



## CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 07/13/2021

**REQUESTER:** Paul D'Andrea, Capital Projects Engineer

**PRESENTER:** Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works

**ITEM TITLE:** CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF EXPENDITURE NO. SIX UNDER CONTRACT K-1314-102 BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AND SMITH-ROBERTS LAND SERVICES, INC., IN AN AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED \$89,055 TO PROVIDE ACQUISITION SERVICES UNDER AN ON-CALL CONTRACT FOR THE PORTER AVENUE STREETScape 2019 BOND PROJECT.

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### **BACKGROUND:**

The intersection of Porter Avenue and Acres Street as well as the Porter Avenue Corridor from Robinson Street south to Alameda Street, has been the subject of much discussion and study over the years, due to concerns over traffic and pedestrian safety.

In 2010, Ochsner Hare & Hare, prepared a Porter Avenue Corridor Study which sought to analyze the area and provide a vision for future improvements to the corridor.

A recent evaluation of traffic control needs revealed that traffic volumes have reached levels that justify the installation of a new traffic signal at Porter Avenue and Acres Street. Approximately 20,000 vehicles pass through the intersection every day. An aerial photograph of the two 2019 Bond projects within the Porter Avenue Corridor is included in the exhibits to this agenda item.

On April 25, 2012, staff presented a summary of a report prepared for the Porter Avenue intersection with Acres Street to the City Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee. In the presentation, a number of improvement alternatives were discussed for this location. The presentation included discussion related to the existing in-pavement lighted crosswalk, a recent Safe Routes to School project for Longfellow Middle School and Jefferson Elementary School, and the most recent intersection evaluation including the traffic signal warrant analysis.

The alternatives discussed included:

- Staffing the existing pedestrian crossing across Porter Avenue at Acres Street with a Norman Public Schools crossing guard
- A project to encourage school children to cross Porter Avenue at existing signalized intersections (e.g., Johnson Street or at Gray Street)
- The installation of a mid-block pedestrian signal on the Porter Avenue corridor in reasonable proximity to Acres Street
- Signalization of the Porter Avenue intersection and Acres Street
- Construction of a roundabout at the Porter Avenue intersection and Acres Street (as suggested in the Porter Avenue Corridor Study)

Following the presentation, the feedback provided to staff was that the most logical approach to solving the neighborhood issues with the intersection of Porter Avenue and Acres Street would be to install a traffic signal for vehicular and pedestrian use. Accordingly, Council authorized \$55,300 toward the development of a conceptual plan for the intersection in the FYE 2013 budget.

In September 2013, Cabiness Engineering, L.L.C, submitted the Conceptual Plan Report for Porter Avenue and Acres Street Intersection Improvements. This plan compared three (3) design options. Based on the comparison of design features, Design Option No. 2 – Offset Centerline was recommended due to Estimated Total Project Cost, with Option 2 being the least expensive, while still meeting the desired design outcome. In addition, Option 2 requires less Right-of-Way Acquisition.

<b>Design Option</b>	<b>Estimated Project Cost</b>
Design Option No. 1 – Maintain Existing Centerline	\$3,178,553.47
Design Option No. 2 – Offset Centerline	\$2,637,734.07
Design Option No. 3 – Roundabout	\$3,614,976.19

\*Staff Recommendation of Design Option No. 2

In July 2017, the Norman City Council approved an amendment to the contract, with Cabiness Engineering, L.L.C., in the amount of \$160,000.00, for Final Design Plans for Design Option No. 2 for the Porter Avenue and Acres Street Intersection Improvements under project TR0097.

On April 2, 2019, the citizens of Norman voted in favor of a Bond Issue to finance the local share of nineteen transportation improvement projects. Two of the nineteen 2019 bond projects are the Porter Avenue and Acres Street Intersection Bond Project and the Porter Avenue Streetscape Bond Project. The Porter Avenue Streetscape Bond Project consists of design and construction of streetscape elements along the Porter Avenue corridor between Robinson Avenue on the north and Alameda Street on the south.

Proposed improvements include:

- New sidewalks
- Driveway consolidation or elimination (access management)
- Decorative roadway and pedestrian lighting
- Landscaping
- New curb and gutter
- Street furniture (e.g., benches, trash receptacles, ash urns, etc.)

The Porter Avenue and Acres Avenue Intersection Project began construction in November of 2020. The Porter Avenue Streetscape project is scheduled for construction in fall of 2021.

On September 10, 2019, the Norman City Council approved Amendment No. 2 to contract No. K-1213-165 for the design of the Porter Avenue Streetscape project including the portion of the project from Robinson Avenue to Hughbert Street, which coincides with the northern boundary of the Porter Avenue and Acres Street Intersection Project.

On April 28, 2020, the Norman City Council approved Amendment No. 2 to contract No. K-1213-165 for the design of the Porter Avenue Streetscape project which expands the design scope to encompass the full project, adding the section of Porter Avenue from the southern boundary of the Porter Avenue and Acres Street Intersection Bond Project to Alameda Street.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Porter Avenue Streetscape Bond Project is anticipated to need right-of-way and or easements from twenty-one (21) different parcels to construct the improvements. A typical easement acquisition for this project would involve a narrow strip of land usually along the Porter Avenue frontage. These easements are necessary to construct the proposed streetscape elements, such as decorative sidewalks and area features, improved lighting, and landscaping or greenspaces. No total parcel acquisitions are included in this project. The project design has focused on minimizing the required easements to mitigate any negative impacts to businesses.

The City of Norman has three (3) on-call right-of-way consultants to choose from for these services. Staff selected Smith-Roberts Land Services (SRLS) for the Porter Avenue Streetscape Bond Project due to their experience on the Porter Avenue and Acres Street Intersection Bond Project.

If approved, funding for these land acquisition services will be allocated from the Porter Avenue Streetscape Bond Project right-of-way account (Account No. 50594019-46001, Project No. BP0418).

For land acquisition of this nature, City policy requires compliance with the Federal Acquisition and Relocation Act. Property owners are provided ample opportunities to negotiate the sale of land to be used for public right-of-way. Property owners may donate the property or they may be compensated for fair market value. Council must approve and accept all land and easement dedications.

Construction of Porter Avenue Streetscape Bond Project has received federal funding for FYE 2022.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of Authorization for Expenditure No. Six, under Contract K-1314-102 between the City of Norman, OK and Smith-Roberts Land Services, Inc., in an amount not-to-exceed \$89,055.00, to provide acquisition services under an on-call contract utilizing funds from the Porter Avenue Streetscape Bond Project (Account No. 50594019- 46001, Project No. BP0418).