



OKLAHOMA
Transportation



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I-35 McClain County Safety & Capacity Improvement Project

Merit Criteria

FY26 BUILD Grant Application

BUILD Grant Request:
\$20,000,000

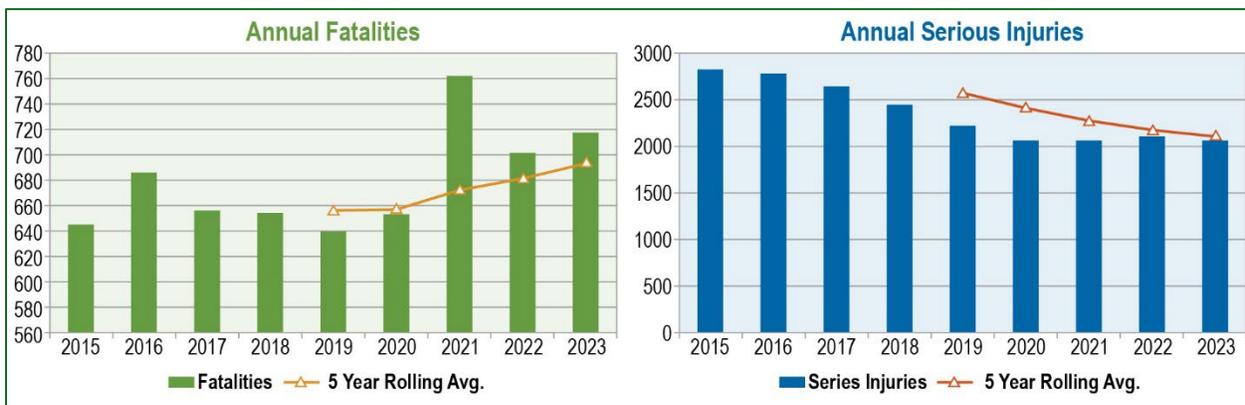
MERIT CRITERIA

Safety

Reduce Fatalities and Serious Injuries

ODOT recorded 718 fatalities¹ in 2023, which translates to a fatality rate of 1.55 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (HMVMT). In the same year, ODOT recorded 2,078 serious injuries, which translates to a serious injury rate of 4.50 serious injuries per HMVMT. Since 2019, Oklahoma has seen an annual increase in fatalities and a general decline in serious injuries (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Statewide Fatality and Injury Data



Between 2017 and 2022², the Project area experienced 83 crashes, including 4 crashes with fatalities³ (Table 5 and Figure 9). Approximately one-third⁴ of the crashes were rear-end crashes, a pattern often linked to sudden slowdowns and speed fluctuations caused by congestion. The corridor also carries a high proportion of heavy trucks, about 25% of AADT. The substantial presence of heavy trucks increases lane-changing complexity and contributes to speed differentials, further elevating the risk of rear-end crashes.

Table 5. 2017–2022 Crash Counts and Severity

| Injury Severity | Total |
|-----------------|-------|
| Fatal | 4 |
| Injury | 18 |
| Property Damage | 61 |
| Grand Total | 83 |

¹ Oklahoma HSIP 2024 Annual Report, Note: Oklahoma is still catching up on processing all records held up from 2022 and 2023.

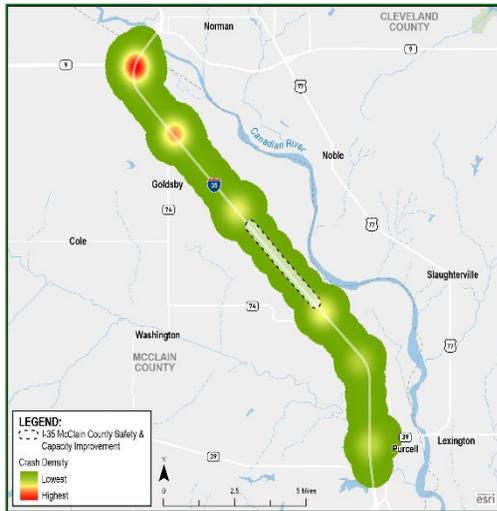
² 2021 and 2022 crash data may be incomplete.

³ According to Oklahoma Highway Safety Office [Current Crash Data](#).

⁴ Based on collision data available for 80 of the 83 crashes.

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Figure 9. Crash Distribution in Project Area



The Project area recorded no fatalities between 2017 and 2020. However, the fatal crashes that began in 2021 signal a critical and immediate need for safety improvements. A fatal crash occurred within the Project area in April 2021, involving a three-vehicle collision at Mile Marker 99.5 on I-35 in Purcell. This crash resulted in the death of a 22-year-old Oklahoma City resident. In December 2021, an eight-vehicle crash on southbound I-35 in the Project segment resulted in one fatality. Just one month later, in January 2022, a rollover crash in the Project area claimed the lives of two Oklahoma high-school baseball players returning from a tournament—an 18-year-old who died at the scene and a 17-year-old who died from injuries two weeks later. In

September 2022, a head-on, wrong-way collision within the Project area resulted in the death of a 28-year-old. Although not included in the crash counts in Table 5, a head-on collision in March 2023 involving a vehicle that crossed the median caused the deaths of a 57-year-old and a 48-year-old.

The fatality rate in the Project area in 2021 was 5.22 deaths per HMVMT and 7.57 deaths per HMVMT in 2022, much greater than the 2023 state fatality rate of 1.55 deaths per HMVMT. In 2021, the serious injury rate in the Project area was 5.22 serious injuries per HMVMT, which is also higher than the 2023 state serious injury rate of 4.50 serious injuries per HMVMT. The anticipated 35.4% reduction in crashes calculated in the benefit-cost analysis (BCA) will help trend fatal and serious injury crash rates in the Project area down toward the statewide average. Figure 10⁵ is an image of emergency vehicles responding to the fatal crash on I-35 in December 2021.

The four fatal crashes happened at night. The Project will address this through the addition of center median lighting to improve nighttime visibility. The highest percentage of collisions within the Project limits involved impacts with fixed objects, representing 47%⁶ of all crashes. Of these fixed-object collisions, 71%⁷ involved the existing median cable barrier, which could indicate issues with speed-related roadway departure. The Project will address this issue by closing the existing median and

Figure 10. December 2021 Fatality on I-35



⁵ Source: [OHP Troopers Respond To 8 Car Fatality Crash On I-35 In McClain County - NewsBreak](#)

⁶ Based on collision data available for 80 of the 83 crashes.

⁷ Based on collision data available for 80 of the 83 crashes.

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constructing a concrete median barrier for the full length of the Project limits. Roadway conditions also play a significant role in collisions, with 31%⁸ of crashes occurring during wet conditions. The Project will address this issue by upgrading the existing drainage system to more effectively remove runoff from the roadway and reduce water pooling.

The Project will reduce the high number of projected vehicle collisions in the Project area through the construction of two additional lanes, a concrete median barrier, rumble strips, lighting, and wider roadway shoulders. These interventions will reduce vehicle conflicts related to roadway congestion, vehicle off roading, head-on crashes, and crashes from dark roadway conditions.

The BCA (uploaded in Valid Eval) calculates the reduction in crashes involving roadway vehicles related to the proposed project improvements in the Project area by applying the appropriate crash modification factor (CMF) to the historical average crashes in the Project area. Given the characteristics of the multiple improvements in the I-35 segment, the following CMFs were selected for the safety analysis:

- Increase from four lanes to six lanes
- Install shoulder rumble strips and widen shoulder

The Project benefits, calculated in the BCA, are estimated to reduce crashes in the Project area by more than 39%, which translates to a total of 4.9 annual crashes avoided. This includes an anticipated reduction of 1.1 annual avoided injury crashes and 0.2 annual avoided fatal crashes. The value of avoided crashes involving roadway vehicles value is over \$32 million. Figure 11 identifies the safety benefits anticipated as a result of the Project.

Figure 11. Benefit Cost Analysis Safety Findings



Protect Motorized Travelers from Safety Risks

The Project protects motorized travelers from safety risks by implementing the following road safety countermeasures shown in Table 6.

⁸ Based on collision data available for 80 of the 83 crashes.

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Table 6. Project Safety Improvements

| Project Component | Safety Impact |
|--|---|
| Increase from four lanes to six lanes | Improves traffic flow and reduces congestion. Adding an additional lane can be associated with a 19.8% decrease in crashes. ⁹ |
| New concrete median barrier | Redirects vehicles following lane departure. |
| Widen inside and outside shoulder from 8 feet to 10 feet | Helps drivers regain control following lane departure and overcorrections and provides refuge for disabled vehicles. Provides a safe refuge for disabled or malfunctioning vehicles, allowing drivers to regain control following lane departure. Shoulder widening can be associated with a 39% decrease in crashes. ¹⁰ |
| New shoulder rumble strips | Alerts drivers through vibration and sound that their vehicles have left the travel lane, which can be associated with an 16% decrease in crashes. ¹¹ |
| New center median lighting | Improves nighttime visibility to assess roadway conditions, which can be associated with a 28% decrease in crashes. ¹² |
| New parallel acceleration and deceleration lanes at northbound on-ramp and southbound off-ramp | Mitigates speed differentials at on- and off-ramps by providing the distance and time needed for vehicles, particularly heavy trucks, to merge with through traffic. |
| Three new impact attenuators | Reduces crash severity. |

The Project also includes new signage and striping. Existing ground-mounted signage will be replaced with more resilient cantilevered monotube overhead exit signs. Overhead signs improve safety through improved visibility, greater structural integrity, and lower exposure to potential vehicle crashes.

