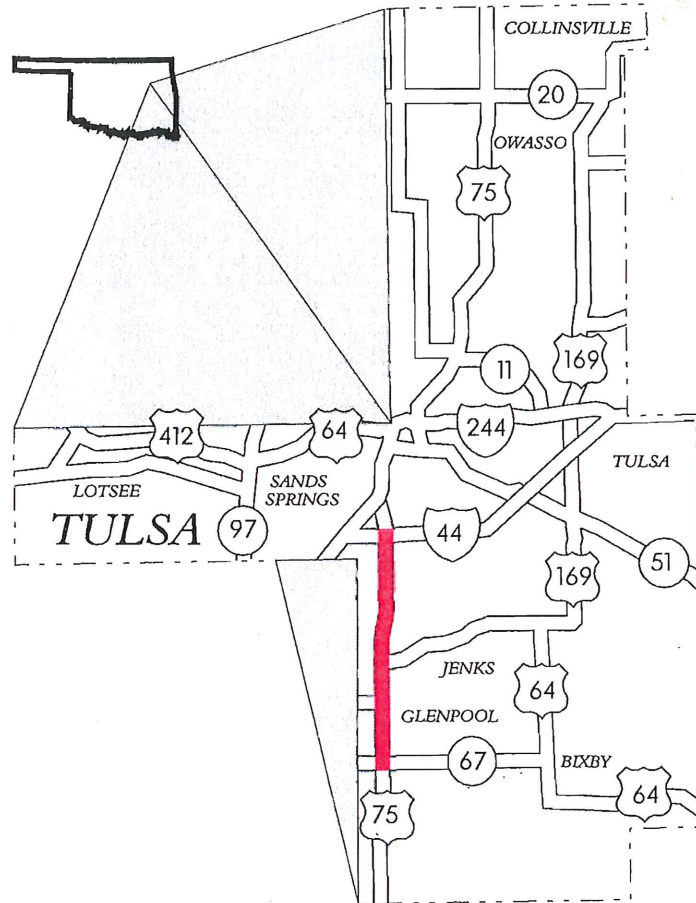


US 75

Environmental Assessment

from SH 67 north to I-44 Interchange
Tulsa County



Oklahoma Department of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

for

Reconstruction of US-75 from and including I-44 interchange
South 10 miles to SH-67 (151st Street),
Tulsa County, Oklahoma

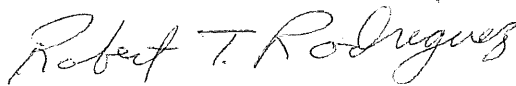
The proposed action covered by this Environmental Assessment (EA) involves the reconstruction of US-75 on existing alignment within the project limits.

The selected alternative will upgrade US-75 to a 4, 6, and 8-lane fully controlled access facility with improved or new interchanges throughout the 10-mile corridor, including the I-44 interchange, and provide frontage roads at certain locations. The details of the planned improvements are listed in detail in the attached EA, Section V, Pages 7-9.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that this project will not have any significant impact on the human environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the attached EA that has been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, the environmental issues, and the impacts of the proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The Federal Highway Administration takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached Environmental Assessment.

12/20/02

Date



for the Division Administrator
Oklahoma Division
Federal Highway Administration

**U. S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**

AND

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ON

US 75

FROM AND INCLUDING I 44 INTERCHANGE

SOUTH 10 MILES TO SH 67 (151ST Street)

TULSA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA

The proposed project is described as the reconstruction of US 75 on existing alignment to a eight/four-lane facility from I 44 south 10 miles to SH 67. US 75 will be upgraded to a fully controlled access facility with improved or new interchanges throughout the 10-mile corridor, including the I 44 interchange, and to provide frontage roads at certain locations.

This highway project is proposed for funding under Title 23, United States Code. This statement for the improvement has been developed in consultation with the Federal Highway Administration and is submitted pursuant to 42 USC-4332(2)(C).

Submitted:

Date:

6/17/02

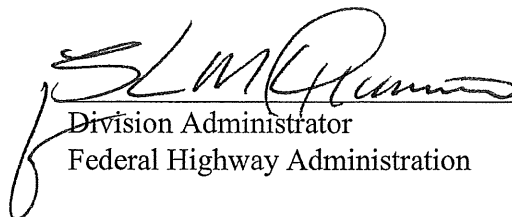


Planning and Research Engineer
Oklahoma Department of Transportation

Approved:

Date:

6/17/02



Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

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I. INTRODUCTION

This document was developed to assist in meeting federal program requirements and was completed by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), Planning and Research Division in conformance with DOT ORDER 5610.1C, dated November 29, 1978, and policy directives of the Federal-Aid Highway Policy Guide of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. This environmental document was developed in consultation with the Federal Highway Administration and has been coordinated with other federal, state and local agencies or organizations.

II. LOCATION

This Environmental Assessment examines the anticipated social, economic and environmental effects of upgrading US 75 to interstate standards from and including I 44 interchange south ten miles to SH 67 (151st Street) in Tulsa County. This project traverses the cities of Tulsa, Jenks and Glenpool. The location of the proposed project is depicted in Figure 1 on Page 2.

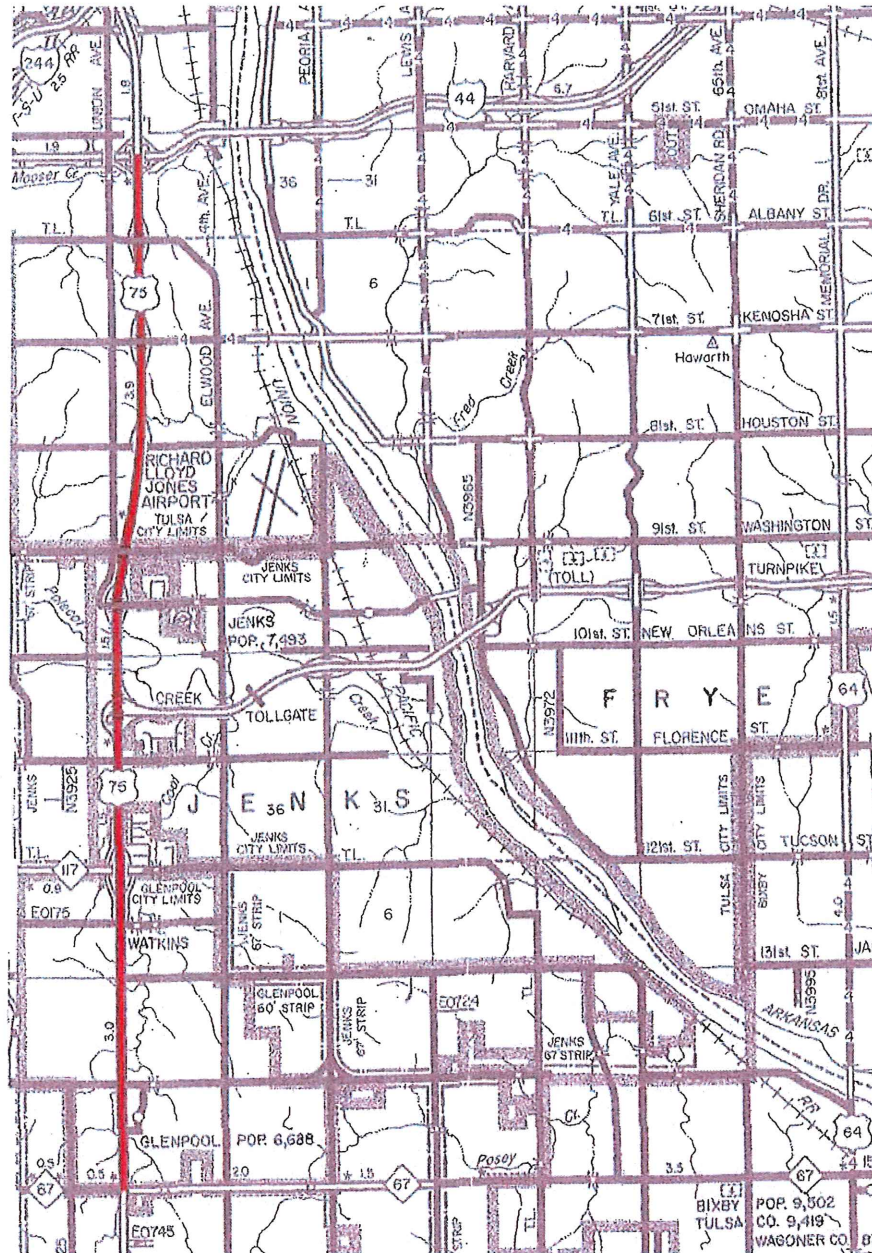
The project termini for US 75 was selected to connect to SH 67 (151st Street), which is a four-lane facility east toward Bixby, and I 44, a 4-lane interstate highway east and west. The area between these two four-lane facilities has been selected for this Environmental Assessment.

In the project area, the Arkansas River parallels US 75 to the east as close as one mile near I 44 to approximately five miles near SH 67. The Creek Turnpike is located just north of 111th Street, basically in the middle of the project area. The west leg of the Turnpike was opened to traffic in January of 2001, creating a full directional interchange north of 111th Street on US 75. The R. L. Jones Airport is located approximately 1 mile east of US 75 between 81st Street and 91st Street.

Existing US 75 is currently a four-lane facility with shoulders with a combination of at-grade intersections and interchanges. US 75 is listed as a National Highway System (NHS) route in Tulsa County. This segment of US 75 is functionally classified as a freeway or expressway. The type of existing intersection on US 75 is listed below from south to north:

151 st Street South	interchange
141 st Street South	at- grade intersection
131 st Street South	at-grade intersection
121 st Street South	interchange
111 st Street South	at-grade intersection
Creek Turnpike	interchange
96 st Street South	interchange
81 st Street South	interchange
71 st Street South	interchange
61 st Street South	interchange
I 44	interchange

US 75 Corridor Improvements Tulsa County



Project Location —————



Prepared by Planning Division **Figure 1: The Location of the Proposed US 75 Project**

Date: March 6, 2002

III. MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

A Major Investment Study (MIS) was completed for this corridor in August of 1999 and is included with this Environmental Assessment. The MIS evaluated alternatives by a screening and evaluation process that included cost and cost effectiveness, transportation benefits, safety and environmental considerations. Based on the screening and evaluation, promising alternatives were subjected to a more extensive analysis. The existing condition of US 75 was evaluated as part of the functional design process to determine how to improve the existing geometric and operational features, improve performance and to improve the physical condition of exiting US 75. The completed MIS study was used as a tool in the development of this Environmental Assessment and will be made part of the project files.

The MIS study included a public participation plan to coordinate the efforts of different groups at the federal, state, and local levels. These efforts included various community development, capital improvement, and economic development plans that are being developed in the area. It also considered the planning process employed by Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG). INCOG participated in a Technical Advisory Committee and other meetings throughout the MIS process. The Department coordinated a public involvement plan for the MIS with INCOG by sharing data and inviting them to community meetings. The participation plan included establishing a Technical Advisory Committee representing key personnel from INCOG, Cities of Jenks, Tulsa and Glenpool, Tulsa County, Federal Highway Administration, Department personnel, Tulsa Transit, and Federal Transit Authority. In May 1998 solicitation letters were sent to various local, state and federal government agencies requesting comments on the MIS and are included in the MIS. Public meetings were held on the following dates and locations:

- 1) June 13, 1996, West Regional Library, 7:00 p.m.
- 2) August 25, 1997, City of Glenpool Community Center, 7:00 p.m.
- 3) May 21, 1998, Jenks City Hall, 7:00 p.m.
- 4) June 3, 1999, Jenks City Hall, 7:00 p.m.

The comments generated by these public meetings are included in the MIS and are considered in this Environmental Assessment. This evaluation resulted in recommendations to improve the facility by adding travel lanes based on future travel demand. Improvements to existing interchanges and providing new interchanges that meet interstate design standards were also recommended. These recommendations have been incorporated into preliminary design functional plans. These preliminary functional plans were utilized in preparing this Environmental Assessment.

IV. NEED FOR THE PROJECT

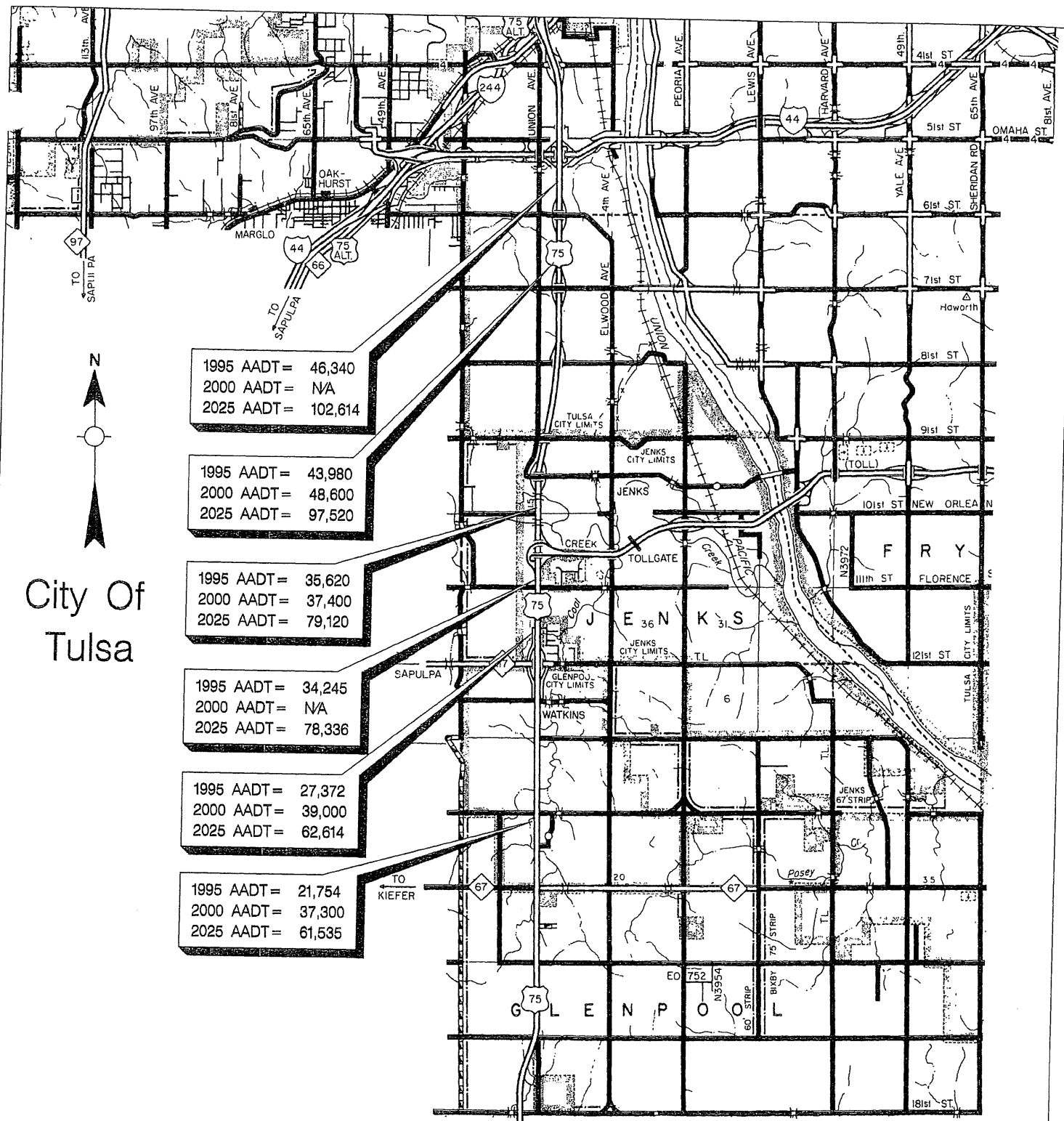
Tulsa County, in general, and Cities of Tulsa, Jenks and Glenpool are experiencing growth through residential and commercial development. This growth has resulted in traffic congestion, impaired accessibility to the transportation network and limited mobility of motorists. The Arkansas River provides a barrier to the transportation network as there are a limited number of crossings as the river transverses the Cities of Tulsa, Jenks and Glenpool.

The existing capacity of US 75 is insufficient to accommodate present travel demand throughout a significant portion of the corridor. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation's 1999 Needs Study and Sufficiency Rating Report evaluates any roadway based on the present geometric design and physical condition. This report classified the segment of US 75 from SH 67 north to the Creek Turnpike as *critical*. The Turnpike area is rated as *inadequate to critical*. From 131st Street north to I 44, US 75 is rated as *adequate*.

The vertical alignment on some portions of US 75 does not meet existing design criteria for stopping sight distance and truck speed reduction. Several at-grade intersections on US 75 exist at the south end of the project. The at-grade intersections degrade the ability of the highway to carry high volumes of traffic at high speeds and do not meet interstate design criteria. The existing interchanges do not meet current design criteria for ramp geometry at most exit and entrance ramps. The interchange with the Creek Turnpike has several undesirable features. These features include low design speed, weaving within the interchange, and ramp traffic movement issues. The existing and projected future traffic along US 75 in average annual daily traffic (AADT) is presented in Table 1. Figure 2 presents a location map with existing and projected future traffic along US 75 with 1995 AADT provided.

Table 1 Existing and Projected Future Traffic along US 75 Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)		
Location along US 75	Existing Traffic vehicles per day (VPD) (2000)	Future Projected Traffic vehicles per day (VPD) (2025)
south of I 44	N/A	102,614
north of 71 st Street	48,600	97,520
north of 101 st Street	37,400	79,120
north of 111 th Street	N/A	78,336
north of 121 st Street	39,000	62,614
south 141 st Street	37,300	61,535

For US 75 to meet interstate design standards as recommended in the MIS, improvements are necessary to the existing interchanges and new interchanges are required at some locations. Additional travel lanes are necessary to accommodate future traffic. Access to US 75 in this project area will be limited to the interchange areas where possible and may require access roads. This will provide for a safer and more efficient transportation facility for existing and future travel demands.



V. ALTERNATIVES

As the completed MIS study compared a full range of alternatives and provided alternatives analysis, please reference the MIS study for a complete discussion on the *Promising Alternatives Evaluation* (Section 3-1 through 3-34). Several alternatives were examined from a variety of perspectives in order to provide the best overall transportation solution. The evaluation of the alternatives is detailed in that study. This Environmental Assessment will focus on the Build alternative vs. the No-Build alternative.

The “do-nothing” or No-Build alternative for this project area has been considered. Continued use of US 75 as a four-lane facility with a combination of at-grade intersections and interchanges throughout the 10-mile corridor would result in unsafe traffic conditions and increased accidents over time. The No-Build alternative is not viewed as a viable long term option for providing the necessary capacity or safety for this roadway that will be necessary as traffic growth continues over time. Therefore, the No-Build alternative is dropped from further consideration.

The preferred alternative or Build alternative selected for the mainline roadway of US 75 consists of lane additions as determined by existing and future traffic volumes and traffic forecasting. The number of traffic lanes is recommended to remain at four through lanes from SH 67 (151st Street) north to 141st Street. The transition from four to six through lanes begins north of 141st Street interchange and extends north to 121st Street interchange. A total of eight lanes is recommended from the 121st Street interchange north through the I 44 interchange. Auxiliary lanes may be added or dropped along the mainline roadway and/or interchange improvements when warranted to provide for traffic weaving.

Additional right-of-way will be acquired adjacent to US 75 for these improvements. The improvement generally will require new right-of-way on both sides of US 75 throughout the corridor. At 141st Street to 131st Street area, 111th Street area, and 96th Street area, additional right-of-way will be required west of existing US 75 to accommodate proposed interchanges and/or frontage roads. The preferred alternative selected for each US 75 roadway interchange is summarized below. A schematic of each interchange can be found in the MIS study.

141st and 131st Street Interchange Area

Currently 141st and 131st Streets have at-grade intersections with 141st Street being signalized. The proposed improvement is an interchange at 141st Street with additional access roads. The mainline lanes of US 75 are proposed to be offset from existing alignment to the west in order to avoid Coal Creek, Black Gold Park and other existing development immediately east of US 75. This proposal provides enhanced transportation benefits and improved safety. This proposed improvement was endorsed by the City of Glenpool and City of Jenks.

SH 117 (121st Street) Interchange

There is an existing full diamond interchange at 121st Street with closely spaced frontage roads. This area includes at-grade intersections to US 75 at 126th and 116th Street. The proposed improvement is a modification of the existing interchange with improved frontage roads. The proposed improvements allow for widening of US 75 and eliminate access to US 75 at 126th and 116th, improving safety and traffic capacity. This proposed improvement was endorsed by Jenks.

111th/Creek Turnpike Interchange

There is an existing full interchange for the Creek Turnpike and an at-grade intersection with signalization at 111th Street. Due to the close proximity of the Creek Turnpike to 111th Street, this area was examined together. The proposed improvement provides for an interchange at 111th Street by shifting the mainline of US 75 to the west. Access to 111th Street is maintained with a half diamond interchange located on the south side of 111th Street servicing traffic to/from the north. Access to 116th Street and 113th Street will be from 111th Street by a proposed new access road east of the Glenwood South Subdivision and direct access is removed from US 75. This proposed improvement was endorsed by the City of Jenks.

Jenks Road (96th Street South) Interchange

There is an existing diamond interchange at 96th Street. The proposed improvement is a traditional diamond interchange with separate frontage roads on the west side of US 75 to provide a continuation of Union Avenue to 101st Street. This will require a new bridge over Nickel Creek and realignment of both Polecat and Nickel Creeks. This proposed improvement was endorsed by the City of Jenks.

81st Street Interchange

The preferred alternative proposed is a full diamond interchange. This proposal improves the existing half diamond interchange by providing additional ramps to allow access to/from the south, providing a complete interchange with access in all directions. This proposed improvement was endorsed by the City of Jenks and City of Tulsa and will provide improved access to the R. L. Jones Airport located east on 81st Street.

71st Street Interchange

There is an existing interchange at 71st Street. The vertical alignment at 71st Street has a steep crest over US 75 which causes restricted sight distance. The proposed improvement is an interchange utilizing loop ramps. This allows for improved traffic operation for this high traffic movement to and from the north and east. The City of Tulsa was in favor of this proposed improvement.

61st Street Interchange

There is an existing diamond interchange at 61st Street which is approximately 1 mile south of the existing I 44 interchange. The preferred alternative proposed is a full diamond interchange. This improvement provides for a high level of service. The City of Tulsa supports this proposed improvement. A retaining wall will be constructed to avoid impacts to the Cecil Bales Sports Complex.

I 44 Interchange

There is an existing interchange at I 44 with frontage roads and numerous movements. The preferred alternative improves the existing loop ramps with directional ramps. Preservation of local established traffic patterns in the interchange area will be maintained when possible. This proposal would minimize local disruption.

The preferred alternative constitutes the ultimate future design of the US 75 corridor to provide a fully controlled access facility and for future growth. Intermediate design improvements may be necessary in the corridor to provide for continuity and limited allocated funds. Construction will be completed in phases. At this time, interchange improvements are recognized as a priority. Additional traffic lanes required on US 75 can be completed in stage construction to correspond with traffic growth. Traffic signals and additional lanes to accommodate turning traffic will be added when warranted.

VI. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Appendix A contains a list of the social, economic and environmental factors examined by the Department in the development of this project. Based on this examination, the following areas are the major consequences of the preferred alternative for the proposed project.

Displacements of People, Businesses and Farms

The number of residential and commercial structures that would be displaced by the preferred alternative was estimated using preliminary functional plans and preliminary right-of-way estimates. These estimates were then verified by driving US 75 in the project study area. The proposed improvements to US 75 will cause the relocation of approximately 18 businesses and 46 residential properties throughout the 10-mile corridor.

At the Rolling Meadow Housing addition in Glenpool, it was estimated that 31 of the 46 residential properties would be impacted from this one location. It is estimated that 7 of the 18 businesses may be relocated from the Glenpool Industrial Park. These estimated relocations are anticipated for the proposed interchange and access roads at 141st Street. Right-of-way acquisition will be kept to a minimum in this area and throughout the project length as much as possible.

Relocations will be mitigated according to the provisions in the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies of 1970 administered by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation maintains an adequate and well-trained staff to administer the Relocation Assistance Program. The program provides both financial and advisory assistance to families, farms, and businesses displaced by the Department's statewide transportation improvement projects.

Noise Impacts

A noise assessment was completed that conforms to the Department's Policy Directive "Highway Noise Abatement" and Federal Highway Administration Regulation 23 CFR 772. Sound from highway traffic is generated primarily from a vehicle's tires, engine and exhaust. Sound is commonly measured in decibels and is expressed as "dB." This noise study used 30 measurement sites for both ambient noise level measurements and noise modeling to determine noise levels for the build noise level future condition, no-build noise level future condition and existing noise level condition. Land use activities were identified that might be impacted by traffic noise. Reference the report for details on noise definitions and assessment criteria. Appendix B contains the *Noise Assessment Report for US 75 Proposed Improvements*.

