CITY OF NORMAN, OK
CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

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

Thursday, September 25, 2025 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

The Community Planning & Transportation Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, will meet in Regular Session in the Executive Conference Room in the Municipal Building, on Thursday, September 25, 2025 at 4:00 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.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Stephen Holman called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

PRESENT

Mayor Stephen Holman
Councilmember Ward 2 Matthew Peacock
Councilmember Ward 5 Brandon Nofire
Councilmember Ward 7 Kimberly Blodgett

OTHERS PRESENT

Councilmember Ward 1 David Gandesbery
Councilmember Ward 4 Helen Grant
Councilmember Ward 6 Joshua Hinkle
Mr. Darryl Pyle, City Manager
Ms. Shannon Stevenson, Assistant City Manager
Ms. Beth Muckala, Assistant City Attorney III
Mr. Anthony Purinton, Assistant City Attorney II
Mr. Taylor Johnson, Transit Parking and Program Manager
Mr. Jason Huff, Transit Planner and Grants Specialist
Mr. Scott Sturtz, Director of Public Works
Mr. Tim Miles, City Engineer
Mr. David Riesland, Transportation Engineer
Mr. Brian Hiney, Traffic Management Center Engineer
Mr. Joseph Hill, Streets Program Manager

AGENDA ITEMS

1. PRESENTATION OF THE AUGUST PUBLIC TRANSIT REPORT

Mr. Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager, presented the August 2025 Public Transit Report and gave an update on the Central Oklahoma Long Range Transit Plan.

- **Ridership**
    - Total rides: 43,718 (vs. 42,950 in August 2024).
    - Modest increase (less than 1,000), indicating a possible plateau in growth.
    - Fixed route ridership per service hour (weekday): 20.12 passengers.
    - Previous metrics were significantly lower (~low teens), showing long-term growth.
- **Norman On-Demand Service**
    - August 2025 rides: 2,640 vs August 2024 rides: 4,694
    - Decrease attributed to strategic service hour redistribution over the year.
    - Fleet consists of 7 minivans, with 5–6 active at a time.
    - Contract with Via utilizes a fixed number of vehicle hours annually, flexibly applied during peak periods (e.g., game days, weekends).
- **Saturday Service Growth**
    - Main Street Route: +50%
    - West Lindsey Route: +50%
    - Overall Saturday Ridership: +16.3% (August 2024 vs. August 2025)

Saturday service was restored after being eliminated previously. The community has responded positively, showing a clear need for transit on Saturdays.

- **Service Frequency and Route Comments**
    - Main Street frequency remains at 60 minutes, while other routes operate at 30-minute intervals.
    - East and West routes (112 and 111) are considered "mixed-use," serving both residential apartments and commercial areas.
    - These high-demand routes continue to show strong performance due to frequency and coverage.
- A 70% increase in riders using bike racks on the buses has been noted. This is being monitored, especially as weather affects usage. Bike racks are seen as important for extending transit access , especially ("first/last mile") bike riders.

Public transit helps reduce car traffic and in August alone, more than 43,000 rides were provided, evidencing the public's need and interest for available efficient service.

Ridership patterns for students shift at the beginning of each academic year, with thousands of new users. The on-demand program remains strong, and the program goal is to maintain high quality service year-round .

1. (continued) PRESENTATION OF THE AUGUST PUBLIC TRANSIT REPORT

Discussion on the Central Oklahoma Long-Range Transit Plan is ongoing, and a public alert has been posted on the website to increase resident awareness, engagement and to solicit community feedback.

Council approval will be requested in October for the purchase of three large buses included in the current transition phase. Funding includes grant money from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) program via the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) and additional Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) 5339 funds.

The City of Norman submitted and received approval for an amendment request from ACOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). All paperwork was finalized; funds were reserved and reallocated as necessary.

The new Paratransit software system was implemented in February to replace the Legacy OU platform. Monthly meetings are being held with passengers at the Adult Wellness and Education center to address concerns and improvements have been noted in efficiency and ridership has increased from 1.2 to 1.8 per service hour.

The improvements on the Transit Center Parking Lot have been completed on the east side, and the west side is currently under construction. The project includes full removal and replacement of deteriorated asphalt. The successful reuse of the existing facility structure was done with minimal building demolition.

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2. UPDATE ON THE 2021 STREET MAINTENANCE BOND PROGRAM AND DISCUSSION REGARDING A 2026 PROPOSED BOND PROGRAM

Mr. Scott Sturtz, Public Works Director, and Mr. Joseph Hill, Streets Program Manager, presented an update on the 2021 Street Maintenance Bond Program and a 2026 Bond Proposal.

The Street Maintenance Bond Program has been operating since 2005 on a 5-year cycle, and is focused on maintenance of existing infrastructure, especially residential streets. This program has proved to be very successful as reflected by the Improved Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 77 citywide as compared to the National PCI average of 60–65, making Norman ahead of state and national peers.

Strong voter approval for the program increased from 50% to 67% in recent elections. Funding has increased from $11M to $27M per cycle, due to rising property values and development.

- Every ward receives investment in each bond cycle. Focus areas include:
  - Urban Asphalt - Mill and overlay — remove top 2 inches, repair sub-base, and replace asphalt.
  - Rural Asphalt - Mill and overlay - tailored to rural conditions.
  - Urban Concrete
  - Urban Reconstruct
  - Preventative Maintenance

2. (continued) UPDATE ON THE 2021 STREET MAINTENANCE BOND PROGRAM AND DISCUSSION REGARDING A 2026 PROPOSED BOND PROGRAM

Concrete Panel Repairs and Urban Reconstruct

- Damaged or cracked concrete panels are replaced individually, rather than repaving entire streets.
- This approach improves ride quality and appearance while targeting problem areas efficiently.
- Urban Reconstruct involves complete teardown and rebuilding of roads beyond basic repair, including base, curb, and gutter replacement.

Preventative Maintenance

- Crack Sealing - Identified by black lines on roads - helps prevent water infiltration and premature degradation.
- Surface Sealing - Thin overlays or spray-on treatments protect road surfaces and extend pavement life.
- This strategy offers high impact at low cost and has been increasingly emphasized in recent bond cycles.

All planned work is mapped and listed prior to bond approval. This transparency builds public trust and allows residents to know what streets will be addressed. Performance data supports continued voter support and confidence in the program.

- Years 1–4 - All construction completed.
- Year 5 - Currently active and underway.
- Prior bond cycles yielded cost savings, allowing the city to add additional mileage to each program.
- Despite rising construction costs, current projections indicate approximately $4 million in potential surplus at the end of the current cycle.

Use of Savings & Project Priorities

- Past example - Alameda Street was completed using savings from the 2012 Bond program to supplement funding
- Current Proposal - Consider using surplus to support 36th Avenue NW project (a long-standing, voter-approved priority).
  - 36th Avenue NW Project Challenges
    - Originally estimated at $12 million — has since more than doubled.
    - Due to changes in federal funding criteria, it no longer scores as competitively as it once did.
    - Now split into four smaller phases due to reduced funding limits per project (currently capped at $7.5 million).

2. (continued) UPDATE ON THE 2021 STREET MAINTENANCE BOND PROGRAM AND DISCUSSION REGARDING A 2026 PROPOSED BOND PROGRAM

Federal Grant Applications

- Staff have submitted grant applications to other agencies including:
  - ACOG
  - Other federal programs
- "Safe Streets for All" joint application with the City of Moore emphasized
  - The emergency route role of 36th Ave NW for I-35.
  - Hospitals are located at both ends of the corridor.
  - Safety corridor designation attempted to improve federal funding chances.
  - Extensive support includes letters from state agencies and Rep. Tom Cole's office.
- Federal priorities emphasize:
  - Pedestrian safety
  - Traffic calming
  - Sustainability
- Pedestrian-focused and traffic-calming projects have been more successful in securing funding for:
  - Porter Streetscape
  - Gray Street Improvements
  - Jenkins Avenue
  - East 24th Street (2-mile section)

Potential Future Projects

36th Avenue NW remains a voter-approved obligation and critical detour route for I-35 congestion. It is the closest section line road to 1-35 and is crucial for emergency detours. Council members have traveled to Washington, D.C. annually for the last 10 years to advocate for funding this project.

- Robinson Street - Section: West of 36th Avenue W to Berry Road.
  - Accelerated delamination.
  - Pothole development.
  - High traffic volume: 20,000+ vehicles/day.
  - Frequent repairs required currently, road at risk of long-term degradation.
- East (Robinson to Rock Creek Road) & West Interstate Drive (Robinson to Tecumseh Road.
  - Transverse cracking.
  - Old asphalt showing wear.
  - Requires regular maintenance.
- The City may be able to complete two of these projects depending on final year's savings.

2. (continued) UPDATE ON THE 2021 STREET MAINTENANCE BOND PROGRAM AND DISCUSSION REGARDING A 2026 PROPOSED BOND PROGRAM

Historical Context

- Pavement data collected since 1999.
- Norman was ahead of its time; some cities are only now starting pavement inventories in 2025.
- Peer cities are seeking to replicate Norman's program.

Norman has a current backlog, (Streets rated "poor" or "very poor.") of 2.2% (800 miles) of road. The National average is 8-12% and Norman outperforms national standards in road maintenance efficiency.

Condition Ratings by Road Type

Type **Average PCI**

- Rural Roads .....80+
  - Formerly gravel; now nearly fully paved.
  - Regularly maintained with high condition ratings
- Residential Neighborhoods.....High 70's – 80s
  - Improved significantly from early 2000s (when PCI was ~60–65)
- Primary Arterials..... Mid to Low 70's
  (e.g., Main St, Robinson, etc.)
  - Starting to decline.
  - Roads like Main St (Berry to Mercedes) and Robinson (north of the golf course) are flagged for attention.
  - Seasonal issues such as concrete buckling noted.

Outlook for 2026 Bond Program

The current program is in its final construction year. Renewal is needed in the first or second quarter of 2026. Approximately $35 million in maintenance activity has been identified and the program must adapt to meet the needs.

Proposed Category Distribution for 2026 Bond Program

Category	Allocation
Urban Asphalt	25%
Urban Concrete	25%
Rural Roads	15%
Full Reconstruction	20%
Preventative Maintenance	15%

- Emphasis remains on ride quality, pavement structure, and sustainability.
- Incidental improvements will be bundled into projects:
  - Bicycle safety features.
  - ADA compliance (ramps, crossings, etc.).
  - Storm drainage repairs.
  - Rural ditches and shoulder regrading.

Bond History and Overview

Since 2005 there has been 577.19 lane miles completed under the Bond Program. The program has been running for nearly 20 years with consistent voter support and 100% of promised work has been delivered.

2005-2010	91.10 miles
2010-2015	207.06 miles
2016-2021	127.14 miles
2021-2026	151.89 miles

The proposed 2026 program estimates 180 lane miles will be completed from 2026-2031 and 95% of the proposed road list has been finalized. The goal of the City of Norman is to maintain a healthy system citywide instead of letting roads deteriorate into expensive rebuilds.

Cross-Department Coordination ensures roadwork does not conflict with infrastructure projects like utility trenching (waterlines, stormwater) and other infrastructure upgrades. Timing and sequence of projects is adjusted based on interdepartmental schedules and future improvements in the area.

Bond Election Timing Discussion

- Renew the bond with no new taxes.
- Two date options discussed for 2026 Bond Vote
  - *February 2026*
    - Requires coming back to Council in the second study session in October to give a full presentation of the program including:
      - A comprehensive map
      - Project details
      - Overall proposal
    - Council's acceptance and acknowledgment are necessary before advancing.
    - Timeline is tight but feasible.
    - Aligned with six city council elections (increased turnout).
    - Potential to combine with charter amendments (e.g., council pay, swearing-in timing).
  - *April 2026*
    - Council presentation is targeted for November 2025.
    - May coincide with runoff elections, offering efficiency.
    - Allows more flexibility and preparation time.

2. (continued) UPDATE ON THE 2021 STREET MAINTENANCE BOND PROGRAM AND DISCUSSION REGARDING A 2026 PROPOSED BOND PROGRAM

- Election deadlines
  - Clerk's office must provide 60 days' notice ahead of either election date.
  - February election: First and second readings in November and December 2025.
  - April election: First and second readings in January 2026.
    - Staff believes either date is achievable. February provides less time for outreach (Rotary, PTAs, ward meetings). Campaign window is shorter, meaning less time for opposition to organize.
  - Staff are prepared for intensive outreach efforts.
    - Rotary Clubs
    - Neighborhood associations
    - PTA groups
    - Faith-based organizations
    - Councilmember hosted ward meetings for discussion.

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3. DISCUSSION REGARDING VEHICULAR DETECTION OPTIONS AT SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS.

Mr. David Riesland, Transportation Engineer, and Mr. Brian Hiney, Traffic Management Center Engineer, presented information on the City of Norman's current traffic signal detection systems. and explained the rationale behind the City's detection choices and the current and future capabilities of the system.

Traffic Management Center

- A new Traffic Management Center is opening soon in Norman.
- It is expected to dramatically improve traffic monitoring and coordination citywide.

History & Transition to Video Detection

- Original detection system was Inductive loop detectors embedded in pavement.
- Challenges with loops:
  - Frequent failure due to pavement degradation.
  - Hazardous and labor-intensive repairs require personnel in live traffic lanes.
- Transition to video detection occurred around 20–25 years ago.
- Norman currently maintains approximately 156 traffic signals across the city.
- Improved worker safety, reduced maintenance, and increased flexibility.

3. (continued) DISCUSSION REGARDING VEHICULAR DETECTION OPTIONS AT SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS.

Benefits of Video Detection

- Safety - Eliminates the need for crews to cut into pavement and work in live traffic lanes.
- Flexibility in construction zones as cameras can be re-aimed during lane shifts; loops cannot be moved.
- Remote Visibility - Fiber-optic connectivity (since 2009) enables real-time video feed access.
- Operational Efficiency
  - Staff can remotely monitor and verify traffic concerns (e.g., stuck signals).
  - Allow a staff of five technicians to function like a team of seven or eight, due to enhanced remote capabilities.
- Cameras can be temporarily set to record for short-term data collection.
  - Traffic studies - Video allows traffic count collection and temporary recording, which is not as feasible with radar systems.
  - Traffic volume counts
  - Turning movement counts
  - Multi-lane detection
  - Vehicle classification

Video feeds are not continuously recorded due to storage costs and the City cannot retrieve footage from past events or crashes unless recordings are proactively initiated. Public requests for incident footage (e.g., from collisions) often cannot be fulfilled due to non-recording policy.

Radar is a newer technology now available, but Norman has not yet adopted radar due to existing investment in video infrastructure and the functional success of the current system.

Video Detection – Advantages, Challenges & Investment

All detection technologies have pros and cons, but there is no "perfect" solution. Radar vendors often point to the limitations of video, such as difficulty detecting during fog, sunrise/sunset glare, or poor weather. Norman staff have adapted through experience and camera adjustments, minimizing issues. Some of the key advantages of video detection are:

- Real-time visual monitoring
- Flexible configuration for construction or traffic changes
- Post-storm issues
  - Cameras may rotate out of alignment during severe weather.
  - A standard post-storm SOP includes reviewing all camera angles for accuracy.
  - Example: An incident at Tecumseh & 36th revealed misalignment of the detection zone after a storm—detected and corrected through camera review.
  - These issues also exist with radar detection, although the symptoms differ.

3. (continued) DISCUSSION REGARDING VEHICULAR DETECTION OPTIONS AT SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS.

Traffic Management Center Integration

- The upcoming Traffic Management Center (TMC) is projected for completion on June 6, 2026. Progress is ahead of schedule and may be operational by February 2026.
- Facility will have
  - Three units at the main center
  - One unit at the Emergency Communications Operations (ECO) center
  - Redundant capabilities during emergencies; staff and police can share visual access in real-time via glass partition.
- Estimated investment in video detection infrastructure exceeds $2 million and includes:
  - Equipment in the field
  - Software platforms
  - Spare parts inventory
  - Training and labor hours
  - Response readiness for major storm events (e.g., hail or ice damage)
- Switching to radar (or another platform) would require:
  - Replacing all field equipment
  - New software and monitoring tools
  - A completely new inventory of spare parts
  - Retraining all staff
  - Increased risk during the transition period
  - Notably, during severe weather:
- Hail and ice storms in recent years damaged cameras and signal heads. City staff responded rapidly using stocked inventory—relying on vendors for replacements would be untimely "recipe for disaster."

