



OKLAHOMA
Transportation



Hochatown Community Access and Pedestrian Safety Project

Project Readiness

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

FY25 BUILD Grant Application

BUILD Grant Request: \$20,000,000



PROJECT READINESS

This section provides an overview of the project readiness for the Hochatown Community Access and Pedestrian Safety Project (Project).

Planning and Constructability

STIP/TIP/TTIP/TAM Plan

The Project is included in the [Statewide Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#) on page 19.

Consistency with Other Plans

The Project is consistent with the [Oklahoma Freight Transportation Plan | 2023-2030](#), which outlines the following goals:

- Invest in infrastructure and operational improvements that strengthen economic competitiveness, reduce congestion, reduce the costs of freight transportation, improve reliability, and increase productivity
- Improve safety, security, efficiency, and resilience – urban and rural
- Improve network state of good repair
- Use innovation and advanced technology to improve safety, efficiency, and reliability
- Improve economic efficiency and productivity of networks
- Improve state flexibility to support multi-state planning and address highway freight connectivity
- Reduce environmental impacts

Freight Plans

The Project is included within the state freight plan, the [Oklahoma Freight Transportation Plan | 2023-2030](#).

Property Acquisition/ Right-of-Way (ROW)

ODOT owns the ROW on U.S. Route 259 (US 259). However, minimal ROW acquisition will be needed, which will be complete by March of 2025.

Construction Techniques and Phasing

Unique construction techniques and non-standard project delivery methods nor phasing will not be required. Design-bid-build will be used for delivery of the Project.

Detailed Project Schedule

ODOT has proposed a realistic timeline for completing the Project, detailed in Figure 1. The schedule has built in time contingencies for potential schedule delays, with an expected grant obligation by September 2026. Initial design work began in the early months of 2023, with the Project reaching 30% level of design in January 2024. Final design plans are anticipated to be finalized by May 2025.

Utility relocation and modification as well as the minimal ROW acquisition required will be complete by March 2025.

Figure 1. Project Schedule

	2024												2025												2026												2027					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Preliminary Design Plans	█																																									
ROW/Utilities													█																													
NEPA	█																																									
404 Permit													█																													
Final Design													█						█																							
PSE																			█																							
Letting/Obligation																									█																	
Bidding/Contract																									█						█											
Construction																									█						█											

PS&E = plans, specifications, and estimate
ROW = right-of-way

Following this timeline and sequence of events, ODOT can successfully complete this Project before the grant funding obligation deadline of September 30, 2029 and the funding expenditure deadline of September 30, 2034. The commitment to improving safety and operational performance is demonstrated through a Project schedule designed to provide the Hochatown area with immediate relief from its current challenges.

NEPA and Permitting

A [Reconnaissance Data Collection Report](#) was developed in May 2021 for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) to review the potential environmental constraints on the Project area. Some of the constraints include potential impacts to streams and wetlands, protected species and habitats, the Hochatown Cemetery, federal properties, and Choctaw tribal ownership. ODOT does not anticipate any major challenges or risks associated with the Project, resulting in a clear and concise schedule.

NEPA Class of Action

This Project has received a categorical exclusion (CE) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, indicating it is not anticipated to have a significant effect on the human environment.

NEPA Status and Milestones

Permits and Approvals

ODOT capital projects demonstrate receipt of all environmental approvals and permits necessary for the Project to proceed to construction on the timeline specified. The aggressive design schedule and accompanying environmental review schedule will be documented and completed well in advance of the final plans and start of construction.

This Project received a CE pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, indicating it is not anticipated to have a significant effect on the human environment. The CE has been provided as an attachment.

Permitting

This Project is expected to fall under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 404 Nationwide Permit 14. Work will be within ODOT ROW, and it is not anticipated to require an individual permit. Additionally, ODOT has agency liaisons at USACE, who will accelerate and improve the consistency of permitting reviews for approval.



Right-of-way Acquisition

Relocations and ROW acquisitions will be minimal for the Project, enabling an efficient project development. The US 259 corridor has at least 65 feet of ROW from the roadway's centerline, with some variations in offset reaching 130 feet. This large ROW footprint minimizes the typical challenges associated with typical construction project impacts to residential and commercial property.

Use of retaining walls, rural curb and gutter, drainage structures, and access management will be considered throughout Project design to resolve potential issues around ROW constraints along US 259.

Project Support

Public Engagement

ODOT has held multiple community outreach events to engage the public on the proposed Project. The first public event was held on October 27, 2022, at the Broken Bow Senior High School auditorium in Broken Bow. The event included a presentation detailing a brief Project background, a description of existing conditions in the Project area, Project goals, interim improvements, current operational traffic volumes, and the findings of the level-of-service analysis.

ODOT hosted another open forum in Broken Bow on May 16, 2023, to receive community feedback on the decision-making process. This meeting focused more on the 6-mile segment of US 259 between State Highway (SH) 259A South and Golf Course Road. This meeting delivered new data and information on the suggested safety improvements intended to address the concerns resulting from the substantial growth of tourism and new development. ODOT has established a dedicated public website for this Project to encourage greater involvement from stakeholders and the general public, fostering ongoing stakeholder engagement throughout the Project's development process.

