

COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

November 15, 2011

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a study session at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 15th day of November, 2011, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray, and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers, Dillingham Gallagher,
Griffith, Kovach, Lockett, Quinn,
Mayor Rosenthal

ABSENT: Councilmembers Ezzell and Spaulding

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN SCOPING STUDY (MOVING FORWARD).

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, provided an update on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) *Moving Forward*, scoping study to Council, specifically an overview of the CTP components and recent Visioning Committee meetings, as well as discussion of the revised CTP survey questions. He said a CTP is a broad plan with guiding principals and identifying specific projects will come later.

Mr. O'Leary said the CTP process initially began with a kick-off meeting, followed by a listening phase, i.e., ward meetings, social media opportunities, and special meetings with different groups/stakeholders, to gather citizen input as to whether the City should have a CTP, and if so, should a CTP be narrow or broad in scope. Mr. O'Leary said Staff will provide Council with all the data gathered at the end of January 2012. He said Council can determine at that point whether to proceed with a CTP, which can be included in the FYE 2013 Budget. If Council chooses to go forward with a CTP, Lochner will provide a CTP scope of work, which will be a very detailed document of items that are included in the CTP, and Staff will send out bids to engineering firms across the country that specialize in this field of work. After receiving the bids, Council could consider selecting an engineering firm to perform the study.

Mr. O'Leary said a CTP could take 18-24 months from beginning to end and could cost approximately \$250,000-\$300,000. He said a CTP is a broad plan with guiding principals and goals important to the City of Norman and identifying specific projects and improvements will come later after the CTP data is compiled. He said comments have been made during this information gathering phase as to "when" and "where" projects and improvements will be accomplished and he stressed those types of selections/projects are data driven and will be forthcoming with the CTP itself.

Mr. O'Leary said Staff has provided Council with a revised CTP survey for their consideration and after tonight's discussions and with Council approval, Staff will be ready to mail out the survey the beginning of December. ETC Institute will administer the survey and send it to approximately 1800 Norman residents. Staff anticipates attaining a minimum of 400 statistically valid survey results by the beginning of January and a final CTP survey/scope of work report will be provided to Council by mid to late January 2012.

Mr. O'Leary said between now and January 2012, Staff/Lochner will be doing more electronic communications with the CTP Visioning Committee and with several others groups such as the Norman Downtowners' Association, Norman Chamber of Commerce Board, Norman Convention and Visitor's Bureau (NCVB), etc., in order to gain input as to what they feel is important to include in a CTP. Councilmember Kovach asked if Staff/Lochner considered using an online CTP survey to gather more input and Mr. O'Leary answered in the affirmative, stating if Council desired, Staff could conduct an online survey internally at the same time that ETC Institute conducted the mailout/statistical survey. Councilmember Quinn asked if both surveys would be the same material/questions and how the online survey results would be incorporated, i.e., would the online survey results be separate from the statistical survey results. Mr. O'Leary said the results would be kept separate but felt the information gathered online, although not statistical, would still be important. Councilmember Dillingham asked if there is a mechanism for citizen(s) receiving the CTP survey via

U.S. mail but preferred to complete the survey online and Mr. O'Leary replied no because the survey mailout is meant to be utilized as a scientific/statistical tool.

Visioning Committee Meeting(s) Update

Mr. Schwinger said the CTP Visioning Committee members were provided with the draft Norman Transportation Guiding Principles, Goals, and Strategies prior to today's scheduled meeting, so that they could be prepared to share their ideas. He said the draft was prepared based on community feedback during CTP Visioning Committee meetings, ward meetings, social media, stakeholder interviews, and special group meetings. Mr. Schwinger said the task of the CTP Visioning Committee members was to review the guiding principles and the underlying goals, provide comments and edits as appropriate, and then to identify appropriate strategies specific to Norman to achieve these goals. The Committee members were pre-assigned to focus groups and requested to concentrate primarily on one of the five guiding principles as follows:

1. Special Place to Live - a vibrant community in 2035 will be achieved by ensuring transportation and infrastructure investments focus on both people and places. These investments should enhance transportation choices and accessibility, and also create a unique place that blends seamlessly with character and vision of Norman.
2. Mobility – a multi-modal network will provide connections between neighborhoods and destinations throughout Norman, with good connections to the Oklahoma City (OKC) region, through a system offering opportunities to drive, walk, bike, and take transit.
3. Maintain and Preserve Existing Infrastructure – *Norman Moving Forward* places high priority upon maintenance, rehabilitation, safety, and reconstruction of basic infrastructure, to include streets, sidewalks, utilities and storm water systems, and other public infrastructure facilities.
4. Fiscal Stewardship – *Norman Moving Forward* strives to provide a detailed roadmap of actions for transportation and infrastructure investments and will be based on an approach that maximizes the benefits for multiple user groups. Future investments will include input from the community-at-large and the priorities as identified through regular ongoing dialogue.
5. Enhance Economic Vitality – *Norman Moving Forward* supports economic vitality that promotes economic growth while using resources in an efficient and effective manner that is intended to achieve a diverse, vibrant local economy with a strong tax base, thus reducing the future fiscal burden on residents to provide City services.

