



Centennial Pathways: Enhancing Community Connectivity on US-69 in Muskogee

BUILD Grant 2026

Oklahoma Department of Transportation

Project Description

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Project Description

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is seeking **\$20 million** in Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant funding to support reconstruction of an approximate two-and-a-half-mile segment of US-69 in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The proposed investment, titled Centennial Pathways: Enhancing Community Connectivity on US-69 in Muskogee (Project), integrates three coordinated infrastructure improvements into a single, comprehensive project. The total future eligible cost for the Project is **\$41.2 million**.

The Project combines three distinct components. The first includes resurfacing a segment of US-69 on its current alignment. The second component involves replacing an existing pedestrian bridge that does not meet current design standards. US-69 carries the [fourth-highest volume of truck traffic in the state](#) (pg. 2-7), with average daily truck traffic of [26 percent](#) in this corridor. However, the existing bridge clearance is insufficient to accommodate oversized freight vehicles, necessitating detours to alternate designated truck routes. Lastly, the Project involves widening a segment of US-69 from four lanes with a grass median to six lanes with two-way left turn lanes, sidewalks, and crosswalks at signalized intersections. The goals of the Project are to **increase safety** for both motorized and non-motorized travelers, **reestablish a non-motorized traveler connection across US-69**, and provide a **direct route on US-69 for freight movement**.

Scope of Work

The Project consists of three primary components, described below and shown in **Figure 1**:

Component A: Spanning approximately 1.6 miles from [Haddock Drive to Border Avenue](#), the roadway will be resurfaced using its current alignment. Like the existing roadway, the resurfacing will have two 12-foot driving lanes and a 10-foot outside shoulder, in addition to new wider four-foot inside shoulders in both the northbound and southbound directions. The shoulders will offer a designated area for emergency stops and disabled vehicles away from the travel lane, allow for drivers to make steering corrections before veering off the road, and provide room for evasive maneuvers. Additionally, the shoulders can be used by bicyclists, adding an important non-motorized traveler connection.

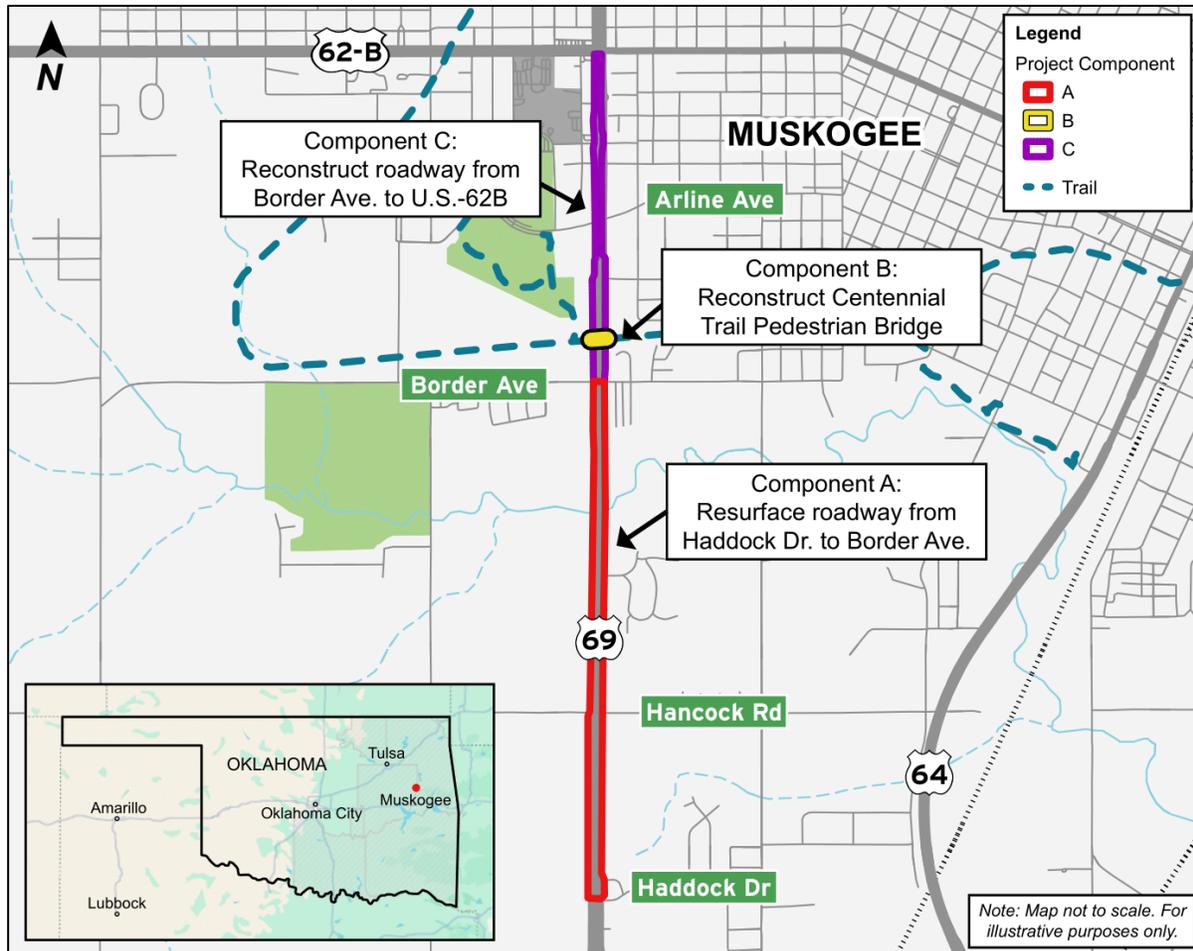
Component B: The [Centennial Trail Pedestrian Bridge](#) will be reconstructed. The existing roadway under the bridge has a sag vertical curve, which causes a bottleneck as trucks travel down into the sag and then must stop at a stop light. Additionally, the current structure is low, 14 feet 10 inches, and as such oversized trucks must detour on one of two routes that are either six or 15 miles on city streets to avoid the structure. The existing sag vertical curve in the roadway will be filled in and the bridge reconstructed to modern design standards. The pedestrian bridge will be reconstructed using prefabricated bridge elements and systems (PBES). The new bridge will be 12 feet wide and continue to be a connection across US-69 for the [Centennial Trail](#), which is a seven mile recreational trail that connects downtown and western Muskogee. The replacement of the pedestrian bridge will allow for room to accommodate the roadway improvements and improve the drainage on the roadway.

