

Virtual Public Open House Summary



I-35 Improvements, McClain County

Two Construction Packages

JP 35589(04), From 1 mile south of Ladd Road, extend north 4.15 miles to the SH-74 Interchange

JP 35588(04) From the SH-74 Interchange, extend north 2.75 miles to the Cleveland County Line

Virtual Public Open House Held:
January 11 – 25, 2023

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Executive Summary

This document summarizes the virtual public open house conducted for the proposed widening of I-35 from 4 lanes to 6 lanes, beginning 1.0 miles south of Ladd Road and extending north to the Cleveland County Line in McClain County, Oklahoma. The purpose of the virtual public open house was to present the purpose and need for the project, the proposed improvements under consideration for I-35 and provide an opportunity to inform and obtain input from the public.

The purpose and need of the project are to improve the operational capacity of I-35 to accommodate existing and future traffic volumes, improve safety, and enhance local and regional connectivity. The current Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) in the year 2021 was 74,800 Vehicles Per Day (VPD). Future estimated AADT by year 2041 is 104,700 VPD.

The virtual open house was held on-line between January 11 and January 25, 2023, at www.odot.org/I35McClain. The website homepage includes the project overview, information regarding the open house, and direct access to a sign-in with handout page, project description page, interactive project map, frequently asked questions (FAQ) page, and a page to submit comments. According to the website analytics, 918 unique users viewed the website over the 15-day period with 1,069 visits to the homepage. After the homepage, the interactive map was the most frequently viewed page (585 views), followed by the project description (370 views), and the project background (244 views). There were 165 views to the FAQ page, 161 visits to the Sign-in/Handout page, and 111 views to the comment page. In total, 75 individuals submitted written comments/questions either through mail, email, or on the interactive map. Some people submitted multiple comments on a single form or email. In total 89 comments were received. Comments from two state agencies were also received.

Virtual public open house notification letters were mailed to 54 public officials and 27 agencies. Four Tribal Nations were notified by letter including the Chickasaw Nation, Quapaw Nation, Osage Nation, and Wichita and Affiliated Tribes. Brochures were mailed specifically addressed to 69 property owners immediately adjacent to the project footprint and 9 utility owners within the project footprint. Postcards were sent using the United States Postal Service (USPS) Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) tool reaching 4,263 residents. Postcards and supporting materials were delivered to Adkins Hill Mobile Home Park, Town of Goldsby, City of Purcell, and Libby's Café.

Questions and Comments:

- The Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission (OAC) indicated that the proposed light poles will pose a hazard to the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace and require a Tall Structure Permit under the Oklahoma Aircraft and Pilot Protection Act (APPA), and that the Administrator of the FAA must be notified via Notice of Proposed Construction (Form 7460-1) as per CFR Title 14 Part 77.13.
- The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) determined that no adverse environmental impacts under ODEQ jurisdiction are anticipated. All projects exceeding 1 acre of disturbance must obtain authorization under OKR10. Projects involving water and wastewater utility relocations must obtain a permit from the ODEQ Water Quality Division.

Thirty-one (31) comments were received regarding safety, traffic congestion, increase in traffic volume, want for more widening, or requesting additional signage during construction. Seven (7) comments were focused on public transportation alternatives. Three (3) comments were focused on access during construction. Three (3) comments were focused on detour routes during construction. One (1) comment

was focused on a noise wall. An additional 44 comments were collected on other projects.

An overview of the comments received is tabulated in **Table ES1**.

Table ES1: Overview of comments received.

Comments:	Number of Comments:
Safety	31
Traffic congestion/increase in traffic volume	
Request for additional signage during construction	
Want more widening	
Connections (On/Off Ramps Access Interchanges)	3
Ladd Road on/off ramps	
Beneficial for business growth and access for first responders	
Public Transportation	7
Transportation alternatives, railways, trams, buses, metro line or bike paths	
Noise	1
Request for noise barrier wall	
Detour Routes	3
Lack of alternative routes during construction	
General Comments (Comments collected not related to this project.)	44

Responses to Questions and Comments

There were several comments and questions received on this project as well as other unrelated projects and topics. Below is a summary of responses including links to additional information for reference.

- **Comments about the SH-9W Interchange:** ODOT has a current project including the SH-9W Interchange (Additional information regarding this project can be found here: <https://oklahoma.gov/odot/programs-and-projects0/public-meetings-and-hearings0/public-meetings-and-hearings/20211118.html>)
- **Comments about SH-74 interchange:** ODOT has a current project to replace the SH-74 bridge over I-35. (Additional information regarding this project can be found here: <https://oklahoma.gov/odot/programs-and-projects0/public-meetings-and-hearings0/public-meetings-and-hearings/20221010.html>)
- **Comments regarding ODOT, OTA, and other areas of need:** The 2023-2030 Eight Year Construction Work Plan includes information on planned transportation improvement projects for interstates, U.S and state highways and bridges. Updated annually, this document can be found here: <https://oklahoma.gov/odot/programs-and-projects0/8-year-construction-work-plan.html>. Additional questions can be directed to ODOT’s Project Management Division or the specific District Project Manager: <https://oklahoma.gov/odot/about/contact-us/project-management.html>. Additional questions and comments regarding OTA projects can be directed to <https://oklahoma.gov/ota/contact-us.html>.
- **Additional widening needed in other areas of I-35:** ODOT is continuously reviewing and studying Interstate capacity needs and anticipate additional widening projects along I-35 to the Texas border in the future.

- **Access/congestion during construction:** Access will remain open, maintaining two lanes of traffic in each direction during construction.
- **Induced demand:** Induced traffic demand is due to vehicles diverting from routes to utilize the newest, largest, or fastest route, primarily in urban areas. Due to the rural nature of this project and the lack of other major north-south corridors within the project limits in which to draw traffic, we anticipate induced demand associated with this project would be minimal.
- **Public transit in lieu of widening:** ODOT is interested and currently reviewing options on implementing Commuter Rail Service. Information regarding ODOT's public transit can be found through the Office of Mobility and Public Transit located here:
<https://oklahoma.gov/odot/programs-and-projects0/multimodal/ompt.html>
- **Noise walls:** ODOT is following federally approved guidelines to study potential noise impacts along the project limits.
- ODOT appreciates all the comments and questions received though the comment period.