



PURPOSE

Why are we Building this Project?

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The purpose of the project is to accommodate existing and future growth and traffic demand, decrease congestion, and improve mobility.

Tulsa County – in particular, the cities of Tulsa, Jenks, and Glenpool – is experiencing tremendous growth through residential and commercial development. The I-44 corridor provides access to important Tulsa County industrial and manufacturing facilities, large employment centers, schools and education facilities, and recreational amenities. In 2018, the I-44/US-75 interchange averaged 148,000 vehicles per day, and future use is anticipated to reach over 195,000 vehicles per day as Tulsa County grows through 2045. The current cloverleaf interchange is an outdated design that is no longer sufficient for today's traffic volumes. As the only remaining four-lane interstate highway segment in the Tulsa metropolitan area, growth in Tulsa County cannot be met with existing I-44 infrastructure conditions.

This section of I-44 is the oldest section of interstate in Oklahoma and the only 4-lane urban interstate bottleneck on the State's Highway Freight Network. Congestion and frequent crashes along the corridor pose a regionally significant transportation challenge, affecting the efficient movement of people and freight. Existing collision rates on I-44 and US-75 in this area are over four times the state average for similar

highways. Almost half of the collisions in the last 10 years were rear end collisions, which can be attributed in part to congested conditions.

Today, freight trucks represent approximately 14 percent of daily I-44 corridor vehicles but the limited number of suitable highway crossings across the Arkansas River has made the river a barrier for oil and gas tanker trucks and the current unimproved interchange further inhibits freight movements of Tulsa's commercial sector. Additionally, the system of roads and ramps and the relationship between the existing interchange and surrounding communities restricts local bicycle and pedestrian access, creating a mobility barrier between concentrated minority, low-moderate income neighborhoods, and the opportunities of the region.

The I-44 and US-75 Interchange improvements will relieve a significant interstate system bottleneck and contribute to a safer and more environmentally friendly, continuous six-lane interstate corridor through the City of Tulsa. Designing to modern standards will yield significant safety benefits on bridges and roadways. Safety improvements include a new median barrier protecting both directions and standard 12-foot inside and outside shoulders on mainline I-44. The four-lane I-44 will be widened to six lanes east of US-75 over the Arkansas River bridge, relieving a major interstate bottleneck and improving regional connectivity over a significant geographic barrier. Importantly, the project will include improved local street connections, including the extension of West 51st Street under US-75 north of I-44, helping to reconnect the historic neighborhoods of Carbondale and Winnetka Heights that were separated when US-75 was constructed.

The project will also enhance personal mobility and accessibility, not only for regional users accessing jobs and services but to the residents in the immediate project area through the construction of bicycle lanes on sections of the Tulsa street system that connect to I-44 and US-75. Local street improvements are also being designed with either finished sidewalks or shelf spacing for future sidewalk installation. A pedestrian bridge extending over the Sand Springs Rail line along 51st Street will connect local neighborhoods to the existing River Park Trail System and the Zarrow Regional Library.

I-44/US-75 INTERCHANGE RECONSTRUCTION

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