Component C: This segment moves through part of the most populated area of Muskogee. Spanning approximately 1.0 mile from [Border Avenue to US-62B](#), the roadway will be

reconstructed to add capacity and non-motorized traveler infrastructure. The roadway will be completely reconstructed from its current divided four-lane roadway to a six-lane roadway with two way left turn lanes. Additionally, sidewalks and lighting will be added throughout the corridor and crosswalks will be added at all signalized intersections.

Together, these improvements will modernize the corridor, enhance safety for all travelers, and transform this segment of US-69 from a vehicle-focused roadway into a more complete street that supports mobility, accessibility, and community connectivity.

Figure 1: Project Location and Components



Source: ODOT

Status of Design

One hundred percent of design has been completed for all components of the Project. The design files are included in the [Supporting Documents](#). The Project will consist of phases to ensure residential and business access during construction is maintained, as discussed in **Project Readiness**.

Project Location

US-69 runs north-south directly through Muskogee, Oklahoma, within Muskogee County, a rural area in eastern central Oklahoma. The Project coordinates are [35.7361 N, -95.4025 W](#). The limits of the Project Area span approximately two and a half miles from Haddock Drive in the south to US-62B in the north within the city limits of Muskogee.

US-69 is a key component of the national freight network and the local and regional economy. The US-69 corridor spans almost entirely across the United States north to south, from southern Texas to Minnesota. The highway connects to many interstates in the United States including I-10, I-20, I-30, I-40, I-44, I-35, I-70, I-29, and I-80. While speeds vary throughout the state, the speed limits along this corridor of US-69 range from 35 to 45 miles per hour (mph).

There are no designated non-motorized travel facilities on US-69, however, the Centennial Trail spans over US-69 within the Project Area on a pedestrian bridge. The [Centennial Trail](#) Pedestrian Bridge was originally a railroad bridge built in 1952 by the Missouri Pacific Railroad. After the railroad track was abandoned, the City of Muskogee claimed ownership of the right of way (ROW) for public use and converted the bridge to accommodate non-motorized travelers. The seven-mile Centennial Trail begins in downtown Muskogee and continues west to the Love-Hatbox Sports Complex, just west of the Project Area, where it loops northwest through the north side of the town. The trail connects to multiple other trails and on-street bikeways within Muskogee, creating a comprehensive active transportation network (see **Merit Criteria** for more information).

The Project is located within the limits of the Muskogee (Creek) Nation, which is the [fourth largest tribe in the United States with 103,926 citizens](#) residing within the reservation boundaries in Oklahoma. The two Census Tracts that surround the Project Area have an estimated population of 6,100 and are considered APP ([Grant Project Location Verification](#)).

