



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

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

Tuesday, February 25, 2025 at 5:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in the Executive Conference Room of the Norman Municipal Building on the 25th day of February, 2025, at 5:00 p.m., and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT

Mayor Larry Heikkila
Councilmember Ward 2 Matthew Peacock
Councilmember Ward 3 Bree Montoya
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 5 Michael Nash
Councilmember Ward 6 Joshua Hinkle
Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 8 Scott Dixon

ABSENT

Councilmember Ward 1 Austin Ball

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Heikkila.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. AIM NORMAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE – TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN.

Mr. Brett Cabiness and Mr. James Walden, Garver Engineering, highlighted the proposed Transportation Master Plan.

Scope and Guiding Principles

- Update of the 2014 Comprehensive Transportation Plan.
- Five guiding principles from 2014 were carried forward: mobility, infrastructure maintenance, fiscal stewardship, safety, and economic vitality.
- Integration with other master plans: land use, storm water, parks, housing, and utilities.

Snapshot in Time Approach

- Comprehensive review of transportation elements: roads, traffic, bridges, trails, parking, transit, and aviation.
- Evaluated six major prior studies, including Encompass 2045 (ACOG), Go Norman 21 Transit Plan, the 2014 Transportation Plan, 2018 Parking Study, OU Max Westheimer Airport Plan, and the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) plan.
Public Input:
- Gathered through open houses, surveys, pop-up events, and committee feedback.
- Key priorities identified: congestion relief, connectivity, safety, and expanded active transportation.
- Shift in community preference toward multimodal solutions, including walkability and bike access, alongside vehicular improvements.

Key Plan Components

Aviation (Max Westheimer Airport):

- Recognized FAA-approved master plan (2024) with \$58 million in long-term projects.
- Emphasized protection of runway zones, improved transit access, and municipal infrastructure upgrades.

Parking:

- Reaffirmed viability of the 2018 joint city-county study.
- Recommendations included a potential parking garage, investment in technology-based solutions, and ADA connectivity between the depot, transit center, and parking facilities.

Transit:

- Built upon the Go Norman 21 Plan, emphasizing flexibility for future growth.
- Noted commuter rail opportunities with potential stops at Tecumseh Road, Downtown Depot, and Cedar Lane, as well as a potential game-day stop near the Duck Pond.

Bridges:

- Mirrored the 2023 Bond Program for bridge replacement and rehabilitation.
- Stressed continued annual inspections and coordination with storm water projects.

Traffic and Safety:

- Reviewed crash data and safety “heat maps.”
- Proposed studies to address high-crash intersections.
- Recommendations included adopting ACOG safety plan principles, expanding signage for bike routes, developing a roundabout policy, and aggressively pursuing safety-related grants.

Roadway Network:

- Updated transportation plan map to reflect current and future land use.
- Special focus on Alameda Street as a corridor for safety improvements and quality-of-life enhancements.
- Addressed inflation and changing ODOT/ACOG criteria as challenges to project implementation.

Active Transportation:

- Strong public demand for safe, connected, and low-stress routes.
- Proposed a backbone network of greenways (along creeks and utilities) and side paths (wide sidewalks with buffers).
- Emphasized inclusivity for all ages and skill levels, shifting from a “cyclists only” perception to broad community use.
- Highlighted potential for regional connectivity and transformative community impact.

Councilmembers asked about project prioritization, funding challenges, and alignment with other master plans. Staff emphasized coordination between storm water, transportation, and land use planning. Consultants noted that cost escalations and evolving funding criteria will require flexibility in project delivery.

Mr. Walden said significant public input was gathered during the process, resulting in targeted modifications across the city’s roadway network plan. Purple highlights on the map indicated areas where elements were added, yellow areas denoted changes from prior plans. Many changes involved shifting from rural to urban cross-sections and refining collector street concepts first introduced in the 2014 Transportation Plan.

The updated plan emphasized a stronger collector network to provide relief to arterial streets, modeled after older grid systems in Norman where alternate routes reduce congestion.

Constructability Review

- Some proposed collector routes from the 2014 plan were removed due to challenges with floodplains or prohibitive development costs.

