

# **PUBLIC MEETING EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**INTERSECTION MODIFICATION OF US-377 AT THE JUNCTION OF SH-22  
IN JOHNSTON COUNTY  
JOB PIECE NUMBER 36178(04)**

Prepared for:



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Prepared by:

**FREESE AND NICHOLS, INC.**  
3600 NW 138th St., Suite 202  
Oklahoma City, OK 73134

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This document summarizes the public meeting conducted by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) for the proposed project in Johnston County. The proposed project involves intersection modifications at the junction of US-377 and SH-22, west of Tishomingo. The purpose of the public meeting was to solicit feedback from the public on the presented design alternatives and provide an opportunity to speak with professionals involved with the project.

ODOT hosted the public meeting in Tishomingo, Oklahoma at the Chapman Conference Center located at Murray State College on April 23, 2024, between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. This allowed the public an opportunity to learn about the proposed design alternatives, speak with professionals involved with the project, and provide feedback before ODOT selects the preferred alternative.

Public meeting notification postcards with general project information and details about the time and location of the public meeting were mailed on April 9, 2024, using the United States Postal Service (USPS) Every Door Direct Mail service to 2,197 addresses along three postal routes adjacent to the project area. Additionally, meeting notification letters were mailed by USPS on April 9, 2024, to elected officials (federal, state, and local), adjacent property owners, tribal nations, utilities, area businesses, and resource agencies. Five public entities/agencies responded to the notification letters, which are included in the summaries that follow.

Public involvement for this project followed ODOT's Public Involvement Plan (February 2022) available at the Public Involvement Meetings and Hearings webpage (Oklahoma.gov). Review of the 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year-Estimate data for the project study area (Tishomingo, OK) indicates there is a population experiencing poverty in Tishomingo (35.7%). Review of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Environmental Justice Screen Community Report (Tishomingo, OK) indicates 49% of the population is low income, which is greater than the state average. Minority populations are also present in the vicinity of the project study area. According to the EPA EJSscreen Community Report, the percentage of the American Indian and Alaska Native Population within Tishomingo is higher (13%) than the state percentage (7.5%). The percentage of the Hispanic or Latino population within the city is lower (9%) than the state percentage (11.6%). The percentage of Black or African American population within the city is less (3%) than the state percentage (7.3%). The percentage of people who identify as two or more races is 17% in Tishomingo. All populations were considered in outreach methods for the public meeting.

Although the sign-in sheet was not required, 54 members of the public and 3 members of the media signed in to the public meeting. Demographic information was voluntarily collected on the sign-in sheets. Sixteen (16) attendees were female, 21 attendees were male, and 17 attendees chose not to answer. One attendee was White/Native American, one attendee was Hispanic/Native American, eight attendees were Native American, 18 attendees were White, and 26 attendees chose not to answer.

With consideration to the 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2020 Decennial Census data, and EPA EJScreen Community Report, the known racial composition of the in-person public meeting attendees was nearly representative of the racial composition of Tishomingo. Native Americans are marginally overrepresented (13% in the city in comparison to 28% at the public meeting). People of two or more races are underrepresented (17% in the city in comparison to 7% at the public meeting). Whites are slightly overrepresented (59% in the city in comparison to 64% at the public meeting). Black or African Americans are underrepresented (3% in the city in comparison to 0% at the public meeting).

During the public meeting, project information and design alternatives were presented by ODOT and the engineering design team. Following the presentation, the public was encouraged to view stations around the room that were set up for the public to see each of the proposed alternatives up close. Easels with large figures of the three (3) design alternatives and an interactive roundabout model were available for the public to interact with. At the conclusion of the meeting, ODOT and the engineering design team encouraged the public to submit comments via the website, email, phone, comment form, or mail.

A website with project specific public meeting information was created to provide the public with a means of reviewing the information online after the meeting. The website included instructions for the public to provide feedback during the public comment period, held between April 23, 2024, and May 7, 2024.

