



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 09/08/2026

REQUESTER: Taylor Johnson, AICP, Transit and Parking Program Manager

PRESENTER: Scott Sturtz, P. E., Public Works Director

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF R-2627-29: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION'S FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUS AND BUS FACILITIES GRANT PROGRAM (5339b) TO UPGRADE CAD-AVL SOFTWARE FOR THE TRANSIT FLEET; AND EXPRESSING ITS COMMITMENT TO SEEK FUNDING FOR THE LOCAL MATCH IF SUCH GRANT IS AWARDED AND PROJECT APPROVED.

BACKGROUND:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program (49 U.S.C. 5339) makes federal funding resources available to states and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities. Funding is provided through formula allocations (5339(a)) and competitive grants (5339(b)).

On June 27, 2019, the City of Norman was recognized by the FTA as an eligible recipient of federal transit funds and is an eligible applicant of the 5339(b) Bus and Bus Facilities competitive grant program. Eligible activities for this program include capital projects to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses, vans, and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities, including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities.

A requirement of the Bus and Bus Facilities Program is to identify the source of local match to the federal funds and to provide evidence and commitment of those funds with the entity's application, such as through a Council resolution. When a project is selected, funds remain available for obligation for four fiscal years. This includes the fiscal year in which the amount is made available or appropriated plus three additional years.

Computer aided dispatch (CAD) / Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) refers to technologies, or a combination of technologies, used to determine the position of a vehicle and report that

information to a dispatcher in real time. Some examples of CAD/AVL technologies include Global Positioning System/GPS (triangulation of satellite signals), Signposts (beacons at known locations transmit signals picked up by vehicle), Ground-Based Radio (triangulation of radio tower signals), or Dead-Reckoning (vehicle's odometer and compass used to measure new position from a previous known position).

In 2011, the University of Oklahoma Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (OU/CART) entered into an agreement with GMV Syncromatics to provide an onboard intelligent transportation system (ITS) for its fleet of fixed-route public transportation vehicles. As part of the initial transition of the public transportation service in the summer of 2019, the City of Norman continued the service agreement with GMV Syncromatics for the ITS which is the CAD/AVL system currently being used by the transit fleet. The estimated useful life for CAD/AVL systems is five to seven years.

DISCUSSION:

The GMV Syncromatics ITS includes hardware and software the City uses to meet local, state, and federal data reporting requirements such as ridership, vehicle miles, and vehicle hours. The existing ITS includes mobile data terminals (MDTs) which are a central control point for drivers, providing schedule adherence data and integrating controls for various onboard equipment. The ITS also includes LED signage and an automated voice annunciator system (AVAS) which helps the City meet its Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for exterior and interior bus stop announcements both verbally and visually. Our current ITS also utilizes GPS tracking, which is essential for both operational efficiencies with dispatching and on-time performance, as well as providing web-based, real-time bus arrival and departure data to passengers.

Maintaining these functions with modernized software and equipment is expected to improve the reliability of operational and passenger data collection. Consistent and accurate data for ridership, vehicle locations, running-time, on-time performance, and stop-level data can provide insights regarding schedule adherence, headway monitoring, detours, delays, and general performance management. With better information collected about the system, operations staff are better positioned to minimize service disruptions, boost service reliability, enhance the passenger experience through more accurate arrival predictions and real-time information, and promote sound transit planning and decision-making for future investment and development of the transit system as a whole.

Staff have identified these technological upgrades as eligible activities of the 5339(b) Bus and Bus Facilities competitive grant program. Estimates from the City's current vendor indicate an initial implementation cost of \$270,000 which would be eligible for a grant share of 80% federal (\$216,000) and 20% local match (\$54,000) funding.

If the project is selected and the City receives such a grant, funding could be sourced from the Public Transit and Parking Fund, the General Fund, the Capital Fund, or any other available local funding source allowed by law.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that City Council approve Resolution R-2627-29 authorizing the City Manager or his designee to submit a grant application to the Federal Transit Administration's

fiscal year 2026 Bus and Bus Facilities grant program (5339b) to upgrade CAD-AVL software for the transit fleet and expressing its commitment to secure funding for the local match if such grant is awarded and project approved.