



MEMO TO: Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee
FROM: Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager
THROUGH: Shawn O'Leary, P.E., CFM, Director of Public Works
DATE: September 28, 2023
SUBJECT: Public Transportation Monthly Report

Purpose

The Public Transportation Monthly Report provides updates to City Council on public transit related items. In addition to the updates provided below, attached is the EMBARK Norman Performance Report and the Norman On-Demand Performance Report for the previous month. These reports provide updates on key metrics associated with the operations of each respective transit systems.

Updates

• Go Norman Transit Plan (City of Norman Transit Long Range Plan Update)

- The Go Norman Transit Plan was approved by resolution by Council on June 22nd, 2021. Staff are continuing to move forward on the next steps as recommended in the plan. Recent work includes:
 - On February 14, 2023, Council approved contract K-2223-72 with Stronghold Construction to complete the renovation of the 320 E. Comanche St. property into the Norman Transit Center. A pre-construction meeting was conducted on February 21, 2023 to organize the start of the project, and a Notice to Proceed was issued on February 28, 2023. Construction commenced on March 1, 2023. It was estimated that the project would be completed and open in August 2023, however, the project has been delayed due to asbestos remediation and other items that came up throughout the project. The current estimated completion date is around October 1, 2023 with a ribbon cutting ceremony being planned for October 12, 2023 and the start of service with the opening of the facility on October 16, 2023. Work on the project during the month of August 2023 included:
 - Mechanical and electrical rough-in
 - Electrical service change over
 - Spray foam installation to close wall penetrations
 - Begin and finish electrical exterior
 - Begin and finish exterior paint
 - Storefront glass installation
 - Exterior seating structure delivery
 - Asphalt patching and seal coat
 - Overhead inspection
 - Seating structure assembly
 - Begin and finish sheetrock install
 - On December 13, 2022 Council unanimously approved a resolution to alter bus routes and transit bus services as recommended in the Go Norman Transit Plan to take effect in 2023. Staff are actively working to implement the approved changes, which includes changes to bus stops, signage and advertising, operator training, and outreach. These route changes are planned to go into effect on October 16, 2023, aligning with the opening of the new Norman Transit Center.

• Grants

- On April 12, 2023 Council approved a grant application to FTA's Bus and Bus Facilities (5339b) and Low-or No-Emissions Grants to purchase 6 CNG cutaway buses for fleet replacement. On June 26, 2023 FTA announced the project selections, and the City's grant application was awarded. Staff will begin the process to request Council's acceptance of the grant and procurement of the vehicles.
- Staff continue to research eligible grants to support existing operations, vehicle needs, and future improvements. Staff are preparing applications for the two ACOG grants that are currently available. Council will consider resolutions for approval for the applications to the Air Quality Small Grant for additional bus stop installations and to the Public Fleet Conversion Grant for pantograph, or overhead, chargers for the electric buses to charge in route.

• Microtransit Pilot Program

- Following a study to determine the best plan for establishing a microtransit pilot program in the City of Norman, staff conducted a competitive bid process. The proposal from Via Transportation was determined to be the best suited to the needs of Norman. Contract K-2223-164 with Via Transportation was approved unanimously by council on June 27, 2023. Following interest from the University of Oklahoma, on August 8, 2023 Council approved contract K-2223-164 with the University and a companion amendment to the existing contract with Via to expand this program to include the University's SafeRide program. Website updates and the end user app both went live on August 16, 2023 and the microtransit service launched on August 21, 2023. The initial performance report for this

office memorandum

service is attached.

• **Fleet Maintenance & Vehicle Procurement**

- City Fleet Maintenance staff continue to ensure that the transit fleet is in operational condition each morning for line up, despite the age of the vehicles that the City inherited.
 - The City's Transit Fleet includes 27 revenue vehicles, 13 in the fixed-route fleet and 14 in the paratransit fleet. Unfortunately, even accounting for replacement vehicles that have been accepted so far, 17 out of 27 (4 of 13 in the fixed route fleet; 13 of 14 in the paratransit fleet) of the revenue vehicles used in the City's transit fleet have met their useful life and are eligible to be retired according to FTA requirements.
 - There are multiple ongoing purchases for replacement vehicles in progress, and once all of these ordered vehicles have been delivered it is expected the City will only have 9 out of 27 (3 out of 13 in the fixed route fleet; 6 out of 14 in the paratransit fleet) of the revenue vehicles used in the City's transit fleet which have met their useful life and are eligible to be retired according to FTA requirements.
- The City is currently in the process of purchasing 5 paratransit vans and staff anticipates receiving these vehicles Sept/Oct 2023. Below is background on this purchase:
 - On December 14, 2021 the City Council passed and adopted resolution R-2122-72 transferring \$346,703 from the Capital Fund Balance to be matched with \$122,812 from the Public Transit and Parking Fund to be used to replace 5 paratransit vehicles in the Transit Fleet for a total of \$469,515. Due to ongoing supply chain issues the price of the vehicles had increased, however staff were able to identify additional FTA grant funding allocated to Norman to supplement the cost increase and decrease the amount of local match that was provided from the Public Transit and Parking Fund. Resolution R-2122-98 was approved by Council on March 8 transferring an additional \$149,454 (for a total cost of \$584,655) to cover the cost increase. FTA grant OK-2020-026 will be amended to \$496,157 leaving a local match of \$88,508 (a reduction in the local matching funds of \$34,304.)
- The City has recently completed the process of purchasing five CNG 35' fixed route buses. All five of the vehicles have been delivered, accepted, and paid for as of September 11, 2023. Below is background information on this purchase:
 - Utilizing transit 5339 funds allocated from FY21 (grant number OK-2020-026), 1 35' CNG bus will be purchased. These were funds allocated to the Norman urbanized area by formula. In addition, on June 14, 2022 the City Council approved a contract with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) accept Surface Transportation Block Grant – Urbanized Area (STBG-UZA) funding for the purchase of 2 35' low-floor CNG transit buses. An Authorization to Purchase for these three buses was approved by Council on August 23, 2022. A purchase order was issued on September 14, 2022 to the manufacturer.
 - Utilizing funds received from the FY22 FTA Low- or No-Emissions Vehicle Program, staff proposed to purchase 2 additional CNG 35' fixed route buses. Council approved a resolution accepting the grant and an authorization to purchase the buses on September 27, 2022. The purchase order for two buses was issued September 29, 2022.
- The City is currently in the process of purchasing 3 paratransit ADA compliant minivans for revenue service as well as 2 non-revenue support vehicles. The support vehicles arrived in late June and are already in service. The paratransit minivans were delivered in mid-August, however did not meet initial inspections and will undergo warranty repairs before being accepted. Below is background on this purchase:
 - Council provided funding in the budget sufficient to outright purchase a single large transit bus and a single paratransit vehicle. Because of effective use of grant funding and only using a small percentage of budgeted money as a local match against grant funds, staff proposed to use \$355,692.55 of the remaining funding (\$357,810) for the outright purchase of 3 additional ADA minivans for the paratransit fleet and replacement of two support vehicles which was approved by the City Manager on April 6, 2023.
 - The first of the two non-revenue support vehicles, a 2023 Ford Escape, was delivered on June 8-2023 and staff are completing the proper paperwork and inspections to bring it into active service and decommission the vehicle it will be replacing.

Conclusion

Thank you for your review of these updates and attached monthly performance reports.

Attached:

1. EMBARK Norman Performance Report for August 2023.
2. Norman On-Demand Performance Report for the first four weeks of service (8/21/23 to 9/18/23)

office memorandum



PERFORMANCE REPORT

Transit System Report

August 2023

Purpose

The Transit System Report provides a summary of both internal indicators and performance measures used to evaluate the performance of the EMBARK transportation system for the City of Norman. The internal indicators are mainly used by staff to compare performance to previous periods whereas, the performance measures having

specific targets are more outcome-based and are included in EMBARK's strategic business plan to help demonstrate accomplishments given the resources that are provided. The internal indicators and performance measures included in this report address ridership, dependability, safety and align with EMBARK's mission.

Total Ridership

Total ridership for EMBARK Norman in August 2023 was 38,329 compared to 24,440 in August 2022. The average total daily ridership was 1,420 for August 2023, a 56.91% increase from 905 in August 2022. Fiscal-year-to-date ridership is 68,455 passengers, a 51.66% increase from the August 2022 YTD total of 45,137.

The fixed-route service totaled 36,156 for August 2023 compared to 22,291 for August 2022. Average fixed-route daily ridership for August 2023 was 1,346 compared to 800 for August 2022, a 68.25% increase. Passengers with bicycles or similar means of travel totaled 1,091, compared to 900 for August 2022. Passengers with wheelchairs or other mobility devices totaled 519, compared to 128 for August 2022.

PLUS ridership totaled 2,173 for August 2023, compared to 2,149 for August 2022. The average total PLUS ridership was 80 for August 2023, the same as August 2022. Passengers with wheelchairs or other mobility devices totaled 391 for August 2023, compared to 368 for August 2022, a 6.25% increase.

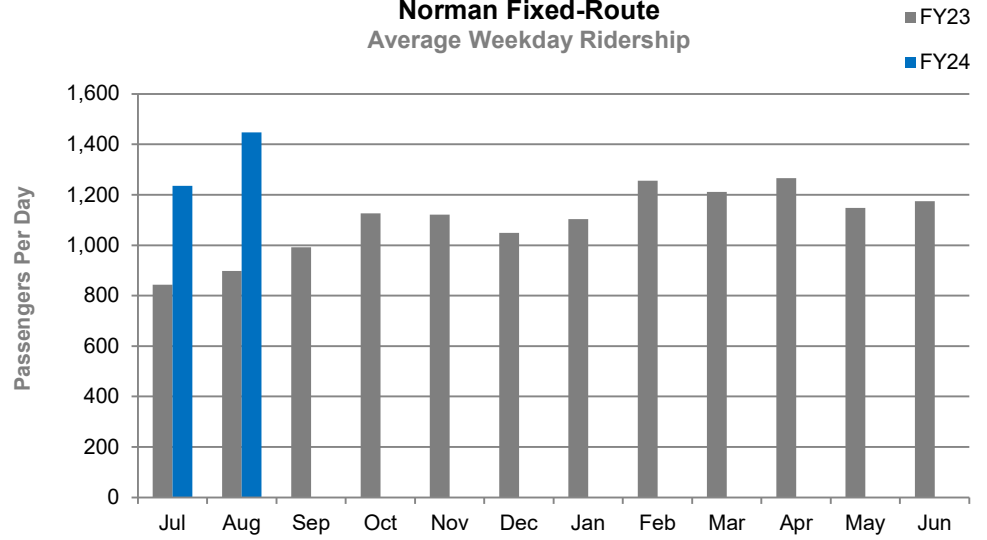
Norman Transit Services	Aug FY24	Aug FY23	+/- Aug FY23
Fixed Routes (M-F)	33,145	20,555	61.25%
110 - Main Street	6,829	4,220	61.82%
111 - Lindsey East	14,443	8,927	61.79%
112 - Lindsey West	4,573	2,821	62.11%
120 - West Norman	213	178	19.66%
121 - Alameda	6,996	4,350	60.83%
144 - Social Security	91	59	54.24%
Fixed Routes (Sat)	3,011	1,677	79.55%
110 - Main Street	827	391	111.51%
111 - Lindsey East	1,160	576	101.39%
112 - Lindsey West	378	268	41.04%
121 - Alameda	646	442	46.15%
PLUS ADA Service	2,173	2,149	1.12%
PLUS (M-F)	2,079	2,057	1.07%
PLUS (Sat)	94	92	2.17%
Bikes	1,091	900	21.22%
Wheelchair	519	128	305.47%
PLUS Wheelchair	391	368	6.25%

Fixed Route Weekday Ridership

Total fixed-route weekday ridership for August 2023 was 33,145, a 61.25% increase from 20,555 in August 2022. Average weekday passenger ridership totaled 1,447 in August 2023; a 61.14% increase compared to 898 for August 2022. The average RPSH was 21.23.

