CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 28, 2022

The City Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 4:00 p.m. in the Conference Room on the 28th day of April, 2022, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT:	Councilmember Hall, Schueler, Studley, and Chairman Holman
ABSENT:	Councilmember Peacock
OTHERS PRESENT:	Ms. Helen Grant, Councilmember-Elect Ward 4 Mr. Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works Mr. David Riesland, Transportation Engineer Mr. Scott Sturtz, City Engineer Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney Ms. Syndi Runyon, Administrative Technician IV

Item 1, being:

PUBLIC TRANSIT REPORT.

Mr. Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager, said the fixed route service transported 22,363 passengers in March 2022, compared to 16,059 in February 2022. The daily average ridership was 828. There were 964 passengers with bicycles and 228 passengers with wheelchairs or other mobility devices transported in March.

The paratransit service transported 2,119 passengers in March 2022, compared to 1,366 in February 2022. Average daily ridership was 78, an increase of 37.89% compared to February 2022.

Saturday service totaled 1,769 in March 2022, a 29.98% increase over 1,361 in February 2022.

On October 1, 2021, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) announced the grant cycle was open for the Air Quality Small Grant Program. This program seeks to improve air quality in Central Oklahoma by reducing reliance on single-occupancy vehicle trips. Small transportation infrastructure projects and transit improvements as well as projects focused on congestion relief efforts are all eligible. He said ACOG approved a grant to install 80 new bus stops associated with the recommended route change in the Go Norman Transit Plan.

Mr. Johnson said Staff worked with Nelson/Nygaard, the consultant for Go Norman Transit Plan, on an amendment to their contract to make minor changes to reflect using 318-320 East Comanche

Item 1, continued:

Street as a Transit Center rather then the Norman Depot. Staff is now working on an additional amendment to include architectural design for the renovation of the new Transit Center.

City Fleet Maintenance continues to ensure the transit fleet is in operating condition each morning, which includes mechanical maintenance as well as fueling, cleaning inside and outside, sanitizing activities, etc.

The City purchased two battery operated electric buses and Staff anticipates receiving these vehicles in August/September 2022. Approximately 70% of the vehicle purchase price will be reimbursed through a grant received from the Federal Transit Authority's 2021 Low or No Emission Vehicle Program. Staff continues to identify other avenues to purchase transit vehicles to modernize and standardize its fleet using existing local and federal funds available.

On December 14, 2021, Council approved the purchase of five (5) Dodge Promaster vans for the City's public transportation fleet; however, due to supply chain issues the vehicle costs have increased and Staff is working on an agenda item to address the increase. He said Staff has identified additional Federal Transit Authority (FTA) grant money to supplement the cost increase and potentially decrease the amount of the local match.

Staff is drafting a resolution to accept Surface Transportation Block Grant – Urbanized Area (STBG-UZA) funding through the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) for the purchase of two 35-foot low-floor Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) transit buses.

Items submitted for the record

1. Memorandum dated April 28, 2022, from Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager, through Shawn O'Leary, P.E., CFM, Director of Public Works, to Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee
2. EMBARK Norman Performance Report for March 2022

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Item 2, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING A TRAFFIC STUDY ON WEST LINDSEY STREET FOLLOWING THE LINDSEY STREET BOND PROJECT.

Mr. David Riesland highlighted the 2011 Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) survey results regarding the level of support for various transportation improvements that included:

- Improving traffic, eliminating bottlenecks, and relieving congestion – 44% very supportive, 45% supportive, 9% neutral, and 2% not supportive;
- Improving maintenance of existing roadway/bridges – 45% very supportive, 43% supportive, 10% neutral, and 2% not supportive;
- Improving major roads around the outer edges – 40% very supportive, 41% supportive, 14% neutral, and 5% not supportive;

Item 2, continued:

- Adding improvements without widening existing roads – 24% very supportive, 49% supportive, 21% neutral, and 6% not supportive;
- Constructing and repairing sidewalks – 39% very supportive, 33% supportive, 21% neutral, and 8% not supportive;
- Adding dedicated lanes for bikes/some major streets – 38% very supportive, 27% supportive, 19% neutral, and 16% not supportive;
- Maximize traffic flow by investing in technologies – 28% very supportive, 34% supportive, 25% neutral, and 13% not supportive;
- Explore rail-based public transportation – 34% very supportive, 24% supportive, 18% neutral, and 24% not supportive;
- Expand the local bus routes and times – 30% very supportive, 24% supportive, 37% neutral, and 10% not supportive; and
- Widening existing roads to relieve congestion – 23% very supportive, 27% supportive, 26% neutral, and 26% not supportive.

