



## CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 06/11/2024

**REQUESTER:** Councilmembers Schueler, Nash, and Foreman

**PRESENTER:**

**ITEM TITLE:** CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF RESOLUTION R-2324-156: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENGAGE A QUALIFIED FIRM TO CONDUCT A SURVEY OF NORMAN RESIDENTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED ROCK CREEK ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT TO GAUGE COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED TAX INCREMENT FINANCING OF THE PROJECT, WITH RESULTS TO BE PROVIDED TO CITY COUNCIL PRIOR TO ITS CONSIDERATION OF THE ROCK CREEK ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT PROPOSAL, AND PROVIDING FOR AN APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$15,000.

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### **BACKGROUND:**

By Resolution R-2324-89 adopted by Council on November 14, 2023, Staff was directed to prepare a Project Plan for Council consideration and a review committee, as required by the Local Development Act, was formed. Several months were spent working on a Project Plan for the proposed development and it was recommended by the Statutory Review Committee for approval on May 23, 2024. The Planning Commission is scheduled to consider the Project Plan, along with a zoning application, at its June 13, 2024 meeting. Under the current schedule, the earliest Council may give final consideration to the proposal for adoption or rejection (after required public hearings) is July 23, 2024.

On May 29, 2024, the City Manager received a request from Councilmembers Schueler, Nash and Foreman to place Resolution R-2324-150 on the June 11<sup>th</sup> agenda for Council consideration. Resolution 2324-150, if approved, would refer to the voters of Norman the establishment of the proposed Rock Creek Entertainment District Tax Increment Finance District (City of Norman TIFs Number 2 and 4).

Section 2-101(d) of the Norman City Code states that items must be submitted for Council consideration at least ten (10) days prior to the Council meeting in which they are proposed to be considered. Section 2-101(e) requires the City Manager to place policy and budget items on the agenda when three Councilmembers request them.

### **DISCUSSION:**

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The initial request was for a resolution setting a special election asking the voters whether to approve or reject the establishment of Tax Increment Districts Number 4 and 5 as currently proposed in the Rock Creek Entertainment District Project Plan, as a way to gauge community sentiment regarding the proposal. Because the Local Development Act does not require approval by the voters in order for a tax increment finance district to be established, a vote of Norman residents would not legally bind the Council to approve or reject a Project Plan ordinance. If the proposed Project Plan ordinance is ultimately adopted by Council, it could also be subject to a referendum petition, and ultimately, a legally binding vote of Norman residents.

After discussing the potential legal issues with an “advisory” special election with Councilmember Schueler, the request was changed to a resolution directing the City Manager to hire a qualified firm, like Amber Integrated or a similarly qualified firm, to conduct a scientific survey of the community as a way to gauge community knowledge and sentiment on the proposed project and tax increment financing as a funding mechanism for the public contributions to the project. The estimate for this survey work is \$15,000. Funds sufficient to cover this cost are proposed to be appropriated from General Fund balance (Account 10-29001) and allocated to Consultant-Management/Research (Account 10110101-44001).

Results of the survey will be presented to Council prior to its final consideration of the proposed Project Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Resolution R-2324-150 is submitted for Council consideration.