Classes for the Fall 2023 semester at the University of Oklahoma began on 8/21.

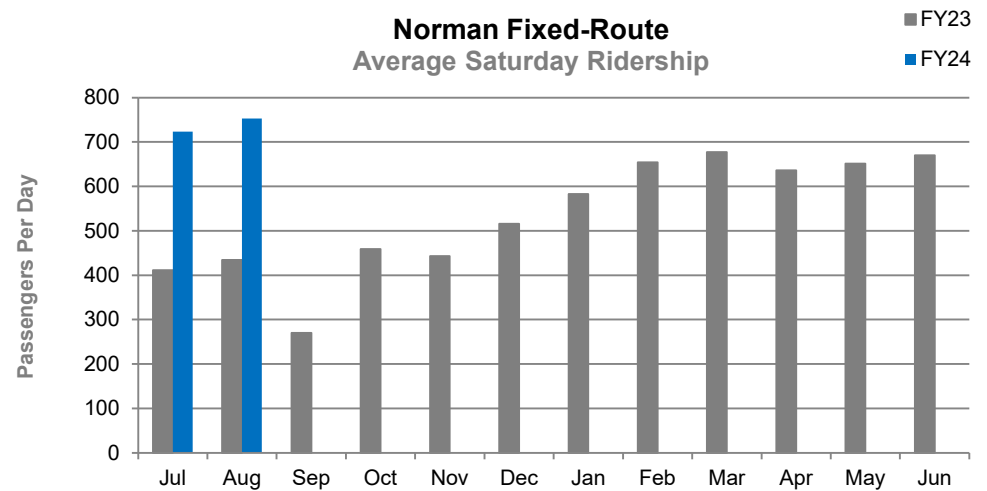
Norman Fixed-Route
Average Weekday Ridership



Fixed Route Saturday Ridership

Total fixed-route Saturday ridership for August 2023 was 3,011, a 79.55% increase from 1,677 in August 2022. Average Saturday passenger ridership totaled 753 for August 2023, a 73.50% increase from 434 in August 2022. The average RPSH was 21.28.

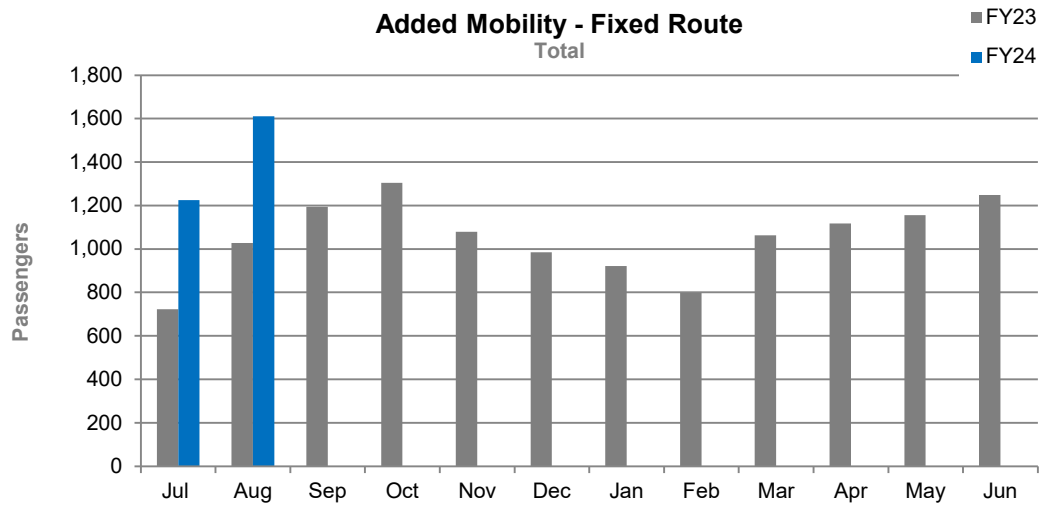
Norman Fixed-Route
Average Saturday Ridership



Added Mobility – Fixed Route

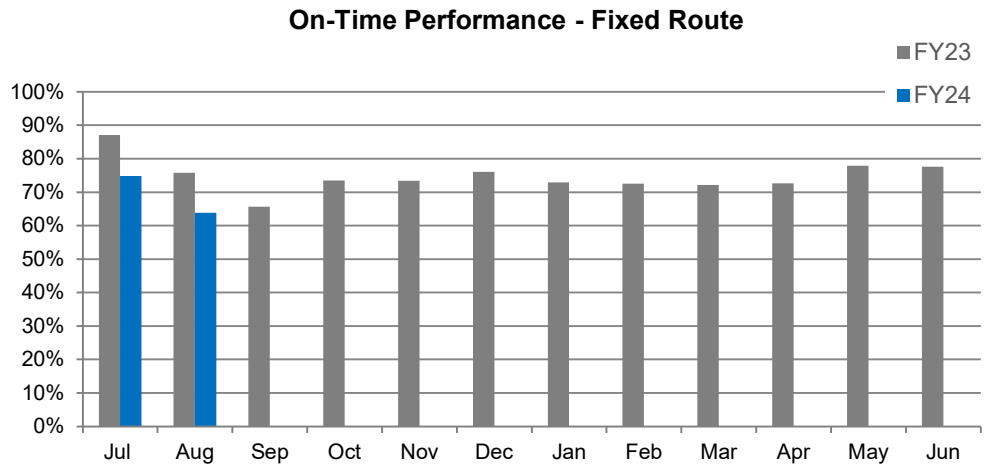
Total passengers with added mobility, such as bikes and wheelchairs, totaled 1,610 for August 2023, an 56.61% increase from 1,028 in August 2022.

Bike passengers totaled 1,091, a 21.22% increase from 900 in August 2022. Wheelchair passengers totaled 519, a 305.47% increase from 128 in August 2022.



