



OKLAHOMA
Transportation



Daniel Nguyen, P.E., MBA
ODOT Director of Project Delivery
dnguyen@odot.org

I-35 McClain County Safety & Capacity Improvement Project

Project Readiness

FY26 BUILD Grant Application

BUILD Grant Request:
\$20,000,000

PROJECT READINESS

Planning and Constructability

State Transportation Improvement Plan and Long-Range Transportation Plan

The Project is included in ODOT’s [2026–2029 Statewide Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#), submitted to FHWA for approval in February 2026. The Project allocates \$25,000,000 to capacity improvements and encompasses grade, drain, and surface upgrades. The Project is slated for Fiscal Year 2027.

The [2025–2050 Oklahoma Long-Range Transportation Plan](#) designates ODOT’s strategic investments to be focused on enhancing safety and efficiency along vital freight and passenger routes. This Project aligns with this objective, contributing to corridor improvements along I-35 to enhance roadway capacity for vehicles and freight traffic.

Freight Plans

The I-35 corridor is identified in the [Oklahoma Freight Transportation Plan | 2023–2030](#) (page 6-20). The Project is part of a critical freight corridor on I-35 between the Texas border and Oklahoma City, with increasing congestion projected over the next 25 years. As a PHFS, the corridor is a priority for funding to enhance roadway capacity to reduce freight congestion along I-35.

Property Acquisition/Right-of-Way

ODOT is the owner of all property associated with the Project. No new right-of-way acquisition or approvals will be required to proceed with construction. There will be no impact on residential and commercial property during the construction phase and following the completion of this Project.

Proposed Schedule

Table 9 provides completed and anticipated dates for the key milestones.

Table 9. Schedule of Activities

Activity	Anticipated Start Date	Anticipated End Date
Preliminary Design	March 2023	June 2025
NEPA	December 2022	July 2026
Permits/Approvals	May 2026	March 2027
Projected in STIP	December 2025	February 2026
Final Design	June 2025	January 2027
Finalization of BUILD Grant Agreement	October 2026	December 2026
Construction	March 2027	March 2028

NEPA and Permitting

The Project will construct two 12-foot lanes and two 10-foot shoulders by closing in the existing 40-foot median. The area of construction is within the existing operational right-of-way and significant environmental impacts are not anticipated. The Project does not require relocations or impacts to historical resources. ODOT’s design consultant is leading the completion of the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) document and will coordinate and consult with local, state, and federal agencies.

NEPA Class of Action

A Categorical Exclusion (CE) is anticipated.

NEPA Status and Milestones

ODOT is currently 55% complete with the NEPA process and anticipates completion in July 2026. Public involvement for this Project included an open house hosted by ODOT on February 5, 2026, to discuss the Project with the community. There are no anticipated challenges to timely completion of the NEPA process according to the current Project schedule.

Link to NEPA Documentation

NEPA documentation is currently underway. Preliminary environmental studies findings have been posted on the [public meeting webpage](#).

Reevaluation and Post-Approval Changes

ODOT’s process for re-evaluations is outlined in the [2024 ODOT/FHWA Programmatic Agreement for Approval of Categorical Exclusions](#). Before a federal action, ODOT provides FHWA with a reevaluation commitment checklist email for compliance with the original CE. If the Project extent or scope changes significantly from the original CE, additional reevaluation documentation will be prepared with updated studies to verify the CE status. FHWA will provide concurrence on reevaluation documentation.

Permits and Approvals

The required permits and approvals in Table 10 have been evaluated as part of the CE. All required permits and approvals will be secured before construction.

Table 10. Permits, Findings, and Impacts

Permits and Approvals	Review Findings and Impacts
Waters and Wetlands	The proposed Project may affect creeks and streams during construction. No significant, permanent adverse impacts to waterbodies are expected. No adverse impacts are expected. A permit may be required because of potential stream and wetland impacts.
Threatened and Endangered Species	Habitat reviews were conducted for federally listed threatened and endangered species, as well as for other protected species. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was conducted, and it was determined that no permanent adverse impacts to threatened or endangered species are anticipated. No adverse impacts to protected species are expected.

I-35 McClain County Safety & Capacity Improvement Project

Permits and Approvals	Review Findings and Impacts
Cultural Resources	No potentially significant historic or pre-historic sites or properties were found within the Project area during the study. ODOT completed the Section 106 consultation on behalf of FHWA and determined the Project will have no effect on cultural resources. ODOT also consulted with the following tribes: Chickasaw Nation, Osage Nation, Quapaw Nation, and Wichita and Affiliated Tribes. No effects on cultural resources are anticipated.
Hazardous Materials	Hazardous materials and waste-related impacts were determined by evaluating the regulatory database reports, assessing the Oklahoma Corporation Commission’s records, reviewing the Oklahoma Water Resources Board’s well databases, and performing a field study. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated. No impacts expected.
Floodplains	The Project is not located within a floodplain. No permitting will be required.
Noise	A traffic noise analysis was performed for this Project. Under the current conditions, one residential receiver is impacted.

Coordination with DOT

The federal lead agency for the NEPA process is FHWA. ODOT’s design consultant leads the design and NEPA process for this Project. The CE will be processed in accordance with the [2024 ODOT/FHWA Programmatic Agreement for Approval of Categorical Exclusions](#).

Project Support

To reduce congestion along the Project area, state, county, and municipal officials worked together to improve safety and address congestion concerns to avoid future gridlock. The Project has received widespread support to address pressing transportation challenges. The current four-lane roadway falls short in meeting the area’s needs, particularly as the region experiences dynamic growth and evolving demands. Congestion affects residents, freight routes, and businesses reliant on the Project area. The collective recognition of these challenges underscores the importance of partnerships and collaboration in finding effective solutions to enhance roadway capacity.

Public Engagement

ODOT presented the Project to the community through a public open house on February 5, 2026, to collect public input and understand the impact construction may have on areas adjacent to the interstate. The presentation included brief background information, a description of existing conditions of the Project area, Project goals, interim improvements, current operational traffic volumes, and the findings of the level-of-service analysis. Once the Project enters construction, ODOT will continue to engage with the community through the construction phase.

State and Local Approvals

The Project has received broad community support, with all letters of support available in the appendix of this application. Adjacent municipalities, including the City of Purcell and

Town of Goldsby, are actively participating in ODOT-led I-35 improvement projects for capacity and other roadway infrastructure improvements. Both municipalities will continue to work with ODOT to facilitate Project coordination and functional support during Project development and construction.

Risks and Mitigation

The Project has completed 60% design and is anticipated to face minimal risks advancing through final design, procurement, and construction. ODOT is the Project sponsor and has successfully designed and constructed many federally funded interstate-widening projects across the state. Should risks arise, ODOT is prepared to mitigate those risks using the strategies outlined in Table 11.

Table 11. Project Risk and Mitigation Strategies

Project Risk	Mitigation Strategies
Preconstruction Delays (Low)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No right-of-way acquisition required Minor utility relocations (No utilities involved with prior rights) NEPA is currently 55% complete and on track for completion in summer 2026 Design is currently at 60% and on track for completion in winter 2027 ODOT will continue close coordination with the design consultant leading both NEPA and final design to ensure the Project is ready for the obligation of grant funds in December 2026 ODOT will continue tracking and sharing Project status through their DOT Maps app
Construction Bids come in Higher than Engineer's Estimate (Low)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project budget is based on a January 2026 estimate The Project budget includes a 20% contingency for increased costs ODOT has sufficient non-federal funds to cover any potential cost overruns
Unforeseen Conditions during Construction (Low)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction will occur within existing operational right-of-way Construction will be phased to maintain two lanes in either direction ODOT has sufficient non-federal funds to cover any potential cost overruns caused by unforeseen conditions affecting construction

Applicant Capacity

Roles and Responsibilities

Project delivery will be led by ODOT's experienced staff. Key personnel will include the following:

- Kendall Wallace, Preconstruction Manager, will manage completion of final design, permitting, and NEPA in preparation for grant obligation
- Ron Brown, P.E., District 3 Engineer, will provide construction oversight of the Project delivery
- Daniel Nguyen, Director of Project Delivery, will provide coordination with FHWA and grant administration oversight

I-35 McClain County Safety & Capacity Improvement Project

Federal Funding and Regulations

ODOT will be the direct recipient of the BUILD awarded funds. ODOT has extensive experience successfully delivering projects with federal grant funds to include multiple large infrastructure projects funded in part by the U.S. Department of Transportation through Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA), BUILD, the Competitive Highway Bridge Program, Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE), and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER). Recently awarded or completed projects include the following:

- Mid-America Industrial Park (2025 Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program / Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant)
- Bridging the Gap: Multimodal Connections over the Oklahoma River (2024 RAISE)
- State Highway 37 Grade Separation (2022 BUILD/RAISE)
- Oklahoma County I-40 and Douglas Boulevard Interchange (INFRA 2021)
- Reconstruction of US 281 Bridgeport Bridge (BUILD 2020)

ODOT works closely with the FHWA Oklahoma Division through which it receives its federal aid allocation and discretionary grant funding. ODOT has a strong [Title VI](#) and [ADA program](#), which are administered through ODOT's Contract Compliance Division. ODOT has been awarded several discretionary grants from various federal programs and is familiar with the development and execution of grant agreements, the administration of grant funding, and the completion and submission of the required reporting.

Project Planning

ODOT effectively manages a substantial portfolio of federally funded projects within the [ODOT 8-year CWP](#), an \$8.4 billion program that annually prioritizes projects based on available state and federal appropriations, and currently receives 55% federal funding. The For inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program, ODOT leadership coordinates with the County Commission, MPOs, and the Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils to nominate and initiate the Project for inclusion.

Project Delivery

ODOT boasts decades of experience successfully delivering federal transportation projects of similar scope and size. Recent examples include the following:

- **McClain County I-35 and State Highway (SH) 9 West Interchange Modification:** Address increases in traffic volumes and localized congestion by improving the operation and safety of the interchange. The total cost was \$50,531,703 and the project was substantially complete in December 2025.
- **SH 29 Widening:** northbound lane widen to three lanes. The total cost was \$32,932,255 and the project was completed in August 2025. ODOT won two prestigious national awards from the American Concrete Pavement Association in early 2026 for excellence in concrete paving for Rural category and the Best in Show Innovation.
- **Elk City's Diverging Diamond Interchange at I-40 and SH-6:** reconstruction of SH-6 and I-40 on-and-off-ramps. The total cost was \$16 million and was completed in 2020.