

# Virtual Public Open House Summary

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**Oklahoma Department of Transportation**

## **US-77 Lexington**

**From East of Canadian River Bridge North 1 Mile to 0.25 Mile  
South of Moffatt Road**

**Cleveland County, JP 20997(19)**

Prepared by:



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Garver Project No.: 13037261

## Executive Summary

This document summarizes the virtual public open house conducted for the US-77 project from the east end of the Canadian River Bridge, extending east and north approximately 1 mile to 0.25 mile south of Moffat Road. The purpose of the public open house was to present the preferred alternative (Alternative 3) for the project to the public and obtain input, and outline the next steps and schedule for the project.

Due to concerns about the spread of COVID-19, ODOT held a virtual public open house. The public open house was held on-line between November 6 and November 23, 2020. Fifteen (15) members of the public signed in on the website. However, sign-in was not required. According to the website analytics, 260 unique users viewed the website over the 17-day period. After the home page, the presentation was the most frequently viewed page, followed by the alternatives exhibits and the interactive map. In total, thirty-five (35) written comments/questions were received during the virtual public open house, including four (4) agency responses, seven (7) comments submitted via the website comment feature, fifteen (15) paper comment forms received by mail, two (2) comments on the interactive map, and two (2) comments collected by ODOT after returning a telephone call from a property owner. Seventy-four (74) people also participated in the on-line MetroQuest survey. Five (5) people submitted comments as part of the MetroQuest survey.

Agency comments included the following:

- The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) determined that no adverse environmental impacts under ODEQ jurisdiction are anticipated.
- The Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission (OAC) indicated that project does not appear to pose a hazard to safe and efficient use of navigable airspace.
- The Oklahoma Conservation Commission does not have any natural resource concerns beyond general concerns of erosion prevention during and following construction.
- Oklahoma State Parks indicated there are no Land and Water Conservation Fund (LCWF) parks adjacent to the route and the project will have no significant adverse impact on any federally funded park or recreation area or state park.

Twenty-nine (29) people submitted comments on the project; some submitted the same comment in multiple ways (e.g. on-line and in hard copy). The most frequent comment was a desire to leave the US-77/SH-39 intersection in its existing location, particularly to maintain access to eastbound SH-39 from the Canadian River bridge. Several suggestions were submitted as to how to reconfigure this intersection. Comments and concerns regarding impacts to property were also common. This included residential and business property and impacts such as parking and access. Other comments occurred in low numbers. Comments are tabulated in **Table E1**. Note that the comments in the table total greater than 29 because several people submitted more than one comment.

**Table E1: Major Issues of Concern**

Issue	# of Comments
Suggestions to Improve Existing US-77/SH-39 Intersection in its existing location	9
Keep eastbound lane on SH-39 exiting bridge	9
Just restripe the existing roadway	1
Important to maintain SH-39 connection to/from bridge	2
Questions/concerns about Property/Business/Parking Impacts	9
Concerns about access with proposed curbs	3
This project is needed – glad you are adding lanes	3
This project is not needed – leave it alone	3
Safety Concerns	3
Accidents will be in my back yard	1
How many accidents will be prevented?	1
Don't need amenities – just build a safe road	1
Prefer Alternative 2 – safer and more efficient	2
Drainage Concerns	2
Need to improve lighting (including at Moffatt Rd. intersection)	2
Like Alternative 1 – simpler and more cost effective	1
Awkward and would cause more traffic on 84 <sup>th</sup> Street	1
Will cause congestion and signal is inefficient	1
Questions about right-of-way process	1
Concerns about noise	1
Add guardrail to south side of US-77 from bridge to 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	1
SH-39 also needs to be 4 lanes east of Lexington	1

Thank you for the information	1
Parking at existing businesses in US-77 RW is problematic and causes sight distance issues	1
Include pedestrian accommodation at US-77/SH-39 intersection	1
Why did I receive this information?	1
Comments unrelated to US-77	3
Concerns about speeds on Moffat Road	1
School zone creates congestion in morning and afternoon – address that first	1
Does this include rides to apartments	1

***Responses to Comments***

Desire to Improve US-77/SH-39 Intersection in its Existing Location (includes maintaining eastbound access to SH-39 from bridge):

The existing intersection configuration does not meet current design criteria and is unsafe for pedestrians due to the angles and width of the overall intersection. It is also confusing to motorists due to the split legs and close proximity of 5<sup>th</sup> Street. Splitting the eastbound lanes off the bridge with one going north on US-77 and one going east on SH-39 does not provide the needed two northbound lanes on US-77. ODOT believes Alternative 3 will improve the existing configuration.

Concerns about Property and Access Impacts:

The project is in preliminary development at this time and it will be a couple of years before design plans with specific details will be available. Property impacts will not be fully known until the plans have been developed. Once plans are developed, if any of your existing property is required, ODOT Right-of-way agents will meet with you to discuss potential impacts and negotiate with you regarding compensation. For each business along the corridor, areas of parking which are on existing State property will require removal, and it will be the responsibility of the property owner to establish their parking needs within the limits of their property boundaries. If the highway improvements impact parking on private property, then the property owner will be compensated, or additional parking will be constructed.

The corridor is being improved for the benefit of both motorized traffic and pedestrian traffic. In general, in the interest of safety, ODOT wishes to reduce the number of access points for local streets and parking lots/business, since having multiple or poorly defined access points causes driver confusion and increases the likelihood of traffic collisions. Currently there are businesses and residents using the existing highway right-of-way for storage, displays or parking, which causes sight issues and obstructions for drivers. Adding curbs and sidewalks helps define areas to be utilized by the traveling public and

provides better sight distance for drivers. The corridor curb sections are also necessary for the safety of the pedestrian traffic, as sidewalks are to be added along either side of the street. The curbs will also be designed with drainage gutters to remove water from the roadway and prevent standing water from seeping into the highway base, which causes deterioration. If curbs were not used, more right-of-way would be required from all property owners in order to design ditches for the movement of water. The size and types of driveways required to accommodate specific property needs can be discussed in further detail as plan development is further along.

#### Approve of Project

Thank you for your comments.

#### Project is Not Needed:

Traffic projections estimate that traffic on US-77 will continue to increase in the future and congestion will worsen if improvements are not made. In addition, the segments of US-77 to the north and south will soon be 4-lanes and if the Lexington segment is not widened it could be a bottleneck for traffic in the future. The high number of existing intersections at skewed angles is also contributing to a high collision rate. Realigning these intersections and reducing the number of access point is needed to improve safety.

#### Prefer Alternative 2:

Roundabouts can provide safety and efficiency advantages over traditional traffic signals. Alternative 2 was more costly and affected more private property as well as Veterans Park than the preferred Alternative 3. ODOT also prefers Alternative 3 because it moves the existing intersection further from the bridge and remains cost effective.

#### Drainage Concerns:

ODOT will investigate methods for accommodating drainage on the project. The proposed curbs will serve in part to direct runoff and prevent standing water on the highway. The right-of-way behind the curb and gutter section will be graded to drain as well.

#### Other Questions/Comments:

- Prefer Alternative 1
  - *Alternative 1 has more impacts to Veterans Park and keeps the intersection very close to the bridge. Drivers would have less time to make decisions about turning at SH-39.*
- Concern about traffic on 84<sup>th</sup> Street
  - *The project is not anticipated to increase traffic on nearby city streets or county roads. The project is intended to address the traffic demand on US-77.*
- Will cause congestion – signal is inefficient
  - *The additional lanes on US-77 will provide additional capacity and are expected to reduce congestion. The signal at the US-77/SH-39 intersection will be designed to*

*provide the optimal phasing for the traffic needs on both roadways and to facilitate pedestrian crossings.*

- Safety concerns
  - *One of the stated goals of the project is to improve safety. Realigning and reducing the number of intersections on US-77 is anticipated to reduce the number of collisions. This is an anticipated benefit based on roadway design principles and similar projects.*
- Noise Concerns
  - *When the design is further along ODOT will conduct a Traffic Noise Study according to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and ODOT policies and procedures using FHWA Traffic Noise Model version 2.5. This study will identify any anticipated noise impacts and the feasibility and reasonableness of noise walls, if necessary. However, due to the multiple access points along US-77, it is unlikely that noise walls would be able to be constructed and still maintain access to side streets and driveways.*
- Add guardrail to the south side of US-77 from the bridge to 5<sup>th</sup> Street to protect pedestrians.
  - *The posted speed for US-77 for this section is 45 MPH, similar to city streets where sidewalks are located adjacent to travel lanes. A curb section was added on the south side with the construction of the bridge for added pedestrian protection. This curb will be continued through Lexington where sidewalks are being added.*
- Include pedestrian accommodation at US-77/SH-39 intersection
  - *The project includes sidewalks on the south side of US-77 west of the new SH-39 intersection and sidewalks on both sides of US-77 east of the new SH-39 intersection. A crosswalk will be provided at the intersection. The signal will be designed to provide appropriate pedestrian crossing opportunity.*
- Existing parking in US-77 right-of-way is problematic
  - *For each business along the corridor, areas of parking which are on existing State property will require removal, and it will be the responsibility of the property owner to establish their parking needs within the limits of their property boundaries.*
- Why am I receiving this information?
  - *ODOT sent the information about the virtual public open house to all addresses in Lexington to ensure all interested individuals had an opportunity to view the information and provide input. Notice of the open house does not mean your property will be affected.*

Other comments and questions not specifically related to this project are not answered in detail here. Improvements to SH-39 and Moffatt Road are beyond the scope of this project.