

OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY REPORT

Meeting Held On:
June 20, 2019

**BRIDGE & APPROACHES SH-101: BRIDGE OVER POLECAT CREEK,
3.11 MILES EAST OF SH-64B JCT.**

**SEQUOYAH COUNTY
J/P No. 29781(04); Project No. J2-9781(004)**

Prepared for:



**OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**

Prepared by:



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1.0 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE OVERVIEW

As part of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) efforts to keep the public informed and involved in the decision-making process, a public open house was held. The following is a generic summary of the information provided and the comments received. ODOT responses to comments are also presented in this document.

1.1 MEETING DATE & TIME

Thursday, June 20, 2019
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

1.2 MEETING LOCATION

Belfonte Public Schools
475751 SH-101
Muldrow, OK 74948

1.3 PURPOSE OF MEETING

The purpose of the Open House meeting is to inform the public of the proposed improvements and answer questions regarding construction activities, sequencing, and scheduling.

1.4 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is planning safety improvements to this portion of SH-101 which includes lane widening and bridge replacement. The existing bridge is a 22-foot wide span bridge that is functionally obsolete. The existing segment of SH-101 is a two-lane, open section roadway with 11-foot wide driving lanes and 1-foot wide sod shoulders. The roadway and shoulders are narrow. Current traffic volumes are estimated at 750 vehicles per day (VPD) and are projected to increase to 1,100 VPD by 2038. ODOT proposes to replace the existing bridge and widen the approach roadways and shoulders. The purpose of the proposed improvements is to correct deficiencies, enhance safety, and efficiently accommodate traffic to better serve the next generation of Sequoyah County residents.

ODOT tasked a consultant to develop design plans for improving this segment of highway while taking into consideration the cost of construction, right-of-way, and utilities, as well as the identified environmental impacts.

1.5 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed improvements include widening the approaches to create two, 12-foot wide paved driving lanes with 4 to 8-foot wide shoulders, and replacing the existing bridge over Polecat Creek with a 40-foot wide clear roadway span bridge on existing alignment. The proposed design would meet current standards. Highway access would remain open with one lane of traffic during construction, and access to residences would be maintained throughout the project duration.

1.6 PUBLIC NOTICES

- ODOT mailed open house invitations to property owners on May 21, 2019.
- ODOT mailed solicitation letters to various agencies on July 10, 2019.

- Public meeting invitation letters were mailed to various political entities, interested parties and public on May 21, 2019.
- ODOT sent out a press release and general media announcements on June 17, 2019.
- ODOT distributed flyers to interested parties near the project area on June 11, 2019.

1.7 MEETING FORMAT

At the public open house, attendees were asked to add their name and contact information to a sign-in sheet. A handout was available to everyone, which described the project and illustrated the proposed project alignment. Personnel from ODOT, including the engineering design team, Division 1, Right-of-Way Division, Environmental Programs Division, and cultural resources, were available to answer questions and take comments from the public. Attendees were encouraged to write their specific questions or concerns related to the project on the available Comment Form.

2.0 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RESPONSES

2.1 PUBLIC COMMENTS

2.1.1 Public Written Comments

Two property owners responded in writing to the proposed project. In general, there was no opposition to the project; however, individuals expressed concerns over impacts to historical sites in the area. The comments are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Property owners, local residents and citizens written comments

PUBLIC WRITTEN COMMENTS	
INDIVIDUAL	INPUT
Sequoyah County Historical Society & Other Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned that the project would destroy the Daniel Hill Home, which is the old Seabolt Home, a historical landmark of Sequoyah County. Concerned about other historical sites in the area.
ODOT RESPONSES	
The written responses were summarized and generically grouped into general categories; each of which are presented below. Next to each item is ODOT's response.	
ISSUE/COMMENT/CONCERN	RESPONSE
Historical Landmarks Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The old Seabolt Home (Daniel Hill home) is not associated with this project. It is well outside of the proposed construction area. ODOT is currently in the process of conducting additional cultural resources investigations within and adjoining the project's construction footprint. The intent is to ensure that important resources are assessed and to determine what potential affects the project may have on identified resources. ODOT will comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and coordinate efforts with the State Historic Preservation Office, the State Archaeologist, Tribes, and other stakeholders.

2.2 BUSINESS COMMENTS

One response was received from a business potentially affected by the project not previously addressed above. The comments are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Businesses written comments

BUSINESS WRITTEN COMMENTS	
AGENCY	INPUT
Sequoyah County Water Association Vance Mooney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wants to make ODOT aware that there are water lines on each side of the bridge on this project that may be in the way of work there.
	ODOT RESPONSE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the plan development process and right-of-way acquisition process, all utility owners within the proposed project area will be contacted regarding their utility and any anticipated affects.

2.3 AGENCY COMMENTS

Five agency comments were received. Individual comments are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Federal, state, & local agency written responses to the solicitation letter

AGENCY COMMENTS	
AGENCY	INPUT
Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Realty Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The BLM reviewed the project information and has no concerns or objections to the proposal. File searches show no impact to federal minerals or federal lands managed by the BLM. There are no BLM administered mineral interests near or within the project area.
	ODOT RESPONSE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments noted.

<p>Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) General Counsel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No environmental concerns under DEQ jurisdiction are anticipated. • DEQ Recommended ODOT obtain a construction storm water permit (OKR10). • Any burning associated with land clearing operations must be conducted in accordance with OAC 252:100, Subchapter 13. <p style="text-align: center;">ODOT RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DEQ stated that ODOT should obtain a construction storm water permit authorization under OKR10. ODOT is aware of the permitting requirements and the process involved. ODOT requires construction contractors to obtain an OKR10 permit authorization (when applicable) prior to starting any construction activities.
<p>Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Regional Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BIA reviewed the project information and has no concerns or objections to the proposal. • Five Federally recognized Tribes have been provided the notice. As Tribes may have environmental and/or cultural resources concerns relating to this action, ODOT should coordinate directly with the Tribes on any of their concerns. <p style="text-align: center;">ODOT RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODOT coordinated with the following tribes: Caddo Nation, Cherokee Nation, Osage Nation, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee, and Wichita & Affiliated Tribes. • ODOT contacted the tribes on May 8, 2018 as part of the initial NEPA process to inform and solicit input. • After the cultural resources study was completed, ODOT will provide the final report to the consulting Native American Tribes.
<p>Oklahoma Archeological Survey (OAS) State Archaeologist</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records indicate that a portion of the project area has been previously surveyed for other projects, and a significant site (precontact site 34SQ76) was recorded. • Expect further coordination as part of the process of complying with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). <p style="text-align: center;">ODOT RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODOT is currently in the process of conducting additional cultural resources investigations within and adjoining the project's construction footprint. The intent is to ensure that important resources are assessed and to determine what potential affects the project may have on identified resources. ODOT will comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and coordinate efforts with the State Historic Preservation Office, the State Archaeologist, Tribes, and other stakeholders.

<p>Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC) Wetlands Program Coordinator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review was completed using the Soil Survey of the Oklahoma County Fish and Wildlife Service NWI maps. • The project area spans one stream channel and associated riparian corridors and potential riverine wetlands. • Concerned that siltation problems may arise. • Concerned about mechanical disturbance in the waterbody. • Recommends plans that reduce disturbance and siltation in the waterbodies and erosion control plans sufficient to minimize sedimentation impacts from construction activities outside the stream channel. • Recommends minimizing changes in the stream configuration, or if the streams must be manipulated, natural designs be used to reshape and stabilize the stream. If this method cannot be used, permanently protected riparian mitigation should be implemented possibly through a conservation easement. • Suggests that sufficient cross-sectional drainage area through the bridge crossings be incorporated in the plan to allow for maximum periodic flood drainage. • Requests that, following completion of the project, the streams remain free flowing with naturally vegetated stable banks and with stream substrate free of excess sedimentation from project activities.
	<p>ODOT RESPONSE</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC): The OCC’s concerns were summarized into three general areas as outlined below. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The concerns regarding siltation will be addressed as part of the storm water permitting process. The construction contractor is required to obtain a Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) OKR10 construction storm water permit and maintain a storm water pollution prevention plan. The plan specifically requires erosion and sediment controls that will address in-stream siltation. Post construction vegetation and stabilization are also required as part of permit compliance. 2. The concerns regarding channel disturbance will be addressed as part of the Clean Water Act Section 404 permitting process currently underway. There is no intent to modify, redesign or significantly alter the stream bed. 3. The concerns regarding adequate cross-sectional drainage area and flood flow capacity were assumed to be generic in nature. However, the designer ran hydraulic and hydrology (H&H) models for the stream system and designed the bridge to meet modern standards and criteria. The bridge is designed to convey anticipated flows.