Highlighted Roadway and Connectivity Projects

- East–West Corridor: Identified as critical for improved vehicular and active transportation connectivity across I-35. Coordination with ODOT’s corridor study would utilize a planned overpass.
- Alameda Corridor: Envisioned as a multimodal connection from Downtown Norman to Lake Thunderbird, with side paths for bicycles and pedestrians.
- Lake Access: Consideration of a north-side access route to Lake Thunderbird to complement Highway 9 access on the south side.
- 48th Avenue East: Proposed as a future north–south corridor, aligning with Encompass 2045 recommendations and supporting connectivity to Oklahoma City and Moore.
- Other Projects: Included Berry Road widening (three lanes with active transportation), Cedar Lane improvements, and a potential roundabout at Porter and Franklin.

Council Questions and Discussion

- Road Widening Concerns: Councilmembers expressed caution about excessive widening, citing long-term maintenance costs for a sales tax–funded city and the risk of induced demand.
- Active Transportation: Councilmembers stressed prioritizing pedestrian safety, bike connectivity, and transit alternatives to reduce reliance on cars.
- Collector Street Network: Discussion acknowledged challenges of aligning collector routes across undeveloped and farm properties but emphasized improved subdivision connectivity to reduce arterial congestion.

- Roundabouts and Policy Tools: Presenters highlighted the potential for roundabouts, access management policies, and collector networks to improve flow and reduce crashes without major widening.
- Long-Term Vision: Staff clarified that maps showing widenings reflect planning horizons through 2045 and do not constitute immediate bond proposals. Plans will be ranked by prioritization criteria, with emphasis on safety, connectivity, and multimodal solutions.
- Bridge and Large-Scale Projects: Clarification provided that the proposed Franklin Road Bridge is an ODOT project. Other large-scale concepts (e.g., a potential airport tunnel under Rock Creek Road) were noted as long-term, aspirational, and subject to feasibility.
- Boulevard Concepts: Staff confirmed that proposed urban arterials envision landscaped medians with side paths, designed for incremental expansion as traffic demands evolve.

Closing Remarks on Transportation Plan

- Councilmembers expressed appreciation for the emphasis on safety, multimodal connectivity, and forward planning.
- Staff and consultants reaffirmed that the plan will serve as a flexible guide through 2045, balancing vehicular needs with pedestrian, cycling, and transit priorities.

2. CONSIDERATION OF ADJOURNING INTO AN EXECUTIVE SESSION AS AUTHORIZED BY OKLAHOMA STATUTES, TITLE 25 §307(B)(4) TO DISCUSS PENDING LITIGATION IN THE CASE OF WILKINS, V. CITY OF NORMAN, CASE NO. CM-2019-05323 X.

Motion made by Councilmember Ward 6 Hinkle, Seconded by Councilmember Ward 4 Grant.

Voting Yea: Mayor Heikkila, Councilmember Ward 2 Peacock, Councilmember Ward 3 Montoya, Councilmember Ward 4 Grant, Councilmember Ward 5 Nash, Councilmember Ward 6 Hinkle, Councilmember Ward 7 Holman, Councilmember Ward 8 Dixon

The City Council adjourned into Executive Session at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager; Ms. Shannon Stevenson, Assistant City Manager; Mr. Rick Knighton, City Attorney; Ms. Jeanne Snider, Assistant City Attorney; Mr. Brad McClure, outside legal counsel; and Ms. Shaakira Calnick, Internal Auditor, were in attendance at the Executive Session.

Motion made by Councilmember Ward 8 Dixon, Seconded by Councilmember Ward 4 Grant.

Voting Yea: Mayor Heikkila, Councilmember Ward 2 Peacock, Councilmember Ward 3 Montoya, Councilmember Ward 4 Grant, Councilmember Ward 5 Nash, Councilmember Ward 6 Hinkle, Councilmember Ward 7 Holman, Councilmember Ward 8 Dixon

The Executive Session was adjourned out of and the Special Session was reconvened at 6:24 p.m.

Item 2, continued

Pending litigation in the case of Wilkins v. City of Norman, Case No. CM-2019-05323 X was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken and no votes were cast.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor