

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE MINUTES

November 13, 2018

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a conference at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 13th day of November, 2018, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Bierman, Carter, Castleberry, Clark, Hickman, Holman, Scott, Wilson, Mayor Miller

ABSENT: None

Item 1, being:

UPDATE AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE I-35 CORRIDOR STUDY.

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, introduced Mr. Gary Evans, Project Manager for EST, Inc., and Mr. Angelo Lombardo, City of Norman Transportation Traffic Engineer. He said there has been ten years of major construction on Interstate 35 (I-35) that included four new interchanges, six new bridges, and widening four lanes to six lanes. The process of planning for this set of projects began 30 years ago and after 20 years of trying to aggregate the money, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) was able to start construction and that is what is being discussed tonight.

Mr. O'Leary said ODOT is taking a corridor planning approach for eight miles of I-35, half of that being in the City of Norman and half in the City of Moore. He said the most important part of this project is that City Staff is at the table in a joint study and hopes to be part of the project throughout.

Mr. Lombardo said City Staff became involved because of Indian Hills Road that includes the condition of the bridge, the interchange being functionally obsolete, and multiple preliminary plats submitted for land development around Indian Hills Road. He said Staff became concerned about the additional development in that area and how it would affect traffic for the current bridge and interchange and Staff wanted to have a conversation with ODOT about the interchange. He said that conversation grew into a two phase corridor study that includes a three party agreement of participation between ODOT, City of Norman, and City of Moore. He said the total costs for Phase I is \$775,000 with ODOT paying \$387,500 (50%), City of Moore paying \$193,750 (25%), and City of Norman paying \$193,750 (25%). City Council approved the participation agreement through Contact K-1516-105 on January 26, 2016, and the study is anticipated to be completed in 18 months.

Mr. Lombardo said Phase I will include long term needs for corridor (from Robinson Street in Norman to S.E. 4th Street in Moore); public meetings; evaluation of every interchange in the corridor; consideration of new interchanges at Rock Creek Road in Norman and S.E. 34th Street in Moore; and reconstruction and reconfiguration of the Robinson Street, Tecumseh Road, and Indian Hills Road interchanges.

Mr. Lombardo highlighted Phase I accomplished tasks as data collection; traffic counts; crash data; public involvement; Universe of Alternatives for Individual Interchanges; draft report; Universe of Corridors; and five corridor alternatives plus no build. Phase I Basis of Study included congestion along I-35; reliability issues; inconsistencies in operations; limited east-west access; limited north-south local access; insufficient capacity; lack of pedestrian/bicyclist facilities; confusing local access patterns; and funding limitation. He said Phase I Goals include operations; functionality; efficiency; connectivity; safety; and

affordability. Phase I Objectives include determining traffic demand; seeking public input; potential roadway solutions; solutions with minimal impact; options for emerging technology; and consideration of local plans.

Mr. Lombardo said the evaluation of current conditions was done by collecting data in 2017 for traffic volumes at numerous locations. The transportation network was developed to model that data and there is a level of commitment made by ODOT and/or the cities to make improvements that will be part of the network model, i.e., Robinson Street west leg construction and intersection improvements, bridge over I-35 at S.W. 34th Street in Moore, I-35 striping between Robinson Street and Main Street and replacement of the Indian Hills Bridge. He said under 2045 traffic conditions, I-35 is expected to operate most of the segments in the corridor at level of service F, which is very bad. He said it is important the study revealed this because before the study was done there were absolutely no plans to improve I-35. He said ODOT will be budgeting to make needed improvements over the next 30 years.

The Phase I Safety Assessment was analyzed over a four year period and the highest concentration of collisions on the corridor was between Tecumseh Road and Indian Hills Road.

A public meeting held on April 27, 2017, gave citizens an opportunity to provide input on things they liked and did not like along the corridor. A list was developed from that meeting and initial reactions were that citizens were pleased with the Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) intersection on Main Street; there are intersection issues west of I-35 at Robinson Street and west leg traffic backs up; Rock Creek Road needs on/off I-35 access; Tecumseh Road's southbound ramps back up and there was a suggestion for two-way on the backage road; and a suggestion for a SPUI at Indian Hills Road as well as major repairs or replacement of the Indian Hills Road bridge.

Mr. Evans said ODOT made a great financial promise for the I-35 corridor, but congestion management has been a problem because Moore and Norman have been economically successful with a lot of growth along the corridor. He said it is through the efforts of the City of Norman reaching out to ODOT that this conversation has taken place to include the City of Moore. He said there needs to be a long term plan as to what this corridor might look like in the future so it can support the growth around the corridor. He said everyone in the transportation community appreciates the City of Norman kick starting this conversation.

Mr. Evans highlighted Phase I Screening Criteria Development and Methodology and qualitative factors considered in Phase I that included operations; functionality; efficiency; connectivity; safety; emerging technologies; affordability; impacts; public agency input; and overall rankings. He said development of alternatives for interchange types include Diamond Interchange; Tight Urban Diamond Interchange (TUDI); Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI); Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI); Partial Cloverleaf Interchange (Parclo); Cloverleaf Interchange; and Offset Diamond Interchange. There is also development of alternatives for one-way frontage roads that include interchange spacing; Diamond Interchange; auxiliary lanes; driveways; U-turns; grade separations; grade separation orientation; frontage road width; intersection approach width; public acceptance; and affordability. He said development of alternatives for two-way frontage roads include interchange compatibility; separation from freeway interchanges; footprint; approach lanes; and highly customized designs.

Mayor Miller asked the benefits of one-way frontage roads, is it cheaper or safer? Mr. Evans said it would be safer and cheaper because the footprint would be smaller, but the major idea is efficiency because the time of travel will be less due to less congestion.

Councilmember Hickman asked if it is true ODOT maintains one-way frontage roads and Mr. Evans said ODOT would need to speak to that. Councilmember Hickman said he would like this question to be part of future conversations.

Low-cost interchange alternatives include meeting current and near-term traffic demand; avoiding building of bridges; preserving current frontage road operations; minimizing developed land use impacts; and ability to implement in a short time.

Mr. Evans said ODOT looked at previously studied alternatives, developed additional alternatives, and determined feasibility for two-way and one-way frontage roads. He said a Phase I screening process was applied to each interchange alternative and five alternatives were developed that include Option 1, One-Way Frontage Road Alternative; Option 2, Two-Way Frontage Road Alternative; Option 1B, One-Way Frontage Road Alternative – B; Option 1X, One-Way Frontage Road Alternative with X-Ramping; and Option 1XB, One-Way Frontage Road Alternative with X-Ramping – B. He said these alternatives will be narrowed to three and taken to a public meeting for comments eventually narrowing down to one recommended alternative.

Mr. Evans said Phase II will consist of a contract amendment and an additional contribution; operations analysis with trip redistribution; potential traffic generators; development of preferred alternatives; second public meeting; selection of alternatives; prioritizing project packages; and a final report.

Councilmember Hickman asked about the timeline for Phase II and Mr. O’Leary said the plan is to bring the contract amendment to Council in January and Phase II will take approximately one year to complete.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitles, “Interstate 35 Corridor Study Update, Phase I, Contract K-1516-105,” City Council Conference dated November 13, 2018
2. I-35 Corridor maps that include No-Build Options; Option 1 – One-way Frontage Roads; Option 1B – One-way Frontage Roads; Option 1X – One-way Frontage roads with Revers (X) Ramps; Option 1XB – One-way Frontage Roads with Reverse (X) Ramping; and Option 2 – Two-way Frontage Roads

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor