

# Public Meeting Summary

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**I-35: Southbound between Memorial Road and NE  
122<sup>nd</sup> Street, 4 Miles North of I-44/I-35 Interchange  
Oklahoma County, JP 33771(04)**



**OKLAHOMA**  
Transportation

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Garver Project No.: 15037100



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## 1.0 Introduction

This document summarizes the in-person public meeting conducted for the I-35 Southbound project between Memorial Road and NE 122nd Street in Oklahoma County [JP 33771(04)] (Figure 1). ODOT proposes to add a southbound through lane along I-35 beginning just south of Memorial Road extending south to Hefner Road. Dedicated auxiliary lanes will be provided for traffic entering and exiting I-35. To reduce the potential for collisions due to the complex weaving movements at NE 122nd Street, a concrete barrier will be constructed to prevent westbound Turner Turnpike traffic from exiting at NE 122nd Street. Turner Turnpike traffic wanting to access NE 122nd Street will exit to I-35 north and take Sooner Road south to NE 122nd Street. The in-person public meeting was held on August 1, 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the public of the proposed improvements and receive public input. The purpose of this project is to improve safety and mobility on I-35 including at the I-35/Turner Turnpike interchange.

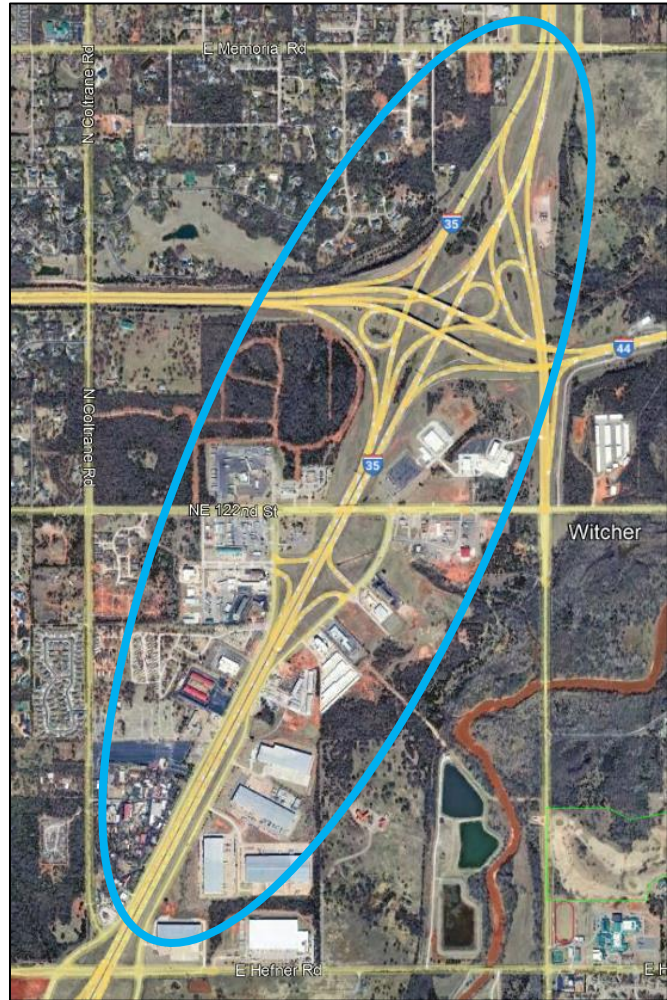


Figure 1: I-35 Project Area

## 2.0 Agency Solicitation

Initial agency solicitation letters were mailed on July 14, 2023. These letters provided a short project description, the purpose of the project, and a brief description of the proposed improvements along with an enclosed project location map. The letter requested recipients provide input by August 15, 2023, and included an invitation to the public meeting held on August 1, 2023. This letter was sent to federal and state resource agencies and Indian Tribes. A copy of the agency solicitation letter and the mailing list is included in **Appendix A**.

## 3.0 Public Meeting

### 3.1 Public Involvement Plan

Public involvement for this project followed ODOT's Public Involvement Plan (February 2022) available at [Public Meetings and Hearings \(oklahoma.gov\)](https://www.oklahoma.gov/public-meetings-and-hearings). Review of the 2021 American Community Survey data for the study area did not indicate the presence of significant low-income or minority populations in the project vicinity. Low-income and minority populations are present, but in lower percentages than



Oklahoma County or the state as a whole. However, these populations were still considered in outreach methods for the public meetings. See **Section 3.2** below.

### 3.2 Meeting Notification

In addition to the notification provided via the agency solicitation letters (see above), notice of the public meeting was provided by several other methods. A letter was sent to the Governor's office, elected officials (federal and state), Oklahoma County Commissioners, officials of the City of Oklahoma City, local school districts, emergency service providers, and medical facilities in the study area. The letter provided a brief description of the purpose and need for the project and an invitation to the in-person and virtual public meetings. The letter was accompanied by a project location map. Letters were mailed on July 14, 2023. A copy of the letter and the mailing list is included in **Appendix B**.

Notice of the public meeting was also sent by letter to all property and utility owners in the study area on July 14, 2023. In an effort to provide maximum notification, especially to rented and leased properties, postcards with information about the in-person and virtual public meetings were delivered by USPS Every Day Direct Mail (EDDM) to all addresses on postal routes 73131-R058, 73013-R020, and 73013-R090. In total, 1,587 postcards were delivered. A copy of the property owner letter and mailing list, postcard, and EDDM postal route map is included in **Appendix C**.

### 3.3 Meeting Information and Formats

The in-person public meeting was held on August 1, 2023, at 6:00 PM at the ODOT Training Center at 5307 NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street, Oklahoma City, OK. Forty-two (42) people signed in for the meeting, including representatives from the City of Oklahoma City (Public Works Department and Fire Department), ODOT, Poe & Associates, Garver, area businesses, and members of the public. A copy of the sign-in sheets is included in **Appendix D**.

Trent January, ODOT District 4 Engineer, opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. Mr. January briefly described the project. Garver and Poe & Associates then gave a presentation about the project, followed by an open question and answer period facilitated by Mr. January. The presentation covered:

- Purpose of the Meeting
- Purpose of the Project
- Project Challenges
- Potential Solutions
- Proposed Improvements
- Impacts and Construction
- How to Submit Comments

ODOT and Poe/Garver staff were available both before and after the formal presentation for one-on-one and small group discussions with the public. Display boards showing the proposed design were available for public viewing in two locations. A handout including the project purpose, proposed improvements, collision data, and a map of the project was provided. A copy of the presentation is included in **Appendix E**. A copy of the display boards and meeting handouts is included in **Appendix F**. The public and agency comment period was open until August 15, 2023.





Discussion at the meeting centered around the proposed barrier and the alternate route for westbound Turner Turnpike traffic wanting to access NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street. Comments included the following:

- Agreement that the westbound Turner to NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street is a dangerous movement.
- The barrier will just create the same problem (multi-lane weave) at Hefner.
- The curvature on the loop on the Sooner exit is not sufficient for large trucks.
- There will be too much traffic on Sooner/NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street (alternate route) and will cause backups.
- Need more lanes on Sooner so traffic (esp. trucks) do not cause backups.
- This project is not enough to fix the issues with the interchange.

### 3.4 Summary of Written Comments

One (1) written comment from agencies and seven (7) written comments from members of the public were received both during and after the public meeting. Copies of the written comments are included in **Appendix G**. ODOT responses to the comments are shown in italics after each comment.

#### 3.4.1 Agency Comments

The **Oklahoma Water Resources Board** stated that before any type of permit is approved, ODOT will need to fill out an OWRB State Owned & Operated Property Floodplain Development Permit. In a second comment, OWRB informed ODOT that the permitting staff has reviewed the environmental impact statement and had found no questions or concerns. If any surface or groundwater is to be used or moved in the completion of this project, a permit through the OWRB may be required. *Response: Thank you for your comment. ODOT will coordinate with OWRB closer to construction to obtain all required permits.*

#### 3.4.2 Public Comments

Seven (7) written comment forms/letters from the public were received. Comments are summarized below.

##### **Concerns about traffic on Sooner Road/NE 122<sup>nd</sup>:**

- Project will increase traffic at Sooner & NE 122<sup>nd</sup>. Will there be a signal?
- Need to add a continuous flow right turn lane for southbound Sooner traffic at NE 122<sup>nd</sup>. Truck traffic will cause backups at the 4-way stop.
- Is the bridge on Sooner over the Turner Turnpike sufficient to handle the truck traffic?
- Sooner exit loop ramp needs to be redesigned – semis will have problems making the turn.

##### **Concern about signage:**

- Signage for northbound I-35 traffic needs to be better – people don't see the signs for the Turner Turnpike until after they have cleared the NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street bridge.
- All the signage around the NE 122<sup>nd</sup> interchange is poor.
- Needs to be signage for traffic wanting to go to Love's (on the turnpike and on Sooner Road). City of Oklahoma City should be willing to partner since it is their tax revenue.
- Needs to be adequate signage for westbound Turner Turnpike traffic wanting to go to the truck stops on NE 122<sup>nd</sup>. Exit for Sooner Road will need to be signed for NE 122<sup>nd</sup> also. Also need signs at the Sooner/NE 122<sup>nd</sup> St. intersection.







**Positive feedback on project/meeting:**

- Public meeting was informative.
- Proposed solution makes sense and seems reasonable given the budgetary constraints.
- I approve and support the project, especially the third lane that will improve safety and reduce congestion on I-35.
- Project is much needed and will improve traffic flow.

**Other:**

- Entering northbound I-35 from NE 122<sup>nd</sup> is scary and should be addressed.

**3.4.3 Responses to Public Comments**

This section includes ODOT's responses to the questions and comments received. Italics indicate ODOT's response.

Concerns about traffic on Sooner Road/NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street: *ODOT has analyzed the projected future traffic that will use the alternate route on Sooner Road/NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street. This analysis shows that the existing 4-way stop will be sufficient for the future traffic, including truck traffic. The estimated re-routing is anticipated to add up to 60 more vehicles making a southbound right turn from Sooner Road to NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street. This additional traffic is not anticipated to change the intersection Level of Service (LOS), which will be LOS C for the overall intersection and LOS B or LOS C for the southbound right turn movement, with or without the additional traffic. Since the rightmost lane on the southbound approach is striped as a right turn only lane, the storage length will accommodate the additional traffic.*

Concerns about signage: *ODOT will coordinate with the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority (OTA) to place new signage on the westbound Turner Turnpike directing traffic destined to NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street to exit on I-35 north and take the Sooner Road exit to NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street. These will be the green highway directional signs. The blue business signs on the highway are not ODOT's signs – they belong to a private company. Businesses will need to work directly with that company to move or place any new blue signs directing traffic to their locations.*

Positive feedback on the meeting/project: *Thank you for your comments.*

Other: *Thank you for your comment. The current project does not address this specific movement; however, the need for solutions at these ramps is recognized.*

