

CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room, 201 West Gray, Norman, OK 73069

Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The Community Planning & Transportation Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 4:00 PM, and notice of the agenda of the meeting was posted at the Norman Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and on the City website at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Stephen Holman opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Stephen Holman - Chair Councilmember Ward 5 Brandon Nofire Councilmember Ward 1 David Gandesbery Councilmember Wad 4 Helen Grant Councilmember Ward 6 Joshua Hinkle

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. Daryl Pyle, City Manager

Ms. Shannon Stevenson, Assistant City Manager

Ms. Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney IV

Ms. Beth Muckala, Assistant City Attorney III

Mr. Anthony Purinton, Assistant City Attorney II

Mr. Taylor Johnson, Transit Parking and Program Manager

Mr. Scott Sturtz, Director of Public Works

Ms. Lisa Krieg, CDBG / Grants Manager

Mr. Chris Mattingly, Director of Utilities

Ms. Jane Hudson, Planning and Community Development Director

Ms. Janita Hatley, Code Compliance Supervisor

Ms. Sara Kaplan, Business and Community Relations

Ms. Katherine Griffith, Admin Tech III, City Clerk

AGENDA ITEMS

1. PRESENTATION OF THE SEPTEMBER PUBLIC TRANSIT REPORT

Mr. Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager, gave the September 2025 monthly report.

Council recently approved acceptance of grant funds, budget adjustments, and authorization to purchase three large buses. These are the final three large buses to replace the inherited fleet.

- All inherited buses have been replaced within the past five years.
- The new buses have a 12-year lifespan.
- A few older buses remain in service but continue to perform adequately.

Mr. Johnson gave an update on the Central Oklahoma Long-Range Transit Plan. The plan consolidates local transit planning efforts to guide regional transit collaboration and improvements. Staff will continue to work with ACOG and additional committees to develop an implementation/action plan before it will be presented for adoption in November 2025.

The City is pursuing a Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET) grant for the Embark Well program. The program focuses on senior transit services (age 60+), encouraging health and wellness. The grant covers 100% of costs, with potential for additional points if requesting less than full funding. A grant resolution will be presented to Council on October 23, with a submission deadline of November 18.

The final walk through was completed on Monday for the Norman Transit Center Parking lot Project. The new lot is fully operational and expected to serve the community effectively.

Ridership Update

- 47,643 total ridership September 2025 versus 44,679 for September 2024
- Representing continued, steady growth (approx. 7% increase year-over-year).

Route Highlights

- 30% increase on Routes 112, 121, and 122 over last September.
- Route 110 (Main Street) and Route 111 (East Lindsey) experienced slight decreases, though Route 111 remains the most heavily used route.
- Saturday Main Street service increased by 35%.
- Variations in ridership are attributed to the number of weekdays, weekends, and local events such as game days.

Fixed Route Service

- 22 riders per service hour (industry standard remains strong for city size).
- All routes currently operate on 30-minute frequencies, except Route 110.

1. (continued) PRESENTATION OF THE SEPTEMBER PUBLIC TRANSIT REPORT

- Recent accomplishments include:
 - o Implementation of Sunday service via Microtransit.
 - o Conversion of Route 112 (West Lindsey) to 30-minute service last year.

Route Frequency Priorities

- The third priority in the long-range transit plan is to increase frequency on Route 110 (Main Street).
- All other routes currently operate on 30-minute frequencies, except for Main Street (Route 110), which remains hourly.
- The next planned addition will be a new route to Southeast Norman and upgrade service routes.
 - o 30-minute routes upgraded to 15-minute service.
 - o Hourly routes upgraded to 30-minute service.
 - o Eventually, all routes will run every 15 minutes.

Mr. Johnson noted that increasing frequency is one of the simpler service improvements, requiring:

- Adding one additional bus to the route.
 - o Ensuring operational capacity and driver availability through EMBARK.
 - Accounting for increased contractual and operational costs (fuel, maintenance, labor).
- Costs fluctuate due to:
 - o Union wage adjustments through EMBARK.
 - o Bus acquisition costs, which have recently increased.
- Staff prefer to update cost estimates when expansion planning is more imminent to reflect accurate market conditions.

