

CITY OF NORMAN, OK CITY COUNCIL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING

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

Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 4:00 PM

AGENDA

It is the policy of the City of Norman that no person or groups of persons shall on the grounds of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, marital status, including marriage to a person of the same sex, disability, relation, or genetic information, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in employment activities or in all programs, services, or activities administered by the City, its recipients, sub-recipients, and contractors. In the event of any comments, complaints, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, and auxiliary aids and services regarding accessibility or inclusion, please call 405-366-5424, Relay Service: 711. To better serve you, five (5) business days' advance notice is preferred.

CALL TO ORDER

AGENDA ITEMS

1. PRESENTATION OF A REPORT ENTITLED "A PLACE TO CALL HOME: A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PLAN FOR NORMAN'S PERMANENT SHELTER" BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION.

ADJOURNMENT

A Place To Call Home: A Community-driven Plan For Norman's Permanent Shelter

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Presented By Hudson Harris on Behalf of The Home Together Initiative

Item 1.

Current State of Housing Insecurity Nationally (2024 Reports)



Wages Lag Behind Rent: To afford a modest 2-bedroom at fair market rent, a full-time worker must earn \$32.11/hour — yet the federal minimum wage is \$7.25.



Assistance Falls Short: Only I in 4 eligible renters receive federal housing aid due to chronic underfunding.



New Construction Doesn't Help the Poor:

The median rent for new multifamily units was **\$1,740/month** in 2021. Units renting for less than **\$850** dropped from **9% to just 2%**.



Disproportionate Burden: Black, Latino, Native American, and women workers are disproportionately impacted.

Current State of Housing Insecurity in Norman (2024 Reports)

Affordability Crisis

- Norman housing costs are 38% higher than OKC, 20% above state average
- 2024 Housing Wage in Oklahoma: \$19.91/hr for a 2BR (FMR)
- Rent spikes since 2023: +18% (studio), +9% (2BR)
- Median rent: \$1,300/month as of Sept 2024
- Nearly I in 3 Cleveland County renters are cost-burdened
- Highest burden among Black (51%) and Native (42%) residents



91 unsheltered, **128 sheltered** in Norman/Cleveland County

Homelessness Snapshot (Jan 2024 PIT Count)

85% long-term homeless; 52% chronically homeless

Surge in **first-time homelessness** cases

□ SHELTER ACCESS & GAPS

245 total beds across all housing types (ES, PSH, RRH, TH)

A Friend's House (52 beds) is at capacity nightly

Existing shelters are limited in **accessibility** (no pets, partners, possessions)

City's temporary shelter at 109 W Gray ends June 30, 2025



BARRIERS TO HOUSING

Landlord discrimination, 3x deposits, ID requirements

Criminal records block access (esp. due to green zones)

Limited case managers, mental health/substance services

Transportation issues and housing market pressure from 31K+ OU students



1,250 housing vouchers issued by Norman Housing Authority

New jobs program for unhoused (launches June 2025, opioid settlement-funded)

Local navigators pursuing **SOAR** certification

Ongoing city debate on shelter sites/funding — no final action yet

D PUBLIC CHALLENGES

Rising tension, stigma, and misinformation

City criticized for lack of transparency, slow response

Some state representatives and officials oppose funding

community members call for dignity & inclusion: "There's just no place out there for us."

Item 1. What Has Been Done In Norman

Planning & Coordination



City of Norman helps leads the **Cleveland County CoC** along with Thunderbird Clubhouse



Homebase Gap Analysis (2021); ongoing CoC collaboration with 20+ partners



Achieved functional zero for veteran homelessness in 2018



Supported **Built for Zero** and **100,000 Homes**, housing 426 chronically homeless individuals

Shelter Operations



109 W Gray Shelter: Low-barrier model, open nightly since 2020; avg. **56 guests/night**



Currently: A Friend's House (52 beds): Operated by City Care; consistently full



Past shelters: 225 N Webster, 325 E Comanche (both closed by mid-2022)

Housing Programs & Assistance



1,250+ Housing Choice Vouchers through NHA; reduced waiting list with new vouchers



~\$170K in ESG funds for prevention/diversion (Food & Shelter, Thunderbird Clubhouse)



COVID-era rental assistance fund led by **United Way of Norman**

Supportive Services



95 housing referrals, 300 advocacy efforts logged via HMIS

30+ ID vouchers issued via McFarlin/First Presbyterian partnership



SOAR certification underway for housing navigators



Transition House: 427 calls/visits in FY'24; \$74K ARPA grant awarded

Community Engagement &New Initiatives

- ONE Norman Task Force formed post-2022
 via CivicCon
- City launched beautification jobs program for unhoused (started June 2, 2025)
- Collaborative events for ID/birth certificate
 access; felony referrals coordinated with OKC



