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# Virtual Open House

## Meeting Summary

### United States Highway 69

**US-69 roadway improvements from 0.48 miles north of US-64 East  
(near Haddock Drive), extending north 2.5 miles to just south of  
Okmulgee Avenue in City of Muskogee**

**Muskogee County / Job Piece # 27108(04)**

**OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Held December 18, 2020 through January 4, 2021  
(extended to January 18<sup>th</sup> at request of City)**

**[www.odot.org/US69Muskogee](http://www.odot.org/US69Muskogee)**

Prepared by:



9225 North 133<sup>rd</sup> East Ave.  
Owasso, OK 74055

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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), solicited comments to improve US-69 from 0.48 miles north of US-64 East (near Haddock Drive), extending north 2.5 miles within the City of Muskogee. Due to ongoing concerns about COVID-19, a Virtual Public Open House was originally scheduled to be a live website for public access from December 18, 2020 to January 4, 2021 at [www.odot.org/US69Muskogee](http://www.odot.org/US69Muskogee); however, the website was maintained live and accessible to the public until January 18, 2021 at the request of the City of Muskogee. The virtual public open house presented the design alternatives for the project and allow the public to submit input.

The purpose and need for this project is to provide operational improvements, including improvements to a pedestrian bridge (abandoned railroad overpass), extension of an existing bridge over Coody Creek, and reconstruction of the existing pavement. The existing US-69 highway is a primary commuter and truck route, and the proposed project is a continuation of ODOT's commitment to safety and operational efficiency. ODOT has tasked a Consultant to develop alternatives for correcting the roadway deficiencies while taking into consideration construction costs, right-of-way and utility costs, and environmental constraints. Now that the virtual open house has concluded, the meeting material can be found at: <http://www.odot.org/publicmeetings>.

Regarding the interactive maps, comments were provided on the three options. For Option 1, one comment was regarding the walking trail and having the road level, and three other comments were in support of Option 1. For Option 2, one comment was regarding the green line on map (represents temporary right-of-way), and two other commenters in support of Option 2. For Option 3, one comment was for a city partnership on traffic signalization, a question on acquisition and concern about the entrance to a business.

Attendee participation included 1,230 users with 3,690 views. The top engagement city was Muskogee with 464, followed by Boston with 162. Sixty-one (61) signed in for the meeting on the webpage. Seven (7) phone call messages, forty-four (44) webpage comments and fourteen (14) written comments were received. The comments were grouped into general categories as listed below:

<u># of Comments</u>	<u>General Category</u>
2	Acquisition questions
1	Opposed to any continued expansion of US-69 in super highway
5	Property impact questions
1	Support both 6-lane divided and 7-lane proposals with 35mph speed limit
2	Support pedestrian bridge
2	Truck comments
1	Traffic signalization on US-69
9	Bypass comments both pro and against
1	Add new intersections/interchanges
4	Add trails, bike lanes, crosswalks / improve other city streets
1	Add passenger rail and streetcar service to Muskogee
9	Support Figure 2 / Option 1 - construction of 6-lane curb & gutter with raised median

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24	Support Figure 3 / Option 2 - construction of 7-lane curb & gutter with continuous two-way left turn lane
2	Support Figure 4 / Option 3 - reconstruct the existing 4-lane curb & gutter with raised median
10	Support improvements to US-69
2	Comments on presentation
1	Other roadway improvements
1	Shrubs and grass in median
1	Questions

Based on the comments received and discussions with the City of Muskogee, ODOT is moving forward with Option 2 - construction of 7-lane curb & gutter with continuous two-way left turn lane, although raised medians will be provided at select locations.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This document summarizes a Virtual Open House conducted for US-69 through the City of Muskogee from 0.48 miles north of US-64 East (near Haddock Drive), extending north 2.5 miles to just south of Okmulgee Avenue in Muskogee County. The purpose of the virtual open house was to present the proposed design alternatives for this highway segment and receive public input to aid ODOT in moving forward with the completion of the environmental studies, design, and construction. ODOT has tasked a consultant to determine the best alternative for correcting the roadway deficiencies while taking into consideration construction costs, right-of-way and utility costs, and environmental constraints.

The purpose and need for this project is to provide operational improvements, including improvements to a pedestrian bridge (abandoned railroad overpass), extension of an existing bridge over Coody Creek, and reconstruction of the existing pavement. The existing US-69 highway is a primary commuter and truck route, and the proposed project is a continuation of ODOT's commitment to safety and operational efficiency. The existing roadway through the project corridor consists of two different typical sections. From the beginning of project to Border Avenue is an open section divided 4-lane roadway consisting of 12 foot wide lanes with 4 foot wide outside and 10 foot wide inside shoulders. From Border Avenue to the end of project is a curb and gutter with raised median 4-lane roadway consisting of 12 foot wide lanes with 8 foot wide outside shoulders. There are four signalized intersections on US-69 within the project corridor: Okmulgee Avenue, Arline Avenue, Border Avenue and Hancock Street. The current (2020) traffic on this segment is 23,710 vehicles per day (vpd) with a 2040 projected traffic of 33,870 vpd.

ODOT proposes to reconstruct the open section divided 4-lane roadway from the beginning of the project (Haddock Drive) to Border Avenue in its current configuration consisting of 12 foot wide lanes with 4 foot wide inside and 10 foot wide outside shoulders. From Border Avenue to Okmulgee Avenue, three alternate typical sections have been investigated. These typical sections include a 6-lane curb and gutter with raised median, 7-lane curb and gutter with continuous two-way left turn lane, and reconstruction of existing 4-lane curb and gutter with raised median. Traffic signals at Hancock Street, Border Avenue, Arline Avenue, and Okmulgee Avenue will be updated to optimize traffic operations.

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## 3.0 VITURAL OPEN HOUSE

### 3.1 MEETING NOTIFICATION

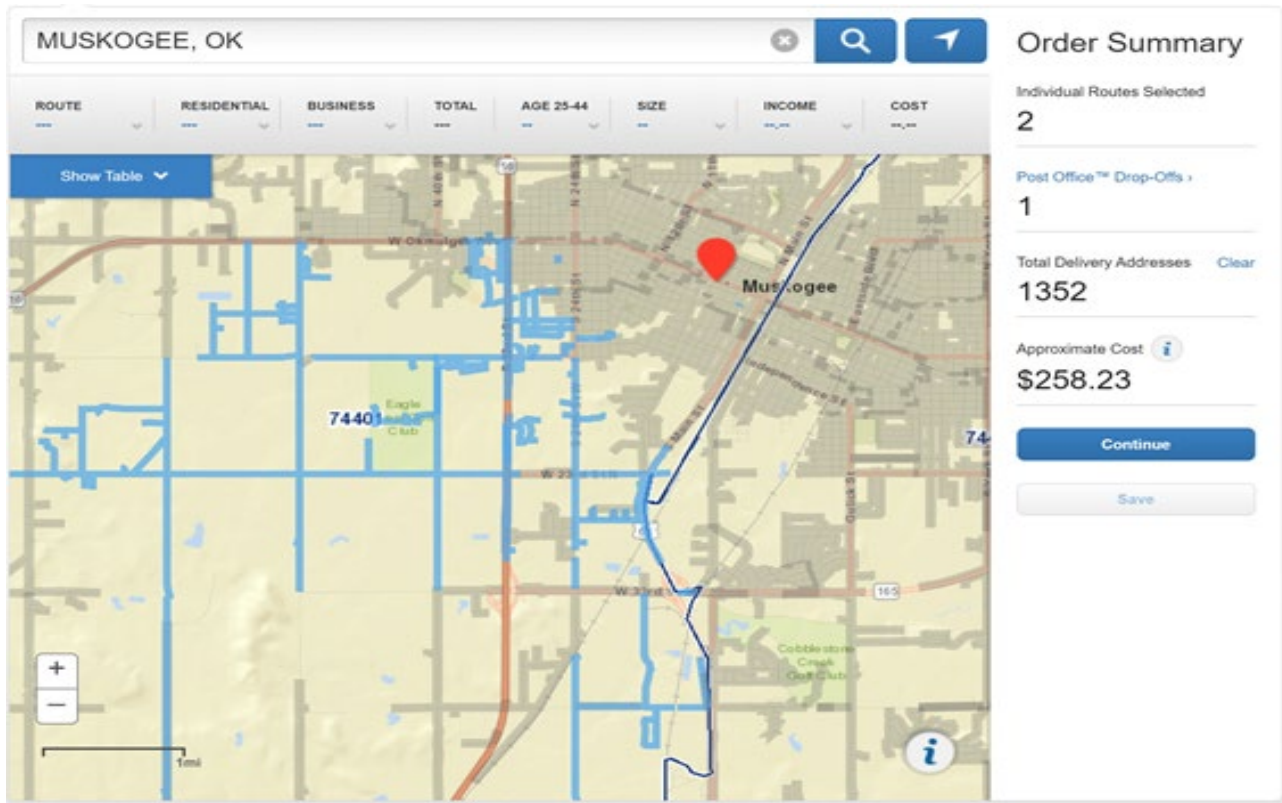
Due to concerns over the spread of COVID-19, a virtual open house was held that was a web-based format (no in-person meeting). The information was available December 18, 2020 to January 4, 2021. At the request of the City of Muskogee the meeting was extended to January 18, 2021. Now that the virtual open house has concluded, the meeting material can be found at: <http://www.odot.org/publicmeetings>.

In addition to the notification provided via the agency solicitation letters (see Section 4.0), notice of the virtual open house was sent by pamphlet to the Governor's office, elected officials (federal and state), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Oklahoma Transportation Commissioner, Muskogee County Commissioners, City of Muskogee, Muskogee Public Schools, and emergency service providers in the project area. The pamphlet provided a brief description of the purpose and need for the project, purpose of the meeting, and an invitation to the virtual open house. The pamphlet was accompanied with a map, comment form and property rights brochure. Thirty-three (33) letters were mailed on December 17, 2020. Notice of the virtual open house was sent by pamphlet to the 2017 Freight Advisory Committee. Fifty-one (51) people were mailed the pamphlet on December 17, 2020.

Notice of the virtual open house was also sent by pamphlet to all property owners in the study area. Ninety-one (91) property owners were mailed the pamphlet on December 17, 2020.

Outreach was provided by a direct mailing by the post office to two (2) mail delivery routes along the project area as noted in blue in Figure 1 on page 5. One-thousand-three-hundred-and fifty-two (1,352) pamphlets, comment forms, right-of-way brochures and self-addressed stamped envelopes were printed and mailed by Mercury Press Plus and direct mailed to Muskogee Post Office for distribution to routes 74401-C015 and 744-1-R010. Direct mailing of pamphlets helps to ensure that individuals who are leasing property within the study area will get the information, as well as the property owners receiving notification through the mail. As the postal route serves a larger area, more people who use the US-69 roadway received the information, increasing the opportunity for input.