The wider roadway shoulders will improve the overall safety along I-35. The wider roadway shoulders will improve accessibility for emergency vehicles and evacuations, reducing incident response times. Wider shoulders will enhance the efficiency of the transportation network by providing an alternative route for emergency vehicles during heavy congestion. This is particularly important because of the lack of adjacent routes in the Project area.

Oklahoma Statutes [Section 4711506](#) prohibits non-motorized vehicles from legally walking along or on I-35, including the shoulders, ramps, or mainline. However, the Project's wider roadway shoulders will assist disabled vehicles and improve Traffic Incident Management (TIM). Wider roadway shoulders help disabled vehicles by providing a safer buffer from highspeed traffic. They also provide TIM responders with adequate space to respond without pushing vulnerable travelers into incoming traffic. Wider roadway shoulders can serve as temporary, safe detour space for non-motorized users during traffic incidents, improving the safety for vehicles and emergency responders along the Project area.

⁹ CMF ID 7928

¹⁰ Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse, Countermeasure ID 6659

¹¹ Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse, Countermeasure ID 3442

¹² Crash Modification Clearinghouse, Countermeasure ID 192

Environmental Sustainability

The Project will be completed within existing right-of-way, minimizing environmental impact. Additionally, the following environmental benefits are included:

- Drainage improvements
- Reduced flooding
- Biodiversity preservation
- Farmland protections

Improve Resilience of Existing Infrastructure

Drainage upgrades included in the Project will improve resilience to extreme weather events and natural disasters by removing runoff more effectively and reducing flood risk. Drainage improvements will prevent pavement pooling, extending the infrastructure's service life and lowering flood-induced environmental impacts. Additional flood mitigation includes pavement edge drains added to drainable base as well as roadway cross drains. The Project will include an increase in the quantity of inlets in the area, including center median barrier wall inlets. Pavement will also be sloped to provide rapid surface drainage, and positive surface drainage should be maintained away from the edge of the paved areas.

Resilience and Long-Range Transportation Planning

The Project is listed in the [2025-2050 Oklahoma Long Range Transportation Plan](#) (LRTP), which includes resilience improvements across transportation modes and regions. The LRTP integrates resilience as both a goal and strategy to ensure the state's transportation system can withstand, adapt to, and recover from disruptions such as extreme weather, natural hazards, aging infrastructure, and economic shocks.

The LRTP includes resilience and reliability goals, aiming to ensure the reliability of movement for people and goods by enhancing the resiliency and adaptability of the transportation system. Implementation strategies in the LRTP enhance the resiliency of both existing and new transportation infrastructure assets to withstand disruptions and strengthen reliability. The Project aligns with the following resilience strategies:

- Include resilience assessments in inspections of existing assets
- Incorporate resilience improvements in infrastructure designs to address flooding and extreme weather events
- Preventive maintenance and innovative practices to ensure long-term structural health and system resilience
- Preservation strategies to increasingly focus on system resilience, system reliability, and freight integration

Support Habitat Protection

The I-35 corridor runs along the central flyway of the monarch migration in the states of Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. In 2015, a federal and multi-state partnership brought together transportation agencies along I-35 to encourage conservation actions along the corridor to sustain great monarch habitats. This

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partnership, as well as efforts under the Monarch Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA), resulted in the creation of the “Monarch Highway,” an initiative to improve pollinator-friendly practices along I-35.

In 2023, ODOT was awarded funds through the FHWA [Roadside Pollinator Program](#) to expand, enhance, and protect pollinator habitat along the nation’s roadway system. ODOT improves pollinator habitats along I-35 through specialized vegetation and mowing practices, prioritizing habitat protection for monarchs and other pollinators along I-35.

Figure 12. Roadside Plantings



Quality of Life

Improve Travel Experience for Families

Roadway demand in the Project area exceeds capacity, resulting in traffic bottlenecks, increased vehicle interactions, and elevated crash risk that affects daily travel for families. This impact is crucial to the Project area given that McClain County is in the top 200 nationwide for marriage rates. With nearly 62% of the population married, there is a strong presence of family households relying on the roadway network for daily activities. The continued population and employment growth in the region will further challenge capacity unless the Project upgrades the corridor from a four-lane highway to a six-lane highway. The added capacity will benefit existing and future travelers by reducing vehicle queuing and travel delays, providing safer and reliable for families traveling to work, school, and activities, as well as for tourists along I-35.

Improve User Experience

The added roadway capacity will significantly improve the overall user experience along the corridor by increasing safety, improving traffic flow, reducing congestion, and increasing reliability along this 2.3-mile segment of I-35. Reducing congestion will decrease the number of crashes along the corridor, contributing to a safer travel environment. Improved accessibility and traffic flows will also help minimize delays, allowing users to move through the Project area more efficiently. In addition, enhanced capacity will improve emergency response times, ensuring quicker and more dependable access for first responders during crashes, natural disasters, and other emergencies.

The Project is designed to elevate the quality of travel in this rural area by creating a safer, more comfortable, and dependable corridor for vehicle and freight movement along I-35. ODOT remains committed to addressing the needs of both the Chickasaw Nation and local communities throughout the Project’s design and delivery, with an emphasis on improving user experience through enhanced safety, roadway performance, and long-term economic benefits.

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Beautification

ODOT's participation in the Monarch CCAA is part of a broader effort to reduce key threats to the monarch butterfly. The native pollinator habitat restoration along I-35 enhances beautification within the Project area. Beautification efforts include the following:

- Planting native plants
- Reducing mowing
- Limiting the spraying of herbicides to support habitat and food sources for wildlife, including monarch butterflies

The Monarch Highway Initiative reinvigorates the I-35 corridor creating a visible difference in working landscapes and communities along the corridor through conservation and beautification.

Mobility and Community Connectivity

Improve Vehicular and Freight Roadway Capacity

The Project serves regional travel, commuter traffic, and a substantial volume of heavy trucks, resulting in recurring congestion during peak travel periods and reduced travel time reliability. The current state of I-35 in McClain County fails to meet the present demands and the future needs of a rapidly evolving area. The existing four-lane highway cannot accommodate the rising traffic volume in the Project area. At its current roadway capacity, the Project currently has limited ability to absorb crashes and other hazards.

The I-35 corridor within McClain County currently operates as a four-lane interstate facility that no longer provides adequate capacity or operational performance for existing and forecasted traffic demand. In 2023, the AADT in the Project area was 57,300. AADT is projected to grow annually at a rate of 2.6%; by 2030, the AADT is expected to be 66,840. Out of the total AADT, heavy trucks comprise 25% of vehicles along the Project area. Without the Project's capacity improvements, increasing AADT presents safety risks for vehicles and freight traffic along this 2.3-mile segment of I-35.

Expanding the four-lane freeway to a six-lane freeway will improve the overall function of I-35 through increased safety, improved traffic flow, reduced congestion, and increased travel time reliability for all traffic types. Lane capacity expansion on I-35 will restore the free flow of traffic, reduce travel delays, and reduce the risk of vehicle collisions by improving traffic flows and reducing roadway congestion. Figure 13 identifies the projected travel time savings following the construction of the Project.

Figure 13. Benefit Cost Analysis Travel Time Findings



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Enhance Accessibility for Families

Improved roadway capacity along the I-35 enhances accessibility for families through the following:

- Enhancing travel time reliability
- Expanding access to jobs and services
- Strengthening regional connectivity
- Increasing safety

The enhanced roadway capacity provided by the Project will increase safety, improve traffic flow, reduce congestion, and increase travel time reliability along I-35. This will benefit families by reducing the overall time spent in traffic for daily commutes. The added roadway capacity also expands access to jobs and economic opportunities for families who can expand the geographic reach of employment opportunities as a result of reduced travel times and congestion.

I-35 connects suburban, urban, and rural communities, enhancing regional accessibility for families. It also supports more inclusive regional growth by linking underserved communities to employment centers, education, healthcare, and other essential opportunities. For families without nearby services, reliable access to the interstate system can serve as a critical lifeline to daily needs and social connections.

Capacity improvements will enhance safety for families along the Project area. The reduced congestion will lower crash risks for vehicles traveling along I-35. In addition, the added capacity will improve access to essential services families depend on, including healthcare facilities, schools, and grocery stores. In emergencies, such as medical or natural disasters, the Project's improvements will support faster response times and safer evacuations for families. Safer roadways benefit families traveling with children, older adults, and drivers with disabilities.

Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity

Promotes Economic Growth

Many employment opportunities exist throughout the Project area. The top employment sectors are government, healthcare, logistics, and manufacturing. Beyond the top performing sectors, a range of employment opportunities are located throughout the region.

Top employers in the Project area include these:

- McClain County Government
- Purcell Municipal Hospital

Figure 14. Local Courthouse



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- Purcell Public Schools
- Diversified Manufacturing Co.
- Airport Road Industrial Warehouse
- Retail centers, including Walmart and Dollar General

Employers traversing the Project area depend on the I-35 corridor for daily commutes. If congestion in the Project area continues to intensify, travel times will increase and dampen economic growth. The Project solves recurring congestion during peak travel periods and reduced travel time reliability as a result of capacity constraints currently experienced along the corridor. Improved roadway capacity provides both population and employment growth opportunities in the region.