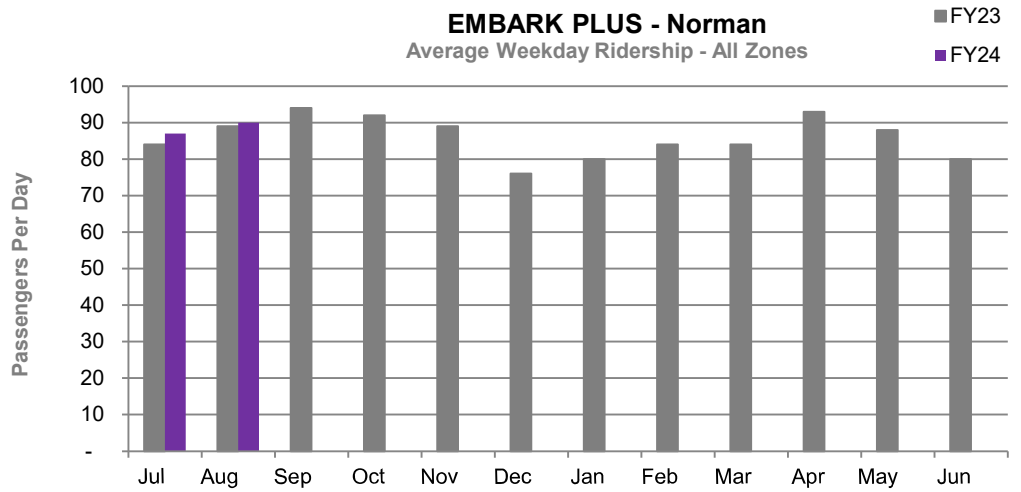
On-Time Performance – Fixed Route

Cumulative on-time performance for fixed-route buses was 63.80% in August 2023, a 12.00% decrease from 75.80% in August 2022.



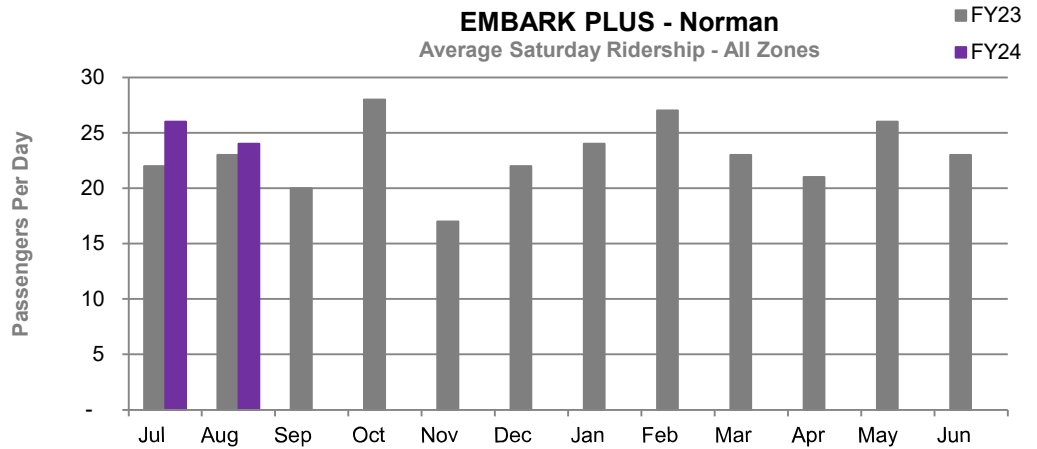
PLUS Weekday

Total PLUS weekday ridership for August 2023 was 2,079, a 1.07% increase from 2,057 in August 2022. Average weekday passenger ridership totaled 90 for August 2023, a 1.12% increase from the August 2022 average of 89. RPSH was 1.25.



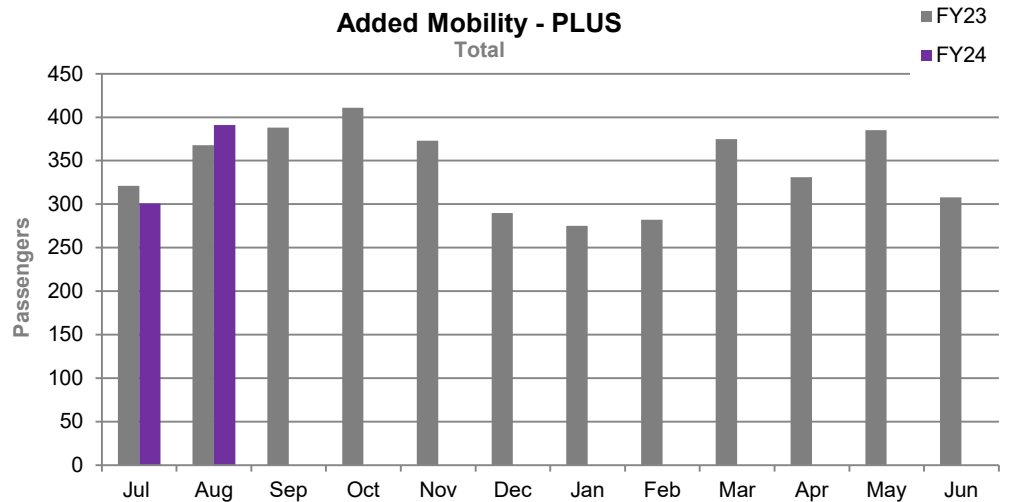
PLUS Saturday

Total PLUS Saturday ridership for August 2023 was 94, a 2.17% increase from 92 in August 2022. Average Saturday passenger ridership totaled 24 for August 2023, a 4.35% increase from 23 in August 2022. RPSH was 1.29.



Added Mobility - PLUS

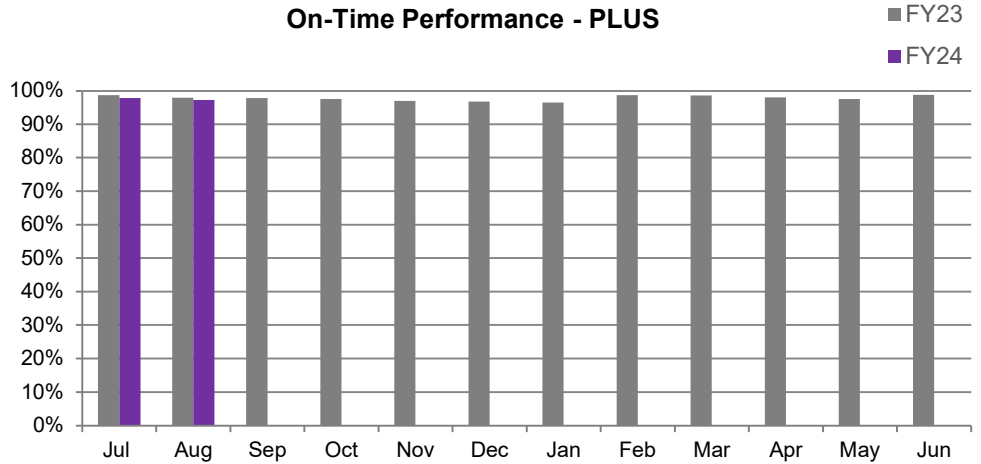
PLUS passengers with added mobility totaled 391 for August 2023, a 6.25% increase from 368 in August 2022.



On-Time Performance - PLUS

Cumulative on-time performance for PLUS buses was 97.23%, a 0.66% decrease from 97.89% in August 2022.

Weekday on-time performance in the primary zone was 97.74%, a 0.16% decrease from 97.90% in August 2022. Weekday on-time performance in the secondary zone was 95.84%, a 1.48% decrease from 97.32% in August 2022. Saturday on-time performance was 96.63%, a 3.37% decrease from 100.00% in August 2022.



PLUS Weekday Service Summary	Aug FY24	Aug FY23	+/- Aug FY23		PLUS Saturday Service Summary	Aug FY24	Aug FY23	+/- Aug FY23
Total Passengers	2,079	2,057	1.07%		Total Passengers	94	92	2.17%
Total Trips	2,007	1,956	1.07%		Total Trips	89	86	3.49%
Trips Daily Average	87	89	-2.25%		Trips Daily Average	22	22	0.00%
Trips Requested	2,089	1,957	6.75%		Trips Requested	89	86	3.49%
Denied Trips	82	1	8,100%		Denied Trips	0	0	0.00%
Capacity Denials	0	1	-100.00%		Capacity Denials	0	0	0.00%
No Show	29	22	31.82%		No Show	0	1	-100.00%

PLUS Applications	Aug FY24	Aug FY23	+/- Aug FY23
New Applications	19	10	90.00%
Renewals Received	7	10	-30.00%
Applications Approved	17	17	0.00%
Applications Denied	4	4	0.00%

Summary of Services Table: August 2023

The table below provides daily averages for the number of passengers carried by many of the services offered by EMBARK Norman. The year-to-date (YTD) figures are cumulative totals.

EMBARK Norman Service Summary	ADP Aug FY24	FY24 YTD	FY23 YTD	Service Profile	Aug FY24	Aug FY23
Fixed Routes (M-F)	1,447	57,794	37,405	Weekdays	23	23
Fixed Routes (Sat)	753	6,625	3,622	Saturdays	4	4
PLUS (M-F)	90	3,813	3,740	Gamedays	0	0
-Zone 1*	68	2,950	3,154	Holidays	0	0
-Zone 2**	22	863	586	Weather	0	0
PLUS (Sat)***	24	223	200	Fiscal YTD Days	52	52
				Cal. YTD Days	205	205

*Requires ¾ mile

**Operates only on Weekdays until 7:00 pm

***Operates only in Zone 1

Strategic Performance Measures

MEASURE	FY 24 YTD	FY 24 Targets	
# of Norman fixed-route passenger trips provided	64,419	251,881	■
# of Norman paratransit trips provided	4,036	21,000	■
% of on-time Norman paratransit pick-ups	97.51%	98.58%	●
# of Norman bus passengers per service hour, cumulative	19.84	13.04	■
# of Norman bus passengers per day, average	1,240	800*	●
% of Norman required paratransit pick-ups denied due to capacity	0.00%**	0.00%*	●
% of on-time fixed-route arrivals	69.30%	80.94%	▲

*These targets are not being tracked in LFR but can be found in the KPI spreadsheet.

**One denial due to capacity was recorded for FY23

Glossary

- **Added Mobility** – Wheelchairs, bicycles, scooters, and other devices used by passengers in conjunction with transit
- **ADP** – Average Daily Passengers
- **ADR** – Average Daily Ridership
- **AVG** – Average
- **Fixed Route** – Regular bus service
- **FY22** – The fiscal year 2022. Lasted from 7/1/2021 to 6/30/2022
- **FY23** – The fiscal year 2032. Lasting from 7/1/2022 to 6/30/2023
- **FY YTD** – Fiscal Year, Year to Date
- **KPI** – Spreadsheet used to record and compare all data used in the monthly report
- **LFR** – "Leading for Results," EMBARK's internal performance measurements and targets
- **OTP** – On-time performance
- **Paratransit** – ADA vehicle service for seniors and other clients with special needs
- **PAX** – Passenger
- **PLUS** – Brand name for EMBARK Paratransit service
- **RPSH** – Riders per service hour
- **SAT** – Saturday
- **WKD** – Weekday
- **YOY** – Year-over-year, used to compare the previous year's performance when available
- **ZONE 1** – Primary zone for PLUS operation
- **ZONE 2** – Secondary zone for PLUS operation



Performance Report

Microtransit Pilot Program Performance Report

August 2023- Startup

Purpose

The Microtransit Pilot Program Performance Report provides a summary of service performance measures used to evaluate the performance of the Norman On-Demand microtransit transportation system for the City of Norman. The performance measures used by staff may change over the course of the pilot program. Initially we will be comparing the key performance indicator goals that were outlined in the request for proposals (RFP) to the data provided from Via for the Norman On-Demand

program. These indicators and performance measures include average walking distance, maximum walking distance, average rider wait time, maximum rider wait time, and the percentage of ride requests completed within 20 minute wait time. Because the program started late in the month of August, this initial report will cover the first four weeks of service (from 8/21/2023 to 9/17/2023). Future reports will evaluate data by calendar month.

Service Profile, Hours, and Pricing

Norman On-Demand is a pilot microtransit service which launched for late night and Sunday service in core Norman on August 21, 2023. Norman On-Demand is a turnkey service provided by TransitTech provider Via. The Norman On-Demand app is available on the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store.

This service compliments existing public transit service by extending service into the late night hours and during the day on Sundays for a small fee. Because this is a pilot program, there may be changes to service area, hours of operations, or other aspects of the service while the City focuses the program to efficiently serve the needs and desires of our community.

Service Hours		Pricing	
Monday-Wednesday	7pm – 1am	First Passenger	\$2.00
Thursday- Saturday	7pm – 3am	Each Additional Passenger	\$1.00
OU SafeRide: Thursday- Saturday	10pm – 3am	OU SafeRide (OU Students using OU email address during SafeRide hours)	Free
Sunday	10am – 6pm		
<i>ADA/Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles available upon request.</i>			

Key Performance Indicator Measures

MEASURE	Target	August Startup (8/21/23-9/17/23)
Average Walking Distance	0.10 miles	0.08 miles
Maximum Walking Distance	0.25 miles	0.32 miles
Average Rider Wait Time	<15 min	16.5 min
Maximum Rider Wait Time	20 min	N/A*
Percentage of Ride Requests Completed Within 20min. Wait Time	>80%	69.45%**

*OU has requested longer available wait times for OU students during SafeRide hours (up to a 2 hour max). Because we are not yet able to filter these rides from the remaining data, we cannot confidently report this statistic at this time

**Number of ride requests with 'Completed' status that have a wait time of 20 minutes or less (766) as a percentage of the total number of ride requests with 'Completed' status (1103). This data may also be skewed by longer available wait times for OU students during SafeRide hours.

Additional Performance Measures

Rider Experience

The system includes an automated feedback process where all ride ratings with 4 stars or fewer that have actual written feedback attached are reviewed by customer support agents. Poor ride ratings alone are not categorized as complaints. No complaints on the service were received in the month of August, and Norman staff have not received any reported complaints so far in the month of September.

Rider Experience	
Average Ride Duration	9.7 min
Average Ride Distance	2.9 miles
Average Ride Rating	4.9 (out of 5 stars)

Program Engagement and Rider Growth

Since the Norman On-Demand App launched on August 21, 2023 at least 1,633 individual people have created accounts, which is a direct result of marketing efforts for the new program. Of these accounts at least one in four have utilized the service once. We are not yet able to differentiate between OU student accounts and others, but look forward to being able to do so in the future. Riders are also able to call 405-643-8638 to schedule rides without using the App.

Engagement		
App Accounts Created Since Launch	1,633	
Active Accounts*	740	45.3%
Rider Accounts**	427	26.1%
Repeat Rider Accounts***	268	16.4%
*accounts where user has engaged with ride requests at least once		
**accounts with at least 1 completed ride		
***accounts with at least 2 completed rides		

Accidents and Vehicles

There have been no accidents or escalated incidents to report since the start of the service on August 21, 2023. Any such incidents will be reported to Norman Transit staff in a timely manner by our provider Via.

One complication for the new service was located by the Field Manager when conducting wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) trainings prior to the service start. Due to an issue with the seatbelt, one of the two WAV vehicles is currently at a maintenance shop in Oklahoma City waiting on a new seat belt part to arrive in order to fix the issue. This issue has had minimal impact on the service because the other WAV vehicle is still in active use.

**City of Norman Transit
Service Changes Effective
October 16, 2023**

Council Community Planning and
Transportation Committee
September 28, 2022



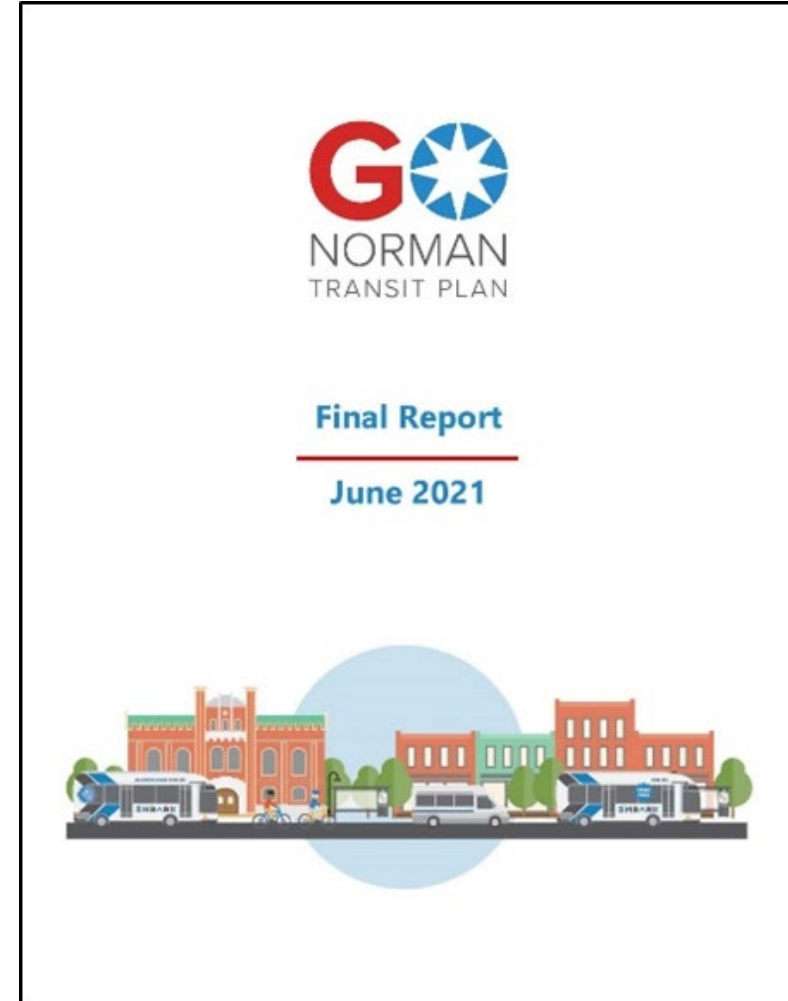
Agenda

- Background
- Summary of Service Changes
- Current and Proposed System Maps
- Summary of Feedback
- Next Steps



Background

- University of Oklahoma transferred operations of City public transit service on July 1, 2019.
- In July 2020, the City hired a consultant, Nelson/Nygaard, to assist with updating the Long Range Transit Strategic Plan.
- On June 22, 2021 the *Go Norman Transit Plan* was unanimously adopted by City Council following an 11 month process of collecting data and receiving feedback from stakeholders, City staff, City Council, and the public.



