



**Media Contact:**  
**Strategic Communications**  
Phone: 405-521-6000  
[www.pikepass.com](http://www.pikepass.com)

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## **August OTA Board Meeting Wrap-Up**

### **Board approves new PlatePay toll rates; \$10 million for cable barrier installation**

The Oklahoma Turnpike Authority board approved two agenda items at its Tuesday, Aug. 23, meeting aimed at aiding in the conversion to PlatePay (cashless tolling). The routine vote helps establish the PlatePay toll rates for drivers along the Cimarron Turnpike as well as PlatePay and PIKEPASS rates for drivers on the new Gilcrease Expressway Turnpike, which is expected to open in September.

"We're excited for this next step for the Gilcrease Turnpike," Secretary of Transportation and OTA Executive Director Tim Gatz said. "This is a very unusual project that has utilized a number of partnerships to be brought to completion."

The 5-mile Gilcrease Expressway turnpike will connect I-44 to US-412 and aims to help relieve urban traffic congestion during peak times. The project involves funding partnerships among six agencies and private investors.

The Cimarron Turnpike between Stillwater and Tulsa is set to start the conversion to PlatePay later this month and scheduled to be fully converted to cashless tolling by the end of the year.

PlatePay helps create a free-flow of traffic by using cameras to take a photo of a vehicle's license plate and enabling the OTA to send the registered owner an invoice. Drivers without PIKEPASS will receive a bill in the mail. PIKEPASS customers will not see any changes. "We encourage all Oklahomans to get a PIKEPASS account as it's the most cost-effective way to travel on the turnpike network," Gatz said.

The Authority plans to have all turnpikes in the state converted to PlatePay by the end of 2024.

Board members also approved a more than \$3 million purchase order for snow and ice removal supplies. This routine vote will help turnpike maintenance crews prepare for winter weather well ahead of the first storm.

The board approved more than \$10 million to assist with installing 16 miles of cable barriers along the Indian Nation turnpike. "I want to thank the board for helping us reinvest into the turnpike network with these cable barriers," Gatz said. "There have been more than 2,000

impacts on our cable barriers, and each one of those could have resulted in serious injury or a fatality, had those barriers not been in place.”

The board, a six-member panel appointed by the governor to an eight-year term to oversee turnpike development, awards project contracts for road and bridge construction on a monthly basis.

The next Oklahoma Turnpike Authority board meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m. Friday, Sept. 30, at the Oklahoma Department of Transportation Commission Room, 200 N.E. 21<sup>st</sup> St., Oklahoma City. The meeting also will be available to view live online.