

Board Members Meet with Congressional Delegation

ACOG representatives met with various members of the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation in Washington, D.C. in early March.

Oklahoma City Councilmember Willa Johnson, Choctaw Councilmember Dave Howe, Logan County Commissioner Mark Sharpton, Nichols Hills Councilmember Kathy Walker, ACOG Executive Director Zach D. Taylor and Intergovernmental Services Director Jane Sutter delivered the board-adopted federal legislative issues policies and discussed issues of importance.

The group had extensive conversations with Senator Jim Inhofe and Congressmen Tom Cole, Mary Fallin and Dan Boren and held productive meetings with the staffs of Senator Coburn and Representatives Frank Lucas and John Sullivan.

Among the topics most frequently discussed were the importance of Tinker Air Force Base, Internet sales taxes, transportation (highway and transit) and CDBG funding, water resources, the Clean Cities alternative fuels program and Homeland Security efforts.

The ACOG representatives briefed the Congressional representatives and their



A team representing ACOG recently went to Washington, D.C. to meet with state leaders. From left to right are Dave Howe, Willa Johnson, Congressman Tom Cole, Jane Sutter, Zach Taylor, Kathy Walker and Mark Sharpton.

staffs on the tenuous status of Central Oklahoma's air quality situation and local efforts to attempt to prevent violating the federal ozone standard. They thanked the delegation for their ongoing efforts to preserve Tinker Air Force Base and shared information about the recently approved Air Installation Compatibility Use Zone (AICUZ) study. They also described ACOG's upcoming Joint Land

Use Study (JLUS) intended to provide the conduit for cooperative planning efforts between TAFB and the surrounding communities.

The group also shared recommendations for the recently completed Fixed Guideway Study and the region's increasing interest in expanding transit options including modern streetcars, bus rapid ...See "Washington" on page four.

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Transportation Improvement Program Comments Sought

ACOG is inviting citizens throughout Central Oklahoma to review and comment this month on a preliminary version of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The TIP identifies all federally funded surface transportation projects (transit, bicycle, highway, airport, etc.) expected to be carried out by city, county, state

and local transportation agencies during federal fiscal years 2008-2011 in the Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS) Area. This region includes Oklahoma and Cleveland Counties and parts of Canadian, Grady, Logan and McClain counties.

Federal law recognizes ACOG as the ...See "TIP Comments" on page four.

Transportation Officials Unveil 8-Year Work Plan

Officials at the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) recently presented a blueprint of the next eight years that showcased available funds for road construction, as well as a new mix of transportation projects. Months of deliberating, planning and engineering went into the process.

“Last year was a banner year for transportation thanks to the Legislature and Governor Henry,” ODOT Director Gary Ridley explained, “Today we are excited to show the fruits of their efforts.”

ODOT committed, over the last couple of years, that given the opportunity for increased funding, focused efforts could be made on the states bridges, highways and safety enhancements. The new Eight-Year Construction Program presented to

the Oklahoma Transportation Commission totals almost \$4 billion dollars, including \$1.5 billion in new funding to specifically address critical transportation needs across the state.

This marks the first time since the late 1990s that the department has been able to use state funds in addition to federal funds in the Eight-Year Construction Program. The occasion is due to HB1176, passed last session, which provides a long term solution for the state’s transportation problems. This is also the first time that there are additional funds to balance much-needed repair, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the system.

Some of the highlights include:

- Bridge replacements for more than 480 deteriorating bridges, which is three times what was in previous programs.
- Adding shoulders on approximately 400 miles of narrow, two-lane roads, which is almost four times what was in previous programs.
- Redesign and rebuilding of high volume multi-lane facilities including I-44 from Riverside to Yale and US-412 in Tulsa, I-40 Crosstown in Oklahoma City and I-35 between Moore and Norman.

- Installation of approximately 240 miles of median barrier on high traffic corridors across the state.
- In addition to construction, there is a yearly dedication of \$50 million for rehabilitation and repair of roadways and bridges that previously did not exist.

Progress on the Load Posted Bridge Program is also going strong as a result of Senate Bill 1288. The six-year plan to reconstruct or rehabilitate load posted bridges is on target if not ahead of schedule.

“While this does not entirely solve our funding challenge for all our needs, it certainly gets us much closer to a solution,” Ridley said. “This Eight-Year Plan is a long term commitment to rebuild our system and improve the safety for those that use it.”

The plan not only considers new state funds with Senate Bill 1176 and additional federal funds provided under the last federal funding bill, SAFETEA-LU, but also balances a recent rise in construction costs.

Meanwhile, construction continues on the I-40 Crosstown Expressway. ODOT staff held a public meeting last month to showcase the project’s progress and to detail the construction process.

Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

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Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

*“Providing Regional Leadership in
Central Oklahoma Since 1966”*

Established in 1966, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) is a voluntary association of cities, towns and counties. ACOG helps member governments plan for common needs, cooperate for mutual benefit and coordinate for sound regional development.

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John Bowman, I-40 project leader for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, discusses the alignment with citizens at a recent public meeting.

Elections in Region Bring New Names, New Positions

Municipal elections in the region last month produced a new mayor in **Norman**, and prompted a runoff for the office in **Edmond**.

Cindy Rosenthal was voted mayor by a majority of Norman voters. Rosenthal is a political science professor at the University of Oklahoma. When she takes office in July, she will vacate her council seat, where she currently serves Ward 4. Rosenthal will replace incumbent Mayor **Harold Haralson**, who chose not to run for a new term. Meanwhile in Norman, **Bob Thompson**, **Doug Cubberly** and **Rachel Butler** retained their council seats, while **Hal Ezzell** was elected to represent Ward 3.

In **Yukon**, **John Tipps** was elected to the city council, while **Kathy Larson** and **Paul Todd** were elected to the council in **Bethany**.

Jim Pumphrey is the new Mayor of **Nicoma Park**, while **John Dengler** was named to the council.

Warr Acres voters reelected **Marietta Tardibono** to the Mayorship, while **Jeff Martinez** and **Stewart Shapiro** retained their seats. **Dean Johnson** and **Jason Eischen** are new councilmembers.

Finally, a council race in **Oklahoma City** will go to a runoff to be decided early this month, while two council seats and the mayorship of **Edmond** will also go to a runoff.

Both communities require a 50 percent majority to win a race. In Oklahoma City, **Brian Walters** and **George Washington** will vie for a council seat in Ward 5 that is being vacated by **Jerry Foshee**, who is running for state senate.

Ann Simank, **Pat Ryan** and **Sam Bowman** were re-elected without opposition in Oklahoma City.

Former state representative **Wayne Pettigrew** will face **Dan O'Neil** for the mayor's race in Edmond. Ward 1 incumbent **Wayne Page** will face **Leroy Cartwright** in a runoff, while **Elizabeth Waner** will vie with **Mark L. Hoose** for the Ward 2 seat.

Results will be provided in the next issue of *Central Oklahoma Perspective*.



Around the Region

- **Tim Lyon** was named assistant city manager of administration for the city of **Midwest City**. Lyon was formerly human resources director, a position now held by **Tim Rundel**, formerly an administrative officer for the city of **Yukon**. Lyon will assist the City Manager, **J. Guy Henson**, with establishing administrative policies and procedures for the city.
- The City of **Del City** and the **Del City Dog Park Association** received a grant from the **Margaret Annis Boys Trust Fund** to purchase trees and bushes for its dog park. The **Oklahoma City Community Foundation** operates the fund and awarded the \$10,000 grant. The dog park, located at Ray Trent Park, also features dog play areas, lighting and watering facilities.
- To honor the region's dispatchers, **9-1-1 ACOG** is recognizing their efforts during **National Telecommunicator Week** April 8-14. Each year, the second full week of April is dedicated to the men and women who serve as public safety telecommunicators. 9-1-1 ACOG will be encouraging all 22 area answering points to participate in activities during the week, which will include daily door prizes, a commemorative lapel pin, a dispatch center decorating contest and official proclamations recognized by member municipalities.
- Several Central Oklahoma communities, including **Edmond**, **Guthrie**, **Midwest City**, **Nichols Hills**, **Norman**, **Oklahoma City** and **Tinker AFB** have been designated official "Tree Cities," as designated by the **Tree City USA** program. The program, sponsored by The National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association

of State Foresters, provides direction, technical assistance, public attention, and national recognition for urban and community forestry programs in thousands of towns and cities.

- As the state's Centennial celebration continues, a new initiative is asking Oklahomans for their input on ideas that will help the state for the next 100 years. The project, spearheaded by Speaker of the House **Lance Cargill** directs citizens to a Web site, at www.100ideasok.org, where ideas and concepts in a variety of categories can be submitted. An advisory board will choose the Top 100 ideas in October.

- A monument honoring the late **J.D. Sharp** was unveiled last month in **Bethany**. The granite pillar, which stands in the gateway of the recently built **Bethany Police Station**, depicts a police officer holding a boy's hand. Sharp was a longtime public servant in the region, serving the city of Bethany as an officer and police chief and as **Oklahoma County Sheriff** for 16 years. Bethany residents and the Bethany Fraternal Order of Police developed the funding for the memorial.



Bethany police officer Austin Warfield unveils the new monument honoring J.D. Sharp.

“Washington”

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transit and possible light rail.

Copies of ACOG’s federal and state legislative policy statements are available at www.acogok.org (Newsroom/ Publications, Reports and Presentations).

“TIP Comments”

...Continued from page one.
metropolitan planning organization responsible for long and short-range transportation planning for Central Oklahoma. As such, ACOG maintains a four-year TIP for the region, which will implement the long-range plan.

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation, the Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority (operator of MetroTransit Oklahoma City), Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (operator of Metro-Transit Norman) and other local governments and transportation agencies developed the preliminary TIP and will implement activities outlined in the program.

Copies of the preliminary TIP are available for citizens’ review at metropolitan area libraries and on the ACOG Web site at www.acogok.org. Those interested

ACOG Calendar	
April	
12th	Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
24th	Clean Cities Stakeholders, 1:30 p.m.
26th	9-1-1 Board of Directors, 1 p.m. Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee, 1:20 p.m. ACOG Board of Directors, 1:45 p.m. Garber-Wellington Policy Committee, 2:30 p.m.
May	
1st	Regional GIS Technical Committee, 9 a.m.
10th	Areawide Planning Technical Advisory Committee, 9 a.m. Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
11th	Garber-Wellington Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
15th	Operation FireSAFE, 10 a.m.
17th	Clean Cities Stakeholders, 1:30 p.m.
28th	ACOG Offices Closed for Memorial Day
31st	9-1-1 Board of Directors, 1 p.m. Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee, 1:20 p.m. ACOG Board of Directors, 1:45 p.m. Garber-Wellington Policy Committee, 2:30 p.m.

in requesting a copy may contact Holly Massie, ACOG, at 234-2264. Written

comments on the TIP will be accepted through April 24.

Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

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