The purpose of the noise study was to determine existing and future noise levels, identify noise impacted areas and to consider and evaluate measures to reduce noise impacts (possible mitigation) for the proposed highway improvement. Noise impacts are determined by two criteria. The first is whether the projected future noise level approaches or exceeds the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) as established by the Federal Highway Administration. The second is whether there is a substantial increase in projected future noise levels over existing noise levels for each build condition. Table 2 lists the Federal Highway Administration NAC for various land use activity categories that are used as one the two means to determine when a traffic noise impact will occur.

Reference the noise report for a full explanation of the noise modeling process. A brief summary is provided in this text. Existing noise levels range from 61 dBA Leq to 75 dBA Leq. The future (2025) noise levels without any construction improvement (No-Build Alternative) range from 64 dBA Leq to 77 dBA Leq. Noise levels for the preferred alternative were also calculated as there are considerable changes in the alignment at places. The future (2025) noise levels with construction improvements are projected to range from 65 dBA Leq to 77 dBA Leq. The 66 dBA contour along the entire length of the project corridor is provided in Appendix IV of the noise report.

Table 2 Federal Highway Administration Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC)		
Activity Category	Leq Noise Level	Description of Activity Category
A	57 (Exterior)	Tracts of land in which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of these qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose. Such areas could include amphitheaters, particular parks or portions of parks, open spaces, or historic districts which are dedicated or recognized by appropriate local officials for activities requiring special qualities of serenity and quiet.
B	67 (Exterior)	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, and parks which are not included in Category A and residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals.
C	72 (Exterior)	Developed lands, properties or activities not included in Categories A or B above.
D	--	Undeveloped lands.
E	52 (Interior)	Residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, hospitals, and auditoriums.

The results of the modeling show that existing peak noise levels exceed 66 dBA at over half of the sites sampled. Approximately 85 homes are presently impacted. The predicted noise level increases under the No-Build Alternative are low to moderate, generally less than 3dBA, but large enough so that three-quarters of the sites approach or exceed the noise abatement criterion of 67 dBA. Under the No-Build Alternative, approximately 120 homes would be impacted. Under the Preferred Alternative, without mitigation, peak-hour noise levels would exceed 66 dBA at seven-eighths of the sites and approximately 144 homes would be impacted.

The proposed improvements will have an adverse impact on noise sensitive areas based upon the design year traffic and improvement criterion. Before noise mitigation can be incorporated into the project, it must be both feasible and reasonable. As the noise report indicates, a noise barrier was determined to be both feasible and reasonable and is, therefore, proposed for incorporation into the project at certain locations. Table 3 provides the general location and length recommended for noise mitigation abatement. Exhibits 6b to 6f on the following pages provide maps of the proposed noise mitigation areas.

Table 3 Proposed Noise Mitigation Areas		
Mitigation Area	General Location	General Length (feet)
1	north of W. 61 st Street west side of US 75	900
2	south of W. 91 st Street east side of US 75	200
3	south of W. 111 st Street east side of US 75	6,000
4	north of W. 151 st Street west side of US 75	2,700

It should be emphasized that the above discussion and proposed mitigation measures are based upon planning-stage noise studies and preliminary functional plans. Any subsequent project design changes may require a reevaluation of this noise study. A final decision to construct the proposed noise barrier will be made upon completion of the public involvement process and final project design. During the final design stage, the areas identified above will be included in the final design plans when the design calls for construction of the roadway on new location, when existing US 75 highway is significantly changed by horizontal or vertical realignment, or when the number of through-traffic lanes is increased on US 75.