Operational Considerations

- Older buses can remain serviceable and could potentially be used to extend peakhour service without requiring a new vehicle purchase.
- However, partial-day increases (e.g., 30-minute frequency during peak hours only) can cause schedule inconsistencies that may confuse riders.
- Fleet management typically prefers uniform service schedules to reduce operational complexity.
- Grant funding opportunities may exist for expanding—not just replacing—fleet vehicles.

Council requested that staff provide a cost estimate for converting Route 110 to 30-minute service for future consideration.

1. (continued) PRESENTATION OF THE SEPTEMBER PUBLIC TRANSIT REPORT

Norman On-Demand Ridership Report

- September 2025, Norman On-Demand recorded just under 3,000 riders, compared to 4,760 riders in September 2024.
- The program operates under an annual service-hour allocation, and VIA (the contracted operator) adjusts service levels to balance demand throughout the year.
 - o In previous years, VIA tended to front-load hours early in the year.
 - This year, they have tapered service levels to align more closely with current demand.
- Fares increased from \$2 to \$3 effective mid-September 2025.
- The six free promotional rides for new users were discontinued.
 - The promotion had been ongoing since the program's launch but was deemed unnecessary in its third year.
 - VIA suspected possible misuse of the promotion through duplicate email accounts.
- The combination of fare adjustments, reduced promotions, and calibrated service levels likely contributed to the 38% decrease in total rides.

Despite lower ridership, the flexibility of on-demand service allows the City to scale service up or down efficiently. If demand remains lower throughout the year, potential cost savings could be realized in the next budget cycle. Alternatively, those savings could be redirected toward expanding service areas or improving wait times. Staff continue to monitor metrics closely and will report back on any significant changes or opportunities.

- Total registered accounts:
 - o 8,100 September 2024
 - o 13,800 September 2025 (a 70% increase year-over-year)
- From August to September 2025, accounts increased by 4%.
- As a college town, Norman sees consistent new user signups each academic year.
- About one-third of users (4,400 accounts) have completed more than five rides, showing a strong core of regular riders.

Transit Center Maintenance and Operation

- With the parking lot project completed, the Norman Transit Center is fully operational.
- Ongoing facility maintenance items include:
 - Bird netting repairs under the awning, which have required periodic attention due to wear and holes.
 - Storefront door replacement and general lobby maintenance.
 - The aluminum storefront is original and experiencing heavy use; staff are coordinating with facility maintenance for replacement planning.

1. (continued) PRESENTATION OF THE SEPTEMBER PUBLIC TRANSIT REPORT

- A recent toilet replacement project has been successful in reducing maintenance issues.
- Some minor water line issues occurred following the change, but they have since been resolved.
- The update has significantly improved restroom reliability and cleanliness for riders and staff.

Security and Safety

- · Occasional minor incidents occur on-site, such as disputes or disturbances.
- Security personnel handle incidents directly or contact Norman Police Department (PD) when needed.
- Overall, the facility remains a safe and effective reuse for community transit purposes.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE CITY OF NORMAN'S PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN INCLUDING POTENTIAL PARKING LEASES FOR FOOD TRUCKS.

Mr. Taylor Johson, Transit and Parking Program Manager, presented proposed updates to the City of Norman Parking Management Plan, with specific attention to potential parking lease arrangements for food trucks.

Mr. Johnson noted that parking management responsibilities transitioned to the Public Works Department a few years ago, and this discussion reviews current operations, interdepartmental coordination, and proposed adjustments. Mr. Scott Sturtz, Director of Public Works, was present to answer questions and provided some historical data on how the City of Norman came to run the parking program.