Background continued

- Projecting 10 years into the future, the *Go Norman Transit Plan* identified many recommendations for transit improvements in Norman. These recommendations included additional frequency, Sunday service, expanded service coverage, and expanded hours on weekdays and Saturdays.
- The recommendations were put into phases to help guide the City in making improvements strategically as funding became available. The first phase of improvements was to revamp the current route network to better serve existing areas within or near the existing budget.
- On September 27, 2022 City Council unanimously approved and acknowledged the Public Participation Process for service changes as identified in the *Go Norman Transit Plan* and this presentation.



Public Notice

- The City of Norman hereby provides notice of three Public Meetings in order to receive comments on proposed summer 2023 transit service modifications planned for implementation in August 2023.
- Based on input gathered at the public meetings, it is anticipated that the City of Norman Council will act on these changes on December 13, 2022.
- These service changes will affect the entire Norman Transit service.

- **Public Meeting Schedule**

- **November 15, 2022: 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.**

- Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

- Join: tinyurl.com/NormanTransitMeeting

- Call in: 888-475-4499

- Meeting ID: 873 4614 7180

- **November 16, 2022: 2:30-3:30 p.m.**

- Norman Central Public Library

- Oklahoma Redbud Room

- 102 W Acres St, Norman, OK 73069

- **November 17, 2022: 6:30-7:30 p.m.**

- City of Norman City Hall

- Council Chambers

- 201 W Gray St, Norman, OK 73069



Proposed Route Changes

- In total, 41 official comment interactions were collected during the public comment period (Oct. 30-Nov. 21)
 - Public Meetings: 19 individual discussions and 4 comment cards
 - Other options provided: 18 comments
- City Council reviewed the Public Engagement Report and approved the proposed service changes on December 13, 2022
- Goal to operate new service beginning in August 2023, due to asbestos remediation and other factors the service changes will begin October 16, 2023

Summary of Service Changes

- All routes will be operated out of a new Norman Transit Center, located at 320 E Comanche St.
- All routes will be reconfigured to improve service operations and passenger usability. This includes having routes mostly operate bidirectionally.
- Some route segments will be eliminated or realigned, resulting in both retired and new bus stops.



New Norman Transit Center

- Currently utilizing OU/CART's Brooks Street Transfer Station.
- Purchased property at 320 E. Comanche St in April 2022 to remodel into a new Transit Center.
- Remodel began March 3, 2023 and will be completed by the beginning of October 2023. Improvements include:
 - Exterior: Bus bays, ADA compliant site circulation, benches, trash cans, and shelters.
 - Interior: Public and staff restrooms, waiting area with vending machines and water fountain, staff breakroom.



