general concerns including disturbance and siltation of streams and riparian areas and changes to stream channels that may constrict flows and result in flooding.

#### 3.3.2 Public Comments

Almost all of the public comments expressed agreement with the need for improvements. Comments were in three main areas – concerns with traffic on Waterloo Road and need for additional widening, a desire for interim improvements for the I-35 & Waterloo Road interchange, and a desire for consideration of interchanges at other locations along I-35. The comments are summarized in Table 3.



**Table 3: Public Comment Matrix**

<b>Comment</b>	<b># of Comments</b>
<b>Request for Interim Improvements</b>	<b>15</b>
Put signals at Waterloo	6
Move the stop sign at westbound Waterloo and add a right turn lane to NB I-35	3
Add a left-turn lane (or additional thru lane) at the WB Waterloo to SB I-35 stop sign	2
Need a traffic signal at Boucher Dr.	1
Are there any interim projects planned?	1
Stripe the SB I-35 on-ramp for 2 lanes and add a dual right turn at the ramp entrance	1
Fix poor pavement condition	1
<b>Request for Alternate/Additional Interchanges</b>	<b>15</b>
Please consider an interchange at Charter Oak (many mentioned lower price tag than Waterloo and 40% congestion relief at Waterloo)	8
General need for new interchange(s)	5
Add an interchange at Sorghum Mill	1
Add an interchange at Coffee Creek	1
<b>Support the Current Plan/Diverging Diamond</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Project is Too Far in the Future/Start Sooner</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Concerns about Congestion on Waterloo Road Beyond the Interchange</b>	<b>7</b>
Need 5 lanes all the way to Sooner Rd. (or beyond)	5
Need improvements at Sooner and Air Depot intersections	2
<b>Thanks for the meeting/meeting was informative</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Widen I-35 to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Concerns with Safety at Existing Interchange</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Project is Too Costly</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Project is More Extensive/Elaborate than Needed</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Traffic Questions</b>	<b>3</b>
Did the traffic modeling consider special events such as Armstrong Auditorium or Oak Tree National?	1
How much traffic that gets off at Waterloo would continue north (to Simmons or Charter Oak)	1
Does the DDI cause traffic to back up at Waterloo/Sooner Rd?	1

<b>Comment</b>	<b># of Comments</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>15</b>
Please allow adequate access in/out of the proposed OnCue and all other future development	2
Request to address congestion in other parts of Edmond	2
Is this project related to the turnpike extensions? Has OTA had any input into the design of the improvements?	1
The purpose of this project is to improve the interchange for time and safety	1
Ask legislature to raise the gas tax or get private donations or federal money to fund projects	1
Will the interchange be lit?	1
Traffic Signals will install signals at the interchange if ODOT/County provides the materials	1
Raise the speed limit on I-35	1
Why was a cloverleaf interchange never considered?	1
The Range number (R20W) shown on the displays was incorrect	1
How much private property will be needed? Eminent domain will run rampant	1
The project is not needed - leave us alone	1
The delay completing Hwy 74 is forcing traffic on I-35 and affecting the interchange	1



### 3.4 Responses to Comments

ODOT's responses to the general comment topics are summarized below.

#### 3.4.1 Request for Interim Improvements

ODOT agrees that something should be done in the interim to help improve the safety at the Waterloo interchange. ODOT has been working on a solution and hopes to discuss the options available with the County in an upcoming meeting. Upon agreement ODOT will expedite those improvements.

#### 3.4.2 Request for Additional Interchange(s)

The need for an additional interchange along this stretch of I-35 was heard loud and clear during our public meeting. At present ODOT does not have any plans for additional interchanges along I-35, but we will certainly look at this option when adding projects to the 8-year Construction Work Plan this year. The cost of an additional interchange with the county road over would be closer to 25 million than the reported 5-10 million.

#### 3.4.3 Support the Current Plan/Diverging Diamond

Thank you for your support.

#### 3.4.4 Project is Too Far in the Future

ODOT develops its 8-Year Construction Work Plan based on statewide priorities and available funding. Should funding become available ODOT will make every effort to accelerate this project.

#### 3.4.5 Concern About Congestion Along Waterloo Road Beyond the Interchange

ODOT is in the process of scheduling a meeting with the County to discuss the need for interim and ultimate corridor improvements along Waterloo.

#### 3.4.6 Thank You for the Meeting/Meeting was Informative

Thank you for your comments.

#### 3.4.7 Widen I-35 to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street

I-35 will not be widened as part of this project north and south of the Waterloo interchange. It will be constructed to accommodate 3 north bound lanes and 3 south bound lanes in the future. However, ODOT commissioned a study last year from Waterloo south into north Oklahoma City to identify how best to proceed with future improvements along this corridor. Upon completion of the study we will know more about what is possible and how best to set our priorities.

