

July 30th, 2026 Meeting Minutes

2:00 pm – 3:20 pm

Meeting Location: Virtual

Welcome and Opening Comments

Chelsea: Good afternoon, for those who don't know, my name is Chelsea Childs. I am the Office of Innovation Division Manager, newly to this role. Tara Cullum is still a co-chair of STIC, but she is out with a family emergency today and will not be returning probably until late next week. I don't have many comments, I'm going to pass it off to Souzan, who has some updates for us on EDC-8. And I apologize if there's any confusion in the agenda. That's listed twice. Souzan, are you ready to give some updates on that?

Souzan: Good afternoon, everyone. It is great to see all of you, and welcome, Chelsea! Thank you so much for taking the lead in Tara's absence. We are thrilled to have you on the team. As announced last week, new EDC-8 initiatives are underway, including regional peer exchanges. To keep these exchanges manageable, the country has been divided into four regions, with Oklahoma placed in the Southwest region. Our exchange will take place in Houston on December 2nd. Federal Highway will cover travel expenses for up to 10 participants per state, which includes two representatives from the Division Offices and eight from the State DOT, MPOs, LTAPs, and other stakeholders. Tara is currently compiling our attendee list today, and we will send that out shortly along with further details on invitational travel. Additionally, as part of EDC-8, organizers are seeking state representatives to serve on discussion panels. Presenters will receive talking points and questions in advance, with the flexibility to customize them. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase Oklahoma's successful experiences and best practices nationwide. If you or someone you know from Oklahoma would be a great fit for a panel, please coordinate with Chelsea and Tara. I will pause now to see if anyone has any questions before handing it back to Chelsea.

Chelsea: All right, thank you. Yes, if you guys do think of any questions later, please reach out to me and Tara and we will handle that accordingly. I believe we don't have anything for the standing committee on pre-construction. Jason, do you have anything, let us know. If not, we will continue.

Standing Committee on Pre-Construction

Jason Boomer: That is correct. We do not have anything

Chelsea: Okay, great. All right, next up is the Standing Committee on Construction Materials and Maintenance, and that is with Mr. Romero.

Standing Committee on Construction, Materials, and Maintenance

EDC-7 & STIC Innovation Combined Efforts:

Enhancing Performance with Internally Cured Concrete & Pilot Internal Curing for Bridge Decks

(ODOT Champion: Matt Romero/Walt Peters/ Nairi Matevosyan-FHWA Champion: Ralph Nguyen & Waseem Fazal)

Matt: Good afternoon, everybody. Hope everybody is having a grand day. We'll start off with our updates for EDC-7, Enhanced Performance with Internally Cured Concrete. I spoke to Mr. Peters; there should be a final report for that project. Walt, do you want to give us an overview of that final report?

Walt: Dr. Ley did write a final report, lots of details, lots of good information. This was treated as a learning experience. We weren't successful with our internal curing because the middle span that was the control did better than our experimental area. We've learned some lessons from that. We've sent a report to FHWA that includes a summary of what Dr. Ley did. We've shared it with them and I'm hoping that we'll give this another try. Some of the material that they used for the internal curing in the lab did the

worst on the four that Dr. Ley tested. In parts of the state, it's hard to get the materials to the project site. I was disappointed but hope to give it another try here in the near future.

Waseem: We need to be a bit more careful now since we have very good success with our wet curing. A lot of things in the market, they're trying to sell as magic or snake oil, we need to be careful in future. I know we intend to try a few more projects. Unfortunately, we did not have much success on these types of chemicals.

Matt: I'll add to what Waseem said. We went into it thinking that E5 chemical was going to be the end-all, cure-all. After talking to the states that were leading that, they have since backed off. I don't really believe that's the way we should go. But at the same time, I still don't want to give up on using aggregates as an internally cured source of material. That technology has been vetted; it's been proven time and time again. I think it's just a logistics problem. Like Walt said, getting the material to the project is part of the problem. I think we would have better luck in the urban areas versus rural.

Waseem: Yes, this is a great toolbox because we use lightweight that can reduce some of the unit weight if you have settlement issue but cost drives everything.

Justin: Did you talk to Iowa about the chemical internal curing mixture?

Matt: Yes, I have, and they've backed off. They were starting to see shrinkage cracking where they weren't before. It's basically a chemical reactive situation they've got going on with some of the aggregates they're using. It works in some cases, and in some cases, you get detrimental effects.

Waseem: Absolutely correct, because there are some other add mixtures that behave differently and if those minor adjustments in the field are add the mix design, like one vendor to another vendor makes a huge difference. A lot of their products don't have that chemical chemistry upfront, so we don't know. We may know a few things but not a lot of other things are known. That might be the reason we need to be a little bit careful, as Matt said, but we still need to keep trying.

Justin: To Matt's point, I do like the idea of mechanical internal curing, so to speak, rather than a chemical product that supposedly does the same thing.

Matt: Yeah, I think that was part of the issue there's too much chemistry involved. And when you start mixing different chemicals, they don't always react the way you intend them to react. At first, those states were all gung-ho and it was the greatest thing. Well, it worked for one or two projects, but then as they changed material sources and the chemistry of the aggregates changed and using different admixtures alongside the E5 chemical, it didn't work quite the way they expected it to. Since then, those states have backed off from using it considerably. It has its uses and its places, but you have to be very selective when using that stuff.

Justin: Good Info.

Waseem: Thank you, Matt. Thank you, both.

Matt: Does anybody have any questions or comments on this initiative? With that, we'll move on to the next initiative on the agenda. Bryce, if you could give us an update on the Geotextile Stabilization.

Innovative High-Performance Geotextiles for Stabilization of Problematic Roadway Subgrades
(ODOT Champion: Bryce Hanlon - FHWA Champion: Waseem Fazal)

Bryce: All of my updates up to this point, have been like, "They're still testing & they're testing another product & they got another setup made." They're at the end of all of that now. The final report is due in two months, and they've tested all the products they wanted to test, and they submitted another progress report yesterday after I'd submitted this update. They tested the calibration models; they tested a section that had no geotextile on it. It was a super thin separator fabric. Then they tested a section that has aggregate base on it. The idea is to have these as baseline models that you can compare to all the geosynthetics that they tested and hopefully develop improvement factors or benefit ratios from that. All the testing is mainly done. I talked to Dr. Hatami the other day and they have a couple different ones that they can set up. While they're doing all their data reduction, the plan is over the next two months to write this report. Then to develop all these traffic benefit ratios and potential structural number reduction factors. They have no more time to keep on testing. By our next meeting I should have the results and the idea is, we're going to be able to

implement it into our pavement design processes quickly. I'm really looking forward to the report that we're going to get here in two months. That's it.

Matt: Does anyone have any questions on this? I had a conversation earlier with senior staff, this is becoming a hot topic once again. I think as a state, we are using more of these products than we should be. In my opinion, based on my discussions with other states, we're using a lot of these materials. If we can get some useful information from this study, maybe that can help us determine when and when not to use these types of materials. That would be a cost savings for the department.

Bryce: From the design side, we're not recommending them at all. All the use right now is coming from construction. The idea is we can use it as a tool for pavement design, but a lot of it is more from the constructability, keeping the site workable is a lot of where it's coming from. We're one of the top if not the top two states that use these in the whole country. Being able to maximize the effectiveness of them will be great.

Wassem: You mentioned earlier, when we started this project, our scope was limited and I believe the PI kept adding more and more product. We should be controlling those because our intent is we need to try those products which are for our interest under our program. Make sure we get those results timely and wrap up our project. You're absolutely right, it looks like the PI extended this project, so why now is he having a hard time getting it concluded and wrapped up.

Bryce: Yes, that's why they ended up having the no-cost extension. They were supposed to be done at the beginning of this year, but they extended it out for nine months. They had more products and it took longer to get the testing done. It took longer than what they originally thought. After this project, they're going to start testing geogrids as well as using the same mechanism, the same setup. We should have a comprehensive look at the benefits of these products from the design side. Like I said, construction may continue to use them for their application, but from our side, we've gone away from recommending these because we didn't have enough data. This should hopefully close out the gap of data we had.

Wassem: We are practitioners, we don't have that patience like professors, we like to see results coming in.

Bryce: This has been tough for me, every time we meet, it's been... they're still testing. I need to have design numbers that I can report on and can apply and potentially reduce pavement sections, or reduce your ad thickness, this amount. That's the type of stuff I'm looking for.

Matt: Any other questions or comments? Bryce, thanks for the work, and I'm looking forward to seeing how this pans out. All right, if nobody else has any questions or comments. We'll move on to Mr. Vivanco, do you want to give us an update on balanced mix design?

Increase Testing Capacity of Field Residencies for BMD Implementation

(ODOT Champion: David Vivanco - FHWA Champion: Waseem Fazal)

David: How are you guys doing?

We finally were able to order these load frames. We ordered six units with this funding plus an additional 12 units, a total of 18 units. We went through the whole bidding process. We awarded the purchase to Instattech, they've already ordered and we're waiting. Hopefully they arrive in the first two weeks of August, we'll get at least eight to 10 units. So, we'll see.

Matt: Hopefully we get those machines dealt out. I believe you mentioned getting together with the first projects that will have balanced mix design associated with those projects. Correct me when I say this wrong, but we're going to try to hit those residencies with those projects first to get them set up, get them trained and ready to go on those projects.

David: That's correct. We have four projects upcoming that are going to go out for bid as BMD, full BMD projects. We're going to focus on those residencies, making sure they're ready to go once they start construction.

Matt: Sounds good. Anybody have any questions or comments? All right; that's it for us.

Taylor: Matt, I appreciate the effort on the BMD. We know it was a major initiative for us to go over, and I know a lot of people have put a lot of hard work into it. It's the time to do it, I appreciate everybody's effort on focusing on those residencies that obviously

will be affected by this. I also appreciate the geotech research. I think that'll be very interesting and important for our future here at ODOT as well. Thank you.

Matt: Thanks, Taylor. I'm a little pessimistic about it. We're one of the lead states on this whole balance mix design thing. And I hate to be the first one into the pool, but it is what it is. We'll see where this goes, hopefully it turns out to be a good thing. Thanks for the work, David.

David: It will be a good thing.

Chelsea: Thank you, Matt. It's not so bad to be first. Sometimes it's okay to come in and say, "Hey, we've got a problem." The next committee is going to be on safety, mobility and technology, which is Alan Stevenson, but I will pass it off to Caitlin.

Standing Committee on Safety, Mobility, and Technology

EDC-7 Innovation:

Next-Generation Traffic Incident Management: Integrating Technology, Data, and Training

(ODOT Champion: Caitlyn Carolus & FHWA Champion: James Bui)

Caitlyn: Hey, no new updates on this. It's completed and done as of last year, but I'm sure we'll be heading up the connected corridors for EDC-8. I'm excited to see what that looks like. If anybody has any questions, let me know.

Chelsea: Thank you, Marty is up next.

Nighttime Visibility for Safety

(ODOT Champion: Marty Farris & FHWA Champion: Huy Nguyen)

Marty: For nighttime visibility, no major updates, just projects that we had ongoing and have been let and constructed. We are continuing development of updated standards and application guides for new lighting items on our roadways that we had a meeting about last month to help move that forward a little bit. Then we're continuing to explore our ability to get additional raised pavement markers out on our roadways to help with wet night visibility and other situations. We're trying to explore all those different options, but nothing major is coming out of it just right now.

Chelsea: Any questions? Lance, you're up.

STIC Incentive Projects:

Transportation AI Projects Team

(ODOT Champion: Lance Underwood & Sam Coldiron & FHWA Champion: Huy Nguyen)

Lance: We have two different initiatives that we're working on for STIC. The first one was the roadway image recognition effort. We made some progress over the spring, but during the summertime, we had to put this on pause and hold while some of our OMES developers navigated some H1B1 Visa steps, but they're back now and we've cleared those hurdles. What we're focusing on now is to identify all the remaining assets. They're also breaking up the approach by control sections in another effort to try to help cut down on the amount of video or unchanged assets that the team is having to review. We're still taking those steps towards getting this into live production. As part of that, they've begun uploading the next year's-worth of video roadway images. AI will start comparing those to previous years and then give us feedback on those interface heat maps for the team. We're excited about this one. This is one of the first kind of AI initiatives that we've started. We're hoping that before the end of this calendar year, we'll get this into live production with the team and start making progress on clearing out a lot of that backlog on the asset review. The next one is with our right-of-way deeds image recognition or deeds analysis tool. We've nearly finished pre-processing all of the deeds. We went into Doc Vault and used AI to identify which of those PDFs that are part of the job piece files, which one of those are deeds. AI helped us pull out those and identify them and then name the files accordingly. I think we're about a week away from turning over those thousands of deeds to the vendor. They'll begin their process of contextually reading the information off of the deeds, creating the traverse file, and then we move into the next phase of development where we'll build an interface and take it from there. We anticipate some deployments pretty soon. Happy to answer any questions on these two. Thank you, Chelsea.

Chelsea: No problem. I don't believe anyone from Rhonda's team is here for the public involvement software. They're piloting the Public Input platform. I'm going to read off the update that they have here on the slide.

Piloting a Public Involvement Software Platform for Oklahoma DOT

(ODOT Champion: Jenny Droscher – FHWA Champion: William Rowe)

Chelsea: They've completed their first project, the I-35 corridor improvements website went live on May 19. They held an in-person meeting on May 27th. At the in-person meeting, they used Public Input's kiosk feature, which allows electronic sign-in for attendees. They only received a couple comments on the website itself, but they had individual QR codes to help track where people were accessing the website. They're working on a schedule for another meeting in the coming weeks with Public Input to follow up on pulling post-reports on the I-35 project, discuss SSD implementation and onboarding for additional users. I know a little bit about this because I've been involved with Community Engagement and heading up the website revamp. If anyone has any questions that I can help answer, please feel free to ask those now.

John: Chelsea, this is John Sharp from ACOG. We went down to the public meeting in Moore. It was different having to sign-in on an Apple kind of tablet, but it was fine and it seemed to go very well. It's probably smoother than having to write your name and your e-mail address and where you work 10 million times, but it seemed to work really well and the website seems very easy to access.

Chelsea: That's wonderful news. Thank you so much for sharing that. We're very excited about this because we want to bring everyone away from the pen and paper as much as possible, even out in the wild. We appreciate that feedback, Mr. Sharp. Thank you so much.

Standing Committee on Special Initiatives

EDC-7:

Chelsea: This last one, strategic workforce. No updates provided, pending final report and we will sally forth with that. Souzan, do you want to provide any closing comments or does anyone else have any comments, questions, concerns before we continue?

Strategic Workforce Development & Pre-Apprenticeship Stakeholder-Focused Training Program

(ODOT Champion: Jennifer Hankins & FHWA Champion: Viplav Reddy)

Closing Comments:

Souzan: I'd like to share a quick update on our STIC incentive projects. Typically, by this time of year, we would have received the funding call and already be working through proposals, but that announcement hasn't come out yet. My recommendation is to go ahead and draft your proposals now, then share them with Chelsea and Tara for preliminary review. That way, when the official call is issued, we can ensure a fast turnaround and be in a strong position to submit right away.

Chelsea: Okay, thank you. I want to let you all know I will be sending out an e-mail. I have one prepared to remind you all that the STIC application and all the information is on our intranet internally. And as a reminder, all submissions for that need to be submitted through an ODOT champion, to me and Tara or to me and Rayna or all the above. If you are on the call and you're from outside the agency, please make sure to coordinate with your ODOT champion to get that STIC application submitted to us. If anyone has any questions about where to find it, et cetera, please let me know. But I will be sending that information out via e-mail soon. Thank you all for joining. It looks like our next meeting will be on October 27th. We currently have it set as in-person. Souzan, is that still the plan?

Souzan: We also have the peer exchange scheduled for December 2nd. We may need to wait until after that event, but as soon as we get more details, I will pass them along. If we need to adjust or reschedule our timing, we can certainly do that.

Chelsea: Okay, so TBD, but tentatively October 27th, either virtual or in person, we will let you know. Okay. No further questions or comments, and I think we're ready to adjourn. Thank you so much, guys. Appreciate your time.