Noise Barrier and Modeling Sites US 75 Widening Project

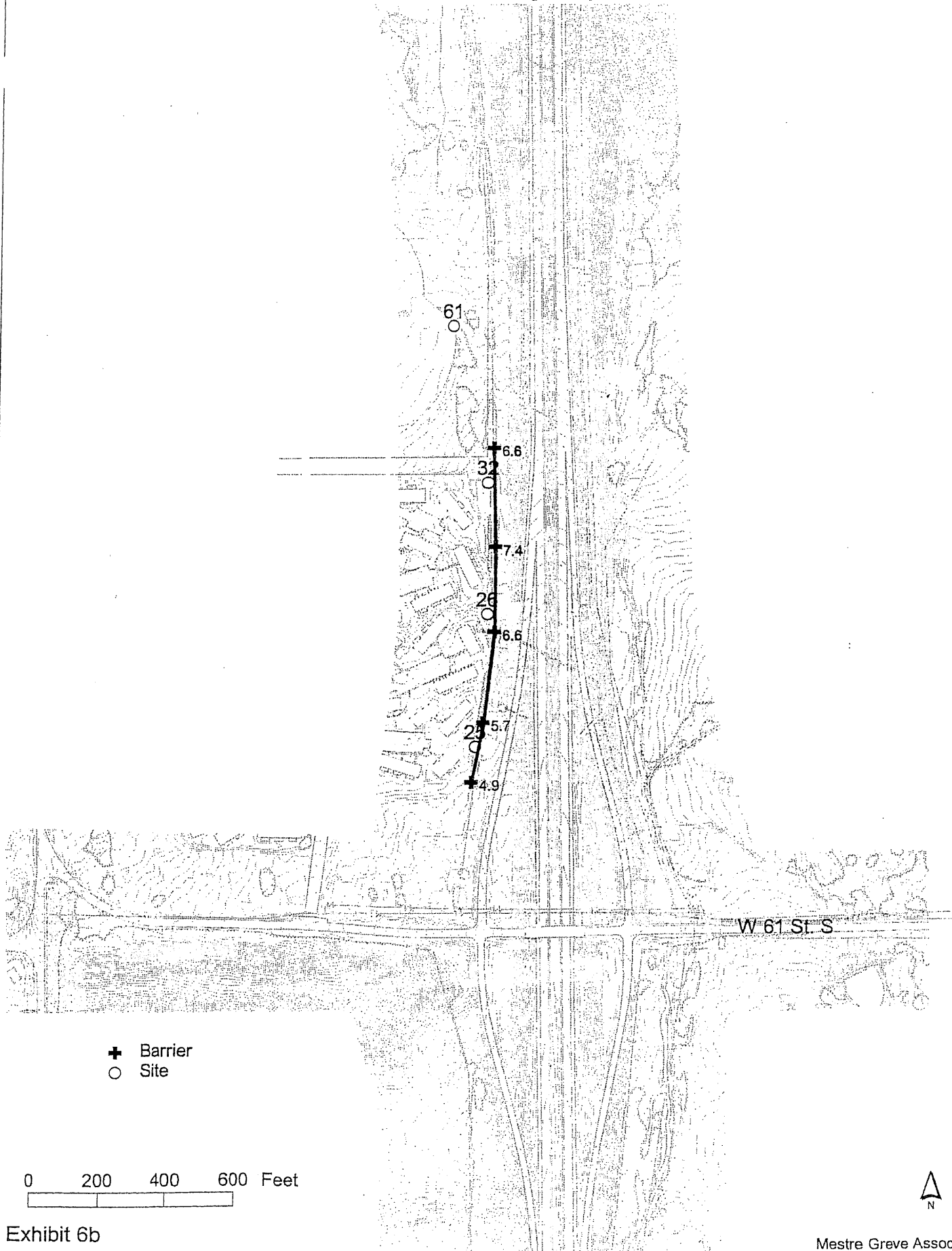
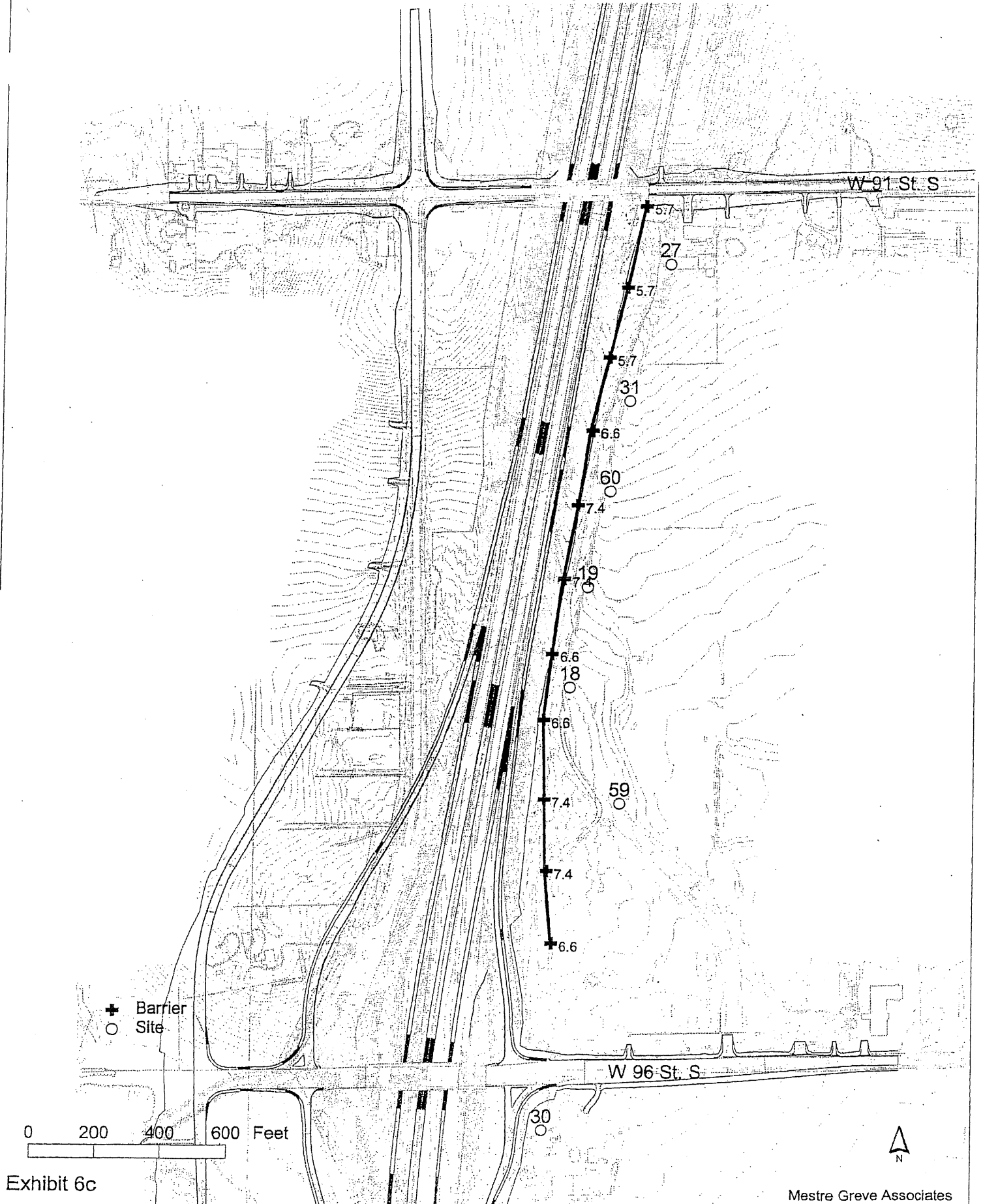
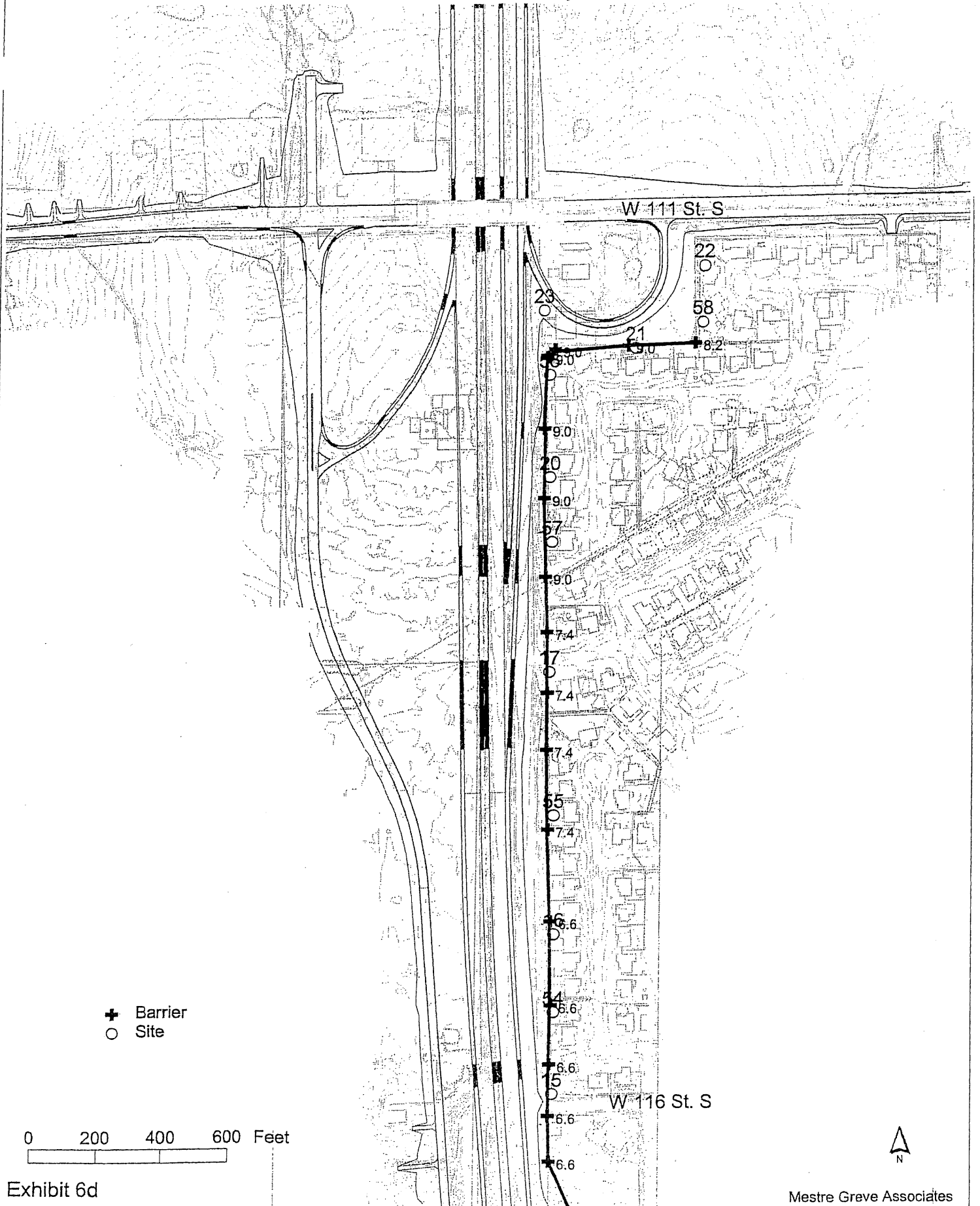


Exhibit 6b

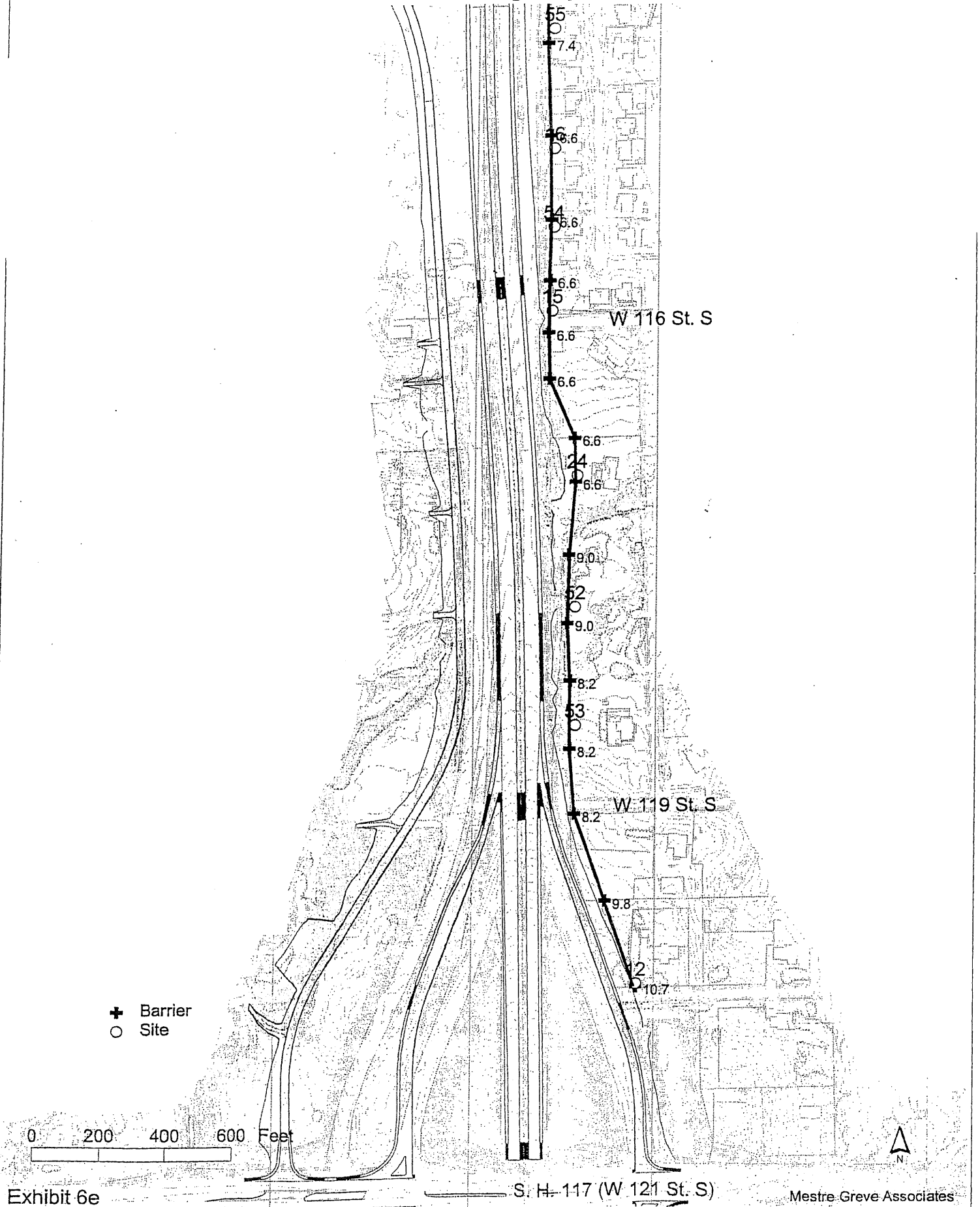
Noise Barrier and Modeling Sites US 75 Widening Project



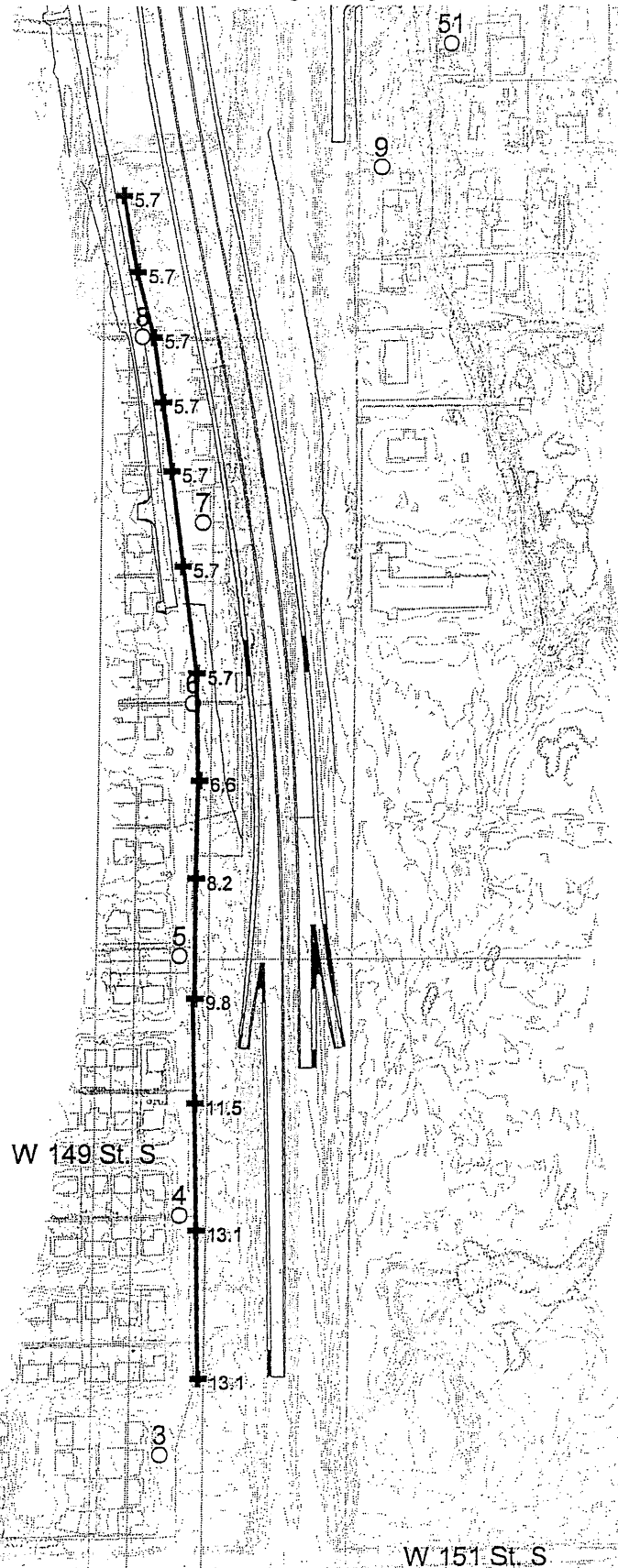
Noise Barrier and Modeling Sites US 75 Widening Project



Noise Barrier and Modeling Sites US 75 Widening Project



Noise Barrier and Modeling Sites US 75 Widening Project



+ Barrier
○ Site

0 200 400 600 Feet

Wetland Impacts

The Department's Biologist conducted a survey with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to determine potential areas of wetlands along the project route. Please see Appendix C for the *Biological Survey and Assessment Report*. One site of importance will be the existing mitigation site developed by the Oklahoma Transportation Authority (OTA). Wetland impacts to this site are estimated to be 16.07 acres. This site was developed by OTA to mitigate their impacts to wetlands caused during the construction of the Creek Turnpike. This site is still developing ecologically and may not recover quickly from Department construction in this area. However, it still can provide some ecological benefit to the wildlife in the area and serve some flood control functions. Two other wetland sites have been identified that include an estimated 11.48 acres which will require mitigation. It is expected that the ratio of mitigation to impacts will be approximately 10:1, or higher, for this project.

A pecan orchard, located adjacent to the area to be channelized for Polecat and Nickel creeks, has been recommended by the United States Army Corps of Engineers as a possible mitigation site for the impacts on the Creek Turnpike wetland mitigation site and all other impacts to wetlands due to this project. When more detailed design information is available, any wetlands identified will be avoided, minimized, and/or mitigated in coordination with the USACE.

This project will require extensive channelization and other channel work. One of the channelization projects will alter Polecat and Nickel creeks. Their current confluence is located east of the current highway. The proposed channel relocation will place the new channel confluence along the west side of the US 75 highway. This will place the confluence into a wetland and associated flood way of these creeks. It will also impact an adjacent pecan orchard. Channel work may occur within several stream areas and will be addressed in the permit application. Any permit required will be coordinated with the USACE.

Cultural Resources

A cultural resources survey for this project has been performed by the Department and accepted by the Oklahoma State Archaeologist in consultation with the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). See Appendix D for the *Cultural Resource Survey Report* and documentation. An archaeological field inspection of the proposed alignment was conducted and it was determined that no impact to prehistoric cultural resources will occur. Additional consultation and documentation were provided to SHPO regarding one Pre-1955 structure. It was determined that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project.

Should subsurface archaeological materials be exposed during construction, the Contractor and Resident Engineer will notify the Department Archaeologist in accordance with the Department's Standard Specifications for Highway Construction (Section 202.02). The appropriate agencies and Tribe(s) would also be contacted, as required.

Hazardous Waste/Petroleum Issues

An Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was conducted within the project area to identify potentially contaminated properties. Appendix E contains the *ISA Report*. This project is in an area which has been extensively explored for crude oil. Three large oil tank farms are located along the east and west side of US 75 between W. 126th Street and W. 131st Street. A review of Oklahoma Corporation Commission revealed that more than 500 oil and gas wells have been drilled within a ½ mile of US 75 through the ten mile proposed project area. As a result, petroleum, brine, and Naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORM) contamination may exist. A Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) was performed to investigate seven (7) underground storage tank (UST) sites, seven (7) active oil/gas well sites, three (3) tank farms, and various underground pipeline crossings.

A Health and Safety Plan (H&S) and necessary Environmental Mitigation Notes will be prepared for the eventual inclusion with the design plans. NORM, abandoned oil/gas/saltwater disposal wells, tank batteries, and five (5) leaking underground storage tanks (UST) sites will be issues with this project. Depending on the presence of corrosive brine or petroleum contamination, Environmental Mitigation Notes regarding contaminate disposal, utility construction, and the use of alternative construction materials may be necessary. UST's which are located in the proposed right-of-way will be referred to the Safety & Hazards Branch for their removal. Necessary mitigation plans/notes will be developed for any construction project to address mitigation and health and safety issues.

Floodplain Issues

Three locations were identified in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) delineated 100-year Flood Insurance Rate Map for Tulsa County. The general area of these known floodplain areas is listed below:

- Coal Creek area located from 151st Street north to 131st Street area in Glenpool
- Polecat Creek area located from 101st Street north to 91st Street in Tulsa and Jenks
- Mooser Creek area located south of the I 44 interchange in Tulsa

The proposed crossings of these surface waterways are designed to convey the 100-year storm and the new roadway surface will be elevated above the 100-year floodplain. Roadway construction will not raise the backwater more than one foot and will not cause flooding on adjacent properties.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The interior least tern, American burying beetle, bald eagle, and piping plover are listed as federal threatened and/or endangered species that occur in Tulsa County. Informal consultation with the United States Department of the Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that the American burying beetle and piping plover are not known from the project area, and therefore are not likely to be impacted by the proposed project. The two species with the potential for occurrence within the project area are the endangered interior least tern and the threatened bald eagle. Interior least

terns utilize the Arkansas River in Tulsa County for feeding and nesting, and the bald eagles are known to occur along this segment of the river. The project will not involve any impacts to the Arkansas River therefore, the proposed project is not likely to adversely affect the interior least tern.

It has been recommended by the United States Department of the Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service that a survey for Bald eagle nests and potential roost trees, be conducted along Polecat Creek in the project area. A survey will be conducted no greater than one year prior to construction activities located within the Polecat Creek area. The survey and any necessary consultation will take place during that time period.

The United States Department of the Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service provided comments and recommendations regarding the Wetland Finding report that will be taken into consideration during subsequent evaluations with the United States Army Corps of Engineers for wetland mitigation and necessary permitting issues. Please see Appendix C for documentation.

Prime Farmland Impacts

The preferred alternative will impact a small amount of prime farmland. The site assessment criteria portion of Form AD-1006, *Farmland Conversion Rating*, has been completed for this project and a rating below the maximum of 160 was obtained. The impacts to prime farmland are not expected to have a negative effect on farmland production within Tulsa County. Additionally, no irrigation facilities are impacted by the preferred alignment. The United States Department of Agriculture reviewed the proposed project. Based on their review, they have determined the proposed project will not result in any adverse impact on prime farmland (see solicitation letters in Appendix H).

The majority of the preferred alignment follows the existing roadway alignment, and impacts to farmlands are relatively limited and unavoidable. The majority of the project area located on US 75 in Glenpool is highly residential and commercial. The cities of Jenks and Tulsa have mixed commercial, residential and undeveloped land.

Potential City Park Impacts

Section 4(f) of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1968 specifies that publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state or local significance or any land from a historic site of national, state or local significance may be used for Federal Aid projects only if there is no feasible and prudent alternate to the use of such land, and such highway programs or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the 4(f) land resulting from such use. Additional mitigation measures would be required to satisfy the provisions of Section 6(f) which are areas that have used Land and Water Conservation Funds (federal funds) in its development.

The Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department and project development activities identified park and recreational areas during the MIS process. These areas are listed in Table 4 entitled Park and Recreation Areas Located Along US 75. Throughout the project development process these parks and recreation areas were identified to be avoided. The above areas will be avoided from new right-of-way except for Lambert Park. In the Lambert Park area, Black Gold Park is located on the east side of US 75. The proposed improvement in this area avoids impacts to Coal Creek, Black Gold Park, and other existing development immediately east of US 75, but will impact Lambert Park. A retaining wall will be constructed to avoid impacts to the Cecil Bales Sports Complex and no new right-of-way will be obtained in that area.

Table 4 Park and Recreation Areas Located Along US 75			
Park Name	City	General Location	Federal Funds
Black Gold Park	City of Glenpool	adjacent to US 75 (east) south of 141 st Street	Yes
Lambert Park	City of Glenpool	adjacent to US 75 (west) north of 141 st Street	No
Turkey Mountain Wilderness Area	City of Tulsa	one mile east of US 75 between 71 st and 61 st Street	Yes
Page Belcher Golf Course	City of Tulsa	one-half mile west of US 75 between 61 st and 75 th Street	Yes
Cecil Bales Sports Complex	City of Tulsa	adjacent to US 75 (west) at 58 th Street	No

Lambert Park will be impacted by the proposed improvements. Coordination was conducted with the City of Glenpool, Federal Highway Administration and the Department concerning Lambert Park and Section 4(f) requirements. Appendix F contains the correspondence between these agencies. It has been determined that Lambert Park is not a significant resource in that it does not play an important role in meeting the recreational needs and objectives of the Glenpool community. It was determined that Lambert Park should not be afforded Section 4(f) protection.

Airport Involvement

The Department is required to notify the Federal Aviation Administration on any project that may affect airports. The proposed US 75 project is within one mile of the R.L. Jones (Riverside) Airport in South Tulsa, Oklahoma. A formal "Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration" will have to be filed by the Department with the Southwest Region of the Federal Aviation Administration when

final design plans are available. Specific design data is required in the notice that will only be known when final design plans are prepared.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues

As the US 75 proposed improvements are designed to provide a facility that meets interstate design standards no bicycle or pedestrians would be encouraged to be on the US 75 highway. There are three crossings of US 75 planned as future bikeways by the **2025 Mobility Plan**, the Long Range Transportation Plan for the Tulsa Transportation Management Area. These planned crossings are located at 151st Street Interchange (SH 67), Creek Turnpike Interchange and 61st Street Interchange. These interchange locations at US 75 will be designed to accommodate a future bicycle path.

Air Quality Impacts

The Tulsa metropolitan area is currently an attainment area for carbon monoxide (CO) with the Environmental Protection Agency and Air Quality Division of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality. An air quality assessment was conducted for the proposed improvements by using an air quality computer model (CALINE4). Reference Appendix G for the *Air Quality Assessment* report for details on air quality modeling and air quality definitions. The model takes into account traffic, tabulation of selected vehicle emission factors, meteorology, type of highway design, and an atmospheric stability classification. The model was used to predict existing CO levels and future CO levels for the design year. Results of this modeling process were then compared to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards to determine if any significant air quality impacts result from the proposed project.

A background concentration of 7.6 parts per million (ppm) for CO was obtained by averaging monitoring data of the last three years for Tulsa. The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for CO, which is not to be exceeded more than once a year, is 35 ppm for 1-hour and 9 ppm for 8-hours. Three receptor locations along US 75 were modeled and are located in Table 5.

Future CO levels are projected to increase over existing whether the proposed project will take place or not. During peak hour, the traffic would be above capacity levels for most of US 75. Without the project, future traffic on US 75 would be especially congested for the northbound lanes at Receptor 2 and Receptor 3. With the proposed project however, the air quality is projected to improve since it would relieve traffic congestion on US 75, and hence, the air emissions. The amount of emission improved cannot be quantified. The project, however, would have a positive benefit on the regional air quality. No exceedence of the NAAQS for CO is anticipated. No mitigation measures for local and regional emissions are recommended.

Table 5 Existing and Future Carbon Monoxide Concentration (ppm)						
Location	Existing		Future-No Project		Future-With Project	
	1-hour	8-hour	1-hour	8-hour	1-hour	8-hour
1. US 75 near 151st	8.4	5.1	8.4	5.1	8.7	5.4
2. US 75 near 116th	9.7	6.1	11.7	7.8	11.3	7.5
3. US 75 near I 44	9.9	6.2	10.1	6.5	10.5	6.8
Number of Exceedances:	0	0	0	0	0	0

VII. COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

A public involvement program has been an integral part of the project development for completing the Major Investment Study process and will be carried through this Environmental Assessment process. Public discussion of the need for improvements to US 75 has occurred for several years. Coordination with tribal, local, state and federal agencies, public meetings and meetings with city officials have been instrumental in identifying a preferred alignment.

