



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 09/13/2022

REQUESTER: City of Norman – Norman Utilities Authority

PRESENTER: Jane Hudson, Director of Planning & Community Development

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF ORDINANCE O-2223-6 UPON FIRST READING BY TITLE: AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AMENDING SECTION 460 OF CHAPTER 22 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN SO AS TO GRANT SPECIAL USE FOR MUNICIPAL USE IN THE A-1, GENERAL AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT FOR PART OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER (SW/4) OF SECTION TWENTY-TWO (22), TOWNSHIP NINE (9) NORTH, RANGE TWO (2) WEST OF THE INDIAN MERIDIAN, CLEVELAND COUNTY, OKLAHOMA; AND PROVIDING FOR THE SEVERABILITY THEREOF. (NORTH OF E. ROBINSON STREET APPROXIMATELY 2,000' EAST OF 24TH AVENUE N.E.)

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

The applicant, City of Norman – Norman Utilities Authority (NUA), is requesting Special Use for Municipal Use with specific variances on the NUA facility. The subject property is currently zoned A-1, General Agricultural District with Special Use for Municipal Use. An amendment to the existing Special Use Permit is requested to allow for additional access off E. Robinson Street and for proposed variances to masonry requirements, gravel parking/drive standards, and landscaping requirements for the facility located in the northwest corner of the site – the NUA site.

In April of 2017, the Planning staff was directed to update/amend the existing Zoning Ordinance to establish a policy for all municipal projects to properly zone the proposed development with a Special Use request. In order for the City to have the greatest flexibility to locate municipal and other public facilities in appropriate locations throughout the City, staff prepared a Zoning Code amendment that allows “municipal uses, public buildings and public utilities” in all zoning districts as a Special Use. The Special Use designation provides Planning Commission and City Council the opportunity to ensure that municipal uses, public buildings and public utilities are in the proper location and enables the approval of conditions that provide protection for surrounding property owners. At the same time, this review process allows approval of variances to specific regulations that best promote the health, safety and general welfare for the community and still meet the needs of the City to provide adequate services to the citizens.

Adopted by O-1920-14 in 2019, the City of Norman proposed to plat, amend the NORMAN 2025 Land Use designation and rezone this subject tract from A-2, Rural Agricultural District, to PL, Parkland, A-1, General Agricultural District, and A-1, General Agricultural District with Special Use for a Municipal Use. The site is planned for future municipal development; the new Emergency Operations Center, EOC, and to serve the future needs of the Utilities Department.

PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS:

GREENBELT MEETING: GB 19-15, August 19, 2019

Greenbelt forwarded this item with no additional comments.

PRE-DEVELOPMENT MEETING: PD 22-15, July 28, 2022

There were no comments from those that attended the meeting.

ZONING ORDINANCE CITATION: A Special Use request shall be reviewed and evaluated on the following criteria according to the Zoning Ordinance 22:434.1, Special Uses:

1. Conformance with applicable regulations and standards established by the Zoning Regulations.
2. Compatibility with existing or permitted uses on abutting sites, in terms of building height, bulk and scale, setbacks and open spaces, landscaping and site development, and access and circulation features.
3. Potentially unfavorable effects or impacts on other existing or permitted uses on abutting sites, to the extent such impacts exceed those which reasonably may result from use of the site by a permitted use. (NOTE: Throughout this Section, "Permitted Use" means any use authorized as a matter of right under the applicable zoning district.)
4. Modifications to the site plan which would result in increased compatibility, or would mitigate potentially unfavorable impacts, or would be necessary to conform to applicable regulations and standards and to protect the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare.
5. Safety and convenience of vehicular and pedestrian circulation in the vicinity, including traffic reasonably expected to be generated by the proposed "Special Use" and other uses authorized and anticipated in the area, considering existing zoning and land uses in the area.
6. That any conditions applicable to approval are the minimum necessary to minimize potentially unfavorable impacts on nearby uses and to ensure compatibility of the proposed "Special Use" with existing or permitted uses in the surrounding area.

EXISTING ZONING: The subject property is currently zoned A-1, General Agricultural District, with Special Use for Municipal Uses.

STAFF ANALYSIS: Per directed changes to the Zoning Ordinance in 2017, Special Use for Municipal Use, Public Buildings and Public Utility can be granted in any zoning district. In addition, the changes made in 2017 allow for the approval of conditions that meet the needs of the City to provide adequate services to the citizens of Norman.

The Norman Utilities Authority (NUA) is proposing additional access to the site from E. Robinson Street, approximately 600' from the existing access drive. In addition, this amendment proposes to permit the following variances for the NUA site only:

- Buildings on the site shall not comply with the eighty (80) percent masonry requirements normally required for special uses;
- NUA site will have gravel parking and a gravel drive for employees, something not normally allowed per standards from Zoning and Public Works; and
- Landscaping requirements for parking shall not apply to the NUA site.

ALTERNATIVES/ISSUES:

IMPACTS: The request to amend the site plan adopted by O-1920-14, and for variances to the masonry requirements, gravel parking/drive standards, and to the landscape requirements will not create any foreseeable negative impacts on adjacent properties. These are low impact municipal projects. This general area consists of undeveloped land to the south across E. Robinson Street, the Vernon Campbell Water Treatment Facility, undeveloped commercially zoned property, open space/parkland to the west, and large lot residential development to the east.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

The applicant is seeking to amend the site plan adopted by O-1920-14 to add additional access off E. Robinson Street, and for variances to the masonry requirements, landscaping requirements, and gravel parking/drive standards. These proposed changes will be for the new Line Maintenance Facility for the Norman Utilities Authority.

OTHER AGENCY COMMENTS:

FIRE DEPARTMENT: No comments

PUBLIC WORKS/ENGINEERING: This property has an existing preliminary plat and a final plat has been submitted.

TRAFFIC ENGINEER: No comments.

UTILITIES: No comments.

CONCLUSION:

Staff forwards this request to amend the site plan adopted by O-1920-14, and for variances to the masonry requirements, gravel parking/drive standards, and landscape requirements for the NUA site, as Ordinance O-2223-6 for consideration by City Council. At their meeting of August 11, 2022, Planning Commission unanimously recommended adoption of Ordinance O-2223-6 by a vote of 7-0.