The Project is expected to have beneficial long-term efficiencies for increased safety, improved traffic flow, reduced congestion, and increased travel time reliability and job opportunities in the region. The Project's roadway improvements are an investment in the region's future. The outcome of this Project will improve safety and provide more efficient timely access to daily destinations, local businesses, and planned future job opportunities, and will overall serve to stimulate growth and economic development.

Addresses a Freight Bottleneck

This portion of I-35 serves as a crucial freight corridor, supporting various industries, including national defense, agriculture, oil and natural gas, and manufacturing. The AADT of heavy trucks in the Project area is projected to rise from 14,325 AADT in 2023 to 16,710 AADT in 2030 and will grow annually at a rate of 2.6%. Out of the total AADT, heavy trucks comprise 25% of vehicles along the Project area. The freeway is a part of both the STRAHNET and PHFS routes, contributing to the federal networks distributing goods and services across state lines. These industries contribute significantly to the traffic load on I-35; unfortunately, this freeway is currently congested because of its four-lane configuration.

To address capacity challenges, ODOT's [Forward I-35](#) and [Oklahoma Freight Transportation Plan | 2023–2030](#) identify solutions to improve capacity along freight corridors in the state. Actions and next steps identified in ODOT planning require funding to implement improvements aimed at improving freight mobility along the corridor. The expansion of freight capacity from this Project will contribute to positive economic growth through new job creation and an increase freight network within the region.

Promote Local Economic Development

ODOT aims to expand opportunities for local businesses. [The state fosters innovative ideas through a pioneering spirit](#), and the state has created an environment where entrepreneurship is celebrated and cultivated by investing in new businesses and

Figure 15. Local Hospital

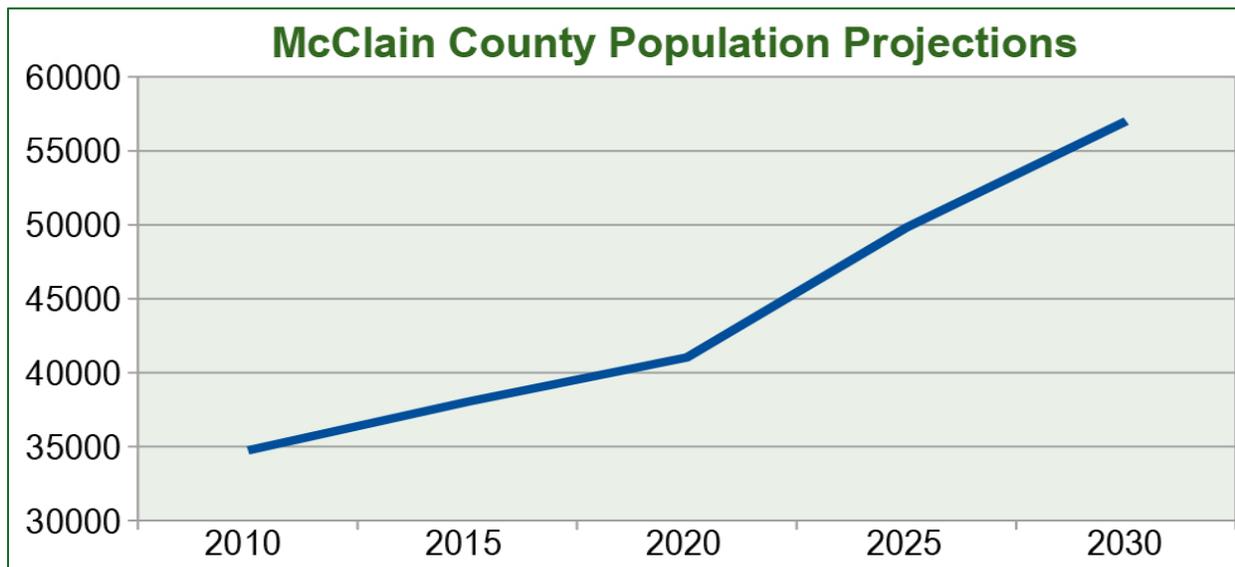


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industries. With diverse co-working spaces, incubators, and business accelerators present, the state draws in entrepreneurship activities. State, education, and private organizations get entrepreneurs in front of investors to fund startups and launch new products.

The Project will help foster growth throughout a rural portion of the region within Native Land. The Project area experiences commuter, freight, and commercial travel within and beyond McClain County. Across the region, expanded population and employment growth is increasing demand for both residential areas and commercial development. (Figure 16) illustrates the population growth of McClain County. McClain County's estimated 2026 population is 51,182 with a growth rate of 2.76% in the past year, making it one of the fastest growing counties in Oklahoma. The added roadway capacity from the Project is essential to accommodate the expanding population and growing economy in the Project area.