#### 3.4.8 Concerns with Safety at the Existing Interchange

ODOT shares your concerns and the primary purpose of this project is to improve safety and accommodate the traffic.





3.4.9 Project is Too Costly/Too Elaborate

The Diverging Diamond Interchange is the best solution for the specific traffic issues at the I-35 & Waterloo Road interchange. The DDI was not significantly more expensive than the other alternatives considered and was less expensive than some alternatives.

3.4.10 Traffic Questions

Upon signalization of Waterloo, traffic would flow more freely through the interchange and may cause congestion at Sooner Road. ODOT is in the process of scheduling a meeting with the County to discuss the need for interim and ultimate corridor improvements along Waterloo.

Traffic data was collected 9/15/14 – 9/18/14. ODOT did some additional counts on 9/30 and 10/01 of 2014 as well. Seasonal factors are used to normalize the traffic if counted during different times during the year (ie – in summer when school is not in session). This data was compared to 2013 ODOT data previously collected to make sure the new data was reasonable. For this particular project ODOT did not collect traffic data at Simmons or Charter Oak. This data should be available to the public on the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) website (<http://www.acogok.org/>) or from your County Commissioner.

3.4.11 Other

The other comments are repeated and addressed below. Responses are indicated with **bold** text:

Other
Please allow adequate access in/out of the proposed OnCue and all other future development <b>RESPONSE: ODOT has discussed future access to Waterloo Road with the landowner and developer of the future Oncue. Most of that discussion centered around what would be allowed. At this time the new Oncue plans on having its entrance directly across from the new location of Industrial Blvd.</b>
Request to address congestion in other parts of Edmond. <b>RESPONSE: Improvements to roadways and intersections within the City of Edmond are part of the City’s transportation improvement program.</b>
Is this project related to the turnpike extensions? Has OTA had any input into the design of the improvements? <b>RESPONSE: The turnpike extensions proposed by OTA are unrelated to the proposed improvements at I-35 and Waterloo Road. This project was identified by ODOT long before the proposed turnpike extensions were announced. The I-35 &amp; Waterloo interchange project is needed with or without the proposed turnpikes. OTA has not commented on the I-35 &amp; Waterloo Road project.</b>
The purpose of this project is to improve the interchange for time and safety. <b>RESPONSE: ODOT agrees with this statement.</b>
Ask legislature to raise the gas tax or get private donations or federal money to fund projects. <b>RESPONSE: ODOT relies on federal and state dollars for many of its projects, including the I-35 and Waterloo Road interchange.</b>
Will the interchange be lit? <b>RESPONSE: Lighting was included in the study and construction estimate. The extent will be determined by the Counties.</b>





<p>Traffic Signals will install temporary signals at the interchange if ODOT/County provides the materials. <b>RESPONSE: ODOT appreciates the offer of assistance.</b></p>
<p>Raise the speed limit on I-35. <b>RESPONSE: ODOT commissioned a study last year from Waterloo south into north Oklahoma City to identify how best to proceed with future improvements along this corridor. Upon completion of the study we will know more about what is possible and how best to set our priorities. Future speeds on I-35 will be one consideration of the study.</b></p>
<p>Why was a cloverleaf interchange never considered? <b>RESPONSE: A full cloverleaf design was not considered because the traffic patterns at this interchange are not balanced in all directions. Alternative 2 considered a loop ramp for westbound to southbound traffic, similar to a cloverleaf. A full cloverleaf is not warranted by the traffic volumes and would have a much larger footprint and more impacts than the other alternatives considered.</b></p>
<p>The Range number (R20W) shown on the displays was incorrect. <b>RESPONSE: Thank you for pointing out this error. The displays were corrected and the revised displays are available on the ODOT website.</b></p>
<p>How much private property will be needed? Eminent domain will run rampant <b>RESPONSE: ODOT anticipates a small amount of private property including one home may be needed to accommodate the proposed improvements. Eminent domain is not a desired outcome and is only used as a last resort if a purchase agreement cannot be negotiated.</b></p>
<p>The project is not needed - leave us alone. <b>RESPONSE: The traffic volumes and accident history at this interchange indicate that there is a need for improvements at this interchange. The current bridges need to be brought up to current vertical clearance standards.</b></p>
<p>The delay completing Hwy 74 is forcing traffic on I-35 and affecting the interchange. <b>RESPONSE: ODOT's traffic counts were performed prior to construction on Hwy 74. Once complete, Hwy 74 will benefit nearby north-south arterial streets but is not anticipated to greatly affect traffic on I-35.</b></p>

