

Agency Solicitation and Virtual Public Meeting Summary

JP 32105(04) – US-62/SH-82 Intersection, Cherokee County

Executive Summary

This document summarizes the virtual public meeting conducted for the US-62 project from 0.2 mile south of the US-62/SH-82 junction, north approximately 1.4 miles, including the reconstruction of the US-62 and SH-82 intersection. The purpose of the public meeting was to present the plans for the project to the public and obtain input, describe the benefits of roundabouts and how they work, and outline the next steps and schedule for the project.

Due to concerns about the spread of COVID-19, ODOT held a virtual public meeting. The public meeting was held on-line between July 13 and August 3, 2020. Six members of the public signed in on the website. However, sign-in was not required. According to the website analytics, 435 unique users viewed the website over the 3-week period. After the home page, the interactive map was the most frequently viewed, followed by the meeting presentation and the submit a comment page. In total, seventy-eight (78) written comments/questions were received during the virtual public meeting, including nine (9) agency and tribal responses, thirty-nine (39) comments submitted via the website comment feature, twenty-nine (29) paper comment forms received by mail, and one (1) comment collected by ODOT after returning a voicemail from a property owner.

Agency comments included the following:

- The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) had no comments regarding the project at this time.
- The United Keetoowah Band pointed out an area of tribal property adjacent to the project and requested to see the plans in that area.
- The Osage Nation requested that a cultural resources survey be performed and asked for avoidance of specific areas during construction.
- The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) determined that no adverse environmental impacts under ODEQ jurisdiction are anticipated.
- The Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC) found no evidence of oil and gas facilities within the project area using desktop research and field reconnaissance.
- The Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission (OAC) indicated that project does not appear to pose a hazard to safe and efficient use of navigable airspace.

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- The Oklahoma Archeological Survey (OAS) indicated that no additional surveys would be required but requested to be contacted immediately if archaeological material is exposed during construction activities.
- The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) requested additional information in order to complete their review of the project.
- The Oklahoma Department of Tourism and Recreation (ODTR) stated that the project will have no significant adverse effect on any federally funded park or recreation area or state park.

Of the 69 public comments received, 16 were in favor of the project, 52 were opposed, and 1 had an unrelated comment. The majority of the public’s comments were focused on concerns over people understanding how to use the roundabout, safety concerns, feeling the project isn’t needed, traffic concerns, and concerns about maneuvering large vehicles. **Table E-1** summarizes the comments received. Note that the comments in the table total greater than 69 because several people submitted more than one comment.

Table E-1: Major Issues of Concern

Issue	# of Comments
<i>Approve of project</i>	16
<i>Disapprove of project</i>	52
Concerns about other drivers’ confusion with roundabout	28
Concerns about safety	21
Project isn’t needed/waste of money/fix something else	19
Traffic Concerns	11
Concerns about large vehicles in the roundabout	10
Roundabout is not appropriate at this location	8
Suggestions for other ways to improve the US-62/SH-82 intersection	7

Don't like the project (not specific)	6
Concern with traffic during construction	3
Concern with access to Crestwood Drive	3
General Roundabout Concerns	3
Other	8

Responses to Comments

Concerns about Roundabout/Other Drivers Using Roundabout:

The roundabout is proposed to increase safety and traffic flow and reduce cost. While initially roundabouts may cause confusion to drivers because they are unfamiliar, drivers quickly get used to the design and the roundabouts are expected to reduce delay and collisions. Because they reduce the speed of through traffic, they also have been shown to reduce the severity of accidents that do occur. ODOT will hold another public meeting prior to construction that will provide education and instruction on the use of roundabouts. While it is up to drivers to obey traffic laws, the roundabout will encourage drivers to slow down and navigate the intersection safely.

Safety Concerns:

Roundabouts improve safety by reducing the number of conflict points at an intersection. Collisions are less likely to occur, and when they do are typically at lower speeds and less severe than at a signalized intersection. Potentially severe collisions such as “T-bone” collisions are eliminated. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has shown that roundabouts reduce collisions by almost half, and reduce fatal and injury crashes by almost 80%, compared to a signalized intersection.

Project Isn't Needed/Fix Something Else:

Currently, traffic experiences congestion and delay at the existing traffic signal. This is expected to worsen in the future. Improvements are needed to improve traffic flow. Other projects will be addressed as need arises and funding is available.

Traffic Concerns:

Roundabouts have been shown to reduce delay over signalized intersections by reducing stops and idling. Traffic will no longer be required to stop at the intersection. Traffic entering the roundabout will yield to traffic already in the roundabout and can proceed when clear. Westbound traffic on US-62 will proceed past the roundabout without stopping.

Large Vehicles Maneuvering the Roundabout Concerns:

The roundabout at US-62 and SH-82 has been designed to accommodate large trucks and trailers. The center of the roundabout will include an area called a truck apron. This is a concrete area that trucks can use to make the turns.

Roundabout is not Appropriate for this Location/Other Suggested Improvements

ODOT investigated several intersection alternatives for this location, including making improvements to the existing signal, an improved “T” intersection, and several different roundabout alternatives. The proposed design is expected to provide the best traffic flow and least amount of delay in the future.

Construction Traffic

While construction always has the potential to increase delays, these impacts are temporary, and the new intersection is expected to provide better traffic flow when completed. All directions of traffic will be open during construction, with turns facilitated with a temporary signal.

Access to Crestwood

The location of Crestwood Drive is not anticipated to interfere with roundabout traffic. Access to and from Crestwood Drive will operate similarly to today.

Approve/Disapprove of Project (General)

Thank you for your comments.

Other Questions/Comments:

Put in crosswalks at all intersections

- *ODOT is working with City to introduce more crosswalks on US-62.*
- A by-pass route would be beneficial.
 - *A bypass is not considered necessary to address the needs at this intersection.*
- Concern about bicycles and motorcycles
 - *Bicycles and motorcycles will use the roundabout similar to other traffic. Reduced speeds within the roundabout are anticipated to make travel safer for all modes, including bicycles and motorcycles.*
- Set up a practice roundabout
 - *ODOT will provide opportunity for additional instruction on how to use a roundabout prior to construction.*

Other questions not specifically related to this project are not answered in detail here.