



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE

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

Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 5:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Council Conference in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 5:00 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

PRESENT

Mayor Larry Heikkila

Councilmember Ward 1 Austin Ball

Councilmember Ward 2 Matthew Peacock

Councilmember Ward 3 Bree Montoya

Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant

Councilmember Ward 5 Michael Nash

Councilmember Ward 6 Josh Hinkle

Councilmember Ward 7 Stephen Holman

Councilmember Ward 8 Matthew Peacock

AGENDA ITEMS

1. AIM NORMAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE - HOUSING AND LAND USE PLANS.

Ms. Amy Haase, RDG, Urban Planner, introduced AIM Norman's comprehensive plan update on the Housing and Land Use Plans.

Ms. Haase reemphasized this Land Use Plan will strive to continue to protect Lake Thunderbird and the Garber-Wellington Aquifer. There are two maps that work together: Character Area Map and Land Use Map, to which there have been no significant changes since December 2024's presentation to Council.

In the Character Area map, the City has been divided into seven areas with common challenges and opportunities. Each area has policies for new development or redevelopment. The Land Use map identifies how specific areas of Norman will be used. A flexible land use approach is considered for a mixed use of land in hopes that it will result in less plan amendments. One discussion point highlighted if we were planning to meet demand. A year ago AIM Norman planned for a population of over 185,000 based on trend. To accommodate this, there were 23,000 housing units added to the market. There is not a lot of Commercial land use seen here, so in response, the Land Use Plan allows mixing with similar intensities because, residents desired areas with easier access to services, jobs, and entertainment. Some commercial of the same level or intensity would be allowed, but nothing

Item 1, continued:

like a supercenter. The Midway Deli is one example of what would be allowed in this Urban Low District. Ms. Haase went on to explain what the Urban Reserve Land Use category is and explains how AIM Norman is protecting the water resources. New development will be discouraged here until existing City water, sewer, stormwater, and transportation infrastructure can serve here without skipping areas to the West. This would encourage incremental growth. Under the Land Use Master Plan's policies, development in environmentally sensitive areas is discouraged, while development in or adjacent to existing developed areas is encouraged. The Stormwater Master Plan has recommendations regarding buffering and treating runoff, so here is an opportunity for these plans to work together. Policies in this plan, strive to keep the rural character East of 48th until 2045 and beyond. The turnpike is shown on this map, because AIM Norman cannot influence decisions regarding the turnpike and we must plan for all scenarios. This plan addresses increasing density in parts of Norman, by including policies to encourage development that keeps the character of existing neighborhoods and also recommendations to guide development of the updated zoning code. The plan will reflect the desires of the residents in said neighborhoods. It will not change your personal property's zoning, unless you want it changed. Then you must follow the new policies for zoning.

Councilmember Nash redirected the discussion, and wanted to know the reasoning and purpose of the Urban Reserve map and stated that if the purpose was to preserve the land, then the language referring to its future development should be omitted and not encourage its development.

Ms. Haase assured him the Committee didn't anticipate any development during the life of this plan and in order to better protect it, they were making policies more restrictive, for example, the 30-acre minimum lot size, versus the 10-acre minimum that is set now.

Councilmember Dixon asked, if the City could not run water or sewer to this area, would it slow development more than Urban Reserve or the Rural Reserve.

Ms. Haase said that it would limit it to the extent where septic systems could be used in a development but would not necessarily limit the development of additional acreages. It would however limit large developments that ideally would need to be on the City's sewer system.

Councilmember Peacock stated the density requirement in this area is currently one house per ten acres, and pointed out that with the new policy it would be one house per thirty acres.

Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager, said per DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) regulations there is a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lot minimum requirement for a well and septic tank. Mr. Richard McKown, Chair of the Housing Subcommittee, said the committee spent a tremendous amount of time talking about the issue on how to protect this area. If someone wanted to build a neighborhood like Brookhaven, they could not anywhere in the near future because a lift station for sanitary sewer would need to be constructed and, therefore, there would not be any single family homes in the near future. He said that if someone had 160 acres and wanted to cut it up into 16 home sites, under this new policy, they would not be allowed. If development did happen, then it would be done in a way that met the standards to preserve water quality and green infrastructure.

Councilmember Holman said ideally, Norman would develop less in the next twenty years versus the last twenty, to make better use of our existing urban footprint.

Item 1, continued:

Ms. Haase expressed her agreement to this statement and shared that the general feedback from the community was, “how do we develop in a different way to slow progression of development?”

Mr. Pyle said if the City wanted infrastructure in that area, sewer/water lines would need to be added which would add to the development of the City’s next footprint.

Mayor Heikkila, said this would add more maintenance for the City and would not work.

Mr. Pyle said that urban densities are more cost effective when it comes to infrastructure, than rural densities.

Ms. Hudson, said when this master plan is adopted, anyone wanting to develop in this area, would still need to come back to Council for rezoning.

Councilmember Nash, referred to the April, 2021 decision when the judge forced the reversal of the April, 2017 Council zoning decision on 36th for being “arbitrary and capricious.” He then expressed concern if a development comes that abides with the guidelines but betrays the nature of the area, and Council rejects it, then the City will get sued. He said any language alluding to future development was irrational and had no purpose.

Mr. Richard McKown said that the committee wanted to give this plan language that would protect the area, even when faced with real world scenarios. He provided the example that if you owned 20 acres and wanted to divide it in half to pass down to your two children, then you would not be allowed to build because of the 30-acre minimum policy. Considering this, such an individual could do 2 – 2 acre tracts in a PUD and then show how the remaining 16 could be used in the future when City sewer and water are available. He hopes that they can be done with it and get this plan approved.

Mr. Charlie Powell, RDG, who is helping lead the Housing Subcommittee team, led the part of the presentation on the Housing Strategy Plan. The Housing Plan focuses on policy and strategies, not land use or where housing should go, but will heavily reference the Land Use Plan. The 23,000 units previously mentioned by Amy, that will be added to the market, will be made up of rental units, ownership units, and units with different price points and purposes. Some examples include assisting living centers and rehabilitation facilities. This action plan will set the blueprint for policies and programs going forward and includes recommendations and house studies of examples used in similar communities. There are five goals that provide specific direction in the housing strategy plan.

1. Modernize development regulations and rewrite zoning and subdivision ordinances. Codes will be streamlined and consistent, so that property owners and developers know what to expect.
2. Add a variety of housing, including ownership and rentals with a variety of styles and models and offer mixed-use reuse/redevelopment incentives.
3. Increase attainable accessible and quality housing options for all people.

The focus here will be cost and attainability while focusing on livability, quality of life and price points.

Item 1, continued:

4. Enhance and promote infill opportunities in existing neighborhoods.

This goal focuses on Norman's core areas and what is already built. This goal aims to continue to invest in existing neighborhoods to maintain existing homes, fill vacant homes, and add homes on vacant lots. Strategies to achieve this are increasing rehabilitation and redevelopment incentives and programs for appropriate sites and building new and revamped public/private partnerships for neighborhood investment.

5. Have clear, understandable, and reasonable housing incentives and procedures.

This goal strives to be clear with the programs and processes, so that it is understandable to everyone, no matter their level of expertise. Strategies to achieve this are, creating a central resource center, expanding housing education and engagement, and simplifying the processes required for incentives, funding and administrative approval.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Heikkila adjourned the meeting at 6:12 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor