

VIRTUAL PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

Cherokee County JP 31246(04) – Grade, Drainage, Bridge and Surface Improvements on SH-80 from 0.85 Mile South of Junction SH-80/SH-51 North 0.5 Miles

This document summarizes the virtual public open house conducted for the realignment of State Highway (SH)-80 from 0.85 mile south of junction SH-80/SH-51, north 0.5 mile in Cherokee County, Oklahoma. The Virtual Public Open House was held January 6 through 20, 2022 at www.odot.org/SH80Cherokee. The purpose of the virtual public open house was to inform the public of the preferred alternative (new alignment west of existing S. Wilson Lane) and present the latest information on the project.

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is evaluating the need for improvements to SH-80 from 0.85 miles south of junction SH-80/SH-51, north 0.5 miles (on new alignment) in Cherokee County, Oklahoma. The purpose of the proposed improvements is to correct roadway deficiencies, enhance safety, and efficiently accommodate traffic. The project is currently scheduled to be let for construction in 2025.

In February 2019, ODOT tasked a consultant to evaluate three alternatives for improving this segment of highway while taking into consideration the cost of construction, right-of-way and utilities, potential environmental constraints.

- Alternative 1: New alignment west of existing S. Wilson Lane
- Alternative 2: New alignment along existing S. Wilson Lane (section line)
- Alternative 3: New alignment along existing S. Wilson Lane (section line) with curb and gutter on the left of the alignment, north of the creek

February 4, 2020, a Public Open House occurred to allow the stakeholders and public to review and provide input on the three alternatives. This open house was a come and go meeting located at Hulbert Public Schools Auditorium. Display boards showing the proposed alternatives and preliminary right-of-way plans were available for public viewing.

In June 2020, ODOT selected Alternative 1 (new alignment west of the existing S. Wilson Lane) as the preferred alignment.

Property owner and stakeholder letters/ brochures were mailed on January 3, 2022. These letters/brochures provided the purpose of the meeting, project background, purpose of the project, and proposed improvements, and the website address to attend the virtual open house. The letter/brochure was accompanied by a project location map, comment form, self-addressed stamped envelope, and a property rights brochure. This letter/brochure was sent to ninety-six (96) property owners, stakeholders and state, federal and local government agencies.

Agency solicitation letters were mailed on January 7, 2022. These letters provided a short project description and brief history of the project with an enclosed project location map, project overview

map, and the website to the virtual public open house. This letter was sent to twenty-five (25) State and Federal agencies.

Notice of the virtual public open house was also sent by brochure to one thousand forty-seven addresses throughout the Town of Hulbert and the vicinity using every door direct mail (EDDM). This brochure provided the purpose of the meeting, project background, purpose of the project, and proposed improvements, and the website address to attend the virtual open house. The brochure was accompanied by a project location map, comment form, self-addressed stamped envelope, and a property rights brochure.

The Virtual Public Open House was held January 6 through 20, 2022 at www.odot.org/SH80Cherokee. The purpose of the virtual public open house was to inform the public of the preferred alternative (new alignment west of existing S. Wilson Lane) and present the latest information on the project. Fifty-two users viewed the webpage. The users could view the brochure, right-of-way brochure, frequently asked questions. The webpage had an interactive project map that users could view the project and multiple ways for the viewer to provide comments.

The public provided good feedback on the preferred alternative and had a few areas of concern. Many had safety concerns regarding truck traffic and the speed of vehicles along the preferred alignment and how individual parcels would be affected by right-of-way acquisition.

The comment period was open until January 20, 2022, with a total of fifteen (15) written comments received, including three (3) from agencies (Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission, and Oklahoma Corporation Commission), and ten (10) from members of the public. ODOT also answered two (2) phone calls from the member of the public. Table below summarizes the written and verbal comments received from the public.

Comment	Number of Comments
A. Other Alternatives: prefer the realignment to occur north of the Rita Myers Property, on Corp of Engineers land, or along county road 400	5
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment.	
B. Property Impacts: loss of property (land, homes, etc.)	7
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment.	
C. No Action: prefer no change to the existing alignment	4
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment.	
D. Roadway Deficiency: roadway deterioration due to truck traffic	1
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment.	
E. Safety & Efficiency Concerns: truck traffic will be faster with the realignment, and children/grandchildren along the alignment	6
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment.	
F. Right-of-Way Maintenance: concern with who will maintain new right-of-way	1
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment.	

G. Socioeconomic: impact to the local retail businesses if highway is realigned	2
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment.	
H. Right of Way Acquisition: concerns of water and surface rights	1
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment. Property owners may retain the ground water rights. They will need to let the acquisition agent know their intent to do so. No mineral rights will be acquired as part of the acquisition process. ODOT will conduct a title search by will not update the individuals abstract. ODOT will file all documents necessary to convey the property. The owner will receive a letter stating when the survey will begin and contact information of the appraiser. The well will need to be assessed for its impacts to the project. ODOT will compensate the owner to move the cattle guard.	
I. Drainage and Drive Concerns: concerns regarding roadway flooding and design of driveways	1
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment. Drainage for the highway will convey a 25-year storm event without overtopping or backwater onto private property. This equates to a 4% chance in any given year of a storm that exceeds this design. Driveways will be designed in accordance with ODOT standards and specifications. The standard provides for 15 ft. radius on driveway returns at the highway and limits grade on driveways to approximately 8%.	
J. In Favor of the Project: agree the project should be constructed as proposed	4
ODOT Response: Thank you for your comment.	