Figure 16. Population Projections



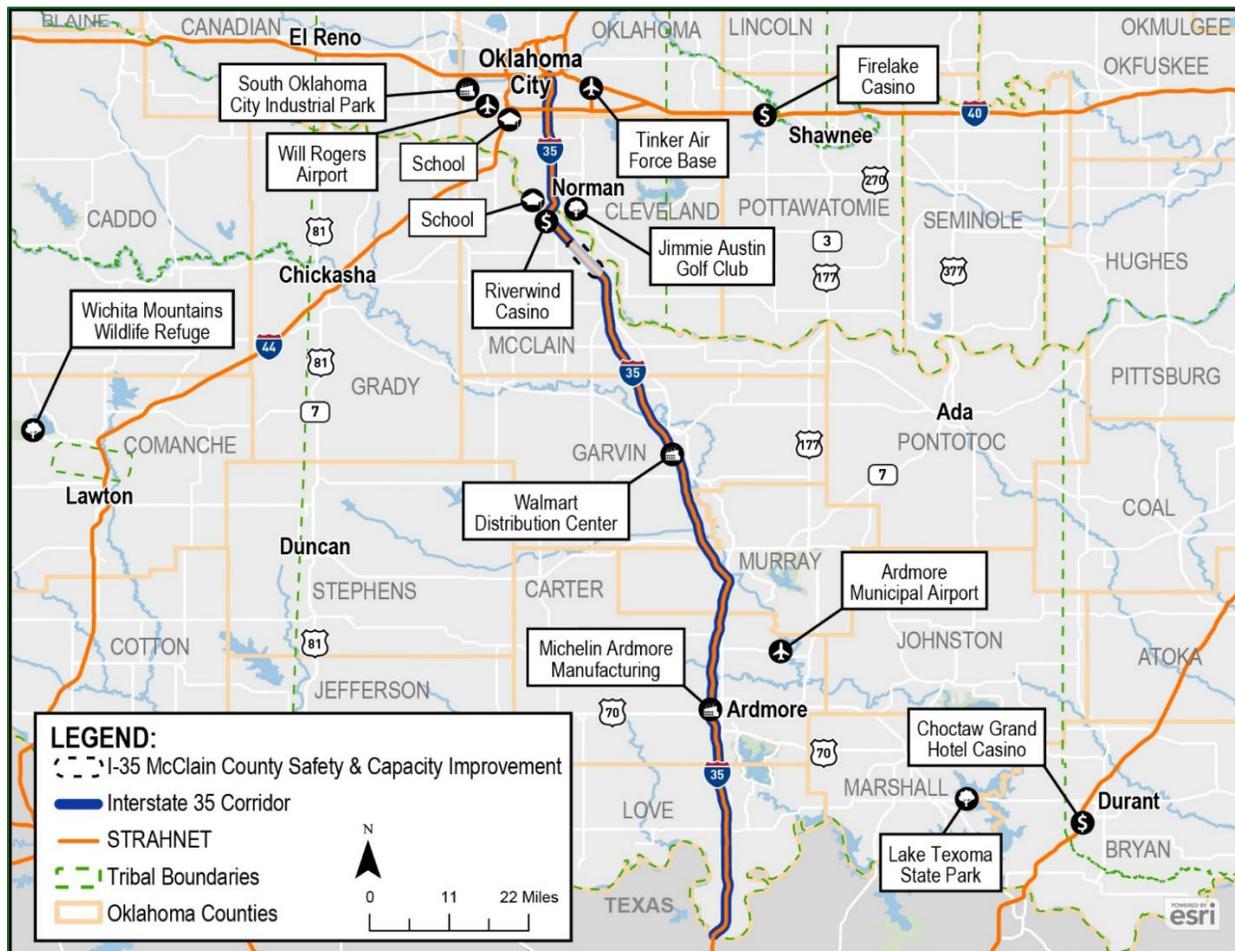
Construction will be phased, maintaining two lanes in either direction, to maintain traffic flow and reduce disruption to travelers and freight traffic. This will ensure connectivity along the corridor during construction is not hindered or inaccessible to the various travelers along this portion of I-35.

Facilitates Tourism

In addition to vehicle and freight movements, I-35 includes several family-friendly scenic and tourist destinations. Figure 17 identifies leisure, recreational, and employment destinations along I-35 that increase daily traffic volumes. Many of the destinations identified on Figure 17 are accessible directly from I-35 or include convenient detours adjacent to the interstate. The Project's added capacity will enhance the corridor's ability to accommodate family tourist travel along the interstate, which contributes to increasing traffic volumes on I-35.

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Figure 17. Destinations



State of Good Repair

Traffic on Oklahoma’s major highways has increased dramatically in the past two decades, and it is expected to continue to compound for the foreseeable future. Improvements to these facilities are often the most expensive and resource-consuming projects but also yield high returns and have an immediate impact on safety and travel times. Addressing highway safety improvements that return major highways to their state of good repair is paramount to ODOT to prevent property damage, injuries, and the tragic loss of life.

