



# Centennial Pathways: Enhancing Community Connectivity on US-69 in Muskogee

BUILD Grant 2025

Oklahoma Department of Transportation

Project Description

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## Project Description

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is seeking **\$20 million** in Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant dollars to help reconstruct an approximately two-and-a-half-mile segment of US-69 in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The Project, known as *Centennial Pathways: Enhancing Community Connectivity on US-69 in Muskogee*, combines three distinct components into one project. The total cost of all three components is **\$46.1 million**.

The Project combines three distinct components. The first includes resurfacing a segment of US-69 using its current configuration. The second component involves replacing an existing pedestrian bridge that is not up to current design standards. The existing bridge clearance is too low for the oversized truck traffic that frequent this corridor, requiring them to detour onto local streets. Lastly, the Project involves widening a segment of US-69 from four lanes with a grass median to six lanes with two-way left turn lanes, sidewalks, and crosswalks at signalized intersections. The primary goals of the Project are to **increase safety** for both motorized and nonmotorized travelers, **reconnect the communities** on the west and east sides of US-69, and provide a **less restrictive roadway for freight movement**.

## Detailed Description of Project Components

The Project is broken down into three components (Project Area), as described below and shown in **Figure 1**:

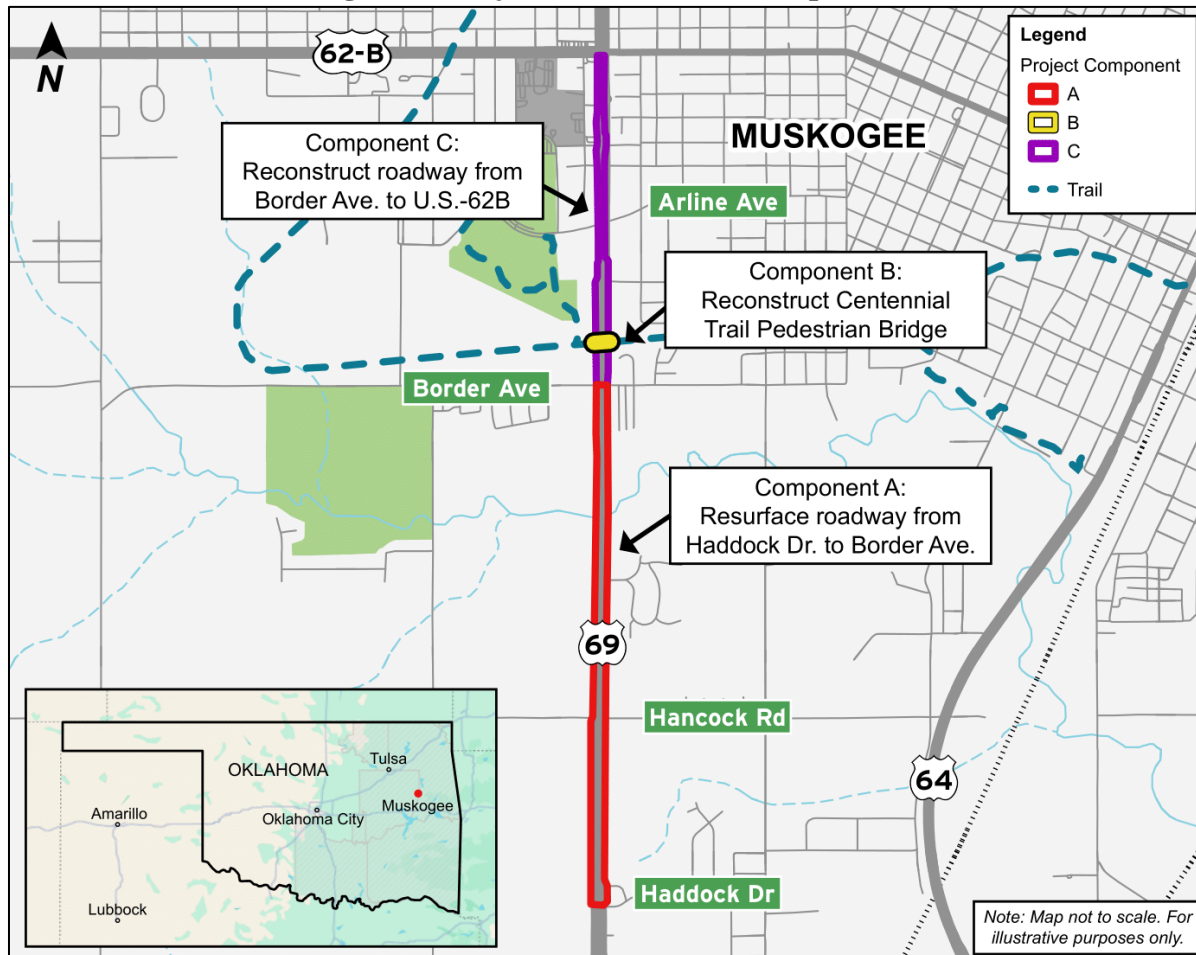
**Component A:** Spanning approximately 1.6 miles from [Haddock Drive to Border Avenue](#), the roadway will be resurfaced using its current configuration. Like the existing roadway, the resurfacing will have two 12-foot driving lanes and a 10-foot outside shoulder, in addition to new wider four-foot inside shoulders in both the northbound and southbound directions. The shoulders will offer a designated area for emergency stops and disabled vehicles away from the travel lane, allow for drivers to make steering corrections before veering off the road, and provide room for evasive maneuvers. Additionally, the shoulders can be used by pedestrians and bicyclists, adding an important active transportation connection.