There were 21 comments received. One commenter submitted 2 comments; therefore, 21 comments were received by 20 commenters. A summary of the public comments is included as Table ES1 with comments often addressing multiple topics. Following the tables, a response from ODOT is included for each topic.

**Table ES1 – Summary of Public Comments**

Public Comment Topic*	Count
Approves of Alternative 1 Four-Legged Intersection	6
Disapproves of Alternative 1 Four-Legged Intersection	1
Approves of Alternative 2 T-Intersection	3
Disapproves of Alternative 2 T-Intersection	2
Approves of Alternative 3 Roundabout Intersection	13
Disapproves of Alternative 3 Roundabout Intersection	5
Disapproves of any Intersection Modifications	1
Wants Traffic Lights	4
Wants Designated Turn Lanes	1
Wants Increased Law Enforcement	2
Concerned About Intersection Safety	11
Design Recommendations	3

\*Some public comments addressed multiple topics

## Public Comment Topics and Responses

### **Topic – Approves of Alternative 1 Four-Legged Intersection**

**Topic Summary:** Multiple commenters approve of Alternative 1 – Four-Legged Intersection.

**Response:** *This alternative is being considered because it is a common traffic control configuration to facilitate orderly vehicular movement and a reduction in through and turning speeds at an intersection. Intersection safety for all-way stops depends on driver responsibility and vigilance in adhering to traffic control devices.*

### **Topic – Disapproves of Alternative 1 Four-Legged Intersection**

**Topic Summary:** One commenter expressed disapproval of Alternative 1 – Four-Legged Intersection because they did not see it as beneficial in comparison to the Roundabout Intersection Alternative.

**Response:** *Your concerns are in line with our thinking that there are some factors which are not as beneficial as the roundabout intersection alternative. For example, the four-legged intersection alternative has longer estimated delays during afternoon traffic and more conflict points for crashes compared to the roundabout intersection alternative.*

### **Topic – Approves of Alternative 2 T-Intersection**

**Topic Summary:** Multiple commenters approve of Alternative 2 – T-Intersection.

**Response:** *This alternative is being considered because it is a common traffic control configuration to facilitate orderly vehicular movement and a reduction in through and turning speeds at an intersection. Intersection safety for all-way stop control depends on driver responsibility and vigilance in adhering to traffic control devices.*

**Topic – Disapproves of Alternative 2 T-Intersection**

**Topic Summary:** One commenter expressed disapproval of Alternative 2 – T-Intersection because they did not see it as beneficial in comparison to the roundabout intersection alternative.

**Response:** *We agree there are some factors that are not as beneficial as the roundabout intersection alternative, such as the T-intersection having longer estimated delays during afternoon traffic and a lower crash reduction factor compared to the roundabout intersection alternative. Your concerns about this intersection control are duly noted.*

**Topic – Approves of Alternative 3 Roundabout Intersection**

**Topic Summary:** Multiple commenters approve of Alternative 3 – Roundabout Intersection.

**Response:** *ODOT has considered a single lane roundabout because traffic studies show that they increase safety, improve traffic flow, and reduce maintenance costs due to the absence of signalized traffic lights.*

**Topic – Disapproves of Alternative 3 Roundabout Intersection**

**Topic Summary:** Multiple commenters expressed disapproval of Alternative 3 – Roundabout Intersection because of the local population’s unfamiliarity with roundabouts, potential for the incorrect use of existing roundabouts, and the perception that it could cause more accidents.

