

OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

Improvements to State Highway 19

Grady County, Oklahoma
JP 30425(04) & 30425(07)

Prepared for:



Oklahoma Department of Transportation
200 N.E. 21st Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Prepared by:

Triad Design Group
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March 2018



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document summarizes the Open House conducted for the Improvements to State Highway 19 project in Grady County, Oklahoma, JP 30425(04) & 30425(07). The purpose of the Open House was to present information about the proposed Preferred Alternatives to the public and to obtain public input. The Open House was held on June 29, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the Alex Public School Cafeteria, 209 South Second Street, Alex, OK. Thirty-four people signed the attendance record. The Open House format was come and go, meaning there was no formal presentation, but rather various materials providing information on the project were available to the public for review. Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and their engineering consultant, Triad Design Group (Triad) staff were also present and available to answer questions and provide explanations. The comment period was open until July 14, 2017 with a total of 17 written comments and one telephone comment received, including 9 from agencies and 8 from members of the public. Table ES.1 summarizes the public comments received. Note that the total number of comments is greater than the number of comments received, as some people made multiple comments.

TABLE ES.1: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

Comment	# of Comments
Asked why they had not received written notice of the Open House	1
Oklahoma Landfill Holdings, Inc. acknowledged right-of-way coordination effort with ODOT and expressed hope for a successful Memorandum of Understanding	1
Questioned what impacts the project would pose to their property	2
Suggested an alternative design for NS 294 (Cemetery Road) to minimize impacts to their property	1
Prefers North Offset (Alternative 2) for Segment A	1
Expressed concern that their residence might be acquired for the Preferred Alternative	2
Provided information regarding underground oil utility location information	1

ODOT's Preferred Alternative for Segment A of the SH-19 project was presented as a North Offset realignment. Both before and after the Open House, ODOT met with representatives of the landfill to discuss the potential landfill impacts associated with the North Offset. ODOT staff also discussed potential minimization concepts with representatives of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, the state agency with permitting authority for the landfill. As a result of these discussions, as well as an independent engineering opinion of the potential landfill economic impacts associated with the North Offset, ODOT determined that SH-19 should be realigned on South Offset in the vicinity of the landfill, thereby eliminating landfill impacts associated with a North Offset alignment. Therefore, the Preferred Alternative for Segment A will be revised from Alternative 2: North Offset to Alternative 3: South Offset. ODOT will inform the public of the Preferred Alternative revision by mailing an informational public flyer to all parties on the project mailing list and by posting this document and supporting graphics on the ODOT website.

1 PROJECT INTRODUCTION

This document summarizes the Open House conducted for the Improvements to State Highway 19 project in Grady County, Oklahoma, JP 30425(04) & 30425(07). The purpose of the Open House was to present information about the proposed Preferred Alternatives to the public and to obtain public input.

2 AGENCY SOLICITATION

Initial agency solicitation letters were sent to federal and state resource agencies. These letters presented a short project description and the purpose of the proposed project, and included enclosures consisting of a project location map and graphics of the three segments, each depicting the Preferred Alternative in that segment. The letter, dated May 25, 2017, invited recipients to the Open House and requested input be provided by July 14, 2017.

3 OPEN HOUSE

3.1 OPEN HOUSE NOTIFICATION

Notice of the Open House was sent by letter dated May 25, 2017 to elected officials (federal and state), the Governor's office, Grady County Commissioners, the City of Alex, local school districts, emergency service providers, and the Southern Plains Landfill. The officials' letter provided a brief description of the purpose and need for the project, and an invitation to the Open House. The officials' letter was accompanied by a project location map.

Notice of the Open House was also sent by letter dated May 25, 2017 to all utility companies and to all property owners in the study area, based upon Grady County Assessor information.

3.2 MEETING INFORMATION AND FORMAT

The Open House was held on June 29, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the Alex Public School Cafeteria, 209 South Second Street, Alex, OK. Thirty-four people signed the attendance record, including representatives from ODOT, Triad Design Group, Waste Connections, Inc., Velocity Midstream, several business owners, and members of the public.

The Open House format was come and go, meaning there was no formal presentation, but rather various materials providing information on the project were available to the public for review. ODOT and Triad staff were also present and available to answer questions and provide explanations.

A looping video presented the following information:

- Purpose of the Meeting
- Existing Facility
- Purpose and Need for the Project
- Project Extents
- Collision History
- Proposed Project Description
- Description of Three (3) Alternatives Considered in Each Segment
- Constraints in the Area
- Comparison Matrix of the Alternatives in Each Segment
- Presentation of Preferred Alternative for Each Segment
- Next Steps
- Request for Public Input

In addition to the looping video, there were two large aerial strip maps depicting the Preferred Alternative for each segment, as well as the environmental constraints. There were also four (4) display boards on easels depicting various aspects of the project:

- The Preferred Alternative and environmental constraints
- A composite environmental constraints map
- A typical section of the Preferred Alternative for Segments A and C
- A typical section of the Preferred Alternative for Segment B

A handout with project information and a map of the proposed Preferred Alternative was provided to attendees.

3.3 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

Nine (9) written comments from agencies, and five (5) written comments from the public were received after the Open House.

3.3.1 AGENCY COMMENTS

The nine written agency comments are summarized in the following text:

- The Bureau of Indian Affairs suggests that ODOT contact the Eastern Oklahoma Office as the project lies within their jurisdictional area.
- The Bureau of Land Management has no files indicating any Federal minerals, BLM surface lands, or administered Indian mineral interests near or within the project area.
- The Delaware Nation supports the project, but requests being up to date on the progress of the project and any new discoveries.
- The National Park Service had no comments on the project.
- The Oklahoma Conservation Commission (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.

- The Oklahoma Department of Commerce supports the preferred alternatives for each of the three segments.
- The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) noted that construction projects disturbing greater than 1 acre require storm water permitting. The ODEQ also attached a list of recommendations for general construction/improvement projects which addressed items such as plumbing codes, lead-based paint, asbestos, fugitive dust, solid waste, and OPDES permitting. Lastly, the ODEQ recommended contacting Rachel Hannigan regarding specific information on the Southern Plains Landfill permitted area as well as information on their application to expand the existing landfill that is under review by ODEQ.
- The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation listed one known species of state concern (threatened or endangered) at or near the project: the Arkansas River Shiner. They also ask that all precautions and actions be taken to limit the amount of disturbance to any stream corridor and ask that caution and best practices be used when working around corridors where riparian zones are present, particularly near the Washita River. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation also pointed out that, because they oversee only the state-listed species, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should be contacted if there are concerns about species of federal interest.
- The Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department responded that no adverse impacts were anticipated on federally-funded parks, recreation areas, or state parks.

3.3.2 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Three of the public comments expressed concerns or asked questions regarding the effects this project would have on personal property, and one of these commenters did not receive an Open House invitation. One comment provided information regarding the location of underground utilities. Oklahoma Landfill Holdings, Inc. (OLH) described the project, acknowledged ongoing right-of-way coordination efforts between ODOT and OLH, and expressed hopes that a Memorandum of Understanding could be developed to the satisfaction of both parties. Table 3.1 summarizes the comments received. Note that the total number of comments is greater than the number of comments received, as some people made multiple comments.

TABLE 3.1: PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

Comment	# of Comments
Asked why they had not received written notice of the Open House	1
Oklahoma Landfill Holdings, Inc. acknowledged right-of-way coordination effort with ODOT and expressed hope for a successful Memorandum of Understanding	1
Questioned what impacts the project would pose to their property	2
Suggested an alternative design for NS 294 (Cemetery Road) to minimize impacts to their property	1
Prefers North Offset (Alternative 2) for Segment A	1
Expressed concern that their residence might be acquired for the Preferred Alternative	2
Provided information regarding underground oil utility location information	1

3.4 RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

ODOT’s responses to the general comment topics are summarized in the following sections of text.

- **Asked Why No Open House Invitation Received**

ODOT obtains the addresses for mailouts from the US Assessor website. The parcel in question had the physical address listed, as opposed to the owner’s mailing address at an Alex P.O. Box. We apologize for the inconvenience and the mailing address has been added to the project’s mailing list for any future mailings.

- **Oklahoma Landfill Holdings, Inc. Comment**

Both before and after the Open House, ODOT met with representatives of the landfill to discuss the potential landfill impacts associated with the North Offset. ODOT staff also discussed potential minimization concepts with representatives of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, the state agency with permitting authority for the landfill. As a result of these discussions, ODOT revised the Preferred Alternative for Segment A, as described in Section 3.5.

- **Site-Specific Concern/Questions Regarding Personal Property**

One commenter submitted an email request for ODOT to call him and explain the impacts to his home in Segment B. ODOT did call and explain that the Preferred Alternative assumes the home would be acquired for the project, but that there is a small chance the home could be avoided by evaluating other drainage options. ODOT encouraged the commenter to submit a written comment as to whether he would prefer the property to be acquired or evaluated further for avoidance, but no subsequent written comment was received.

Another commenter asked if the Preferred Alternative will require acquisition of the parking lot associated with a beauty salon located north of SH-19 in Segment B, east of the gas station. The Preferred Alternative in Segment B (i.e., Alternative 3) will not require any additional ROW.

However, the parking lot in question is estimated to be located within the existing ODOT ROW, and preservation of the parking lot cannot be guaranteed for those portions within ODOT ROW.

- **Suggestion of Alternative Design for NS 294 (Cemetery Road)**

A comment was received suggesting that the proposed realignment of County Road NS 294 (Cemetery Road) be shifted to the west, rather than to the east, to minimize impacts to personal property. ODOT has considered the suggestion and, based upon preliminary calculations, determined that moving the alignment from the east to the west would increase earthwork costs by approximately \$8,000. Also, utility relocation costs would increase by approximately \$20,000, due to impacts to gas and power lines located west of the county road. Lastly, the property in the southwest corner of the intersection is owned by Velocity Midstream, who is planning to construct a transfer facility averaging 30 trucks per day. The eastern re-alignment would provide safer truck access to this proposed facility, and shifting the alignment to the west would require acquisition of an estimated \$7,000 of this commercial property. For these reasons, the Segment C Preferred Alternative will remain unchanged.

- **Prefers Alternative 2 North Offset for Segment A**

This comment is noted.

- **Concerns Regarding Residential Relocation**

Two commenters expressed concern that their residence might require relocation. Both residences are located within Segment A, with one south of SH-19 and the other north of SH-19. The originally-proposed Preferred Alternative, which realigned Segment A to the north, would have required relocation of the residence located north of SH-19 and would have avoided the residence located south of SH-19. However, the revised Preferred Alternative realigns Segment A to the south, due to landfill impacts (see Section 3.5). The result is that the residence located north of SH-19 is not impacted and the residence south of SH-19 must be relocated. ODOT has reviewed the south offset design closely for ways to avoid the residential relocation and has resolved that there is no way to avoid relocation of the home located south of SH-19.

- **Information on Underground Oil Utility Locations**

ODOT appreciates the utility location information and will share it with the designers.

3.5 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE REVISION

Both before and after the Open House, ODOT met with representatives of the landfill to discuss the potential landfill impacts associated with the North Offset. ODOT staff also discussed potential minimization concepts with representatives of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, the state agency with permitting authority for the landfill. As a result of these discussions, as well as an independent engineering opinion of the potential landfill economic impacts associated with the North Offset, ODOT determined that SH-19 should be realigned on South Offset in the vicinity of the landfill, thereby eliminating landfill impacts associated with a North Offset alignment. Therefore, the Preferred Alternative for Segment A will be revised from Alternative 2: North Offset to Alternative 3: South Offset. ODOT will inform the public of the Preferred Alternative revision by mailing an informational public flyer to all parties on the project mailing list and by posting this document and supporting graphics on the ODOT website.