Mr. Riesland said the CTP Survey showed Lindsey Street as the number one stormwater problem in Norman and the number one traffic congestion corridor in the Oklahoma City Metropolitan area. The crash rate was three times higher than the national average for similar roadways. He said access management was the key to a successful 2012 Lindsey Street Bond Project.

Lindsey Street, pre-construction, carried approximately 21,000 vehicles per day, had 90 driveways, crash frequency created unreliability, and the street featured unique peaking characteristics. Long-term volume projections showed increased demand for east/west connectivity into the University of Oklahoma (OU) area. The goal of the bond project was to create a safe, vibrant east/west gateway that meets the transportation needs of all users, i.e., motorists, pedestrians, bikes, busses, etc.

Construction began on July 5, 2016, and three pre-construction years were established in 2013 through 2015. Construction was substantially completed on December 6, 2017, with some activities extending into early 2018. The three post-construction years were established in 2019 through 2021.

The average daily traffic (ADT) in 2014 was 20,221 and Level of Service (LOS) using Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) methodology is 18,900 so 2014 observed 7% over capacity making Lindsey Street heavily congested. The ADT in 2020 (post-construction was 19,213 and LOS was 38,000 so 2020 observed volume was nearly 50-% under capacity having very little congestion.

Mr. Riesland said a study area along Lindsey Street from the west edge of 24th Avenue S.W. to the east edge of Berry Road was established, which had 224 total collisions between 2013 and 2015 for the 3 pre-construction years. Between 2019 and 2021, there were 121 total collisions for the 3 post-construction years or a 46% reduction in the total number of collisions. He said there were 46 total injury collisions in the three pre-construction years and 36 total injury collisions in the three post-construction years or a 22% reduction in the total number of injury collisions.

Item 2, continued:

Collisions at signalized intersections are notorious for an increase in rear end collisions, which are generally less serious than right angle collisions. There were three traffic signals along Lindsey Street pre-construction and four traffic signals post-construction so more traffic signals mean more rear end collisions, right? Mr. Riesland said the three pre-construction years featured 50 signalized rear end collisions of which nine had injuries and the three post-constructions years featured 33 signalized rear end collisions of which seven had injuries. This is a 34% reduction in the number of signalized rear end collisions and a 22% reduction in those same collision types with injuries. He said this is compelling evidence of reduced congestion.

Another common type of collision at signalized intersections is the right angle collision. The three pre-construction years featured 13 signalized right angle collisions of which six had injuries and the three post-construction years featured six signalized right angle collisions of which three had injuries. This is a 54% reduction in the number of signalized right angle collisions and a 50% reduction in those same collision types with injuries. Mr. Riesland said this is a pleasant surprise given that the City only added one signal to the corridor that further reduced congestion.

The remaining types of collision at signalized intersections were reviewed as a single category all of which are generally less dangerous than right angle collisions. The three pre-construction years featured 15 other signalized collisions of which three had injuries and the three post-construction years featured 18 other signalized collisions of which had eight injuries. These increases in these categories are explained by the additional traffic signal on the corridor in the post-construction condition.

The three pre-construction years featured 32 unsignalized right angle collisions of which five had injuries and the three post-construction years featured 22 unsignalized right angle collisions of which six had injuries. This is a 31% reduction in the number of unsignalized right angle collisions, but a 20% increase in those same collision types with injuries.

One of the goals of the Lindsey Street Bond Project was to improve safety at the large number of driveways on the corridor and strategies to improve safety included driveway consolidation and the median to manage access. Mr. Scott Sturtz, City Engineer, said Staff visited every business regarding their driveways, but were only successful in paring down one driveway. He said Staff would eventually like to have retail parking behind businesses with buildings closer to the street for better aesthetics, safety, etc.

Mr. Riesland said congestion has improved because of the additional lane in each direction and the similar or slightly lower traffic volumes. The most dangerous forms of collisions are post-construction and the number of injury collisions are generally lower. Access management on the corridor was successful based on the lower number of collisions at unsignalized intersections. All in all the Lindsey Street Bond Project was a successful project with the goals of lower congestion levels and improved safety.

Councilmembers requested Staff present this information to full Council.

Item 2, continued:

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Lindsey Street: Before and After Study," dated April 28, 2022

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Item 3, being:

UPDATE ON THE HISTORICAL SIGN INSTALLATION PROJECT.

Mr. Riesland said the Historical Sign Installation Project evolved during the FYE 22 Budget discussions. An amendment to the budget added $30,000 for the establishment of historical markers/signs and since this project is considered a Capital Project, the Traffic Division was assigned to the project. A kick-off meeting by the Citizen Advisory Ad Hoc Committee (Ad Hoc Committee) led by Mr. Andy Rieger, Ad Hoc Committee Chair, was held on August 23, 2021.

