



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 09-03-2026

REQUESTER: Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation

PRESENTER: Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF THE APPOINTMENT OF NORMAN RESIDENTS TO THE SOONER THEATRE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE.

BACKGROUND:

The Sooner Theatre is located at 101 East Main Street and is a part of the City of Norman's Park System as a Cultural Center. This beloved live performance venue opened its doors in 1929. Eventually, it came into the city's possession in the 1980s, after a group of citizens bought the building from the architect (Harold Gimeno) to save it from demolition. Soon after, it was gifted to the city and treated as a preservation project. After a round of initial restoration work, the Sooner Theatre was reopened as a performance space and has operated since the mid-1990s.

After decades of use to produce high-level live performances that draw thousands of people each month downtown for hours of entertainment, dining, and shopping as part of the overall experience of producing, rehearsing, and then presenting a live performance, the staff has determined that it is time to plan for the next 100 years at Sooner Theatre, starting with a Master Planning design phase.

DISCUSSION:

In May 2026, the Request for Qualifications (RFQ-2526-51) for Professional Design Services for the Sooner Theatre Improvements Master Plan was advertised in the Norman Transcript and on the City of Norman website. Complete proposals were received from fifteen design teams.

The Review committee shortlisted five firms for interviews and subsequently recommended engaging the services of the team led by Beck Design of Oklahoma City for this project. The process we intend to use to develop the master plan will include utilizing a project Steering Committee, a public input process, and review by the Norman Board of Park Commissioners, Parks and Recreation Staff, and City Council. A vital part of the plan will be to obtain a current opinion of probable costs, funding sources, and a phasing plan to help craft the scope of any construction project(s) resulting from this study.

The contract with Beck includes a schedule of input meetings, design work, and deliverables, which will give the city a clear vision for renovating the facility into this immensely popular cultural entertainment space.

On August 25, 2026, the Council approved Contract Number K-2627-36 to Beck Design in the total amount of \$92,000.00 for the Sooner Theatre Master Plan Project. The proposed funding will come from the proposed appropriation of the Room Tax Account Fund Balance.

Norman Board of Park Commissioners - Sooner Theatre Steering Committee

Mayor Nominee:	Nicholas Bartell
Ward 4 Nominee:	Julius Manda Shae Dickinson
Park Board Chair Nominee:	Brad Benson
Parks Director Nominee:	Lee Hall
Sooner Theatre Nominee:	Leslie Clowners
Park Board Ex Efficio:	Kristina Wycoff

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the above list of Norman residents for the Sooner Theatre Master Plan Steering Committee.