




DATE: July 13, 2022

TO: Darrel Pyle, City Manager

FROM: Brandon Brooks, Staff Engineer

THROUGH: Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works 

SUBJECT: 2022 Bridge Investment Program Planning Grant Application and Bridge Bond Program Development

BACKGROUND:

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is tasked by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to perform Bridge Safety Inspections for all publicly owned structures greater than 20 feet in length. Inspections are performed at least once every two years to identify any critical findings, document the bridge condition, and make repair recommendations if necessary. The City of Norman utilizes Qualifications Based Selection process to select an appointed Bridge Inspection Consultant. In 2017, 2019, and again 2021, H.W. Lochner has been selected for this role.

Upon completion of the biennial inspections, H.W. Lochner provides the City with inspection reports detailing their findings. Staff then use the data contained in the inspection reports to identify bridges that are in need of rehabilitation, maintenance, and/or replacement. In 2021, the following four locations were deemed to be the highest priority for maintenance:

- NBI No. 05645 – 48th Ave. SE (0.8 miles South of HWY 9)
- NBI No. 18958 – W. Imhoff Rd. (0.2 miles East of S. Berry Rd.)
- NBI No. 20034 – Cedar Lane Rd. (0.8 miles East of Indian Meridian Ave.)
- NBI No. 09189 – 60th Ave. NE (0.5 miles North of Rock Creek Rd.)

On July 29, 2021, the West Imhoff Road Bridge experienced a failure warranting the closure of West Imhoff Road between Walnut Road and Berry Road. This was the third bridge failure to occur in the City of Norman within the last 6 years.

Despite the failure of the West Imhoff Road Bridge, the City's Bridge Maintenance Program has generally been successful in recent years. Since the 2019 Off-System Bridge Inspections, the City has seen a reduction in the number of structurally deficient bridges; from thirteen (13) in 2019 to five (5) today. The failure of the West Imhoff Road Bridge prompted staff to adopt a more proactive, rather than reactive, approach to the bridge infrastructure in the City. Staff developed a detailed inventory ranking system, consulted with H.W. Lochner to validate the findings of the ranking system, and contracted with H.W. Lochner to perform a Bridge Maintenance Program Site Discovery that provided detailed cost estimates for rehabilitation/replacement for twenty (20) of the City's most in-need bridges. All of the aforementioned activities have ensured an additional measure of accuracy for future large-scale bridge improvement activities and provided more detailed information necessary for City Council to consider a Bridge Maintenance Bond Election in the future.

DISCUSSION:

On June 13, 2022, a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released by the FHWA for its Bridge Investment Program (BIP). Through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the BIP funding can be used for planning, bridge investment, and large bridge investment. The goals for the program as stated by the FHWA are as follows:

- Improve condition by reducing the number of miles traveled over bridges:
 - In poor condition
 - In fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition
 - That do not meet current geometric design standards
 - That cannot meet the load and traffic requirements of the regional transportation network
- Improve safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of people and freight over bridges
- Provide financial assistance that leverages and encourages non-Federal contributions

Staff held meetings with Freese and Nichols, Meshek, and Garver to discuss the City's eligibility for this NOFO. The consensus among consultants is that, at this time, the City would be most competitive pursuing a planning grant.

The attached scope of work from Garver for grant application and engineering services seeks to perform the following:

- Provide strategic guidance and coordinate meetings with staff
- Compile an appropriate cost estimate for the grant application based on the "worst case" option for the development of a future bridge bond program
- Assembly of appropriate data to demonstrate the project's qualifications as if the City were applying for future Bridge Program grants (a stated goal of the FHWA)
- Prepare and FYE 2022 BIP planning grant application for a future City of Norman Bridge Bond Project to include a detailed and color-coordinated narrative

The total project fee will be \$45,800.00. There is an extremely tight timeline to this grant program. The final grant application must be submitted to FHWA by midnight on July 25, 2022. It appears that the City may be eligible for \$500,000.00 in grant funds.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1:

Staff recommends approval of the proposal by Garver, dated July 13, 2022, to provide grant application and engineering services to be funded through the FYE 2022 Bridge Maintenance Program, project number TC0254 and fall under the terms of the attached proposal.

ACCEPTED BY:


Darrel Pyle, City Manager

DATE:

7-14-22