A draft of the text for the first sign, Naming of Norman, was received from the Ad Hoc Committee and forwarded to three sign contractors in the Oklahoma City area on November 15, 2021. Quotes were received from Walker Companies - $9,300 to $13,750 depending on two size options; G&S Sign Services - $6,095; and J&B Graphics - $5,453.26. Based upon the low bid, J&B Graphics was selected for fabrication and installation of all signs in the program.

The final draft for the first sign was received from the Ad Hoc Committee on November 15, 2021, and immediately sent to J&B Graphics for creation of a proof that states, "In the spring of 1871, Kentuckian Abner Ernest Norman was hired as a chainman for a government survey crew working its way from the Red River to north of the Canadian River. He later was placed in charge of the crew, having studied math and surveying at an academy near Louisville. While in the area of what we now know as Norman, his crew camped at a spring south of the present day intersection of Lindsey Street and Classen Boulevard. Near the camp, the bark was scraped off one side of a large elm tree and the words "Norman's Camp" were burned into the trunk, likely in jest of their young supervisor. The railroad was completed in the spring of 1887 and the first passenger trains began rolling through Central Oklahoma a few months later. Railway officials assigned the name, Norman, to the stop and later said they based the name on what was burned in the tree by the survey crew. Norman left the survey crew in 1873 and returned to his home in Kentucky where he eventually operated a wholesale lumber business until his death in 1922."

The proof went through a series of steps including font, font color, and sign background color. The final proof was received on January 6, 2022, notification from J&B Graphics that the sign had been fabricated and received in their shop came on March 1, 2022, and the location was staked on March 2, 2022. Utility locates were called on March 7, 2022; the footing was dug and poured on March 16, 2022; and installation of the sign occurred on March 18, 2022.

The next historical sign being manufactured, A Navy on the Prairie, states, "After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, the United States entered the war and the Navy began looking for sites to train fighter pilots. The Navy bought 2,537 acres in Norman and leased another 62,000 acres throughout Oklahoma. In the spring of 1942, crews blitz-built the Naval Air Station

Item 3, continued:

(North Base) at the University of Oklahoma's Max Westheimer Field. A large mound made from dirt scraped up for the lengthening of the runways was named Mount Williams in honor of an early commander of the Naval Air Station Norman and the dirt hill was used as a backstop for the rifle range. Simultaneously, on the south side of Norman, the Navy built dozens of temporary buildings and opened the Naval Air Technical Training Center (NATTC) and a Naval hospital. Every three months, 800 cadets learned to fly on the North Base and another 18,000 mechanics, machinists, and nurses were trained at the NATTC throughout the year. The bases were closed after the war but the technical training center (South Base) was reactivated briefly during the Korean War. When that war ended, the land and buildings were deeded to the University and the City and some were sold to private interests."

The proof of sign two went through a series of steps including font, font color, and sign background color. The final proof was received on February 9, 2022, and notification from J&B Graphics that the sign had been fabricated and received in their shop. Next steps will include staking the location for the sign and installation of the sign.

The third historical sign proposed to be manufactured, Caring for People with Mental Illness, states, "Dozens of Oklahomans boarded a train in Jacksonville, Ill., one day in 1895. They were bound for the prairie town of Norman, Oklahoma, and the newly opened private sanitarium that would care for them. That was the beginning of what is now known as Griffin Memorial Hospital near this location. By the end of September, 1895, 78 patients were returned to Oklahoma. Prior to 1895, Oklahoma Territory contracted out treatment of its mental patients to the state of Illinois. When the failed High Gate Academy buildings on the east end of Main Street in Norman became available, some Oklahoma doctors formed the Oklahoma Sanitarium Co. to open a facility here. They contracted with the territorial legislature to care for the patients closer to their families. The first patient, a woman from Woodward County, was admitted on June 15, 1895. In 1915, the sanitarium was sold to the state and became known as Oklahoma State Hospital. The name changed in 1952 to Central State Griffin Memorial Hospital. In 1994, the name was shortened to Griffin Memorial Hospital, to honor Dr. David Griffin, an early-day hospital psychiatrist and administrator. Inscribed on the hospital's Main Street front gate as "Norman Institute for Violently Mentally Insane." Legend has it that Dr. Griffin, a psychiatrist from North Carolina, personally chiseled the word "insane" off the sign in an early attempt to reduce the stigma of mental illness. Thousands of patients have received care at the hospital, which, at one time, employed hundreds of Oklahomans. It was a gated city within our city. The hospital had a dairy, a cattle operation, gardens, laundries, ice and power plants, and recreational areas for patients. Most patients had jobs within the institution. Doctors and administrators lived on the grounds with their families."