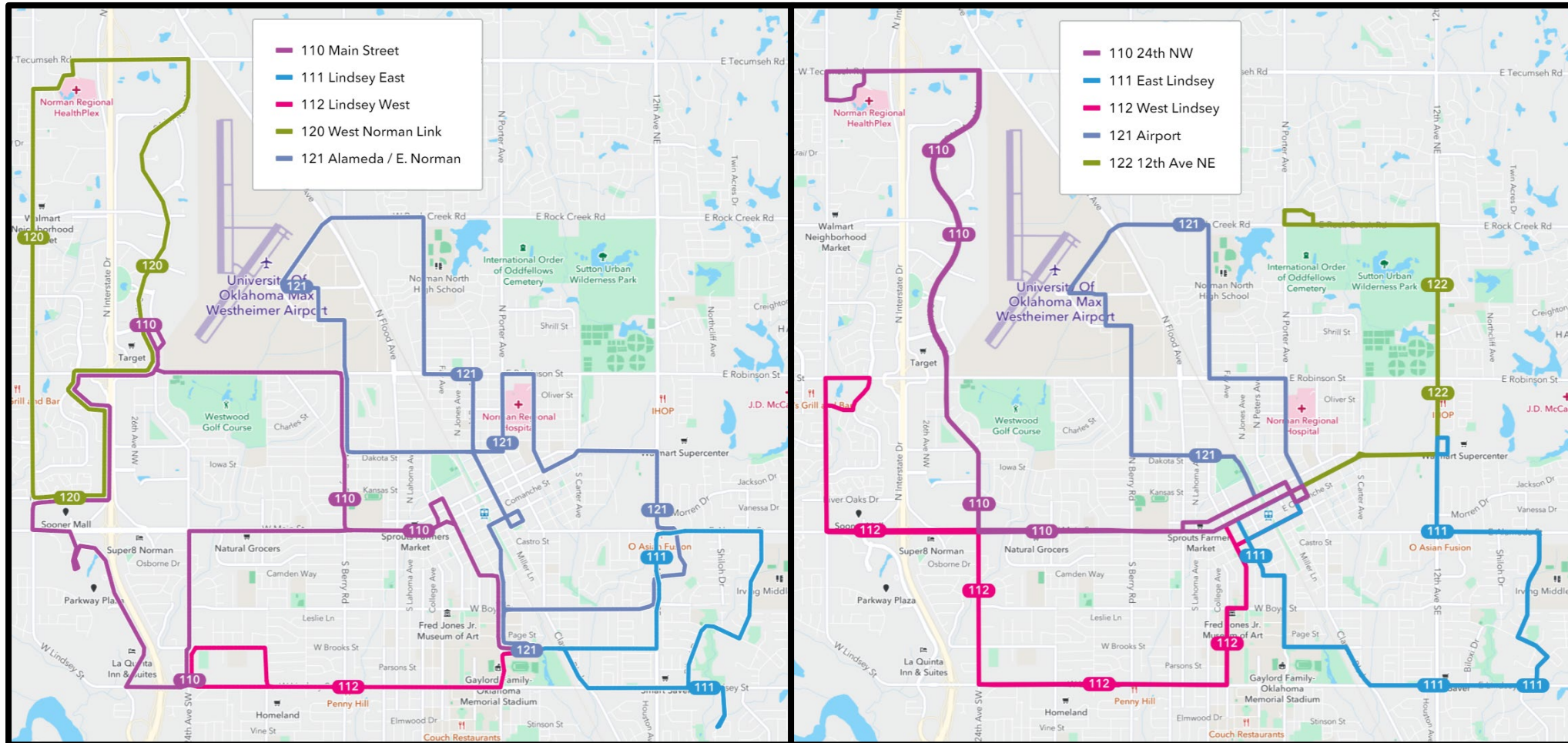
Current Exterior of 320 E. Comanche St



Rendering of Remodeled Exterior of 320 E. Comanche St



Current and New System Maps

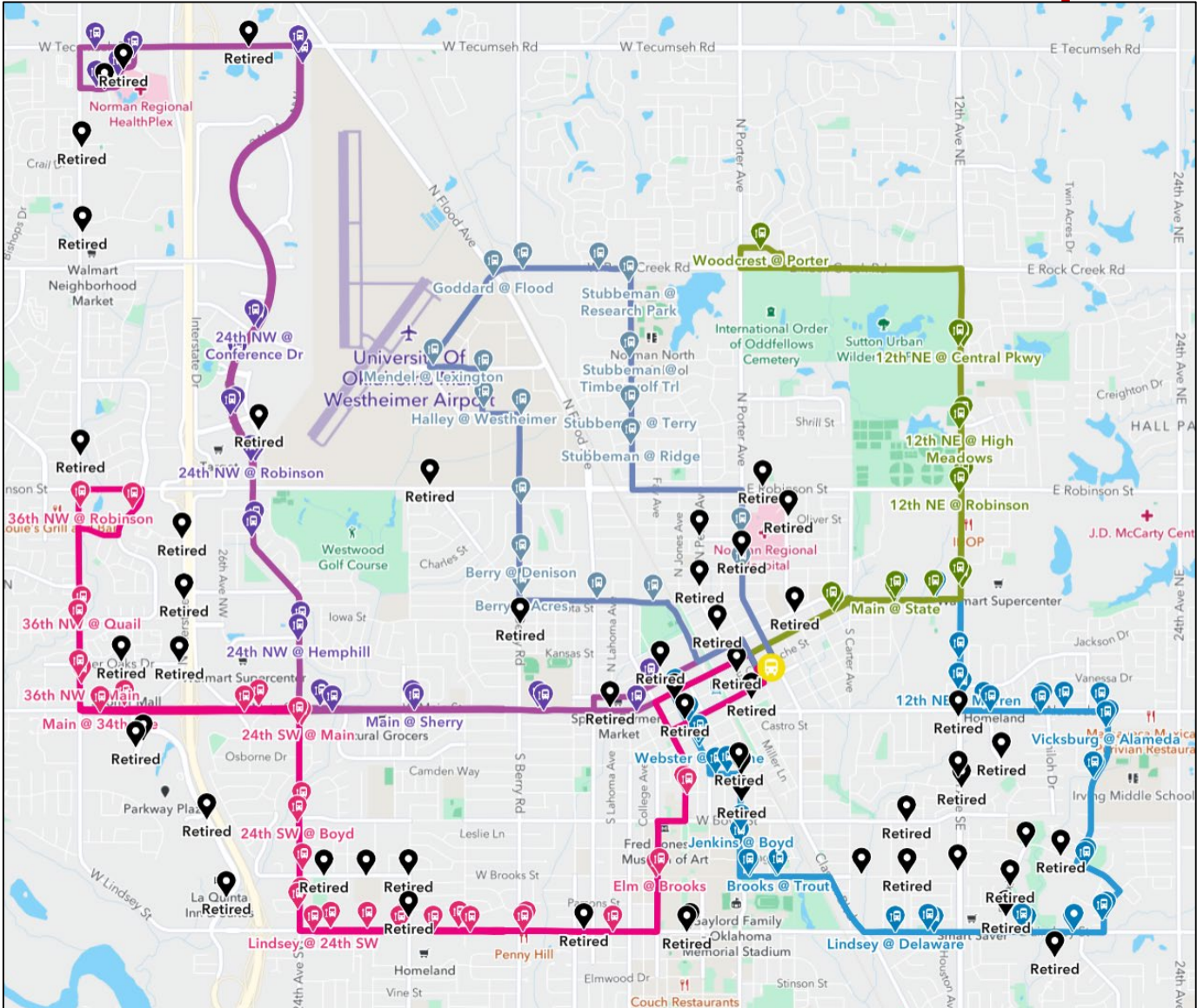


Current Routes

New Routes



New Route System Map with New and Retired Bus Stops



Summary of Recent Outreach Efforts

- Refreshed City of Norman webpage for changes, with a link to an interactive map of routes and stops.
- EMBARK webpages with information on changes and linking to City webpage.
- September 8 – Bus Stop Closure signs installed at all stops to be retired with QR code and webpage information.
- September 8 – Flyers posted on each bus.
- September 12 – Email to list of about 115 stakeholders asking to share information/flyer.
- September 17 – Front page Norman Transcript article about the changes.
- September 21 – University of Oklahoma mass email to students, faculty, and staff.
- Staff have currently spoke to the following groups: Chamber Aviation/Transportation Committee, Thunderbird Clubhouse, and League of Women Voters.



Questions?

**Transit and Parking Division
Department of Public Works
City of Norman**

www.normanok.gov/residents-visitors/transit-parking

transit@normanok.gov

(405) 307-7219

