

First Phase of Crosstown Reconstruction Dedicated

State and civic leaders hailed completion of the first phase in construction of the new I-40 Crosstown, commending nearly 12 years of planning and cooperation involving state, local and federal governments, along with civic groups.

Local and state leaders dedicated a project a year and a half in the making at a cost of \$6.8 million. The City of Oklahoma City, Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Congress have all contributed to the project.

Although not visible to current traffic, this first in a series of projects consisted of two interstate bridges and a railroad bridge nearly five blocks south of the existing Crosstown. Stretching four and a half miles, from May Avenue to I-235, the entire Crosstown project will incorporate 10 lanes and establish an additional four to six-lane boulevard into downtown.

In addressing critical functions of the current I-40 Crosstown, Governor Brad Henry discussed the impact of the project on all Oklahomans.

"Interstate-40 brings us commerce and connects us with the nation; phase one is just the first of many milestones," Governor Brad Henry said. "This project



Congresswoman Mary Fallin commemorates the completion of the first phase of construction of the new I-40 Crosstown Expressway at a ceremony near the Chesapeake Boathouse last month.

is monumental for the people of Oklahoma. It will increase safety for Oklahomans and those traveling through our state."

ODOT and city officials said the Crosstown project is the largest in Oklahoma and I-40 holds national significance as one of the nation's few all-weather, coast-to-coast routes. Congresswoman Mary Fallin said the project is critical for the state and nation.

"We are proud of Oklahoma City and proud of Oklahoma," Fallin said. "In the year of our Centennial, these projects illustrate Oklahoma's progress and the achievement of Oklahoma City."

Panelists at the unveiling all agreed that this phase is a pivotal first step in uniting ODOT and city projects. The completion and location of the Crosstown's ...See "Crosstown" on page four.

Inside Perspective:

Region Opts into New EPA Program	2
Stronger Standards for Smog Proposed	2
What's New Around the Region	3
ACOG Calendar	4

New Officers Named to ACOG Boards

Officers for the 2008 fiscal year have been named and will lead the Association in the next year as it considers policy issues regarding transportation, air and water quality, census and data activities, federal grants, state and federal legislation, regulations and programs that affect the Central Oklahoma region. For the second year, Logan County Commissioner Mark Sharpton has been named Chairman of the ACOG Board of Directors. Willa

Johnson, Oklahoma City Councilmember, serves as Vice-Chair and, Kathy Walker, Nichols Hills Councilmember is Secretary-Treasurer.

The 9-1-1 Association of Central Oklahoma Governments has also confirmed new officers. David Hopper, Norman Councilmember, will serve as Chairman, while Kathy McMillan, Moore Councilmember, serves as Vice-Chair. Keith Bryan, ...See "New Officers" on page three.

Region Optes into New EPA Ozone Flex Program

A group of clean air stakeholders, led by ACOG, is opting into a new program intended to assist the Central Oklahoma region should it reach air pollution levels that would violate federal air quality limits. Last month, the group submitted a draft emissions reduction proposal to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

In 2006, EPA introduced a new initiative called the 8-Hour Ozone Flex program [8-Hr O₃ Flex]. The purpose of the program is to support and reward innovative, voluntary, local strategies to reduce ground-level ozone, thereby improving air quality and helping areas maintain attainment. It is available only to areas that are currently in full compliance with federal ozone standards.

Collective interest in this program began in earnest in September 2006 when ACOG gathered a group of business, government, environmental and community leaders to discuss the importance of crafting a tangible emissions reduction program that would help the greater Oklahoma City metropolitan region maintain its compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Since that first meeting, ACOG staff initiated a comprehensive process of communication and interaction regarding the formation of the 8-O₃ Flex Program document.

The program is the third generation of programs designed to allow participating communities greater flexibility with selecting emission reduction programs and strategies. By providing local control of the process, these programs recognize that each region has distinct emission characteristics and socioeconomic variables that make a standardized approach unrealistic and unrepresentative.

The time span of the program would run from the official approval date until December 2012. The action plan includes a list of voluntary measures intended to prevent a violation of the current 8-hr standard for ozone during the five-year term of the plan. Also, as part of its continued commitment to clean air, the Central Oklahoma area will continue planning efforts which should result in the ongoing addition of new projects throughout the plan term.

Central Oklahoma has a long history of good air quality thanks in part to participation in the voluntary programs offered by the EPA. In addition to educational efforts such as the Clean Air Alert Day Program and the annual public education campaign, stakeholders have committed to or participated in previous initiatives such as the Flexible Attainment Region program, 1-Hour Ozone Flex agreement and the Early Action Compact.

More information will follow in the fall after EPA reviews the proposal.

Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

Offering Regional Leaders News and Information

21 East Main, Suite 100
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73104-2405
(405) 234-2264/FAX: (405) 234-2200
TDD: (405) 234-2217/www.acogok.org
E-mail address: acog@acogok.org

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.

Chairman:

Commissioner Mark Sharpton, *Logan County*

Vice Chairman:

Councilmember Willa Johnson, *Oklahoma City*

Secretary-Treasurer:

Councilmember Kathy Walker, *Nichols Hills*

Executive Director:

Zach Taylor

Editor: Jerry Church

Layout: Ken Brown

Central Oklahoma Perspective, printed in house, is authorized by the ACOG Board of Directors. Financing is partly provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, the U.S. Department of Transportation and local dues. 1,850 copies were prepared and distributed at a cost of \$944. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

Stronger Standards for Smog Proposed

EPA is proposing to strengthen the nation's air quality standards for ground-level ozone, revising the standards for the first time since 1997. The proposal is based on the most recent scientific evidence about the health effects of ozone.

"Advances in science are leading to cleaner skies and healthier lives," said EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson. "America's science is progressing and our air quality is improving. By strengthening the ozone standard, EPA is keeping our clean air momentum moving into the future."

The proposal recommends an ozone standard within a range of 0.070 to 0.075 parts per million (ppm). EPA also is taking comments on alternative standards within a range from 0.060 ppm up to the level of the current 8-hour ozone standard, which is 0.08 ppm.

Ozone can harm people's lungs and can be problematic for persons with asthma or other lung diseases, as well as those who spend a lot of time outside,

such as children. Ozone exposure can aggravate asthma, resulting in increased medication use and emergency room visits, and increased susceptibility to respiratory infections.

The United States has made significant progress reducing ground-level ozone in the past quarter century. Since 1980, ozone levels have dropped 21 percent nationwide as EPA, state and local governments have worked together to continue to improve the nation's air.

Ground-level ozone is not emitted directly into the air, but is created through a reaction of nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compound emissions in the presence of sunlight. Emissions from industrial facilities, electric utilities, motor vehicle exhaust, gasoline vapors, and chemical solvents are the major man-made sources of these ozone precursors.

EPA also is proposing to revise the "secondary" standard for ozone to improve protection for plants, trees and crops during the growing season. The ...See "Smog Standards" on page three.

“New Officers”

...Continued from page one.

Mustang Councilmember is now Secretary-Treasurer. The 9-1-1 Association was formed to implement and manage the emergency telephone system for suburban communities within the Central Oklahoma region. The 9-1-1 Board also named Willa Johnson, former Piedmont Mayor George Fina and State Representative Charles Joiner to the Operation FireSAFE Foundation board. This group oversees the operations of the region's juvenile firesetting prevention program, which is conducted by over 22 fire departments in Central Oklahoma.

Finally, the Garber-Wellington Policy Committee - an entity of the ACOG Board of Directors - elected officers including Chairman John Brown, Piedmont Councilmember; Jim Pumphrey, Councilmember, Nicoma Park as Vice-Chair; and Russell Smith, Mayor of Midwest City, to Secretary-Treasurer. The Garber-Wellington Policy Committee works on issues relating to Central Oklahoma's ground water and surface water activities.

“Smog Standards”

...Continued from page two.

secondary standard is based on scientific evidence indicating that exposure to even low levels of ozone can damage vegetation. EPA is proposing two alternatives for this standard: a standard that would be identical to the “primary” standard to protect public health, and a cumulative standard aimed at protecting vegetation during the growing season.

Central Oklahoma is in full compliance with the current standard of eight parts per million, based on an eight-hour average. Given the region's recent history of elevated ozone readings, adhering to the proposed standard could be a difficult prospect. The region has recently established a proposed emissions reduction strategy for the current standard (see story page 2).

EPA will take public comment through October 9, and will hold four public hearings. ACOG will be registering comments and encourages stakeholders to provide feedback.

For more information, contact Doug Rex or Jerry Church, ACOG.



Around the Region

- **Oklahoma City** has been selected as the site of the 2010 annual meeting of the **U.S. Conference of Mayors**. The 2010 annual meeting promises to be one of the most important and high profile political events ever staged in Oklahoma. Oklahoma City joins impressive company in hosting the annual meeting. At the annual meeting, the members of the conference debate and adopt policy positions.

- **Steve Lewis** has been named new City Manager for the **City of Norman**. Lewis, scheduled to start his job on August. 13, was the city administrator for Lee's Summit, Mo. Lewis comes to Norman with high accolades from his Missouri colleagues. Aside from a new city manager, Norman **Mayor Cindy Rosenthal** was recently sworn in to office. Rosenthal last month appointed **Carol Price Dillangham** to her vacant Ward 4 position.

- The **Oklahoma Department of Commerce/Office of Community Development** announced that several Central Oklahoma municipalities were recipients of the FY 2007 Small Cities – **Community Development Block Grant Program** (CDBG). The City of **Crescent** was awarded funding to renovate the Frontier Country Museum. **Lexington** will make electrical system improvements. **Logan County, District 1**, earned funding for street improvements and the Town of **Union City** will be able to construct a new fire station.

- **Tinker Air Force Base** recently received recognition for several environmental accomplishments. The base, which has developed a stellar reputation for its environmental record was awarded the Secretary of Defense Environmental Award for industrial installations. Tinker was

singled out for the implementation of a system that eliminates sludge from the wastewater plant, and for the use of alternative fuels in the bulk of TAFB's vehicle fleet.

- Several public officials and staff spent a day in **Bricktown** last month learning about public service and **ACOG's** programming and services at ACOG's annual orientation. **Marilyn Murrell, Arcadia; Kathy Walker, Nichols Hills; Ray Poland, Jones City; Earnest Ware, Spencer; Turner Mann, Midwest City; Julie Rozypal, El Reno; Dan O'Neil, Edmond; Janetta Chapple, Arcadia; Melanie Kellogg, Guthrie; Chuck Burtcher, Guthrie; G.A. Williams, Langston; and Willa Johnson and Gary Marrs, Oklahoma City**, attended the session.

- **Ryan Billings** is a new intern and data specialist at **ACOG**. Billings, from Colorado Springs, Colo., has a bachelor's degree in geography from the **University of Oklahoma**. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in regional and city planning. Billings will work with the 9-1-1 program on GIS programming and database applications.



Ryan Billings, ACOG data specialist

“Crosstown”

...Continued from page one.

first phase permits the city to consider canal and river projects that would not otherwise be possible.

“We appreciate ODOT’s cooperation with all projects associated with the I-40 relocation,” Mayor Cornett said. “We are excited to commemorate this milestone in the construction.”

The new boulevard will provide Oklahoma City the opportunity to create a beautiful first impression for visitors. The thoroughfare will allow for economic growth and, with 12 ports to downtown Oklahoma City’s entertainment district, will continue to blossom.

With Crosstown reconstruction located south of the existing I-40 bridge, crews will work without lane closures and upcoming projects will have minimal impact on interstate traffic.

Ridley said that Crosstown reconstruction is possible through Congressional appropriations from the federal Highway Trust Fund.

“The project is a critical necessity for the state and southwestern United States and without the help of our Congressional delegation it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to get as far as we are,” Ridley said.

The next stage will begin with the construction of a permanent railroad bridge, followed by a series of earthwork projects to be let throughout the next year.

ACOG Calendar

August

- 3rd JLUS Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 16th 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.
- 17th JLUS Policy Committee, 10 a.m.

September

- 3rd ACOG Offices Closed for Labor Day
- 7th JLUS Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 11th 9-1-1 Technical Committee, 9:30 a.m.
- 13th Areawide Planning Technical Advisory Committee, 9 a.m.
Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 14th Garber-Wellington Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 18th Operation FireSAFE, 10 a.m.
Clean Cities Stakeholders, 1:30 p.m.
- 21st JLUS Policy Committee, 10 a.m.
- 27th 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.

Originally built in 1965, the Crosstown currently carries 120,000 vehicles per day, nearly 50,000 over the intended capacity of 72,000. The new highway, designed to be ground level or a semi-

depressed roadway, will accommodate up to 173,000 vehicles per day. The reconstructed Crosstown is expected to be open to traffic in 2012 and is estimated at \$557 million.

Central Oklahoma

Perspective

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

21 East Main • Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73104-2405
(405) 234-2264 • FAX 234-2200
TDD 234-2217 • www.acogok.org

Return Service Requested

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma
Permit #193

“Providing Regional Leadership in Central Oklahoma Since 1966”