

Agency Solicitation and Virtual Public Meeting Summary

JP 26360(04) – US-281 Bridgeport Bridge over the South Canadian River, Canadian County

Executive Summary

This document summarizes the virtual public meeting conducted for the US-281 Bridgeport Bridge over the South Canadian River project. The purpose of the virtual open house was to present information about the proposed improvements to the Bridgeport Bridge and obtain information from the public to further assist in the identification of critical social, economic, and environmental effects that may result from the project.

Due to concerns about the spread of COVID-19, ODOT held a virtual public meeting. The public meeting was held on-line between Sept. 29 and Oct. 18, 2020. Thirty-one members of the public signed in on the website. However, sign-in was not required. According to the website analytics, 346 unique users viewed the website over the 3-week period. After the home page, the 3D visualization was the most frequently viewed, followed by the meeting presentation, and the interactive detour map. In total, thirty-three (33) written comments/questions were received during the virtual public meeting, including two (5) consulting party responses, thirteen (13) comments submitted via the website comment feature, six (6) comments received via email, eight (8) paper comment forms received by mail, and one (1) comment collected via voicemail from a property owner.

Solicitation letters including notification of the virtual open house were mailed to the appropriate local, state, and federal resource agencies on Sept. 30, 2020. Agency comments included the following:

- The United States Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Southern Plains Region, indicated that there are no concerns that the proposed project will impact Indian Trust Lands within the region's jurisdiction.
- The Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission (OAC) indicated that project does not appear to pose a hazard to safe and efficient use of navigable airspace.
- The Osage Nation indicated that the proposed will likely not adversely affect any sacred properties of cultural significance to the Osage Nation but requested that two areas be avoided for any borrow site locations, temporary access roads, or temporary staging areas. They also requested to be notified if any artifacts or human remains are discovered during construction.
- The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) determined that no adverse environmental impacts under ODEQ jurisdiction are anticipated.

- The Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC) found no evidence of oil and gas facilities within the project area.

Of the twenty-eight (28) public comments received, all were either in favor of the project or contained neutral questions or suggestions. The majority of the public’s comments were focused on the historical significance of the Bridgeport Bridge, tourist accommodations, and improvements to surrounding areas of US-281. **Table E-1** summarizes the comments received.

Table E-1: Major Issues of Concern

Issue	# of Comments
<i>General Route Importance and/or Historical Significance</i>	12
<i>Tourist Accommodations</i>	5
<i>Tower Bridge Improvements</i>	2
<i>US-281 Improvements and/or Bridge Capacity</i>	2
<i>Other Varied Inquiries</i>	7

Responses to Comments

General Route Importance and/or Historical Significance:

Thank you for your comment.

Tourist Accommodations:

The Department is currently evaluating options for developing a parking area with signage near the Bridgeport bridge. However, it is still undetermined at this point. Your input is appreciated in this matter.

Tower Bridge Improvements:

Thank you for your comment. Although the “Tower Bridge” on US-281 located just west of the US-281 Bridgeport Bridge is currently not programmed for improvements in the ODOT 8-year Work Plan, ODOT District 7 is in the process of developing a rehabilitation project for the Tower Bridge. It is undetermined at this point if the fiber line will be re-attached to the bridge or bored under the river channel. There are no plans to modify the existing roadway or pavement west of the bridge as this pavement is part of the original Route 66 pavement and contributes to the historic district.

US-281 Improvements and/or Bridge Capacity:

Thank you for your comment. Currently there are no plans to widen the adjacent roadway on US-281. The new bridge should not be restricted in weight limit at all. It should have the same capacity as a typical, new highway bridge. The only potential limiting factor will be the existing concrete columns at the pier supports. We are currently in the process of designing the bridge and will know more as we proceed. Based on preliminary structural calculations, we believe they will not cause a reduction in overall capacity.

*Canadian JP 26360(04) US-281 Bridgeport Bridge
Virtual Public Meeting Summary – December 21, 2020*

Improvements for this project will be limited to the bridge itself and no roadway modifications are planned with the exception of a small amount of pavement at the approaches on either end.

Other questions not specifically related to this project are not answered in detail here.