Figure 1: Direct Mail Route



### 3.2 MEETING INFORMATION AND FORMAT

The virtual open house was held from December 18, 2020 to January 4, 2021 to present the information on this project. At the request of the City of Muskogee the meeting was extended to January 18, 2021. Garver hosted a website that included tabs for sign in and handout, virtual project presentation, project history, an interactive project map, right-of-way information, frequent questions, and submit a comment.

All comments were requested to be received on or before January 4, 2021. The City of Muskogee requested the time period be extended for both the website and comment submittal to January 18, 2021. Written comments could be submitted by mail, email, or online comment form as described on the submit a comment page. Comments could also be added to the interactive map.

## 4.0 COMMENTS

### 4.1 PHONE CALL COMMENTS

Seven (7) phone call messages were received from the virtual open house. These phone calls were provided from the (405)-521-3050 number provided in the brochure and provided to the NEPA consultant to return. Each phone

call was returned by the NEPA consultant, Able Consulting. A summary of each phone call is listed below along with the date the phone call was returned.

**Caller 1:** 12/21/2020. Owns a Mini Storage (Access Storage 3300 W Border) at Border in northwest corner. Wanted to know what green line was (temporary right-of-way) and if ODOT would be taking the building. It was explained that the temporary right-of-way could be for drainage or utilities and that temporary means that that piece of land is needed during construction, then would be returned to landowner. Caller requested further information, so the designer contact information was provided. Caller did not understand why improvements to Border Avenue went to west so much.

**Caller 2:** 12/22/2020. Owns Denny’s property (635 S 32nd St, Muskogee, OK 74401). Caller wanted to know what the yellow line represented. It was explained that the yellow line represents a utility easement that is needed. No loss of parking or buildings taken. Owner wanted to know if the tenant’s operation would be affected. It was explained that access will be maintained during construction. The US-69 roadway just had an overlay on it, so construction would be like that. Owner asked how to determine the fair market value for a utility easement. It was stated to speak to a realtor.

**Caller 3:** 12/28/2020. Message was received from Cotty Foods. Call was returned and a message left.

**Caller 4:** 1/4/2021. Lives in the Coburn housing addition near Border Avenue. Caller liked the idea of having a shoulder to be able to pull off and does not support the bypass. Likes the seven lanes with turn lane as well. Overall caller wants the safest option that keeps US-69 in town.

**Caller 5:** 1/4/2021. Caller in support of widening and approves of US-69 highway to be six lanes and redone. Caller liked Figure 1 and Figure 2. Caller stated there is a lot of traffic on US-69 and has lived in Muskogee for 65 years.

**Caller 6:** 1/10/2021. Caller stated they do not want the extra two lanes. Likes Option Number 3.

**Caller 7:** 1/10/2021. Caller lives at corner of Ramona and US-69. Wanted to be certain their property would not be impacted.

## 4.2 WEB-PAGE COMMENTS

Forty-four (44) web-page comments were received from the virtual open house. These comments received from the virtual open house are from citizens who left a comment on the webpage. These comments were then forwarded to the NEPA consultant by E-mail. These comments have been grouped into general categories for ease of reading. An ODOT response has been added at the end of each general category.

US-69 MUSKOGEE WEBPAGE COMMENTS	
Acquisition Questions	
1a	Could you please confirm if the City of Muskogee or Department of Transportation (ODOT) is buying part or all the properties needed for the Hwy 69 expansion in Muskogee?
6b	Will right of way be purchased on the east side or the west side? The east side has a lot of dilapidated structures and may be easier to acquire



**ODOT Response:** From our current plans, ODOT will only have to acquire easements and hopefully not have to buy any full properties. ODOT will have a better understanding of the right-of-way needs once a determination of how many lanes are to be constructed. The vast majority of right-of-way impacts include temporary construction easements and utility easements. Permanent right-of-way acquisitions are currently shown at the Coody Creek bridge, Border Avenue and NW corner of Arline Avenue. ODOT is hoping that no buildings will be acquired for the roadway improvements.

**Opposed To Any Continued Expansion of US 69 Into Superhighway**

I am opposed to any continued expansion of US 69 into a Superhighway, that is currently traveling thru a 'residential district' of City of Muskogee, OK. I am very disappointed with the "Lack of Public Information", "NOT being distributed by the local Muskogee newspaper", "Phoenix" or the Area TV. This important issue, if lucky, will receive, intentionally, only 'one printing' to avoid feedback from concerned citizens. The City of Muskogee operates by endorsing short term schemes, and it appears, the less said plays better when seeking ODOT project money to boost local economy. Avoiding the hard questions regarding excessive Air Pollution from increased Auto Traffic and Semi-Trailer Traffic, resulting in Medical Harm (cancer. etc.) to citizens of Muskogee, increased risk to senior citizen drivers, delays in travel for emergency vehicles, ambulances, appointments locally, a proposed widening of Highway 69 actually resulting in losing additional unsustainable businesses, dangerous drivers access/egress to State Highway 69 (not a street), the risk of a traffic accident blocking, stopping or closing 'ALL' North/South 69 Traffic, because of "CITY BOTTLENECK". { The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (O.D.O.T) in 2020 Plan/Graph admits over 5,000 Semi-Trailers 'travel this corridor daily'; meaning approximately "1,825,000 SEMI'S use Highway 69. Yearly"} This they assert is "only 25 % of total auto/truck traffic", which adds up to 5,475,000 vehicles/auto/trucks Traveling Across A City Street. {Total= "6,300,000- 6 Million Three Hundred Thousand Vehicles" a Year.} How about telling the Citizens 'all' the facts on City/State Television Broadcasts? State/Local Newspapers, Virtual Internet, etc.? The PEOPLE should Be Informed, not Ignored. Covering over a problem does not address finding an intelligent solution. Pouring Millions of Dollars "DOWN A HOLE" just creates a bigger hole to deal with in the future. We all want the City of Muskogee, OK. to move toward a better future for "ALL CITIZENS" by planning beyond today. This will only be done when CITY HALL/ Municipal Government looks beyond short-term fixes and quick-money schemes to address failing economy, lost businesses and unemployment, especially during a Covid-19 Pandemic. The City of Muskogee building 50 - (5&10) discount businesses, 50 dope houses, 50 convenience stores, 20 unsupported restaurants and 10 empty motels will not save Muskogee financially. Support realistic future development by investing in "NEW MUSKOGEE" - WEST OF 70TH Street. A great location for the "BIGGEST SEMI-TRAILER/TRUCK STOP IN OKLAHOMA", the City of Muskogee", Muskogee County, U.S.A. A good site for new school, new housing, business development, industry, manufacturing and a "SUPER WALMART" to support City of MUSKOGEE". Plus, it will be away from the Arkansas River Flooding, O.D.O.T can make that happen by splitting Route 69 into a 'Business Route 69 SOUTH' for tourist/visitor/local/area use and by intelligently developing a 'Semi/Traffic Bypass Route 69 WEST'; around the City of Muskogee. An ongoing continuing legacy focused on the Development of 'Future Muskogee', a growing WIN-WIN, financially and economically FOR ALL: Muskogee Citizens, Children, Families and Area Residents, the City of Muskogee, Muskogee County and the State of Oklahoma. "STOP CHASING A LOST CAUSE", "THE PROBLEM, over the last 50 years, IS THE TRAFFIC ITSELF". "NO SOLUTION HAS BECOME A CITY TRADEMARK". My question is Why waste Millions of Dollars altering a City Street in the City of Muskogee, if all you end up with is the same problem? Lastly, a few more question? Are you sure the proposed 69 changes are not on Native American Land? Creek Indian Territory? Without any Historic Value? THANK YOU. O.D.O.T for INFO. \*note: Recently Mayor of Muskogee commented ODOT spent a Million\$ widening 69 Border to Peak- 'actually adding rumble strips'. No mention of Route 69 Proposal - Border to Okmulgee St????

2a



**ODOT Response:** The purpose and need for this project is to provide operational improvements, including improvements to a pedestrian bridge (abandoned railroad overpass), extension of an existing bridge over Coody Creek, and reconstruction of the existing pavement. ODOT provided a public media release of this meeting but cannot guarantee who will pick up the release.

**Property Impacts**

3a I own Access Storage, 3300 W Border Ave, Muskogee. I am supportive of the HW69 expansion. I am not supportive of any plan to expand Border Ave which impacts my facility buildings. I am not adjacent to HW69 and there is no justification expand Border AVE, no traffic study to justify this. I spoke to the design engineer and the proposed turning lane on Border is a city of Muskogee request and not part of the HW69 project expansion. Per the designer, the proposed easement through my front building is unnecessary and can be modified to avoid impact to any of my front buildings. My expectation is that the plan will be modified to not impact Access Storage. I will fight any attempt to impact my buildings.

**ODOT Response:** ODOT has been in contact with this property owner. The preliminary design shows a utility easement that goes through one building that is a climate-controlled structure. ODOT understands this owner does not want to lose the building. During final design, the designer will try to work around the building with a design/right-of-way exception or possibly bore under the building.

**Support Both 6-lane Divided and 7-lane Proposals With 35mph Speed Limit**

4a I like both the 6-lane divided and the 7-lane proposals as long as the 35mph speed limit is maintained from Border to Okmulgee, otherwise only the 6-lane would be feasible.

**ODOT Response:** The speed limit is and will remain 55 mph from the beginning of project to South of Border. From there north to Okmulgee the posted speed limit is 35mph and that will remain the same after the improvements.

**Support Pedestrian Bridge**

4b I love the concept of updating the pedestrian bridge and making it look more like the recent improvements to other structures around town. I only wish it was to begin sooner than 4 years.

9a The old railroad overpass replacement is long overdue, great ideas!

**ODOT Response:** ODOT has been and will continue to work with the City on the pedestrian bridge to have it “fit in” with other City improvements. If additional funding becomes available, this project could be advanced.

**Truck Comments**

5a I try to avoid traveling on US69 as much as possible. Way too many trucks. I make better time traveling 24th st at a slower speed limit, and the road up til lately has been smoother. It would be nice to be able to see the businesses on either side of the road while traveling US69, but the trailer trucks block vision as well causing you to have to pay close attention to them. The drivers don't always see you and can cut you off easily. I sometimes feel intimidated because of the congestion. The idea of re-directing trucks sound great to me.