Staff Recommendation and Fiscal Responsibility

- Staff emphasized the importance of fiscal responsibility in maintaining and upgrading infrastructure.
- While radar detection does offer some benefits (e.g., reliability in bad weather), the cost, complexity, and operational strain of switching systems would outweigh potential benefits.
- Staying on the current video detection platform:
  - Protects the City's substantial investment
  - Maintains system compatibility and operational continuity
  - Ensures technician readiness and avoids confusion in field service

The City's decision to continue with video detection is rooted in long-term planning, safety, investment protection, and efficiency. Staff will continue to evaluate future technologies, but staff strongly support continuing with the existing video detection infrastructure.

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4. DISCUSSION ON POSSIBLE USES FOR THE ASP STREET PARKING LOT.

Mr. Darryl Pyle, City Manager, said this item was placed on the agenda as there has been much discussion regarding potential uses for the Asp lot, prompted by increased interest from developers and parking constraints in the area.

Mr. Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager, provided information on the lease with Campus Corner, including duration and usage during game days. Campus Corner experiences significant foot traffic on game days, with pedestrians' shoulder to shoulder on Boyd and Asp. Parking demand is extremely high, and game days are expected to remain chaotic, but weekday parking facilities are needed to serve residents and businesses.

The Asp lot is identified in the city's parking study as a future parking structure site, with staff working on an update to combine downtown and campus corner parking management plans.

- The Asp lot is periodically utilized, like a church parking lot - busy during events (e.g., home games), underused otherwise.
- The Asp lot is currently leased to Campus Corner merchants for $25 per spot on game days, totaling $1,200 for the season.
- The City also leases 51–53 spaces at the Gray Street lot on an annual fee basis to adjacent businesses and other parties on a first come basis and the Peters Street lot is currently leased to Vista building tenants.
- A private housing developer has expressed interest in leasing the Asp lot to use for tenant parking.
- A food truck owner currently leases space in a nearby lot and is losing his lease in December due to redevelopment plans and is looking for a new lease space.

Parking structure development ideas include lowering Asp lot rates from $1/hour to $.50/hour, improving signage and clarifying lease terms for events like music festivals. Aerial views show the lot can potentially support vertical parking, but space will be lost to ramp infrastructure.

The adjacent Chinese restaurant property has been closed for years but remains intact and may be part of future development opportunities by increasing the size of the buildable property. Combining adjacent parcels (including the vacant restaurant and narrow southern lots) could create a high-value development site. The City may need to accelerate plans for a parking structure to meet long-term needs.

Flowbird Parking System and Validation Payment Options

- Businesses could fund validation codes to cover customer or employee parking, managed through the Flowbird software.
- Validation can be set for specific times/dates. Staff noted this could modernize the system and provide flexibility.
- Businesses can also create accounts to directly manage and pay for employee parking.

4. (continued) DISCUSSION ON POSSIBLE USES FOR THE ASP STREET PARKING LOT.

Vision for Public-Private Use

- Proposal to build a parking structure with multiple floors reserved for:
  - Nearby apartment tenants
  - Campus Corner businesses
  - Public use
- Pre-leasing floors to developers can support financing and encourage urban density.

TIF and Zoning Considerations

- Campus Corner is currently excluded from the Center City TIF due to existing C3 zoning (no height limit, no parking requirements).
- A past compromise allowed inclusion into the TIF if a parking structure is built, at the cost of imposing a height limit.
- Some council members questioned the need for height limits and suggested amending or creating a new TIF (Center City 2) to include Campus Corner.

Historical Context

- The Center City Policy was formed after a six-story high-density apartment proposal (Risser Project) was rejected.
- In the absence of large developments, smaller, less dense duplexes replaced older homes, which led to loss of neighborhood character without density gain.
- The policy now encourages urban form, such as row houses and higher-density apartments, when redevelopment occurs.

Business and Housing Considerations

- Continue evaluating parking structure feasibility, potential partnerships, and developer interest.
- Parking turnover is essential to support businesses, while long-term strategies should focus on supporting additional housing density in the area.
- Developers could add more housing if parking needs are met through shared or structured parking solutions.
- Finance Committee will review parking trust development and potential bond financing for parking structures.
- Staff to bring back updated parking management plans and strategies for council review.
- Conduct evaluation of parcels and ownership around proposed parking areas to support potential structure development.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

ATTEST

Brenda Hall

City Clerk

CITY OF NORMAN CORPORATE SEAL

Mayor