**Component B:** The [Centennial Trail Pedestrian Bridge](#) will be reconstructed. The existing roadway under the bridge has a sag vertical curve, which causes a bottleneck as trucks travel down into the sag and then must stop at a stop light. Additionally, the current structure is low, 14 feet 10 inches, and as such, oversized trucks must detour on one of two routes that are either six or 15 miles on city streets to avoid the structure. The existing sag vertical curve in the roadway will be filled in and the bridge reconstructed to modern design standards. The pedestrian bridge will be reconstructed using prefabricated bridge elements and systems (PBES). The new bridge will be 12 feet wide and continue to be a connection across US-69 for the [Centennial Trail](#), which is a seven-mile recreational trail that connects downtown and western Muskogee. The replacement of the

pedestrian bridge will allow for room to accommodate the roadway improvements and improve the drainage on the roadway.

**Component C:** Spanning approximately 1.0 mile from [Border Avenue to US-62B](#), the roadway will be reconstructed to add capacity and pedestrian infrastructure. The roadway will be completely reconstructed from its current divided four-lane roadway to a six-lane roadway with two way left turn lanes. Additionally, sidewalks and lighting will be added throughout the corridor and crosswalks will be added at all signalized intersections.

**Figure 1: Project Location and Components**



Source: ODOT

90 percent design has been completed for all components of the Project. The design files are included in the [Supporting Documents](#). The Project will consist of phases to ensure residential and business access during construction is maintained, as discussed in **Project Readiness**.

## Transportation Challenges

Below is a list of transportation-related challenges in the corridor and how the Project will address those challenges:



- **Safety:** The Project will improve safety and traffic flow while providing new and improved infrastructure for both vehicular and non-vehicular traffic. **Component A** – road resurfacing – includes inside and outside shoulders, which play a crucial role in minimizing the risk of accidents. **Component B** – pedestrian bridge replacement – includes reconstructing the bridge to meet modern vertical clearance design standards and widen the bridge to 12-feet, both of which will enhance safety for all types of traffic. **Component C** – road reconfiguration – includes reconstructing the roadway to include two-way left turn lanes and infrastructure such as sidewalks and crosswalks, both of which will reduce the risk of collisions (see **Safety Merit Criterion**).
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Both Project Area Census Tracts rank in the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally for Particulate Matter (PM) 2.5 concentration, which can be caused by vehicle emissions and road dust (U.S. Census Bureau). The Project may reduce vehicle miles traveled and shift travelers to other forms of transportation, therefore reducing PM 2.5 concentration. Overall, the Project will address the negative environmental impacts by reducing collisions, producing more efficient vehicular flow, and modal shift to active transportation (see **Environmental Sustainability Merit Criterion**).
- **Quality of Life:** The Project is located within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Census Tracts that are designated as Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC) and Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) (see **Project Location**). There are no higher education facilities, grocery stores, medical facilities, or parks within a 15-minute walk for most living in the area (U.S. Census Bureau). Currently, pedestrians must walk on the highway and cross without crosswalks to traverse the corridor, as shown in **Figure 2**. The Project will provide safe connections for residents surrounding the US-69 corridor to businesses, creating opportunities for economic development and access to community resources in the area. The Project will add new facilities that will provide safe connections for the residents who rely on the corridor (see **Quality of Life Merit Criterion**).