21a Perhaps to make the widening project most beneficial, there should be a law that the semi-trailer traffic should be required to use right lines only. Otherwise widening won't improve the flow due to these rigs occupying all lanes.

**ODOT Response:** Currently US-69 has 25% trucks. ODOT understands that vision can be impaired by the trucks. It would not be possible to enforce a truck right lane policy.

**Traffic Signalization on US-69**

6a How will the city and ODOT work together on the light synchronization part of the project?

**ODOT Response:** The traffic signals will be synchronized to prioritize the US-69 corridor and minimize congestion. ODOT will have control and maintenance of these signals.

**Bypass Comments in Favor or Against**

7a Option 1 is the best out of these 3 options. It would be even better if we made a bypass or build 69 around Muskogee, but not where they wanted to put it before. The reason the bypass was voted down before is because they chose to put it thru private property, which was a very bad idea. They should have re-evaluated the position so that it would not go thru peoples' property. I just want a way to get thru or around Muskogee FASTER!!!! I do not care how. I just need to get from the North side of Muskogee to the South side faster. If a bypass has no chance of ever being built, please consider making 69 into an Interstate/Freeway by adding bridges at every intersection and service roads along 69 so drivers have the option of getting on and off easily, get to nearby businesses, or pass thru Muskogee at a fast speed. Shawnee Bypass can easily be turned into a freeway with service roads. It is horrible as is and literally begging to be constructed correctly!!!

13a This proposal is far better than destroying the businesses now on highway 69 with a bypass. We have seen what happened to Tucumcari, N.M. when it was bypassed.

22a Build the bypass

23a In my opinion. Project B would be the best in least impact for the future expansions of Muskogee and increased traffic of the future.

28a I am still in favor of the bypass and regret that city leaders responded without, apparently, researching the impact of bypasses in other cities and states regarding their economic impact - and especially seeing your data on the 2050 level of service we will have even after spending these millions.

37a Is there a drawing of where it reroutes? Will landowners be paid a fair price for their property? Will it bring more business south?

39a I would vote to do the bypass. Having managed Weldon Truck Parts for 20 years before I retired, I understand the trucking industry but having said that I have lost three friends from wrecks on 69. My thoughts are you cannot put a monetary value on human life. I would be in favor of an elevated highway like the ones in Texas. Thank you

**ODOT Response:** Based on public feedback, ODOT and FHWA refocused attention on updating the existing US-69 corridor and tasked a consultant to look at alternatives to improve the existing US-69 facility through Muskogee in early 2020. There are no options for a bypass route that do not involve purchasing new right of way for the extents of the project.

**Add New Intersections/Interchanges**

7b The new type of intersections that bigger cities are slowly building, are helping alleviate traffic, get more cars thru an intersection in less time, and preventing accidents from happening. These intersections include: Dogbone interchange (also called bowtie). It has a double roundabout. Diverging Diamond Interchange (this is probably my favorite because pedestrians walk down the sidewalk in the center). Some cities have added tunnels under each end of this intersection so drivers can have the option of going straight thru, while

	still being on the exit/entrance ramp or service road. Single-point Interchange (Tunnels can also be implemented here to go straight thru without stopping at a traffic light on a normal intersection) Simple, 2 or 3 lane roundabout 3. Please add more of the new-style traffic lights with 4 or 5 lights in a row that features a flashing yellow arrow. These are the best traffic lights ever made!
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> The interchanges and intersection types mentioned would require extensive amounts of new right-of-way and create numerous relocations.

**Add Trails, Bike Lanes, Crosswalks / Improve Other City Streets**

7c	Please add more trails, buffered bike lanes, and add proper pedestrian/trail crosswalks with either the new-style crossing light that has 3 bulbs in a square or flashing yellow signs in the grass and flashing lights built into the road (both will stop traffic properly and will help drivers see pedestrians). 5. Improve the streetscape of downtown and along highways. This will bring more businesses to Muskogee, make Muskogee look better, make people want to stop, and make people want to walk in those areas. Add sidewalks, benches, crosswalks, trees, gardens, plants, plant a tree in every few parking spaces and build a curb around it (especially in areas that have too much parking, but not enough cars using it).
38a	As a taxpayer I do not approve of this project because the streets in this town are in way worse shape than this section of road. Fix the city streets first and let the state worry about the state highways. MY VOTE IS NOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!
44b	Sidewalks along the reconstructed highway need to have an adequate buffer strip between them and the curb/vehicle lanes.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> ODOT is responsible for the U.S. and State highways. The streetscape improvements mentioned for downtown and city street improvements that are not designated as state highways would need to be funded by the City.

**Passenger Rail and Streetcar Service to Muskogee**

7d	This is the most important of all! Please, I beg of you, PLEASE build or find a way to get passenger rail service to Muskogee. We need something like Amtrak that goes to other towns/cities, but we also need a commuter train going around Muskogee too. Muskogee needs more options for transportation. We need to get people into Muskogee by train, then let them get on a city train to go around Muskogee. Not everyone can afford a car, but everyone can afford \$8 to get there and \$4 to go halfway around the city. It makes no sense for thousands of people to all drive separate cars and all go to the exact same place. Why not put 500+ people on 1 train to get to Muskogee instead, then 50 or 100 people on the commuter train. 7. Finally, we need a streetcar going around downtown or all-around Muskogee if we can't get a commuter train. This will alleviate traffic wherever it goes and will be affordable. It will also help Muskogee look better, bring more customers to businesses, and bring in more businesses. It will go great with the streetscape. The streetscape and streetcar can triple the benefits, if done right. Please implement as many of these as possible. The more you invest in rail transportation, the less you will waste on roads and highways.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> The Heartland Flyer is the only passenger rail service operating in Oklahoma from Oklahoma City to Fort Worth Texas.

**Support Figure 2 / OPTION 1 - CONSTRUCTION OF 6-LANE CURB & GUTTER WITH RAISED MEDIAN**

8a	Option 1 makes the most sense. Less accident impact, better longevity and options for both local and semi traffic. Option 3 is a complete waste of time and resources with no benefits to the community.
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15a	My initial pick was Option 2 with a continuous two-way left turn lane. However, after reviewing the many driveways along this stretch, I feel Option 1 would be a safer choice especially if left turn lanes were included. I would also hope the crepe myrtle bushes in the median south of Border Avenue would not be removed as they greatly enhance the aesthetic beauty entering the city.
18a	In the three proposed layouts, I like the idea of having 6 lanes, just like we have going N. on 69 highway from Broadway N. to Shawnee. I would like to see no or less left turn lanes however. If there is a center left turn lane (which I would do away with) people needing to turn N or S from a side street would be crossing four lanes of traffic to make a left turn. I see people all the time use a left turn lane as a merge into traffic lane. With all the semi traffic we have on 69 highway, limiting left turns, in my opinion is both a safety issue and traffic flow issue, maybe a center median, like we have going S. out of town would be an in town option. Just to alleviate left turns in this small area. I realize emergency vehicles need easy access though. Thank you.
24a	I favor option1 with turn lanes at all intersections.
25a	The 6 lane, elevated median highway would be the safest.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Based on the comments received and discussions with the City of Muskogee, ODOT is moving forward with Option 2 - construction of 7-lane curb & gutter with continuous two-way left turn lane, although raised medians will be provided at select locations.
<b>Support Figure 3 / OPTION 2 - CONSTRUCTION OF 7-LANE CURB &amp; GUTTER WITH CONTINUOUS TWO-WAY LEFT TURN LANE</b>	
9b	My opinion to the alternate sections of highway sections would be figure 3 . Several roads in Tulsa and Broken Arrow are using this type and it seems to be working fine. Controlled traffic speed with proper signal lighting, flashing lights, speed signs, and police patrol could curb accidents immensely. When I have traveled in the Tulsa area , I have found the turning lane in the middle to be helpful as a haven for me when turning left into traffic. I look at it as a safe zone. I think proper painting on road and maybe some small vibration strips could be helpful (in certain places) I know that this type also gives a much more modern look with less upkeep.
10a	Figure 3 Option 2- Construction of 7 lane curb and gutter with continuous two way left turn lane. That will bring Muskogee more business. People will stop and shop.
17a	I am in favor of option 2 from BOP to Arline. I am unsure whether this same option would be safe enough for the higher density of driveways between Arline and Okmulgee.
19a	As a resident of Muskogee who lives west of the 69 Border area, I prefer the 7-lane proposal.
20a	I am in favor of option 2 from BOP to Arline. I am unsure whether this same option would be safe enough for the higher density of driveways between Arline and Okmulgee.
26a	I support option 2. I believe that providing dedicated turn lanes would be safer for those who use those lanes and would also prevent rear end accidents or other type of accidents if no turn lanes were provided.
27a	The seven lane is by far the best, to encourage retail development.
29a	I as well as many other citizens of Muskogee want south 69 in Muskogee road improvements to be just like the north end as far as being 7 lanes with no median. This will help with traffic flow as well as an economic benefit. We need this to help Muskogee grow and now is a perfect time for this to happen.
30a	Finish the highway in the same manner as was done in front of Quick Trip.
34a	I prefer 7 lanes with no center median so businesses may better develop on both sides of the highway.

35a	Highway 69 is the main corridor through Muskogee. I believe that figure number 3 (7 lanes) represents what's in the best interest for the city and economic growth.
36a	I think the 7-lane proposal would be the best. The continuous center turn lane helps with efficiency and traffic flow
41a	I'm in support of the 7-lane option.
43a	I use HY 69 and Muskogee roads every day. I believe the Figure 3 option 2, (Construction of 7 lane curb and gutter with continuous two way left turn lane) from the Muskogee Phoenix dated Jan. 9-10 is the best option to solve the congestion and delays currently experienced in this area.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Based on the comments received and discussions with the City of Muskogee, ODOT is moving forward with Option 2 - construction of 7-lane curb & gutter with continuous two-way left turn lane, although raised medians will be provided at select locations.
<b>Support Figure 4 / OPTION 3 - RECONSTRUCT THE EXISTING 4-LANE CURB &amp; GUTTER WITH RAISED MEDIAN</b>	
28b	My 'vote' is for Option 3 (four-lane)
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Based on the comments received and discussions with the City of Muskogee, ODOT is moving forward with Option 2 - construction of 7-lane curb & gutter with continuous two-way left turn lane, although raised medians will be provided at select locations.
<b>Support Improvements to US-69</b>	
11a	As a lifelong citizen of Muskogee, I feel this project is vital for our city. The growth due to the project from West Okmulgee to Shawnee was a huge improvement for our businesses and welcomes travelers to our city.
12a	Would love to see this happen.
14a	I believe this to be a must, that area is more congested, and it would help clean up that area making Muskogee more presentable and people may want to stop and see what we are about if we look nice. I have been living in Muskogee since the 90's, graduated High School here, raised my children here also. Makes me sad to see the old empty buildings. Makes Muskogee look poor, giving a negative vibe. When you update that area, it will be so nice. I am really glad you did not do the bypass; it would have hurt Muskogee really. Clean up the problem, do not build around it. Thank you.
31a	I am in favor of the project. I believe this will be beneficial to our city in order to attract business, as well as updating our aesthetics that will improve visitation and events. Whether with a median or without, this change is greatly needed for the growth of our community.
32a	I completely support the widening project for HWY 69. This will be beneficial for businesses and traffic flow.
33a	I would prefer ODOT expand the existing Highway 69 versus a complete reroute. The economic impact for our already low-income City could be catastrophic. Please consider widening versus re-routing.
40a	I would think this would be a great upgrade to the city and surrounding areas. Thank you.
42a	I concur with the expansion of US 69 through Muskogee to enhance the flow of traffic.
44a	Whichever option is selected should be the one that is safest for all users, including pedestrians and motor vehicles. Narrower and fewer lanes would slow traffic down, likely improving safety for all users, as well as accessibility in and out of businesses along the corridor.