□ WHAT THE COMMUNITY IS ASKING FOR

Survey Results & Comments show community wants:

- Year-round **low-barrier shelter** (open 24/7, minimal entry restrictions)
- On-site wraparound services: mental health, addiction recovery, job support
- Clean, safe design with trauma-informed care principles
- Transparency in planning and inclusion of **lived experience voices**
- Access to basic needs and stability: Respondents emphasized the importance of consistent meals, hygiene facilities, and access to ID/legal aid — not just a bed for the night

Concerns: crime, safety, proximity — and how cities resolve them



Criteria For Shelter Location (HTI's Research)

- **9** Minimum **5 acres** for scalable site
 - Within 1/2 mile of transit routes
- Buffered from major residential zones to reduce NIMBY backlash
- æ
 - Not adjacent to elementary schools, high-traffic commercial hubs



Zoning compatibility or potential for special use permitting

POTENTIAL LOCATIONS WE'VE IDENTIFIED

Interactive Map



Item 1.

Ideal Location: Griffen Memorial & Land Owned By O.D.M.H.S.A.S.

State-Owned Property managed by the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS)	Located near downtown Norman , within reasonable distance of public transit	Historically used for behavioral health services , aligns with wraparound service goals	Over 20 acres of potentially developable land, including underused and vacant parcels
Opportunity to repurpose existing infrastructure , reducing development costs	Zoned for institutional/public use — fewer hurdles than rezoning private land	Centralized site avoids clustering in low-income neighborhoods	Could serve as a multi- phase campus : shelter, supportive housing, recovery, reentry

WHAT OTHER CITIES HAVE DONE

Item 1.

Lawrence, KS – Lawrence Community Shelter & Pallet Village

- I75-bed low-barrier facility (up from 25 beds) now serves ~600 people/year
- 93 chronically homeless individuals housed in 2023 alone
- 35% increase in sheltered homelessness (184 in 2025 vs 136 in 2024)
 - \rightarrow Tangible shift from unsheltered to sheltered



GREATER MANCHESTER, UK – HOUSING FIRST PILOT

- Supported 430 individuals with complex homelessness in the first year
- Followed Finland's model: allowed immediate housing without prerequisites, offering personalized intensive support
- Achieved a 70% reduction in rough sleeping across Greater Manchester
- Mayor and UK government are now scaling the model region-wide due to early success



SAN ANTONIO, TX – HAVEN FOR HOPE CAMPUS

- Shelters 80% of the city's homeless population daily
- 88% of housed individuals remain stably housed after one year
- 80% drop in downtown homelessness since 2010
- \$148M saved annually in public costs → \$5.6B net benefit



✓ KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Permanent, low-barrier shelters significantly reduce unsheltered homelessness
- Wraparound services (health, casework, ID support) are critical to long-term success
- **Retention rates are high** when people are housed quickly without barriers
- Investment in shelter infrastructure leads to cost savings for cities (ER, police, jail)
- Multi-agency coordination and public-private partnerships strengthen outcomes
- Visibility, safety, and stability improve for both housed and unhoused residents

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR NORMAN 1/2

Federal Grants

- HUD Continuum of Care (CoC): Funding for permanent supportive housing, shelter operations, and case management
- Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG): Short-term shelter, prevention, and rapid rehousing support
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program: Affordable housing development and rehab support

State Resources

- Oklahoma Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS): Collaboration opportunities, especially for wraparound care on state-owned land (e.g., Griffin campus)
- State opioid settlement funds: Can be allocated to housing-related mental health and recovery services

S FUNDING OPTIONS FOR NORMAN 2/2

Local Government Funds

- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds: Some ARPA dollars remain unallocated or could be redirected
- General obligation bonds or sales tax measures: Requires voter support but can fund infrastructure and services
- *TIF (Tax Increment Financing)*: For shelter facilities that revitalize neighborhoods or reduce long-term city costs

Public-Private Partnerships

- Collaborations with nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and OU for co-managed facilities
- Local foundations and donors can help fund shelter construction or specialized programs

◆ OUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL



Item 1.

WE'RE READY TO HELP

HTI offers:

- Continued research, public outreach, and location analysis
- Help coordinating feedback from residents
- Student volunteers for data collection and community forums

"We believe that everyone in Norman deserves a safe place to sleep, a place to heal, and a place to call home."





CONTACT INFORMATION

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