Restores Existing Infrastructure

The Project restores and modernizes existing core infrastructure assets that have met their useful life and are no longer in a state of good repair. No additional right-of-way is required to widen the interstate, add a median barrier wall, install lighting, and complete ramp improvements.

The Project area was originally built in the early 1960s and is now roughly 65 years old, well beyond its design life. While I-35 has remained in service through resurfacing, rehabilitation, and selective reconstruction, the infrastructure no longer meets safety or capacity needs. Pavement is deteriorating in the Project area, including cracking and

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potholes, as a result of traffic high traffic loads on aging infrastructure. The Project's reconstruction and widening will extend the pavement design life for approximately 25 years. A Pavement and Subgrade Survey field investigation was completed in November 2025 and included pavement design recommendations for existing and new pavement sections in the Project area. The Project improves existing conditions through solutions identified in Table 7.

Table 7. State of Good Repair Solutions

| Existing Conditions | Project Solution |
|------------------------------|--|
| Surface pavement distress | Asphalt mill and overlay; crack filler as needed |
| Insufficient drainage system | Upgrades to remove runoff and reduce pooling |
| Inadequate lane capacity | Additional travel lanes with new pavement |

Reduces Construction and Maintenance Burdens

The Project incorporates efficient and well-integrated design, reducing future construction and maintenance burdens along I-35. ODOT is responsible for managing 30,373 miles of roadway throughout the state, which requires a thorough maintenance plan. Furthermore, ODOT has had an established Pavement Maintenance Schedule (PMS). A key function of the PMS is to analyze and report pavement surfaces. The PMS also provides project-level decision making support through an optimization analysis to select treatments based on pavement surface condition, pavement type, and available funding. This analysis is informed by PMS-modeled pavement deterioration, treatment cost, and benefits in conjunction with ODOT pavement management decision thresholds and pavement preservation project decision tree analysis. Additionally, ODOT routinely reviews the condition of its roadways to ensure safety, actively addressing pavement deterioration caused by traffic and weather. It has allocated \$500 million over four years, with federal and state funding, to mitigate pavement and bridge conditions statewide.

Once the Project is constructed, the roadway improvements will guarantee dependable highway operations along the I-35 corridor. The frequency of major road maintenance will be reduced from 8 years without the Project to 14 years with the Project. Upon completion, the Project will eventually be included in ODOT's [FY 2026-2029 Asset Preservation Plan](#), which will ensure both the multi-use path and the highway are maintained in a state of good repair.

The Project will enhance this portion of I-35 to a state of good repair, including the use of new pavement to ensure safety and minimize traffic delays attributable to pavement degradation. In addition, the Project will update or add elements in a state of good repair to the construction project to reduce future maintenance costs. Elements include these:

- Concrete or high-density polyethylene cross drains to replace metal
- Cantilevered monotube overhead exit signs, as needed
- Center median lighting
- New safety shoulder rumble strip spanning the entire length of the Project area

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This Project takes a preventive approach to road deterioration to expand roadway capacity to ensure the highway operates in a state of good repair and at an acceptable level of service. Expanding to three lanes in each direction will mitigate future failure in level of service as the region experience increases in population and employment growth.

Improves Condition and Safety of Existing Infrastructure within Existing Footprint

The Project does not require relocations or right-of-way acquisition, reducing impact on the local community. There are no expected impacts to residential and commercial property during construction or following completion of the Project. Construction will be phased to maintain two lanes of traffic in each direction, minimizing delays along the corridor as capacity improvements are added.

Addresses Transportation System Vulnerabilities

Operational constraints are driven primarily by limited through-lane capacity. These conditions contribute to traffic bottlenecks, increased vehicle interactions, and elevated crash risk. I-35 experiences high levels of congestion, with traffic only projected to increase as the Project area experiences population and employment growth. The improvements from a four-lane highway to a six-lane highway will reduce traffic bottlenecks and stabilize traffic flow during peak and non-peak periods.

I-35 is currently sensitive to disruptions, including crashes and weather events. High congestion and limited lane space increase rear-end and secondary crashes and crash severity caused by stop-and-go traffic. The Project's improved capacity will alleviate congestion, thereby reducing the likelihood of crashes and improving the overall reliability and safety along I-35. The added capacity to the Project area will improve the emergency response and evacuation capability by improving access for first responders.

I-35 serves as a critical freight corridor. The Project's current operations leave freight vulnerable to unpredictable delivery times and broader regional economic vulnerability because of the existing capacity constraints in the Project area. The added roadway capacity will help address delays and vulnerabilities by improving truck travel time reliability, reducing queuing, minimizing the delay of goods and services, and supporting the efficient movement of goods across regional and national supply chains.

