



## CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 01/13/2026

**REQUESTER:** City Council

**PRESENTER:** Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney

**ITEM TITLE:** CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF ORDINANCE O-2526-36: AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AUTHORIZING THE CALLING AND HOLDING OF A SPECIAL ELECTION IN THE CITY OF NORMAN, STATE OF OKLAHOMA (THE "CITY"), ON THE 7<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2026, FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBMITTING TO THE REGISTERED QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF SAID CITY THE QUESTION OF THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF SAID CITY IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED THE SUM OF EIGHT MILLION DOLLARS (\$8,000,000) TO BE ISSUED IN ONE OR MORE SERIES TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR THE ACQUIRING, CONSTRUCTING, RECONSTRUCTING, EXPANDING, REPAIRING, WHICH MAY ALSO INCLUDE IMPROVING, RENOVATING, ACQUIRING AND EQUIPPING OF A COMMUNITY FACILITY TO SERVE AS A HOMELESS SHELTER AND TO BE OWNED EXCLUSIVELY BY THE CITY; TO BE COMPLETED WITH OR WITHOUT THE USE OF OTHER FUNDS, AND LEVYING AND COLLECTING AN ANNUAL TAX, IN ADDITION TO ALL OTHER TAXES, UPON ALL THE TAXABLE PROPERTY IN SAID CITY FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE INTEREST AND PRINCIPAL ON SAID BONDS; PROVIDING FOR ELECTION PROCEDURES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND CONTAINING OTHER PROVISIONS RELATED THERETO.

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### **BACKGROUND:**

The City of Norman is currently partnering with City Care to operate an emergency, low-barrier shelter at the corner of James Garner Avenue and West Gray Street in Norman. Prior to January 15, 2025, local non-profit Food & Shelter was contracted to manage shelter operations for the City of Norman. Prior to the Food & Shelter agreement, the City of Norman facilitated the administration and management of an emergency shelter at two locations from December 2019 to June 2022. Community discussions regarding solutions for homelessness in Norman with City officials, community partners, and interested neighbors began cooperatively with long-term planning ideas in Spring 2020.

In 2022, the Norman/Cleveland County Continuum of Care received a report from Homebase, which included action steps to end homelessness. The plan recognized the Housing First approach as a key guiding principle for future action. The Housing First approach centers on providing people who are experiencing homelessness with housing as quickly as possible, and then providing services needed to maintain their housing. One of the strategies in the Homebase Plan included establishing a permanent year-round, low barrier housing-focused shelter with day and night services.

The City endeavored to identify an appropriate site for the shelter recommended by the Homebase Plan and recently purchased land for such purpose just south of the current Food & Shelter location. An architect has been engaged to develop conceptual plans and a budget for the construction of a shelter in consultation with the City and CityCare. The plans and budget were presented to Council on January 6, 2026 along with the results of a Shelter Bond Voter Sentiment Survey. Direction was given to place an item authorizing an election to pose the question to the voters of approving general obligation bonds in the amount of \$8 million to fund the homeless shelter on the agenda for January 13, 2026 (First Reading) and January 27, 2026 (Second Reading) so that it could be considered by the voters at the April 7, 2026 election.

**DISCUSSION:**

Ordinance O-2526-36 authorizes the calling of an election on April 7, 2026 to pose the question to the voters of whether the City should incur indebtedness by issuing its general obligation bonds in the sum of \$8,000,000 to provide funds for the homeless shelter and levy and collect an annual tax upon all taxable property sufficient to pay for the bonds over a twenty-year period.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff forwards Ordinance O-2526-36 for Council consideration on Second and Final Reading.