

Virtual Public Open House Summary



Oklahoma Department of Transportation

**SH-66 over Bird Creek (Northbound) & Road Under,
3.68 Miles North of I-44**

Rogers County, ODOT JP 20899(09)

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October 2022

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Introduction

This document summarizes the virtual public open house conducted to introduce the various alternatives that are being considered for improvements to the SH-66 northbound bridge over Bird Creek, Rogers County, Oklahoma. The purpose of the virtual public open house (VPOH) was to provide information regarding the various alternatives under consideration and obtain input from the public.

Virtual Public Open House Notification

Notice of the VPOH was sent by USPS mail to elected officials (federal, state, and local), stakeholders, property owners, utility owners, and Native American Tribes in the study area. The mailing included a project pamphlet with information on how to access the virtual open house. The pamphlet also included the history of the project, project background, an overview of the alternatives under consideration, and the purpose and need for the project. A comment form and self-addressed stamped envelope were included. The pamphlet also included a letter from ODOT. An opportunity for translation or other accommodations was provided but no translation or special accommodations were requested. Postcards with a brief overview of the project and the upcoming virtual open house were also mailed via USPS Every Door Direct Mail service to 14,466 addresses in and around the area surrounding the project.

Meeting Information and Format

The virtual public open house was held online between June 13, 2022, and June 27, 2022. The website address was www.odot.org/SH66NB. Twenty-three (23) members of the public signed in on the website; however, sign-in was not required. According to the website analytics, 515 unique users viewed the website over the two-week period. The website included the following pages:

- Homepage welcoming the public to the virtual open house, and a series of six tabs containing additional information as detailed below.
- Sign-in and Handout tab – a form for signing in and a PDF copy of the notification pamphlet.
- Project Information – provides an overview of the project, project purpose, details regarding existing bridge conditions, alternatives under consideration and a summary of findings from the Design Analysis.
- Environmental Impacts – summaries of studies and coordination conducted for Tribal Consultation, Cultural Resources, Streams, and Wetlands, Endangered and Threatened Species, Hazardous Materials, Floodplain, and Environmental Justice
- Right of Way Information – information about right-of-way process and the ODOT Property Rights Brochure.
- Frequently Asked Questions – Responses to questions likely to be asked about the project
- Submit a Comment – online form to submit a comment as well as a PDF of the comment form to download and mail.

Agency Solicitation

Agency solicitation letters were mailed on June 10, 2021. These letters provided a short project description and included information about the virtual public open house and requested that recipients provide input by June 27, 2022. Enclosed with the letter was a copy of the project location map. The letter was sent to state and federal resource agencies.

Summary of Comments and Responses

In total, forty-nine (49) written and verbal comments/questions were received during the virtual public meeting, including five (5) agency responses, one mailed comment, one voicemail, and forty-two (42) comments submitted via the website comment feature.

Agency & Tribal Comments

Four agency comments were received.

- The Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission (OAC) indicated that the project does not appear to pose a hazard to the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace.
Response: ODOT appreciates your comment.
- The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality indicated that no adverse environmental impacts in their jurisdiction are anticipated.
Response: ODOT appreciates your comment.
- The Oklahoma Water Resources Board (OWRB) indicated that a temporary permit or water from a permanent location would be needed for dust suppression, if needed.
Response: ODOT appreciates your comment.
- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) determined that the project would have no negative impact to the natural landscape or existing agricultural easements.
Response: ODOT appreciates your comment.
- The Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department Division of State Parks indicated that Alternative 4 is preferred as it does not affect Rogers Point Park. No significant adverse impact would occur on any federally funded park or recreation area as a result of the proposed project.
Response: ODOT appreciates your comment.

Public Comments

Of the forty-four (44) public comments received, the majority expressed a preference for a specific alternative and/or provided recommendations for mitigation. A few additional comments pertained to a range of considerations as presented in the table below. **Table E-1** summarizes the comments received. Please note that the total number of comments for each concern identified is greater than total number of comments received, because, in a few cases, multiple concerns were included in a single comment.

Table E-1: Major Issues of Concern

ISSUE OF CONCERN	# OF COMMENTS
Project Location	2
Preference for a Specific Alternative	29
Recommendation for Mitigation	7
Project Need	1
Winter Safety Concern	1
Drainage considerations	1
Detour	1
Schedule	1
Pedestrian accommodations	2
Maintenance cost	1
How does ODOT use my feedback?	2

Responses to Comments

Project Location

Thank you for your comment. Publicly accessible maps depict the waterbody crossed by this project as Spunky Creek, rather than Bird Creek.

Preference for a Specific Alternative

Thank you for your comment.

Recommendation for mitigation

Thank you for your input. If the selected alternative results in a Section 4(f) use of the historic bridge, mitigation options will be further evaluated. A mitigation option includes, transporting the existing trusses to a nearby location to be placed on display on pedestals, similar to the original southbound structure.

Project Need

The bridge was constructed in 1956 and rehabilitated in 1979. Design specifications in place at the time of construction are generally considered to provide a 50-year service life, which has since been exceeded. Further, reconstructed portions are nearing the end of the designed service life. The project is needed to address the current structural and functional deficiencies of the existing bridge and approach roadway.

Detour

Thank you for your comment. Motorists would not be detoured off site. Existing median crossovers would be utilized to maintain traffic during construction of any on alignment improvements.

Winter Safety Concern

Thank you for your comment.

Drainage Considerations

Thank you for your comment.

Schedule

Thank you for your comment. Construction is anticipated to start in 2024.

Pedestrian Accommodations

Thank you for your comment. This is not a strategic location for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations due to the level of service of SH-66 in proximity to the Bird Creek crossing and to other bridges that do not have accommodations.

Maintenance Cost

Thank you for your comment. The bridge was built in 1956 utilizing modified state design standards, which are now obsolete. The deck was rehabilitated in 1979, which included widening the roadway to 30-ft. The structure was painted in 2014 and the deck expansion joints were rehabilitated in 2015. These projects were completed with the expectation of extending the service life of the bridge. While these

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activities have extended the service life of the bridge, they did not address the poor condition of the superstructure or restore load-carrying capacity. Due to the magnitude of improvements that would be needed, the rehabilitation alternatives would cost more than the replacement alternative.

How Does ODOT Use My Feedback?

Thank you for your comment. ODOT appreciates public comments and feedback as part of our project development process. Feedback from the public helps the project team better understand existing conditions and concerns. The input provided by the public is reviewed and considered as part of the project development process.