**Response:** *ODOT has considered this intersection type because traffic studies have shown they increase safety, improve traffic flow, and reduce maintenance costs due to the absence of signalized traffic lights. Although drivers may initially be unfamiliar with roundabouts, signage at roundabouts helps drivers quickly recognize how to navigate a roundabout. The roundabout alternative is expected to reduce delay and potential collision points at this location. Roundabouts have also been shown to reduce the severity of collisions that do occur. The roundabout would be specifically designed to accommodate the large size of vehicles such as tractor trailers using the intersection.*

**Topic – Disapproves of any Intersection Modifications**

**Topic Summary:** One commenter expressed disapproval of any intersection modifications.

**Response:** *ODOT’s top priority is improving safety for the traveling public. A modification to the intersection configuration is necessary to improve safety, and it will also improve operational efficiency of the intersection.*

**Topic – Wants Traffic Lights**

**Topic Summary:** Multiple commenters expressed that the intersection needs traffic lights.

**Response:** *The intersection was evaluated and was not found to meet the required criteria for installation of a traffic light. As such, the four-legged intersection and T-intersection would be designed as unsignalized with an “all-way” stop, meaning all vehicle approaches come to a stop at the stop sign. Intersection safety for all-way stops depends on driver responsibility and vigilance in adhering to the traffic control signs. If the four-legged intersection or T-intersection are selected, this will allow ODOT to reevaluate the intersection for the use of traffic lights in the future.*

**Topic – Wants Designated Turn Lanes**

**Topic Summary:** One commenter expressed that they want designated turn lanes.

**Response:** *Designated turn lanes will be considered and added as appropriate. The final design configuration will be decided in conjunction with ODOT based on optimizing operations, right-of-way impacts, and safety considerations.*

**Topic – Wants Increased Law Enforcement**

**Topic Summary:** Multiple commenters expressed the belief that law enforcement and traffic tickets could mitigate safety issues at the intersection.

**Response:** *ODOT agrees that law enforcement and adherence to laws is important for safety because improper driving techniques can cause problems at any location or intersection type. ODOT's focus is to improve the safety of the intersection by reducing potential conflicts of vehicles using the intersection, which cannot be accomplished by increased law enforcement and traffic tickets alone. The Oklahoma Highway Patrol (not ODOT) is the primary enforcer of laws on highways and turnpikes outside of incorporated city limits, and local police, sheriffs and federal agencies enforce laws within their jurisdictions. ODOT's role in improving this intersection is to provide a safer and more efficient roadway configuration.*

**Topic – Concerned About Intersection Safety**

**Topic Summary:** Multiple commenters expressed that the existing intersection is not safe, but the commenters disagreed on which alternative is best suited to meet the purpose and need.

**Response:** *The existing design of the intersection met the needs of the community when initially constructed. However, due to a growing population and the current needs of the community, intersection modifications are needed to improve its safety.*

**Topic – Design Recommendations**

**Topic Summary:** Multiple commenters provided ODOT with recommendations for the proposed improvements. Recommendations included modifying the roundabout alternative to make it a two-lane roundabout and adding lighting, yield flashing signage, layout signage, a speedbump, and a speed limit of 20 mph at the roundabout.

**Response:** *Thank you for recommendations on how we can optimize the proposed improvements to the intersection of US-377 and SH-22. These recommendations will be considered during the detailed design phase, and ODOT will continue to collaborate with stakeholders during design and construction.*

ODOT appreciates all the input and feedback submitted by the public for this project. Thank you for taking part in the public involvement process.

## Public Entity/Agency Responses

The following seven public entities/agencies responded to the notification letter:

- **Oklahoma Department of Aerospace and Aeronautics** responded by email:  
*After reviewing the current documents, the Department found no aeronautical hazard with the proposed project.*
- **Bureau of Indian Affairs** responded by email:  
*On April 12, 2024, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Oklahoma Regional Office, received solicitation for information or comments from the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), concerning possible modifications to the intersection of US-377 and SH-22 at the junction west of Tishomingo. This office has no comments regarding the project at this time.*  
*Six Federally recognized Tribes (see list below) have been provided the notice by copy of this email. As the Tribes may have environmental and/or cultural resources concerns relating to this action, it is recommended that the Oklahoma Department of Transportation coordinate directly with the Tribes on any of their concerns. The contact information has been attached for reference.*
  - *Apache Tribe of Oklahoma*
  - *Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes*
  - *Chickasaw Nation*
  - *Osage Nation*
  - *Quapaw Nation*
  - *Wichita and Affiliated Tribes*

*If additional information is required, please contact me using the contact information below.*

- **Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality** responded by email:

*In response to your request on behalf of Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), we have completed a general environmental impact review for the project listed below.*

Project

*Letter dated April 9, 2024 – Intersection Modifications at US-377 & SH-22, State Job Piece No. 36178(04), Project No. J3-6178(004) PM, Tishomingo, OK | Johnston County | 34.23719, -96.69750  
Adverse Environmental Impacts Under DEQ Jurisdiction: None anticipated.*

Additional Regulatory Considerations

*A. Prior to beginning any construction activity disturbing more than one acre, you must submit an NOI and obtain authorization under OKR10, construction stormwater. If you need assistance, please contact DEQ's Stormwater Unit at (405) 702-6100.*

*B. It is unclear if water or wastewater utilities will be affected by this project. If so, please note that water and wastewater infrastructure projects that will require a construction permit from DEQ's Water Quality Division include the following:*

- *Construction of new water and wastewater treatment facilities;*
- *Modifications and upgrades to existing facilities;*
- *Construction of new water distribution and wastewater collection lines;*
- *Relocation of existing water distribution and wastewater collection lines.*

*Projects that do not require a construction permit include:*

- *Replacement of existing equipment with same type and size equipment;*
- *Replacement of existing water and wastewater lines with the same size line in the same location.*

*Please contact DEQ's Water Quality Division (Construction Permitting Section) if you have specific questions or need further clarification. Rocky Chen is the Manager of this section and can be reached at (405) 702-8140 or [rocky.chen@deq.ok.gov](mailto:rocky.chen@deq.ok.gov).*

*Additional recommendations to consider may be found in our guidance document,*

*Additional Recommendations for Your Project ([link](#))*

*Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments. If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact me.*



- **The Oklahoma Conservation Commission** responded by email.

*The Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC) appreciates the opportunity to review this ODOT proposal as described in your letter of April 9, 2024. A review was completed using the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Survey of Comanche County and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland*

*Inventory maps based on the general depicted project area. Neither hydric soils nor wetlands were indicated within the assumed project boundaries. At this time, OCC has no other comments pertaining to the proposed project, but we would be happy for additional review once specific alternatives are proposed.*

- **The Oklahoma Corporation Commission** responded by email.

*I didn't find any wells, new permit, or intents on or near your proposed construction area.*

- **The National Park Service** responded by email.

*Received with no NPS comment. Thank you.*

- **The Chickasaw Nation** responded by a mailed letter.

*Dear Mr. Brutsche:*

*This letter is written in support of "Alternative 3: Roundabout Intersection," as it relates to our shared goal to enhance public safety with the intersection modification of highways US-377 and SH-22 in Tishomingo.*

*In planning the interchange improvements, to adequately accommodate the needed space for tractor-trailers, we believe the roundabout design will best serve the community's specific traffic needs, while accounting for future growth in the area.*

*Thank you for your consideration.*

### **ODOT Selects Alternative 3: Roundabout Intersection**

Following the thorough review of the three alternatives and careful consideration of public input, ODOT has selected Alternative 3: Roundabout Intersection for the proposed intersection improvements at the junction of US-377 and SH-22 in Tishomingo. ODOT's top priority is improving safety for the traveling public. Traffic studies have shown that roundabouts increase safety, improve traffic flow, and reduce maintenance costs. As such, Alternative 3: Roundabout Intersection meets the project's purpose of improving safety and operational efficiency of the intersection. This proposed improvement is expected to reduce delay and potential collision points at the intersection, as well as reduce the severity of collisions that could occur. The roundabout will be designed to accommodate the large size of vehicles such as tractor trailers using the intersection. ODOT is proceeding into detailed design of the intersection and has scheduled to open the project for bids in fiscal year 2026.