Mr. Schwinger said the focus group(s) reported back to the other committee members their possible strategies pertaining to their assigned goal and also had an opportunity to provide comments about the other goals and strategies during the meeting. He said the Guiding Principles, Goals, and Strategies will be revised to include all the input and comments and an updated version will be provided to Council as soon as possible. Mr. O'Leary said Council will also be provided with notes/comments from remaining ward meetings as well as comments from a meeting with Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (CART) Access Advisory Group, Administrative Leadership at University of Oklahoma (OU), and a student group at OU. He said Staff/Lochner will continue to have meetings with groups that invite the City to come and discuss the CTP.

Transportation Plan Components

Mr. Schwinger said the CTP process will take approximately 18-24 months and their work is just getting started. He said the draft goals will be revised several times before having a final list of goals, which is just one piece of the CTP. The City already has pieces of the CTP in place, i.e., sidewalk inventory is 70% complete, Aviation Master Plan, Trails Master Plan, and Transit Master Plan. He said a lot of these policies/plans were developed independently and will not necessarily mesh, therefore plans and/or policies will need to be looked at and made consistent. Mr. Schwinger said the plans/policies should look at existing and future transportation conditions to include traffic, pedestrian, aviation, bike, etc., as well as improvements whether interim or immediate that should be made. He said the Plan would also include funding, evaluation and prioritization of the improvements, as well as future planning strategies.

Revised Transportation Survey Questions

Mr. O'Leary provided Council the revised transportation survey and a summary of comments from members of the CTP Visioning Committee and/or Councilmember(s) who went through the survey line by line with ETC Institute. He also distributed Mayor Rosenthal's survey suggestions and felt they were very beneficial. He said ETC is very focused on limiting the survey to no more than four-pages and feels that is the ideal length for most citizens who will be completing the survey.

Mayor Rosenthal said question number twelve (12) "standing alone" asks citizens about an unspecified bond issue that are about specific projects and she felt most citizens would want to know what they are voting on. She suggested having a follow-up to question number six (6), "...if a bond issue included your priority choices, how likely would you be to vote in favor of a bond election...". Councilmember Kovach felt question number six (6) is clustered and complicated and may persuade a citizen to chose "not important at all", if they do not like/agree with one of the proposed projects. Mayor Councilmember Gallagher suggested adding one or two specific projects outlined with costs because if the questions are not specific, citizens may be critical. Mr. O'Leary said Staff fully intended to change/re-word question number twelve (12) at Council's discretion and agree that citizens would want more specifics; however it can be a little difficult to come up with the number(s). Councilmember Dillingham suggested using simple and general statements such as "roadways cost approximately *X amount* to build per mile", etc., and she liked the idea of then linking it to the preference. Mr. O'Leary said Staff can look at costs associated with recent corridor projects to determine approximate costs in order to obtain accurate numbers.

Mr. O'Leary said there has been interest to have the question "...if you had \$100, where would you spend it..." added back to the survey and requested Council guidance. He said the question was originally in the CTP survey, but through revisions it was deleted and Staff felt it would be important to have it re-added. He said the question was derived from the Encompass 2035 survey and it was discovered at various ward meetings that citizens like those type(s) of questions. He felt citizens liked to think about where they would really spend the money. Councilmember Dillingham agreed and felt it would be very useful to include the question in the survey.

Mayor Rosenthal felt items B & L in question number five (5) are technical issues and may be already included in the Engineering Design Standards and Sub-Division Regulations, therefore they may not need to be included on the survey. She trusts that Staff knows the technical issues and she, as well as other citizen(s), may not have an opinion on those types of questions/issues.

Councilmember Dillingham agreed with Mayor Rosenthal's suggestions to delete questions that may not give Staff any valid information and save space on the survey to add or re-word questions. Councilmember Gallagher felt most of the questions were unnecessarily technical and agreed they should be stricken. He felt if the questions are too technical or elaborate, they may overwhelm the citizen(s) taking the survey and the citizen(s) may not invest a *real* consideration/thought to the question being asked.

Councilmember Griffith suggested changing item D, question number five (5), "...maximize traffic flow...". He felt stating the goal upfront and then how it would be accomplished would make more sense and Staff agreed.

Councilmember Kovach requested Staff add a CTP survey link to the front page of the City of Norman website.

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Items submitted for the record

1. Transportation Planning Draft – Guiding Principles, Goals, and Strategies, prepared by Lochner
2. *“Moving Forward”* Comprehensive Transportation Plan City Council Work Session Agenda, dated November 15, 2011
3. Draft Community Transportation Survey, dated 11-10-11
4. Summary of Transportation Survey Comments

The meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor