

## **PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY**

### **Cherokee County JP 31246(04) – Grade, Drainage, Bridge and Surface Improvements on SH-80 from 0.85 Mile South of Junction SH-80/SH-51 North 0.5 Miles**

This document summarizes the public open house conducted for the realignment of State Highway (SH)-80 from 0.85 mile south of junction SH-80/SH-51, north 0.5 mile in Cherokee County, Oklahoma. The Open House was held between 5:00 and 7:00 PM on February 4, 2020 at the Hulbert Public Schools Auditorium located at 316 Rider Lane, Hulbert, Oklahoma. The purpose of the public open house was to present the proposed alternatives (three alternatives) and received public comment.

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is evaluating the need for improvements to SH-80 from 0.85 miles south of junction SH-80/SH-51, north 0.5 miles (on new alignment) in Cherokee County, Oklahoma. The purpose of the proposed improvements is to correct roadway deficiencies, enhance safety, and efficiently accommodate traffic. The project is currently scheduled to be let for construction in 2023.

ODOT tasked a Consultant to evaluate three alternatives for improving this segment of highway while taking into consideration the cost of construction, right-of-way and utilities, potential environmental constraints.

- Alternative 1: New alignment west of existing S. Wilson Lane
- Alternative 2: New alignment along existing S. Wilson Lane (section line)
- Alternative 3: New alignment along existing S. Wilson Lane (section line) with curb and gutter on the left of the alignment, north of the creek

Property owner and stakeholder letters were mailed on January 9, 2020. These letters provided a brief description of the purpose and need for the project, the project history, and an invitation to the open house. The letter was accompanied by a project location map. This letter was sent to ninety-six (96) property owners, stakeholders and state, federal and local government agencies.

Initial agency solicitation letters were mailed on February 6, 2020. These letters provided a short project description and brief history of the project with an enclosed project location map, project overview map, and handout from the open house. This letter was sent to twenty-five (25) State and Federal agencies.

A flyer with notification of the open house was distributed door-to-door to all residents and business owners along the corridor. The flyer provided a brief description of the purpose and need for the project and an invitation to the open house.

The Open House was held between 5:00 and 7:00 PM on February 4, 2020 at the Hulbert Public Schools Auditorium located at 316 Rider Lane, Hulbert, Oklahoma. The purpose of the public open house was to present the proposed alternatives (three alternatives) and received public

comment. The open house was a come and go meeting with no formal presentation. Thirty-six (36) attendees signed in for the meeting. Throughout the open house period, ODOT and consultant staff members were available for one-on-one and small group discussions. A project brochure was provided to the public as a handout. Display boards showing the three alternatives and preliminary proposed right-of-way were available for public viewing. The attendees were encouraged to fill out a written comment form and complete an online survey using MetroQuest.

The attendees at the open house provided good feedback on the three alternatives and have a few areas of concern. Many had questions about how much right-of-way would be needed and how individual parcels would be affected by right-of-way acquisition. Comments heard at the meeting were mostly about, how the proposed alternatives would impact specific property owners.

The comment period was open until February 18, 2020 with a total of seventeen (17) written comments received, including four (4) from agencies (Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, Oklahoma Conservation Commission, Oklahoma Department of Tourism and Recreation, and Oklahoma Water Resources Board), one (1) from local government (Town of Hulbert), and twelve (12) from members of the public. ODOT also answered four phone calls from the member of the public. Eight (8) members of the public provided input via the MetroQuest Survey. Table below summarizes the written and verbal comments received from the public.

Comment	Number of Comments
A. No Action: prefer no change to the existing alignment	7
B. Bridge Improvements: construct a bridge across Double Spring Creek on Wilson Road	1
C. Socioeconomic: impact to the local retail businesses if highway is realigned	2
D. Other Alternatives: prefer the realignment to occur west on Corp of Engineers land	4
E. Property Impacts: loss of property (land, homes, etc.)	10
F. Safety Concerns: truck traffic will be faster with the realignment, and children/grand children along the alignment	8
G. Right-of-Way Maintenance: concern with who will maintain new right-of-way	1
H. Alignment Selection: Alternative 2 is the best option	2
I. Notification/Additional Information	2

On May 14, 2020, the Town of Hulbert approved a resolution supporting the project and Alternative 1 (new alignment west of existing S. Wilson Lane).

Based on these comments, ODOT will evaluate the three alternatives and determine the best alternative that has the least impact on the environment and public but addresses the safety concerns. Another open house will be held after 60% plans are complete to inform the public of the proposed alternative/action.