Mr. Johnson explained that the Transit and Parking Division acts as the lead coordinator for parking-related matters. While the division manages the system, it relies on collaboration with multiple departments:

Traffic Control Division

- Previously managed meter maintenance and pay stations.
- o Currently assists with signage, striping, and provides historical context.
- The Transit and Parking Division now handles maintenance of pay stations, revenue collection, and coordination of operations.

Police Department (PD)

- Responsible for parking enforcement.
- o Coordinates with the division when issues arise, such as malfunctioning pay stations or special event closures.
- PD communicates upcoming road closures and enforcement adjustments to Public Works.

• City Clerk's Office

- o Currently manages the East Gray Street lot lease program.
- o Discussions are underway for the Transit and Parking Division to assume full responsibility for this management in the future.

Municipal Court

- o Handles citations, fines, and fee processing.
- o The division provides documentation and receipts to assist court staff when necessary.

In response to Councilmember questions on whether parking enforcement is in place on weekends, Mr Johnson confirmed there is no weekend parking enforcement citywide. Campus Corner maintains its own parking enforcement officer, who works on Saturdays. Most complaints originate from residential neighborhoods, where residents report excessive parking on weekends, including vehicles parking on grass.

During OU football game days, limited allowances are made for temporary parking arrangements, but safety rules, such as no parking in front of yellow curbs or fire hydrants, remain in effect. Parking Enforcement is active during game days to ensure public safety compliance. The Norman Police Department currently has four parking enforcement officers.

Mr. Johnson provided an overview of existing metered parking areas managed by the City.

Downtown Area

- East Gray Street lot (Located between Crawford and Peters)
 - o 41 leased parking spaces
 - o 6 accessible (ADA) spaces
 - o 93 public spaces
 - o 3 EV charging stations in the northeast corner.

County Courthouse Area

- o County Courthouse On-Street Parking
 - Metered parking surrounding the Cleveland County Courthouse Square.
- o Total of 10 accessible (ADA) spaces.
- o 42 public spaces open to the general public.
- 18 spaces reserved for law enforcement officers, located in the southwest corner near the courthouse.
- o 2 spaces reserved for veteran courtesy parking.

In response to the question of whether law enforcement officers pay for their reserved spaces, Mr. Johnson explained that an arrangement has existed for many years, dating back to when the county jail was located nearby. The intent was to provide readily available parking for officers traveling to and from the courthouse. The law enforcement spaces remain publicly managed by the City but are designated for official use only.

The on-street parking surrounding the courthouse is also City-managed, as requested by the County years ago. The intent of metered parking in that area is to encourage turnover, like Campus Corner and Downtown, to ensure access for visitors conducting business at the courthouse.

- Asp Avenue Parking lot
 - o 3 accessible (ADA) spaces.
 - o 64 general public spaces.
- On-Street Parking in Campus Corner
 - o 153 public spaces.
 - o 6 accessible (ADA) spaces.

Together with the East Gray Street lot and Courthouse Area, these four zones represent the City's current paid public parking network.

• The courthouse area represents the last remaining portion of Downtown that retains metered parking, with traditional downtown meters removed several years ago.

The City currently maintains two active parking management plans, (Downtown Plan and Campus Corner), both created in 2013 and revised periodically. These documents outline operational procedures, current parking rates, payment methods, and general management guidelines.

The plans serve as living documents for current, day-to-day management, provide clear directions for Staff operations, offer public transparency regarding parking regulations and pricing. They are distinct from long-term infrastructure plans (such as potential parking structures or parking authority proposals).

Regular updates align well with ongoing parking-related projects and modernization efforts and will be consolidated into a single document to reduce redundancy. Staff anticipate minor amendments to the plan once integration is complete to ensure all information remains current.

Payment options will be revised, and new technologies will be incorporated. Contact information will be updated to reflect the Transit and Parking Division as the lead, rather than Traffic Control and new more accurate parking maps will be included.

Mr. Johnson explained the Flowbird parking system, including options for payment via app or credit card. A \$0.35 transaction fee applies to card payments, which affects minimum charge structures. Currently, some lots require a three-hour minimum to offset this processing cost.

Members discussed whether transaction fees could be added directly to user payments rather than being absorbed by the city. Staff noted they would follow up with Flowbird, their current parking vendor, on this possibility.

- Flowbird, was recently acquired and rebranded as "Arrive."
- "Arrive" integrates with ParkMobile, providing a better user experience and cross-platform compatibility.
- The new system allows visitors already using ParkMobile in other cities to seamlessly use it in Norman.
- Pay-by-Text was implemented a few years ago and is gaining popularity among users.
- Business Accounts available to allow employers to create accounts for employees, manage parking permissions, and cover parking costs.
- Validation Codes
 - Businesses may pre-purchase credits (e.g., \$500) and distribute validation codes (e.g., "1234") to customers.
 - o Each code provides discounted or free parking up to the prepaid amount.
 - o Useful for special events or business promotions.
 - The validation system would allow employers to provide off-street parking for employees, increasing on-street turnover for customers.
 - Options will gain value as parking structures and expanded systems are introduced.
 - Staff will continue exploring these tools to increase customer convenience and parking fund revenue.

Staff presented an overview of current parking revenues and expenses, noting that the parking program is operating at a deficit. Committee members discussed the importance of addressing the shortfall and considering strategies to reduce reliance on the general fund and basically be self-sustaining.

Mr. Johnson presented a rate adjustment proposal for review and discussion for these parking areas. Staff noted the City's parking fees remain at the low end compared to similar cities. A proposal was discussed to raise rates incrementally to help close the deficit while keeping parking affordable.

The \$0.25/hour rate has remained unchanged for over 12 years (since inception), while maintenance costs, equipment servicing, and Staff costs have all increased. The adjustment would modernize pricing while keeping rates below comparable cities in the region.

Preliminary estimates indicate that the combined effect of all proposed changes, including lease adjustments, could increase annual parking revenue by approximately \$40,000. Excluding lease changes, a \$0.50 hourly increase would generate an estimated \$10,000 additional revenue.

Current and Proposed Rates

Location	Current Rate	Proposed Rate	Metered Days I	Metered Hours	Notes
East Gray Street lot	\$0.25/hr	\$0.50/hr	Mon-Sat	8 AM-6 PM	10-hour max (\$2.50 full-day currently)
County Courthouse On- Street	\$0.25/hr	\$0.50/hr	Mon-Sat	8 AM-6 PM	Encourages turnover near courthouse
Asp Avenue Parking lot	\$1.00/hr	No Change	Mon-Sat	8 AM-9 PM	Two-hour max (day) / three-hour max (evening)
Campus Corner On-Street	\$1.00/hr	No Change	Mon-Sat	8 AM-9 PM	Matches current enforcement hours

ASP Avenue Parking Lot

The committee discussed the low usage of the ASP Avenue parking lot. Members suggested that reducing parking rates in this lot could encourage more use and make it appear more active. The idea of better signage, such as a lighted "Public Parking" sign, was also mentioned to improve visibility and encourage use.

The committee discussed the potential impact of increasing parking rates downtown, including concerns about affordability near the courthouse and effect on businesses.

Members discussed whether to increase all rates to \$1 per hour or begin with a smaller adjustment of \$0.50 per hour in select areas. Some preferred easing into the change to minimize public resistance. Members agreed that small, incremental rate adjustments (such as \$0.25—\$0.50 increases) would be reasonable and should be developed further by staff.

Approval Process and Implementation

- Gray Street lot
 - Currently leased at \$450 annually for 41 spaces, representing a 28% discount at the \$0.25 hourly rate. Staff proposed increasing the annual rate to \$600, corresponding with a \$0.50 hourly rate and maintaining an approximate 52% discount for all-day weekday parking.
- ASP Avenue lot
 - Proposed new lease options, with 21 spaces identified for potential leasing in the north section. A suggested lease rate of \$800 annually was discussed, which would represent about a 59% discount at \$0.50/hour.

Committee members discussed balancing affordability and demand. The Gray Street lot is in high demand, with all 41 spaces leased annually and strong interest from state offices and other nearby businesses. Members expressed confidence that an increase from \$450 to \$600 would not significantly affect leasing demand.

Since the City Manager has authority to adjust rates with council consent, the council directed Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager to move forward on the recommended rate adjustments discussed and have the necessary resolution prepared for Council consideration.

Discussion also covered potential residential development near the ASP lot. Members suggested that establishing lease spaces now could serve as a model for future mixed-use and housing projects. Staff emphasized ensuring fair access through a transparent application process.

The current process for the Gray Street leases is through a lottery system. Applicants are selected randomly, and any additional spaces are offered in subsequent rounds. Staff proposed using the same approach for the ASP Avenue parking lot once a lease option is available.

Staff will prepare to implement lease options in the ASP Avenue lot with an equitable allocation process, and coordinate with the Campus Corner Merchants Association to avoid any potential conflict regarding use of the ASP Avenue lot use during game days.

The Campus Corner Merchants Association, which leases the entire lot during game days, agreed to limit their use to the middle and south rows, leaving leased spaces on the north side, which can be accessed from Buchanan Avenue. This compromise allows both the annual leaseholders and the merchants' group to coexist without disruption.

Committee members discussed the possibility of differentiating lease rates for residential tenants versus employees or public users. Residential users typically occupy spaces continuously, while employee and public use involve more turnover. Some committee members suggested charging higher lease amounts for residential users to offset the reduced availability. The committee agreed that proposed lease rates could serve as a starting point, with the option to revisit them after one year.

Food Truck Parking and Permitting

Staff introduced preliminary considerations for food truck operations within City-owned parking lots. Key issues identified:

- Determining the number of permits to allow at one time.
- Deciding whether food trucks would be allowed on-street or only in parking lots.
- Avoiding conflicts with nearby brick-and-mortar businesses by ensuring fairness.
- Defining lease structure (monthly vs. annual).
- Assessing electrical access and whether food trucks would provide their own power via generators.
- Ensuring pedestrian safety and maintaining clear access routes.
- Avoiding conflicts with special events (e.g., game days, music festivals).

Committee members noted that food trucks require additional space beyond one parking stall for customer access and employee parking. Larger trucks could need up to three parking spaces, creating challenges in smaller lots like ASP Avenue.

The Taco Villa food truck located in a private lot near Campus Corner was cited as a successful model, as it occupies a corner space with minimal disruption. Members discussed the potential for allowing one truck at the ASP lot or up to two at Gray Street, depending on space and safety factors.

Concerns regarding electrical connections were raised, with members emphasizing the need for legal protections if food trucks are allowed to plug into City utilities. Initially, the City would likely not provide electricity but could be considered in future upgrades for multipurpose lot use. Consensus is to continue exploring food truck opportunities cautiously, balancing business development and parking availability while ensuring public safety and City liability protection.

Council instructed Staff to proceed with the rate adjustments under administrative authority. Implementation of new rates, leases or programs could begin January 1, 2026.

Staff noted that current Gray Street lot leases operate on a calendar-year basis, requiring timely renewal notices and applications. To accommodate proposed rate adjustments and potentially initiate leases in ASP Avenue lot, action would be needed soon to meet annual renewal deadlines.

- The Gray Street lot could begin the new lease cycle with rate adjustments on January 1, 2026, aligning with the calendar year.
- The ASP Avenue lot, being a new lease program, could begin July 1, 2026, allowing time for signage installation, public education and outreach. Leases would be renewed in January 2027 to synchronize with Gray Street, with Midyear leases being prorated.
- Staff noted that if vertical construction occurs during a lease period, affected tenants would receive refunds for unused time. During construction, groundlevel parking would likely be unavailable for approximately six months, but longterm lessees would be accommodated after completion.