Partnership and Collaboration

The Project has received widespread support to address pressing transportation challenges. State, county, and municipal officials have engaged to improve safety and address congestion concerns to avoid future gridlock in the Project area (Table 8). The current four-lane roadway falls short in meeting the area's needs, particularly as the region experiences dynamic growth and evolving demands. Congestion impacts families, freight routes, and businesses reliant on the Project area. The collective recognition of these challenges underscores the importance of partnerships and collaboration in finding effective solutions to enhance roadway capacity.

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Table 8. Existing Partnerships

| Partner Organization | Project Interest |
|--|--|
| Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) | This Project affects regional mobility and freight within the Metropolitan Planning Organization's boundary. The Project aligns with ACOG's goals related to connectivity, economic vitality, safety, and system performance identified in plans like Encompass 2045 . ACOG is committed to supporting projects that reduce congestion and improve traffic flow for regional commuters and freight traffic along within the Project area. |
| Chickasaw Nation | The Chickasaw Nation is a part of multiple transportation improvements in McClain County, reflecting their commitment to improving local infrastructure benefiting both the Nation and surrounding communities. I-35 is essential for economic growth in Oklahoma and the Chickasaw Nation. The added capacity in this Project will improve the movement of goods and people important for Tribal enterprises, tourism, and economic development. |
| Town of Goldsby | Goldsby does not have a large internal street network. Most residents and businesses depend heavily on I-35 for daily travel across the region. The Project's added roadway capacity directly benefits Goldsby's commuters, local employers, school traffic, and emergency response routes. Additionally, the Project will enhance the safety along the corridor by reducing the number of crashes along the corridor. |
| City of Purcell | The City of Purcell will benefit from the added roadway capacity included in this Project. The Project's improvements are designed to efficiently accommodate current and anticipated traffic volumes in the region. Purcell relies on I-35 for regional travel, and as the city's population and employment expand, the added capacity will help the corridor handle growing traffic volumes, enhance safety, and support economic development. |
| Newcastle | The Project's improvements directly affect how Newcastle residents, businesses, and emergency services travel along I-35. Newcastle has a strong interest in ensuring the Project area can handle current and future traffic volumes safely and efficiently. |
| McClain County | McClain County has facilitated various roadway capacity projects along I-35 to improve safety, promote economic development, and accommodate population growth along the corridor. The County prioritizes an efficient transportation network that keeps pace with population growth and travel demand in its 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan . This Project directly supports this goal by reducing congestion and improving travel flow. |

Engaging Residents and Community-Based Organizations

ODOT's public participation facilitates the involvement is designed to ensure early, continuous, and meaningful engagement with residents, businesses, agencies, tribes, and other stakeholders throughout transportation decision-making. ODOT presented the [Project](#) to the community through a public open house on February 5, 2026.

The ODOT [Public Open House](#) format provides a flexible setting that allows the public to participate one-on-one with Project staff at their convenience. Exhibits are displayed throughout the room, with staff available to answer questions. This approach encourages participants to review materials, ask questions, and share feedback comfortably through



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written comments, with comment forms provided. Once the Project enters construction, ODOT will continue to engage with the community throughout the Project process.

The Project is located within the Chickasaw Nation, which encompasses a significant portion of McClain County. ODOT works with the Chickasaw Nation in McClain County through formal Section 106 agreements, early consultation, environmental review coordination, public involvement, and clearly defined agency roles. ODOT coordination with the Chickasaw Nation creates a structured, respectful, and repeatable model for roadway improvements while ensuring Tribal sovereignty in the region.

Stakeholder Support

The project has garnered widespread support from key federal, state, and local stakeholders. Endorsements include letters from U.S. Senators Markwayne Mullin and James Lankford, the State Chamber of Oklahoma, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), and municipal leaders from the City of Newcastle, the City of Purcell, and the Town of Goldsby. This strong coalition of support underscores the project's significance to regional economic development, infrastructure improvement, and community advancement.

Innovation

Innovative Technologies

Implementation of [Smart Work Zone technologies](#) will be considered during construction to improve safety and reliability. Smart Work Zones use intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technologies to provide real-time traveler information, dynamic queue warnings, and speed management to motorists approaching and within construction zones. This is especially important, as the lack of adjacent reliever routes necessitates additional construction phases to maintain existing throughput during construction.

ODOT offers several tools to share road and traffic conditions with the public during construction. [OKTraffic.org](#) provides real-time traffic, cameras, weather data, and dynamic messages. ODOT's Drive Oklahoma app is an ITS tool that provides access to traffic cameras and interactive maps of current traffic conditions and road conditions.

Additionally, ODOT completed installation of wrong-way driving systems at interstate access ramps along I-35 in 2024, which use radar and cameras to detect and respond to wrong-way vehicle movement. This included installation of a wrong-way driving system at Johnson Road ramps, which will be especially critical in mitigating wrong-way driving during Project construction.