

October 4, 2021

RE: I-35: Interchange at SH-74 (Grant Street) in Purcell State Job Piece Number JP 32802(04), McClain County.

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), in cooperation with the City of Purcell and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has assessed alternatives for a new interchange on I-35 at W. Grant Street (SH-74). Under existing conditions, emergency response times to incidents on I-35 is delayed by the lack of access to I-35 between milepost 91 and 95 near Purcell. Secondly, the US-77/North Green Avenue directional interchange is missing the southbound I-35 connection. This also causes delays to the traveling public. The purpose of the proposed project is to improve emergency response times to incidents, reduce delay on this segment of I-35 and ultimately improve system connectivity, accessibility to the regional transportation network, and support the continued growth of the local community.

A Feasibility Study was conducted by the City of Purcell in early 2019 and resulted in a selected set of alternatives to carry forward for further study. The three alternatives identified in that study were presented to the public at the virtual open house for this project, which was held online between January 27 and February 10, 2021. The open house materials included a project handout, presentation, interactive project map, interactive survey and project alternatives. A total of 123 written comments/questions were received during the virtual public open house. The majority of the comments were in support of the project, with Alternative 3, as the most popular alternative. The majority of the concerns expressed by the commentors focused on neighborhood impacts, traffic, access for emergency services, cost and access to the new hospital location. Additional details pertaining to the virtual open house can be found in the Virtual Public Open House Summary dated April 2021 on the ODOT Public Meetings and Hearings webpage (<https://oklahoma.gov/odot/programs-and-projects/public-meetings-and-hearings/20210127.html>)

A subsequent, detailed Alternatives Analysis completed in September 2021, concluded that, Alternative 3, which includes full interchange access at W. Grant Street (SH-74), is the preferred alternative. The analysis included evaluation of several performance measures including mobility, incident management, and cost benefit. The analysis showed that Alternative 3 provides the highest monetary benefit value in terms of delay reduction and secondary crash reduction savings, would provide the fastest emergency response time and improve overall mobility, accessibility and connectivity across the City network. Further, Alternative 3 satisfies the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Policy on Access to the Interstate Systems (May 22, 2017) requiring that “the proposed access.... will provide for all traffic movements”. The other two alternatives did not satisfy this consideration and requirement.

Alternative 3, the Proposed Action, will be advanced for further design and environmental study. A public hearing will be held following completion of the environmental study to provide the public with an opportunity to review the environmental document, including the range of alternatives considered and the social, economic and environmental impacts of the preferred alternative.

Should you have any questions regarding the project, please contact **XXXX**.