Committee members discussed potential leasing to support nearby residential developments. Members acknowledged that residential users have different needs than business employees, requiring more stability and longer-term agreements. It was suggested that future residential leases extend beyond one year to provide predictability for tenants and property owners.

Staff clarified that no current residential projects are dependent on City-owned lots to meet parking requirements, but developers have expressed interest in overflow parking. Such leases could provide additional revenue but should not be used to satisfy formal parking minimums.

Committee members emphasized the importance of planning for future vertical parking structures, particularly at the ASP Avenue site. Staff noted ongoing coordination with property owners to gauge interest and obtain letters of intent for potential lease commitments. These letters would help establish demand, strengthen the City's position with the bond market, and support Tax Increment Financing (TIF) planning.

The Committee discussed the relationship between Campus Corner, Center City, and existing TIF districts. Staff explained that Campus Corner was originally excluded from the TIF boundary to accommodate a height limit restriction agreed upon during prior planning efforts. Several members suggested reconsidering this arrangement, noting:

- Including Campus Corner in the Center City TIF boundary could generate additional revenue for parking structure construction.
- The market, rather than regulation, should guide building height, as developments would be shaped by demand and economic conditions.
- The current five-story height cap may unnecessarily constrain redevelopment opportunities.

Committee members proposed revisiting the height restriction policy and exploring the possibility of expanding the TIF district to include Campus Corner. This change could enable the City to capture future sales tax and TIF revenue from new development in the area.

Staff summarized remaining action items for the city's parking lease adjustments.

- The Committee agreed to implement rate changes and programming updates for the Gray Street lot effective January 1, 2026, aligning hourly rates through the Flowbird app and ensuring synchronization with nearby courthouse parking.
- The ASP Avenue lot lease program will begin July 1, 2026, with prorated fees for the partial year to allow additional time for discussion on residential leasing options.
- Members acknowledged continued high demand for Gray Street parking, anticipating strong participation in the annual lottery system despite the rate increase.
- Staff also noted that while Flowbird currently manages rate programming, the City expects to assume greater direct control over rate changes in the future.

The Committee expressed appreciation for staff's work on the parking strategy and indicated interest in receiving ongoing updates as new management and lease programs are finalized.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING POSSIBLE VACATION OF ALLEYWAY BETWEEN REED AVENUE AND COOK AVENUE

Ms. Kathryn Walker presented information regarding a problematic alleyway between Reed Avenue and Cook Avenue, that was dedicated in 1910, but never improved or maintained for modern use.

- There is no current vehicle access or use of the alley, though gas utilities are present and will require preserved easements.
- The alleyway has become a site for encampments, resulting in trash, used syringes, and other hazards.
- Multiple departments Code Enforcement, Police PACE Team, Sanitation, and Central Oklahoma Community Mental Health Center — have been collaborating to conduct cleanups, but issues persist.

Staff recommended initiating the process to vacate the alleyway, transferring ownership to abutting property owners.

Key steps include:

- 1. Council adoption of a resolution of intent to close, target date November 25, 2025
- 2. Planning Commission review in January 2026
- 3. Council hearings in February 2026
- 4. Filing for district court vacation thereafter

Vacating the alley would:

- Return approximately 10 feet of property to each abutting owner (20-foot total width)
- Allow use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to assist residents in rebuilding fence lines, replacing nearby fences, many that are broken or missing, decreasing visibility and access to the area.
- Reduce illegal camping and improve neighborhood safety

Several council members emphasized the importance of property owner outreach via mailers and door hangers before formal consideration.

The PACE team supports the alley's abandonment to better enforce no-trespassing rules and curb illegal activity. Staff clarified that until it was vacated, the alley remains cityowned, and trespassing laws cannot be applied by residents.

The committee consensus supported proceeding with the alley vacation process, pending community notification and utility coordination.

ADJOURNMENT

City Clerk	Mayor			
ATTEST:				
The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 pm				