



## **Special June Commission Wrap-Up:**

### **Community enhancement proposals approved; \$72 million in projects awarded**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Highlights of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission's June 22 meeting include approval of transportation enhancement projects, recognition of the *Heartland Flyer's* 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, designation of memorial bridges and highways and awarding \$72 million in projects. The commission also was updated on the status of economic stimulus spending and related engineering contracts and projects.

Commissioners approved a two-year, \$17 million plan for transportation enhancement projects. The program uses dedicated funding for community improvements, such as sidewalks, streetscaping, bicycle paths and historic preservation, among others. Of more than 60 proposals submitted, 30 were approved. In addition, the Commission approved the request for dedicated funding categories for specific department-sponsored enhancement projects. These projects require national or state coordination and are of a general statewide appeal.

Commissioners recognized the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the *Heartland Flyer*, which was inaugurated June 14, 1999. Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley noted the *Heartland Flyer* is one of the Amtrak routes supported solely by the states it serves.

Legislative action was approved to place memorial bridge and highway designation signs on 19 locations statewide.

Updating commissioners on the status of economic stimulus spending, Ridley said 82 percent of the transportation portion of the state's funding is under contract, or more than \$382 million of the \$465 million received.

"We think the program is going to start paying off this summer," Ridley said. "We hit the construction season absolutely right. We are certainly receiving a lot of bids on the jobs; they are very competitive in nature."

Also related to the economic stimulus, commissioners approved contracts for engineering services to upgrade sidewalks along highways in rural communities to make them compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In action items, commissioners approved projects including resurfacing of the Duncan Bypass (US-81) in Stephens County and a \$14 million, stimulus-funded rehabilitation of I-44 in Comanche County.

In all, commissioners awarded 45 contracts totaling \$72 million to improve highways, interstates and roads in 32 counties. Projects include bridge and highway construction and reconstruction, resurfacing and safety improvements.

Contracts were awarded for projects in Beckham, Comanche, Caddo, Canadian, Cimarron, Cleveland, Comanche, Creek, Custer, Grady, Harper, Hughes, Jackson, Johnston, Kiowa, LeFlore, Major, Marshall, Mayes, McCurtain, Murray, Muskogee, Noble, Oklahoma, Payne, Pontotoc, Pottawatomie, Pushmataha, Seminole, Stephens, Texas and Woodward counties.

The commission – an eight-member panel appointed by the governor to oversee the state's transportation development – awards project contracts for road and bridge construction every month. The panel's next meeting is 11 a.m. Monday, Aug. 3, in the R.A. Ward Transportation Building in Oklahoma City.

Before a project is awarded, ODOT researches, plans and designs work to be done. Contracts are bid competitively, with the OTC selecting the winning firm. Contractors have a grace period to begin work, typically several weeks or months after a contract is awarded. Weather or other factors can delay a project.

Contracts, bid information, the commission's monthly agenda and project details can be accessed at [www.okladot.state.ok.us](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us).

--[www.okladot.state.ok.us](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us)--

(Editors and News Directors: For details about projects in your area and to view accompanying pictures, please visit the Web site [www.okladot.state.ok.us](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us). For more information, call the ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)

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Celebrating a mile stone: Joe Kyle, manager of the Rail Programs Division for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, discusses the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the *Heartland Flyer* at Monday's Oklahoma Transportation Commission meeting. Since 1999, the train has provided daily service from Oklahoma City to Ft. Worth, Texas and points in between, serving about 625,000 passengers in that time.



Cyclists enjoy a bike and pedestrian path built as part of federal transportation enhancements projects administered by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. Monday the Oklahoma Transportation Commission approved 30 proposals for community projects over the next two years. The funds are specific to the program which supports community improvements such as sidewalks, streetscaping, bicycle paths and historic preservation among others.

**OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING JUNE 22, 2009**