



About 80,000 vehicles per day pass through Del City along I-40. The heavy traffic volume has taken a toll on bridges in the area. -Provided photo

Bridging the Gap

ODOT planning to replace troublesome I-40 bridges in Del City

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Interstate 40 is heavily traveled each day and like any roadway over time it will need to be rebuilt in stages.

And, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation is planning to rebuild parts of it including bridges on I-40 at S.E. 15th St. Bridges and Crutcho Creek Bridges in Del City.

Mills G. Leslie, ODOT spokesperson, said six new bridges and approaches are planned at I-40 westbound and eastbound at Crutcho Creek, S.E. 15th St. and Sooner Road in the Del City/Midwest City area.

She said this is a \$58.6 million combined project scheduled in the

Eight-Year Plan for construction in FY 2020, with \$31.6 million for S.E. 15th and Crutcho Creek.

"The Sooner Road bridges were moved up in the Eight-Year Plan to coincide with this project to maximize cost savings," Leslie said. "It also allows us to be in the area once instead of disrupting traffic twice for longer projects."

Leslie said the bridges were built in 1960 and they have suffered significant wear and tear due to increasing volumes of traffic, especially heavy truck traffic.

Nearly 80,000 vehicles use this area, on average, according to 2013 daily average traffic count.

"Urban interstate bridges also receive a significant amount of salt

and sand, which can lead to pavement deterioration issues earlier in the life cycle than typically expected," Leslie said. "The salt tends to flow to the low side of the bridge, which in this case corresponds to the middle and right lanes on the eastbound I-40 bridges where the majority of patching has been required. These lanes also are where the bulk of heavier truck traffic moves, putting added pressure on the pavement condition.

Leslie said the other four bridges are now scheduled with the Sooner Road project to maximize costs, but also because of significant delays to utility relocation.

"This is a very narrow corridor with major transmission lines, three pipelines

and many other utilities with not a lot of room to move them," she said. "ODOT is working with the City of Oklahoma City, City of Del City and City of Midwest City for utility relocation, which began in fall 2017 and is anticipated to be complete by late 2018."

Leslie said the bridges will be replaced with similar configurations to what exists there now, but they will be widened to accommodate future lanes of I-40.

She said the Crutcho Creek Bridge will be replaced first. The phasing of projects will be up to the contractor.

"These structurally deficient bridges monopolize the Oklahoma City metro's maintenance resources due to poor conditions and ongoing significant needs," she said.