



CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room, 201 West Gray, Norman,
OK 73069

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 5:00 PM

MINUTES

The City Council Study Session of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 5:00 PM, and notice of the agenda of the meeting was posted at the Norman Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and on the City website at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

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CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Holman called the meeting or order at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 1 David Gandesbery
Councilmember Ward 3 Robert Bruce
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 5 Brandon Nofire
Councilmember Ward 6 Joshua Hinkle
Councilmember Ward 7 Kimberly Blodgett
Councilmember Ward 8 Scott Dixon

ABSENT

Councilmember Ward 2 Matthew Peacock

OTHERS PRESENT

Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager
Ms. Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Tim Miles, City Engineer
Mr. Scott Sturtz, Public Works Director
Ms. Shannon Stevenson, Assistant City Manager
Major Chad Vincent, Norman Police Department
Mr. Clint Mercer, Finance Director
Ms. Jamie Meyer, Interim City Clerk
Mr. Derick Colwell, Sooner Mall Manager

AGENDA ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION OF PROPOSAL FROM SOONER MALL FOR A SALES TAX REBATE AGREEMENT

Ms. Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney, presented the item. She provided background on Sooner Mall, noting its long-standing presence in the community since opening in 1976, with subsequent expansions and renovations. The mall currently includes approximately 500,000 square feet of retail space and is operated by Sooner Fashion Mall, LLC, with General Growth Properties as the parent company.

Ms. Walker explained that the mall has requested a sales tax rebate agreement to reimburse certain property improvement costs. She noted that the City's Economic Development Incentive Policy (adopted in 2013) recognizes sales tax rebates as a tool but does not specifically address retail incentives. She indicated that this proposal represents a new approach for the City.

The proposed agreement would provide a rebate of up to 100% of new, non-dedicated sales tax revenue (2.3%), calculated based on growth above a three-year average (2022–2024). The baseline annual non-dedicated sales tax revenue is approximately \$1.5 million. Based on 2025 projections, the initial rebate amount is estimated at approximately \$60,000, with a maximum annual cap of \$300,000.

The agreement would have an initial term of five years, with the option to renew for two additional three-year terms, subject to Council approval and demonstrated progress. Eligible expenses would include capital improvements such as tenant buildouts, interior upgrades, common area enhancements, and infrastructure improvements. Routine maintenance would not qualify. Businesses relocating from within Norman would not be included in the calculation of new sales tax revenue.

Ms. Walker also noted that dedicated sales taxes (including public safety, capital improvements, and transit funding) would not be impacted by the rebate.

Council discussed the financial structure of the agreement, including the annual cap and projected growth needed to reach maximum rebate levels. It was noted that filling the vacant Sears anchor space could significantly increase sales tax generation.

Discussion included the potential for additional development on the property, including infill opportunities such as residential, hotel, or mixed-use projects, particularly given the removal of parking minimums.

Item 1, continued

Councilmembers expressed general support for maintaining the viability of Sooner Mall, noting its importance to the community, local economy, and overall quality of life. Several members emphasized the value of proactive investment to prevent long-term decline, referencing challenges faced by other regional malls.

Discussion also included:

- The potential for increased regional tenants to drive higher sales volumes
- The importance of continued reinvestment in the property
- Opportunities to modernize signage along the I-35 corridor to improve visibility
- Potential job creation associated with new tenants, including a prospective anchor tenant (estimated 200+ jobs and significant capital investment)

Council noted that the proposal is not contingent upon securing a specific tenant but is intended to support overall property improvements and tenant attraction.

There was general consensus among Council to proceed with further consideration of the proposal.

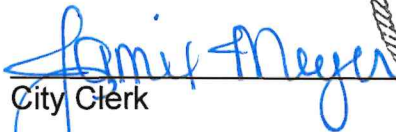
Staff indicated that feedback from the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) would be provided following its upcoming meeting. Pending that feedback, a term sheet is anticipated to be brought forward for Council consideration at the next regular meeting.

There was no objection from Council to placing the item on the upcoming agenda, subject to EDAB input.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

ATTEST:


City Clerk




Mayor