	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Thank you for your comments.
<b>Comments on Presentation</b>	
15b	Thank you ODOT staff who put this presentation together.
16a	Nice Presentation.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Thank you for your comments.

### 4.3 INTERACTIVE MAPS COMMENTS

From the three design options, interactive map comments have been received that are listed below with each map. An ODOT response is provided as well.

#### OPTION 1

Fill in the walking trail underpass and make it a walking trail overpass. Level out the road.
Please use Option 1.
I think option 1 is the best for Muskogee
I like the raised median look and plan one

#### ODOT Responses:

The road will be raised 5 feet under the pedestrian trail.

Thank you for your input.

#### OPTION 2

What do these green lines on the entrance of our driveway mean for our business?
Option 2 is best. It ties in with the enhancement made north of Okmulgee.
Option 2 which is the 7-lane option with a continuous turn lane is the best option and provides for the best traffic flow

#### ODOT Responses:

The green line represents temporary right-of-way that will be needed by the Department to construct a new driveway during construction.

Thank you for your input.



**OPTION 3**

The City would like a defined partnership role in the signal coordination part of this project
The presentation seemed to indicate right of way acquisition on the west side of U.S. 69. Why wasn't the east side considered? The east side has more dilapidated structures and would seem cheaper to acquire. Was that considered?
I am concerned if I am retaining the entrance onto my parking lot in front of my business off of Border Ave.?

**ODOT Responses:**

The traffic signals will be synchronized to prioritize the US-69 corridor and minimize congestion. ODOT will have control and maintenance of these signals.

From our current plans, ODOT will only have to acquire easements and hopefully not have to buy any full properties. ODOT will have a better understanding of the right-of-way needs once a determination of how many lanes are to be constructed. The vast majority of right-of-way impacts include temporary construction easements and utility easements. Permanent right-of-way acquisitions are currently shown at the Coody Creek bridge, Border Avenue and NW corner of Arline Avenue. ODOT is hoping that no buildings will be acquired for the roadway improvements.

Access will be maintained to business during construction. If ODOT removes access from a property, then that will be compensated for during right-of-way acquisition.

**4.4 WRITTEN COMMENTS**

Fourteen (14) written comments were received that are summarized below. An ODOT response is provided as well.

<b>US-69 MUSKOGEE WRITTEN COMMENTS</b>	
<b>Other Roadway Improvements</b>	
<b>1a</b>	Not only those areas are in need of improvements as other roads in the inner areas need improvements as well. Meadow Brooks Apartment off of Border Ave.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Improvements to City streets would be the responsibility of the City of Muskogee.
<b>Support Figure 2 / OPTION 1 - CONSTRUCTION OF 6-LANE CURB &amp; GUTTER WITH RAISED MEDIAN</b>	

2a	I would like to see HWY 69 updated and have a 6 lane to drive on would be safer for all of us that live in the era. Figure 2 would be my preference.
7a	I like the proposal of Figure 2 - Option 1
12b	Proposed improvements It appears Option 1 will be the safest and will provide the best level of service for the existing mix of traffic. Offset left turn bays and constructed with 12' reinforced concrete.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Based on the comments received and discussions with the City of Muskogee, ODOT is moving forward with Option 2 - construction of 7-lane curb & gutter with continuous two-way left turn lane, although raised medians will be provided at select locations.
<b>Support Figure 3 / Option 2 - CONSTRUCTION OF 7-LANE CURB &amp; GUTTER WITH CONTINUOUS TWO-WAY LEFT TURN LANE</b>	
3a	We proposed. Figure 3: Option 2 - construction of 7 lane curb and gutter with continuous two way left turn lane to US-69 in Muskogee
4a	Option 2 - Figure 3. Thanks
5a	I favor Figure 3: option 2
6c	I do not know why anybody would think any choice other than Figure 3- option 2. This would save on maintenance cost and gas of residence not always going down and make a U-turn every time you go somewhere.
8a	Option 2 - Figure 3.
9a	I like Figure 3 (Option2) because there are more opportunities with it. If this goes through the traffic flow will be better. The cars won't have to go make a left turn to enter a business. Cars that are turning won't interrupt traffic flow.
10a	On behalf of Shyama Hotels we like Option 2 - Figure 3. The rationale is that making an open street divided rather a raised divided will create more accessibility for those traveling through who want to visit businesses along both side of the highway.
11a	I have chosen Figure 3 because of truck and traffic lights.
13a	Our family likes Figure 3 - Option 2. There needs to be thru lanes in the middle.
14b	As to options, I vote for the one to have the least negative effect on ingress and egress as possible. I believe that would be Option 2.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Based on the comments received and discussions with the City of Muskogee, ODOT is moving forward with Option 2 - construction of 7-lane curb & gutter with continuous two-way left turn lane, although raised medians will be provided at select locations.
<b>Sidewalks</b>	
6a	The current design does not serve the needs of a growing city. There are no sidewalks, crosswalks, or turn lanes. People are forced to walk and operate their wheelchair in the street because of lack of sidewalks. There are just a few breaks in the center median and none have crosswalks. Any business or street on the left side can only be accessed by going way down the road and make a U-Turn and backtrack. I live on Arline only 100 ft east of Highway and see lots and lots of people in wheel chairs and waling in the highway.

	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Sidewalks will be provided on both sides of the US-69 roadway from Border to Okmulgee Avenue.
<b>Shrubs and Grass in Median</b>	
6b	The shrubs and grass in the median not good. The grass and shrubs in the center median are not taken care of properly and always look shaggy and neglected.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> The plantings in the median are the responsibilities of the City to maintain.
<b>Questions</b>	
10b	Can you provide us with the exact measurement and dimensions of the 1. lanes, 2. inside and outside shoulders, 3. curb, 4. gutter, 5. medians or 2-way left turn lane. And 6. sidewalks for each of the 3 proposed options? This will allow property owners such as us to better gauge what impacts the new construction will have on our respective properties.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> This commenter was contacted by the designer to answer these specific questions.
<b>Bypass</b>	
12a	For the record: The west bypass should be built with three connection roads into Muskogee.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> Based on public feedback, ODOT and FHWA refocused attention on updating the existing US-69 corridor and tasked a consultant to look at alternatives to improve the existing US-69 facility through Muskogee in early 2020.
<b>Property Impacts</b>	
14a	I am 85 years old and difficult to travel long distances (California to Oklahoma). I am worried about impact to my property and its tenant. The little income I get from this is important me. I am only asking for as little impact on property and tenant as possible and as much reasonable compensation as is possible.
	<b>ODOT Response:</b> From our current plans, ODOT will only have to acquire easements and hopefully not have to buy any full properties. ODOT will have a better understanding of the right-of-way needs once a determination of how many lanes are to be constructed. The vast majority of right-of-way impacts include temporary construction easements and utility easements. Permanent right-of-way acquisitions are currently shown at the Coody Creek bridge, Border Avenue and NW corner of Arline Avenue. ODOT is hoping that no buildings will be acquired for the roadway improvements.

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## 5.0 AGENCY SOLICITATION LETTERS

Agency solicitation letters were dated December 16, 2020 and were mailed during the virtual open house. These letters provided a short project description, website link, and enclosed project location and aerial maps. The letter requested recipients provide input by January 4, 2021 and included a link to the project presentation information. This letter was sent to thirty-nine (39) State and Federal agencies including the US Army Corps of Engineers, Tribal Nations and numerous State agencies.

## 5.1 AGENCY COMMENTS AND ODOT RESPONSES

Three (3) agency letter responses were received and are summarized below along with an ODOT response.

- 1) The **Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission** stated that based on the limited information provided and our cursory review, the potential project does not appear to pose a hazard to the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace.

**ODOT Response:** This comment is noted and appreciated.

- 2) The **Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)** stated no adverse environmental impacts under DEQ jurisdiction are anticipated for the project; however, please be aware of the following regulatory requirements:

A. Prior to beginning any construction activity disturbing more than one acre, you must submit an NOI and obtain authorization under OKR10, construction stormwater. If you need assistance, please contact DEQ's Stormwater Unit at (405) 702-6100.

B. It is unclear if water and wastewater utilities will need to be relocated as part of this project. Water and wastewater infrastructure projects that will require a construction permit from DEQ's Water Quality Division include the following:

- Construction of new water and wastewater treatment facilities;
- Modifications and upgrades to existing facilities;
- Construction of new water distribution and wastewater collection lines;
- Relocation of existing water distribution and wastewater collection lines.

Projects that do not require a construction permit include:

- Replacement of existing equipment with same type and size equipment;
- Replacement of existing water and wastewater lines with the same size line in the same location.

**ODOT Response:**

These comments are noted and ODOT will obtain authorization under OKR10, construction stormwater prior to construction.

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- 3) The **Bureau of Indian Affairs** stated there are five Federally recognized tribes within the project area and provided the names and addresses.

**ODOT Response:**

The five tribes mentioned in the response letter were also provided a solicitation letter and an opportunity to comment on the project.

## 6.0 DATA ANALYTICS AND SIGN IN

**Appendix F** contains the data analytics from the US-69 webpage virtual public input page. Attendee participation included 1,230 users with 3,690 views. The top engagement city was Muskogee with 464, followed by Boston with 162. Sixty-one (61) signed in for the meeting on the webpage and that list can be found in **Appendix G**.