The Ad Hoc Committee is waiting for a proof of sign three. The Ad Hoc Committee is also waiting on a proof of sign number four, Ada Louis Sipuel Fisher Trail, and sign number five, Chickasaw Ranchers and Their Impact. After J&B Graphics has evaluated these signs, cost estimates will be obtained to ensure sufficient funds remain.

Mr. Riesland said the Historical Sign Budget is $30,000 and the cost of the first sign was $5,445.26; the cost of the second sign was $6,227.29; and the cost of the third sign was $6,431.94

Item 3, continued:

leaving a balance of $11,887.51. The cost of the fourth sign will determine if adequate funds remain to complete the fifth sign. A potential second phase of the program would pay for any remainder of the fifth sign as well as a minimum of four additional signs.

Councilmembers fully supported the historical sign program and said they would like to see its continuation.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Historical Signs: Progress Report", dated April 28, 2022

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Item 4 being:

PRESENTATION OF THE FINAL SUMMARY OF THE CAMPUS CORNER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT.

Mr. Riesland updated Councilmembers on the Campus Corner Infrastructure Project that allowed all fixtures to be rewired and upgraded to Light Emitting Diode (LED). He said voltage was dropped from 480 volts to 120 volts so Traffic Division personnel could provide future maintenance. No poles were replaced and the cost of the lighting and receptacle upgrades was just under $200,000. He said the need to bore under the Presbyterian Church driveway onto White Street was discovered during the project and the Traffic Division provided the cost of $1,200. Three poles were a different diameter than the fixtures so the Traffic Division financed three adapters at a cost of $600 from its operating budget as well. Many receptacles were at high locations on the pole and were lowered for easier access/maintenance. The cost of the receptacle upgrades were included in the cost of the lighting upgrades and originally, not all poles had receptacles, but each pole now has a receptacle.

The breaker boxes are locked with the breaker in the "off" position and a key was provided to the Campus Corner Association on April 12, 2022, and they were shown which breaker controls the receptacles for Christmas lights, etc. All receptacles are currently at good working heights for merchants and locked breaker boxes with the breaker in the "off" position will eliminate the unintended use that had been occurring.

Mr. Riesland said the Campus Corner project removed all existing single space parking meters, which greatly reduced the number of obstacles in the sidewalks. The project included the placement of 14 new multi-space pay stations throughout Campus Corner and some remote areas received new single space parking meters (two on Asp Avenue north of White Street and seven on Buchanan Street). The cost of parking meter upgrades was just over $107,000.

Mr. Riesland highlighted the project timeline as follows:

Item 4, continued:

- April 2021 – the City was contacted about the condition of the curbs and lighting around Campus Corner
- April 2021 - $200,000 was allocated to fund sidewalk and curb repairs identified in the Community-Neighborhood Improvement Project
- April 2021 – Project was advertised for bidding
- May 17, 2021 – Bids were received and the low bidder was Rudy Construction for $134,850
- May 25, 2021 – Council approved contract
- June 3, 2021 – Contractor began work
- August 13, 2021 – Work was completed prior to students returning to OU

The project area included Boyd Street to White Street and Asp Avenue to University Boulevard. The project scope included replacing 285 square yards (SY) of concrete; replacing 215 SY colored/stamped concrete; replacing 503 linear feet (LF) of curbs; painting 183 LF of curbs; replacing 28 SY of Americans with Disabilities (ADA) pipe rail barricade; and installing 132 LF of pipe rail barricade.

The contractor will adhere to all federal, state and local laws and ordinances and will refer to the City of Norman's Engineering Design Criteria and Standard Specifications and Construction Drawings. New construction will meet ADA Guidelines and colored/stamped concrete will match existing colored/stamped concrete in the area.

The initial project budget was $200,000 with a bid of $134,850 and a change order in the amount of $20,735 for total final project costs of $155,585.

Chairman Holman asked how the balance of the funds would be used and Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, said the money would go back into the Capital Fund for other projects. Councilmember Holman suggested using the remaining funds for other needed maintenance on Campus Corner. He said more signage is needed to guide drivers to the Asp Street parking lot because many drivers are unaware there is a public parking lot available on Asp Street.

Councilmembers were pleased with the results of the project and thanked Staff for their hard work on the Campus Corner Infrastructure Project.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Campus Corner: Improvements Update, dated April 28, 2022

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The meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

ATTEST:

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City Clerk Mayor