Tribal Coordination

Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, information was requested from the Seminole Nation, Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma regarding places of traditional importance to native peoples. Based on the recommendation from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Alabama Quassarte Tribal Town, Kialegee Tribal Town, and the Thlopthlocco Tribal Town were provided a copy of the *Cultural Resources Survey Report*.

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation (December 18, 2000) has responded and provided information regarding property ownership. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation owns approximately 25 acres of that part of the N/2 SW/4 of Section 14, T18N, R12E, Tulsa County, lying west of US 75 easement in favor of the county of Tulsa. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation also responded that the project will not impact sites of cultural or historical integrity. As of this date, no response has been received from the other Tribes or Tribal Towns, although further consultation may be required if requested during the project life.

Solicitations

During the MIS process letters soliciting comments were sent to tribal, local, city, state and federal agencies to assist in the MIS process. Ten (10) replies were received and they are included in the MIS (Appendix B) as relevant environmental letters. This information was utilized during the MIS process for promising alternative analysis.

As part of the Environmental Assessment process, letters soliciting comments related to anticipated social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed US-75 improvement were mailed October 24, 2000, to forty-three (43) tribal, local, city, state and federal agencies. Ten (10) replies were received and they are included as Appendix H. Comments and responses are summarized below:

- 1) The United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) stated that tribal trust properties and/or restricted lands located within the construction corridor may be impacted from the proposed construction activities. They forwarded the information to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Three addresses for tribal towns that reside within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Treaty Boundary were provided. The BIA stated tribal laws/or permits applicable to the construction project will be identified by the tribes.

Response:

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation was contacted during the solicitation letter process, and during the cultural resource survey. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation provided property ownership information that is included in this Environmental Assessment under tribal coordination. The three tribal towns were also contacted by the Department December 13, 2001. No reply has been received from the three tribal towns.

- 2) The United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service stated the project does not involve any impacts to the Arkansas River; therefore, no federally listed threatened or endangered species are likely to be affected by the project. No further endangered species consultation will be needed. The Service also recommends avoiding impacts to wetland areas.

Response:

Federally listed threatened or endangered species impacts were considered in the development of this project. The interior least tern, American burying beetle, bald eagle, and piping plover are listed as federal threatened and/or endangered species that occur in Tulsa County. Informal consultation that occurred subsequent to the solicitation for comments determined that the American burying beetle, piping plover and interior least tern are not likely to be impacted by the proposed project. It has been recommended by the United States Department of the Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service that a survey for Bald eagle nests and potential roost trees, be conducted along Polecat Creek in the project area. A survey will be conducted no greater than one year prior to construction activities located within the Polecat Creek area. The survey and any necessary consultation will take place during that time period. Please see Appendix C for further documentation. Coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has occurred and will continue throughout the life of the proposed project regarding wetland identification and mitigation, as necessary.

- 3) The Oklahoma Historical Society stated that a survey report, forms and photographs for standing structures located within the project boundaries will be required to be submitted and reviewed by their office.

Response:

A Cultural Resources Survey for this project has been performed by the Department and accepted by the Oklahoma State Archaeologist and the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). See Appendix D for the *Cultural Resource Survey Report* and documentation regarding cultural resources. The project, as proposed, will have no impact to properties on/or eligible for National Register of Historic Places.

- 4) The Department of Wildlife Conservation stated that it does not appear that the proposed reconstruction of US 75 in this location will affect state-listed endangered or threatened species. In general, several recommended guidelines to reduce highway construction impacts were provided to reduce wildlife impacts.

Response:

Federal and State listed threatened or endangered species impacts were considered in the development of this project. Both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have been contacted regarding this project. Coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has occurred and will continue throughout the life of the proposed project regarding identified wetland impacts. Please see Appendix C regarding wetland impacts and the *Wetland Findings Report*. Informal consultation that occurred subsequent to the solicitation for comments with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined that the American burying beetle, piping plover and interior least tern are not likely to be impacted by the proposed project. It has been recommended by the United States Department of the Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service that a survey for Bald eagle nests and potential roost trees, be conducted along Polecat Creek in the project area. A survey will be conducted no greater than one year prior to construction activities located within the Polecat Creek area. The survey and any necessary consultation will take place during that time period. The recommended guidelines will be considered during project construction activities.

- 5) The Oklahoma Aeronautics and Space Commission stated that the R. L. Jones Airport in South Tulsa is the busiest airport in the State of Oklahoma. The airport is located just east of US 75 between the areas of 96th and 71st Street on Elwood Avenue. Public access is critical to this airport. They were critical of the fact that this airport was not discussed in the Major Investment Study.

Response:

The R. L. Jones Airport was identified in this Environmental Assessment. Airport issues regarding permitting within Federal Aviation Administration space were discussed in this document.

- 6) The Oklahoma Archeological Survey stated that no sites are listed in the project area, but based on the topographic and hydrologic setting of the project, archeological materials are likely to be encountered. An archaeological field inspection is considered necessary prior to project construction in order to identify significant archaeological resources that may exist in the project area.

Response:

A Cultural Resources Survey for this project has been performed by the Department and accepted by the Oklahoma State Archaeologist in consultation with the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). See Appendix D for documentation regarding

cultural resources. The project, as proposed, will have no impact to prehistoric cultural resources.

- 7) The United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management stated the proposal should have no impact on jurisdictional activities of the Bureau of Land Management and therefore, they had no substantive comments.

Response:

This comment is noted.

- 8) The Eastern Oklahoma Development District (EODD) has reviewed the proposed US 75 upgrading south of Tulsa. They know of no reason why the project should not proceed as planned. The EODD is not aware of any negative social, economic, or environmental consequences that will result from completion of this project.

Response:

This comment is noted.

- 9) The United States Department of Agriculture reviewed the proposed project. Based on their review, they have determined the proposed project will not result in any adverse impact on prime farmland. However, should vegetation be disturbed during construction, the Natural Resources Conservation Service should be contacted or an appropriate erosion control vegetation procedure should be followed.

Response:

Prime farmland impacts were considered in the development of this project. The site assessment criterion portion of the Form AD-10006, *Farmland Conversion Rating Form*, was completed for this project and a rating below the maximum of 160 was obtained. It was determined that the majority of the preferred alignment follows the existing roadway alignment, thus impact to prime farmland is relatively limited and unavoidable. An erosion control vegetation plan will be prepared of any construction project.

- 10) The Oklahoma Conservation Commission stated that they have reviewed the proposed activity and defer the wetlands decision to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Response:

This comment is noted. Both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have been contacted regarding this project. Coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has occurred and will continue throughout the life of the proposed project regarding identified wetland impacts.

The completed US 75 MIS study provided a public involvement program during the course of the study for public input and comment. Section III, Major Investment Study, of this Environmental Assessment provides a summary of the actions conducted.

A public hearing to consider the social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed project was held at the Tulsa Technology Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma on August 6, 2002. Attendance at the hearing was 161 people. Twenty-one written comments and no oral comments were received. Copies of the written comments are attached as Appendix I. Also included in Appendix I are appropriate responses to each comment.



NOTE

To review or obtain copies of the appendices referenced in this
Environmental Assessment, contact:

**Oklahoma Department of Transportation
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APPENDIX A

ITEMS CONSIDERED DURING PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

FOR

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT OF US-75

ITEMS CONSIDERED DURING PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- **Purpose and Need for Project**
- **Alternatives**
- **Affected Environment**
- **Possible Environmental Consequences**
 - Airport Impacts
 - Air Quality Impacts
 - Community Impact Assessment
 - Consideration Relating to Pedestrians and Bicyclists
 - Construction Impacts
 - Cultural Resources/Archeological Sites
 - Economic Impacts
 - Effects on Public Parks, Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuges and Historic Sites
 - Energy
 - Environmental Justice
 - Farmland Impacts
 - Floodplain Issues
 - Hazardous Waste/Underground Storage Tanks
 - Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources
 - Joint Development
 - Land Use Impacts
 - Noise Impacts
 - Permits
 - Relationship of Local Short-term Uses vs. Long Term Productivity
 - Relocation Impacts/Right-of-way Acquisition
 - Secondary and Cumulative Impacts
 - Social Impacts
 - Threatened or Endangered Species
 - Visual Impacts
 - Water Body Modification
 - Wetland Impacts
 - Wildlife Impacts
 - Wild and Scenic Rivers
- **Comments and Coordination/Public Involvement**
 - State/Federal Agencies
 - Local/City Officials
 - Tribal Coordination
 - Interested Citizens
- **Engineering/Design/Drainage Concerns**
- **Accidents/Safety Concerns**