



OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

200 N. E. 21st Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3204

July 5, 2012

City of Oklahoma City
Dennis Clowers, Assistant City Manager
200 N. Walker, 3rd Floor
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Re: New I-40 corridor/Downtown Oklahoma City

Dear Mr. Clowers:

On June 15th I received your e-mail asking several questions concerning the reconnection of the new I-40 to Downtown Oklahoma City. As you are aware, the old I-40 bridge was/is in poor condition and needed to be taken out of service. To address this issue, the crosstown project required the relocation of I-40 to the South and the reconnection of the downtown area of Oklahoma City to the Interstate system. The reconnection will be accomplished by utilizing new interchanges at selected city street crossings of the new I-40, along with the utilization of some portions of the existing I-40 to connect to a "boulevard". The entire project is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2014.

ODOT is committed to fund, design, and construct these improvements. Much of the I-40 portion of the project is complete and the focus is shifting towards completing the reconnection of the downtown area. The design of the "boulevard" will be as desired by the City of Oklahoma City. ODOT's commitment is to fund, design, and build a four or six lane facility, as desired by Oklahoma City, within the existing right of way including adjacent dedicated city street right of way, including standard design features typical of a city street. Additional enhancements to the design such as landscaping or other architectural features, if included in the project, will be outside the funding commitment of ODOT.

Your questions were as follows,

1. Do we have to build the boulevard? Yes, the "boulevard" was a commitment of the environmental document.
2. Could the city do it with funds from ODOT? No, the project is funded with federal funds, and requires the administration of those funds by ODOT.
3. What is the current amount allocated to construction? \$36.8 Million

The dollar amount as shown is a programming estimate from the 2012-2019 Construction Work Plan, not a construction estimate, as you know the construction plans have not been fully developed at this time.

There have been additional inquiries about the potential for a traffic circle near the intersection of Western Avenue/Classen Boulevard and Reno Avenue. As stated previously, ODOT's commitment is to fund, design, and build the boulevard as desired by the City of Oklahoma City given the parameters stated

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above. A traffic circle has been reviewed for inclusion in this project, which resulted in the following findings.

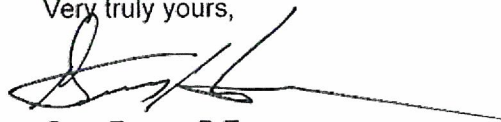
1. An appropriate traffic circle would not fit within existing public right of way.
2. Additional property would have to be acquired which would displace several businesses.
3. Additional utility relocations would be necessary.
4. Local streets would have to be reconstructed/reconfigured or potentially closed in the area of the traffic circle to provide for proper operation.
5. All of these modifications of the current design considerations would require extensive planning and traffic analysis.
6. The area necessary for the traffic circle would be outside the current right of way, and outside the area addressed in the environmental document. This would require that the environmental document be opened for reevaluation.

Combined, these issues would add multiple years, and tens of millions of dollars of cost to the project and delay the completion of the reconnection of downtown Oklahoma City to the Interstate. The additional cost would not be funded through ODOT.

Again, ODOT's commitment to the project has been to remove the old crosstown bridge from service by reconstructing a portion of I-40 on new alignment, removing the existing I-40 bridge, and reconnecting the downtown area to the new I-40 by constructing new connections of surface streets with I-40, and the completion of a "Boulevard". The entire project is to be completed by the end of 2014.

I will be contacting you in the near future to schedule a meeting to bring any unresolved design issues forward and chart a course for the expeditious reconnection of downtown. If you have further questions concerning this issue, I may be reached at (405)521-2701.

Very truly yours,



Gary Evans, P.E.
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GE/slr

cc: Gary Ridley, Secretary of Transportation/ODOT Director
Jim Couch, City Manager
Paul Green, ODOT Division IV Engineer