



## CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 12/9/2025

**REQUESTER:** David Riesland, Transportation Engineer

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

**ITEM TITLE:** CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF RESOLUTION R-2526-89: REQUESTING OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE (TA) GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PORTION OF THE MULTI-MODAL PATH ALONG THE NORTH SIDE OF STATE HIGHWAY 9 BETWEEN BLUE CREEK DRIVE AND 72<sup>ND</sup> AVENUE SE (WARD 5).

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### **BACKGROUND:**

The Federal Highway Administration's Transportation Alternative (TA) program has historically provided funding for projects and programs defined as transportation alternatives that advance non-motorized transportation opportunities, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, historic transportation preservation, environmental mitigation and vegetation management activities; recreational trail programs; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former interstate system routes or other divided highways. TA continues to build upon the legacy of the Transportation Enhancements (TE) and Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) programs by providing funding opportunities for local projects that support additional transportation options, strengthen local economies, improve quality of life, protect the natural environment, and enhance transportation infrastructure.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) replaced TA with a set-aside of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program funding for TA. These set-aside funds include all projects and activities that were previously eligible under TA, encompassing a variety of transportation projects that prioritize safety, comfort, and connectivity to destinations for all people who use the street network such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity. The call for projects, through the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), is now open and will remain open through December 31, 2025.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The construction of two miles of path along State Highway 9 between 48<sup>th</sup> and 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenues SE

bid through ODOT on Thursday, November 20, 2025. The low bidder came in higher than funds were available for construction. The possibility was anticipated such that Staff arranged a base bid to construct the path between 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and Blue Creek Drive with a bid alternate between Blue Creek Drive and 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SE which includes a bridge over Dave Blue Creek for the proposed path (see location map, attached). When the bids came in higher than available construction funds, only the base bid west of Blue Creek Drive could be awarded within the allocated funding (bid tabulation is attached). This funding application, if approved, will fill the gap in the funding to be able to complete the project all the way to 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SE.

The need for the multi-modal path along the State Highway 9 corridor was first identified during the public hearings that ODOT conducted in 2010 as part of the design and environmental clearance process associated with road improvements and was phased over a number of years. The initial citizen and City Council request was for the multi-modal path to be included in the various State Highway 9 improvement projects. State officials opted not to do so; rather to support the City of Norman with the implementation of separate multi-modal path projects under the TE program.

This path, when completed, will connect the existing network of sidewalks/paths in the City of Norman to the roads and trails at Lake Thunderbird State Park. Additionally, this completed path will provide an excellent facility for citizens to walk, jog, or bike between central Norman and Lake Thunderbird. These activities have consistently been among the highest recreational priorities in our community. When the entire path is completed, promotional guides, brochures, and maps showing and promoting this path will be distributed by various entities including the Oklahoma Department of Tourism, various chambers of commerce and visitors bureaus.

The first two phases, between 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, were implemented using this approach. The next portion of path between 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and Blue Creek Drive will be under construction in early 2026. The next mile of path between 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SE and 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE is currently under design.

A call for projects for the next ODOT TA set-aside program is currently open and will close on December 31, 2025. For this call, staff will be submitting a project to fill the gap in the prior two miles between 48<sup>th</sup> and 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenues SE. The application associated with this Resolution will be for remaining portion of the path between Blue Creek Drive and 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SE.

The call for projects documentation indicates that grants will be awarded in Summer 2026. If the City is successful in receiving a grant, City Council must consider acceptance of the grant and entering into an agreement with ODOT. In that case, construction of the path might take place in late 2026.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of Resolution R-2526-89 requesting ODOT TA grant funding to provide 80% of the anticipated \$1,750,000 construction cost for the portion of multi-modal path along the north side of State Highway 9 between Blue Creek Drive and 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SE in east Norman.