Table 1: Project Area Census Tracts

Muskogee Census Tract Number	Area of Persistent Poverty and Small Area Income Poverty Estimates (Y/N)?
1	Yes
10	Yes

Source: [Grant Project Location Verification](#)

Transportation Challenges the Project will Solve

The Project addresses multiple transportation challenges along the US-69 corridor and delivers benefits across key merit criteria:

- **Safety:** The Project improves safety for both motorized and non-motorized travelers through roadway resurfacing, widened shoulders, added two-way left-turn lanes, and new non-motorized traveler infrastructure. Reconstructing the Centennial Trail Pedestrian Bridge to meet modern vertical clearance standards removes the existing crash-prone sag curve and eliminates the need for oversized trucks to detour through downtown Muskogee. Adding sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, and a grade-separated multi-use path addresses safety risks

that currently force non-motorized travelers onto shoulders or travel lanes. These improvements directly align with documented safety risk mitigation strategies identified in the [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#), ODOT's [Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#), the [Muskogee Creek Nation Safe Streets for All](#) (SS4A), and ODOT's [Vulnerable Road User Assessment](#), which designates Muskogee as a high risk area for vulnerable road users. By correcting design deficiencies and providing protected facilities for nonmotorized travelers, the Project addresses crash patterns—such as the corridor's high share of rearend crashes—and helps reduce injuries in a corridor that has experienced 238 crashes and 62 injuries from 2017 to 2021. These improvements position the Project to help reduce serious injuries and improve safety performance below statewide averages for similar facilities.

- **Environmental Sustainability:** The Project strengthens environmental resilience by correcting the sag vertical curve that currently forms a bowl-shaped low point where stormwater repeatedly ponds, causing closures and safety hazards during major weather events. It also increases the number of drainage inlets by 51 percent and enhances the conveyance capacity to move water off the roadway more quickly. These improvements reduce hydroplaning risks, prevent premature pavement deterioration, and keep US-69 operational for residents, emergency responders, freight, and military mobilization during extreme rainfall. Overall, the Project significantly improves long-term corridor reliability and reduces reliance on rural detour routes with lower structural capacity.
- **Quality of Life:** The Project improves daily travel for families by adding continuous sidewalks, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant curb ramps, and safe, clearly marked crosswalks where none currently exist. Replacing the Centennial Trail Pedestrian Bridge with a 12-foot-wide, ADA-compliant multimodal facility provides safe access to the seven-mile Muskogee Trail System and nearby parks, schools, and community resources. Enhanced lighting and accessible design features make non-motorized travel safer and more comfortable throughout the day. Overall, the Project turns US-69 from a barrier into a safe, intuitive corridor that supports family travel and community connectivity.
- **Mobility and Community Connectivity:** The Project removes a long-standing physical barrier that separates residential neighborhoods from commercial and retail areas by providing a grade-separated pedestrian bridge and continuous non-motorized traveler facilities. Wider shoulders, sidewalks, and ADA-compliant crossings create safe and reliable travel options for residents, including those in Census tracts where up to 12 percent of households lack access to a vehicle. These improvements link underserved communities to the Muskogee Trail System and essential destinations without requiring car ownership. The Project therefore expands mobility and reconnects communities divided by the highway.
- **Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity:** US-69 is a nationally significant north-south freight corridor and a designated Critical Rural Freight Corridor, carrying over 25,000 vehicles per day, 26 percent of which are trucks. By correcting the vertical clearance deficiency and removing the detour requirement for oversized loads, the Project generates travel time, and operating cost savings totaling \$38.8 million in discounted benefits. It also supports economic growth by ensuring efficient multimodal connections to Port Muskogee, a major regional economic engine with more than 85 industries and ongoing investments. Together, the improvements strengthen freight reliability, reduce transportation costs, and enhance access to emerging industrial and technology developments in Muskogee.
- **State of Good Repair:** The Project modernizes the 74-year-old Centennial Trail Pedestrian Bridge, which does not meet current vertical clearance standards and includes substandard

piers that create fixed-object hazards. By raising the US-69 grade, removing obsolete bridge piers, and constructing a wider, ADA-compliant replacement structure, the Project brings the corridor into alignment with contemporary ODOT design requirements. Eliminating the sag vertical curve and improving drainage reduces recurring maintenance needs on the US-69 mainline, lowering annual costs from \$88,000 to an estimated \$7,500. These changes preserve the corridor's core infrastructure, extend its useful life, and reduce long-term operational burdens for ODOT.

- **Partnership and Collaboration:** The Project is the result of coordinated planning with ODOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Tribal Governments, the City of Muskogee, and community-based organizations and targeted stakeholder engagement. Virtual meetings and open houses in 2020 and 2021 gathered input from elected officials, the Muskogee (Creek) Nation, and local government staff, all of whom expressed overall support. Ongoing collaboration ensures alignment with regional transportation, safety, land-use, and recreation priorities. ODOT is also exploring use of state apprenticeship programs to support workforce development during construction.
- **Innovation:** Accelerated Bridge Construction by way of Prefabricated Bridge Elements and Systems (PBES) will be used for the new pedestrian bridge, reducing onsite construction time, minimizing disruptions, and improving long-term durability. The Project incorporates Smart Work Zones using Intelligent Transportation Systems to monitor travel speeds, manage incidents, and reduce delays during construction. It uses Virtual Public Involvement to expand participation and improve communication with residents throughout planning and delivery.