**Figure 2: Pedestrian on US-69 Roadway**



*Source: Google Maps, accessed December 2024*

- **Mobility and Community Connectivity:** Currently, there are no pedestrian or bicycle safe facilities along this corridor of US-69. However, the road is frequently used by pedestrians as it is a vital connection through the community. Because there are no facilities, pedestrians must walk on the shoulder or on adjacent properties, as shown in **Figure 2**. Residents struggle to traverse US-69 from east to west because there are no crosswalks at signalized intersections. The Project will add this infrastructure throughout the corridor, including sidewalks, crosswalks at signalized intersections, and LED lighting. Additionally, the improvements will connect the residents surrounding the US-69 corridor to the wider trail system in Muskogee (see **Mobility and Connectivity Merit Criterion**).
- **Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity:** US-69 is a major north-south corridor through the United States and is on the National Highway System and the Strategic Highway Network. Along the Project corridor, there are approximately 25,000 vehicles per day, with **average daily truck traffic of 26 percent**. US-69 has the fourth highest volume of truck traffic in Oklahoma ([ODOT Freight Transportation Plan](#)). The improvements to US-69 will improve the efficiency of traffic flow on US-69 and allow oversized trucks to continue on US-69 rather than detouring onto local streets. Additionally, the Project will spur tourism and economic growth by enhancing the roadway connection to Port Muskogee and making community resources accessible to residents (see **Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity Merit Criterion**).
- **State of Good Repair:** The Project will restore and modernize the existing Centennial Trail Pedestrian Bridge, which does not meet modern vertical clearance design standards and poses fixed object hazards on the roadway. Additionally, the Project will reduce future maintenance costs on the mainline of US-69 by eliminating the need for annual temporary repairs (see **State of Good Repair Merit Criterion**).

## Project Location

US-69 runs north-south directly through Muskogee, Oklahoma, within Muskogee County, a rural area in east-central Oklahoma. The Project coordinates are [35.7361 N, -95.4025 W](#). The limits of the Project Area span approximately two and a half miles from Haddock Drive in the south to US-62B in the north within the city limits of Muskogee.

US-69 is a key component of the national freight network and the local and regional economy. The US-69 corridor spans almost entirely across the United States north to south, from Minnesota to southern Texas. The highway connects to many interstates in the United States including I-10, I-20, I-30, I-40, I-44, I-35, I-70, I-29, and I-80. While speeds vary throughout the state, the speed limits along this corridor of US-69 range from 35 to 45 miles per hour (mph).

There are no designated bicycle lanes or pedestrian routes on US-69, however, the [Centennial Trail](#) spans over US-69 within the Project Area on a pedestrian bridge. The Centennial Trail Pedestrian Bridge was originally a railroad bridge built in 1952 by the Missouri Pacific Railroad. After the railroad track was abandoned, the City of Muskogee claimed ownership of the right of way (ROW)

for public use and converted the bridge to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The seven-mile Centennial Trail begins in downtown Muskogee and continues west to the Love-Hatbox Sports Complex, just west of the Project Area, where it loops northwest through the north side of the town. The trail connects to multiple other trails and on-street bikeways within Muskogee, creating a comprehensive active transportation network (see **Merit Criteria** for more information).

The Project is located within the limits of the Muskogee (Creek) Nation (MCN), which is the [fourth largest tribe in the United States with 100,766 citizens](#) residing within the reservation boundaries in Oklahoma. The two Census Tracts that surround the Project Area have an estimated population of 6,100 and are considered HDC and APP ([Grant Project Location Verification](#)).

**Table 1: Project Area Census Tracts**

Muskogee County Tract Number	Historically Disadvantaged (Y/N)?	Area of Persistent Poverty (Y/N)?
<b>1</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>10</b>	Yes	Yes

Source: [Grant Project Location Verification](#)