On November 26, 2024, ODOT held a public walkability audit throughout various portions of the US 259 corridor to engage the community and gather feedback on current issues as well as potential solutions the public feels comfortable with. The public voiced concerns over unsafe crossings due to lack of pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, and the need to reduce the vehicular speed limit. Furthermore, the public expects that pedestrian traffic will continue to increase, which will only exacerbate the conflict between vehicles and vulnerable road users further.

Moving forward, ODOT is regularly engaging the community through monthly meetings, which will aim to build further support.

State and Local Approvals

The Project is presently included in ODOT's 8-year [Construction Work Plan \(CWP\)](#) and is also part of the [Statewide Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#), covering the initial 4 years of ODOT's 8-year CWP. The Project has received broad community support, with all letters of support available in the appendix of this application.

Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning

The Project is along a designated high-truck-volume corridor. ODOT recognizes high-truck-volume corridors as crucial to the movement of goods. Identifying these corridors allows ODOT to focus its investment, maintenance activities, and enforcement efforts.



Construction Technique and Phasing

The Project will not require unique construction techniques nor non-standard project delivery methods and/or phasing. As such, ODOT will ensure a qualified contractor is selected, with successful experience in delivering projects of similar scope on time and on budget.

Risks and Mitigation

Potential risks and mitigation strategies to minimize the potential impact of those risks are summarized in

Table 1. ODOT will continue to evaluate the potential Project risks and adjust the mitigation strategies as coordination and design advance.

Table 1. Project Risk and Mitigation Strategies

Project Risk (Probability of Occurrence)	Mitigation Strategies
Cost Increases (Moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ODOT has included the Project in its 8-year CWP and remains committed to adjusting the Project as needed to meet all BUILD Grant and statutory deadlines for funding obligation and expenditure. ▪ ODOT's construction estimates will contain a 10% contingency allowing for a margin of increase.
Public Consensus (Low)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ODOT will continue its close coordination with the community as design advances. ▪ ODOT will acknowledge the public's support of the purpose and need of the Project to improve safety and provide additional connectivity and mobility, which will benefit the local community and tourists. ▪ ODOT will finalize scope details to address stakeholder and community concerns and incorporate public comments.

BUILD = Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development

Technical Capacity Assessment

Project Delivery

As the Project sponsor, ODOT boasts decades of experience in managing the receipt and expenditure of federal transportation funds, demonstrating a long history of successfully delivering projects at a comparable scale. Committed to enhancing traffic conditions and safety on Oklahoma's bridges and roads, ODOT ensures the obligation of all required construction funding before advertising a project and again before awarding a construction contract. With a consistent contract growth of less than 3 percent, any additional costs are covered by other federal formula funds or Oklahoma State Rebuilding Oklahoma Access and Driver Safety (ROADS) funds. Moreover, this Project aligns with ODOT's ongoing efforts to address safety and capacity improvements. 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 that is currently receiving 55% federal funding. One example of a successfully delivered project with federal dollars is:

- US 69/75 Bryan County, Oklahoma Fastlane Grant (City of Calera, 2016)



The Project improves safety and efficiency for the significant freight traffic on the US 69/75 corridor in Bryan County by improving approximately four miles of existing arterial highway with numerous access points and three signalized intersections. The new highway is fully access controlled, with grade separations and functional frontage roads.

Federal Funding

ODOT has expertise in securing competitive federal grant funding, having successfully managed multiple large infrastructure projects funded in part by the U.S. Department of Transportation through programs such as Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA), BUILD, Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD), the Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP), and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER). Recently awarded and/or completed projects include:

- Bridging the Gap: Multimodal Connections over the Oklahoma River (BUILD 2024)
- Oklahoma County I-40 and Douglas Boulevard Interchange (INFRA 2021)
- Reconstruction of US 281 Bridgeport Bridge (BUILD 2020)
- Oklahoma Freight Rail Upgrade (TIGER 2011)

ODOT has a proven track record of collaboration with other agencies, including local governments and tribal nations, to successfully complete projects.

Federal Regulations

As ODOT has experience with delivering projects that were awarded federal funding, ODOT understands the federal contract and procurement requirements. ODOT has been awarded several discretionary grants from various federal programs and is familiar with developing grant agreements, administering the funding, and providing the necessary reporting. ODOT has the technical expertise and resources dedicated to the Project to provide quality control over all aspects of design and construction, ensure the Project meets all federal requirements, and keep the public informed of the Project's progress.

ODOT has dedicated staff personnel, who have decades of grant award management to ensure the Project fulfills all federal contract and procurement requirements such as Buy America, Americans with Disabilities Act, Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, Davis Bacon Act, etc.

ODOT has a close partnership with the FHWA Oklahoma Division through which it receives its federal aid allocation and discretionary grant funding. ODOT's Contract Compliance Division ensures that ODOT and all its consultants and contractors comply with applicable Civil Rights requirements.

- Civil Rights and Title VI

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the main legal authority for ODOT's external nondiscrimination programs. ODOT ensures that no person or groups of persons shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, retaliation or genetic information, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any and all programs, services, or activities administered by ODOT, its recipients, sub-recipients, and contractors. ODOT complies with Title VI by conducting internal and external compliance reviews, conducting training for staff, suppliers, vendors, contractors, local governments, and other ODOT sub-recipients of federal funds, and developing Title VI compliance information for internal and external dissemination.