



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING

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

Thursday, May 05, 2022 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Business and Community Affairs Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room on the 5th day of May, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. and notice of the agenda of the meeting were posted at the 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 Peacock called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilmember Ward 8 Matthew Peacock (Chair)

Councilmember Ward 5 Rarchar Tortorello

OTHERS PRESENT

Councilmember Ward 1 Brandy Studley

Councilmember Ward 6 Elizabeth Foreman

Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman

Ms. Beth Muckala, Assistant City Attorney

Ms. Jane Hudson, Planning and Community Development Director

Mr. Greg Clark, Development Services Manager

Ms. Lisa Webb, Administrative Technician III

AGENDA ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE HOME ENERGY RATING SYSTEM (HERS) ENERGY RATING INDEX (ERI)

Mr. Greg Clark, Development Services Manager, provided an overview of the HERS Above Code Incentive Program, which offers permit fee rebates for newly constructed homes that exceed minimum energy code requirements.

Key points included:

- The program began in July 2018 and has been renewed five times, with the current iteration set to expire June 30, 2022.
- The benchmark score to receive credit was reduced from 65 to 51 in 2021 to align with then-anticipated state code changes.

Item 1, continued:

- From July 2021 to April 2022, there were 263 applicants, but only 12 homes received Certificates of Occupancy (CO). None of these achieved the ERI benchmark score of 51.
- Supply chain issues and extended build times due to COVID-19 were cited as key factors in the slow completion rate.

Program Structure:

- ERI Score 51: 50% permit fee rebate
- ERI Score 41 or lower: 100% rebate
- Rebate amount is calculated based on project area (home, garage, patio)
State Context:
 - The Oklahoma Uniform Building Code Commission dictates minimum codes statewide.
 - The Commission recently rejected a proposed 2015 energy code update with an ERI of 51.
 - A new subcommittee has recommended an ERI 64 as the minimum standard, currently pending legislative or gubernatorial approval.
 - For comparison, Texas uses a ERI of 59 as a statewide standard.

Program Options Presented:

1. Allow Program to Expire: Defer changes until more data is available and state standards are finalized.
2. Maintain Current ERI 51 Benchmark: Keep existing standard despite low qualifying rate; maintains high-performance bar.
3. Modify Benchmark to ERI 57 and Extend Program for Two Years (Staff Recommendation):
 - 57 is a historically supported energy code level
 - Would provide a more attainable yet rigorous standard
 - Aligns better with state and regional practices
 - Allows more time to gather performance data

Committee Discussion:

- Cost/Benefit Consideration: Some questioned whether the rebate amount (\$364 in a 2,600 sq ft example) sufficiently offsets construction upgrades needed to meet a 51 ERI score.
- Support for Energy Efficiency: Members strongly supported continuing the program to promote more efficient homes and uphold Norman's leadership in sustainability.
- Consensus on Adjusting Benchmark: General agreement to modify the benchmark to ERI 57 for attainability, while keeping it stricter than the proposed state standard (64).
- Duration of Program: Members supported extending the program to two years to collect meaningful data.
- Funding Considerations: Discussion included concern about shared funding with the Visitability Program and whether future programs (e.g., storm shelters, multi-family enhancements) could be similarly incentivized. Staff explained the rebate is based on internal plan review fees, limiting impact but also available resources.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor