

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE MINUTES

September 10, 2013

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a conference at 5:37 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 10th day of September, 2013, 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 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Castleberry, Griffith, Heiple, Holman, Jungman, Kovach, Miller, Williams and Mayor Rosenthal

ABSENT: None

Item 1, being:

UPDATE FROM FREESE AND NICHOLS, L.L.C., ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF NORMAN.

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, said Council approved a contract with Freese and Nichols for the development of a Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) in December 2012. Since that time representatives from Freese and Nichols and the Public Works Staff have been working with a 45 member CTP subcommittee.

Mr. Eddie Haas, Freese and Nichols, provided an overview of the scope and schedule of the CTP including guiding principles, goals and objectives; existing transportation systems; assessment of transportation needs; forecasting transportation conditions; developing a long range improvement plan; transportation policies and programs; and implementation strategies.

Mr. Haas highlighted guiding principles, goals, and objectives as follows:

MAKING NORMAN A SPECIAL PLACE TO LIVE

- Vibrant Norman community in 2035
- Transportation and infrastructure focus on both people and places
- Enhanced transportation choices and accessibility
- Create a unique place with lasting value
- Blends seamlessly with the character of Norman's neighborhoods, employment centers, and activity centers

MOBILITY

- Seamless system of transportation options and solutions
- Norman Moving Forward's emphasis on system management and operations, context sensitive, and complete street designs
- Range of accessible and convenient, multi-modal transportation choices that provide connections between neighborhoods and destinations

MAINTAIN AND PRESERVE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Priority on maintenance, rehabilitation, safety, and reconstruction
- Neighborhood viability through maintaining streets, sidewalks, utilities, storm water systems, and other infrastructure facilities
- Investments balance transportation needs of the community and local neighborhoods.

FISCAL STEWARDSHIP

- Provide a detailed roadmap of actions for transportation and infrastructure improvements
- Investments maximize the benefits for multiple user groups in a way that is fiscally and environmentally responsible
- Input from community-at-large and ongoing dialogue with stakeholders

ENHANCE ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Promotes economic growth while using resources in an efficient and effective manner
- Supports a diverse, vibrant local economy with a strong tax base
- Reduces the fiscal burden on residents to provide city services

Mr. Haas said as the Norman community grows, there needs to be choices for multi-modal transportation, e.g., vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, transit, etc. He said as part of the complete streets concept, the subcommittee is formalizing the creation of a concept for a special class of streets known as *special corridors*. The special corridors would include Flood Street, Front Street (a/k/a James Garner Boulevard), and Porter Avenue. He said the subcommittee will look at north/south access into the core area of the community while trying to maintain the integrity of the area. He said the subcommittee will review expansion of the collector network aimed at helping traffic access and circulation within the arterial grid. He said the circulation to support the arterial grid will be used to form the backbone of the bicycle/pedestrian system. He said it is important to have north/south connectivity from I-35 and that could be done by enhancing the use of 12th Avenue N.E./Sooner Road and 60th Avenue N.W./Western Avenue. He said the subcommittee will review increasing the significance of Jenkins Avenue and Chautauqua Avenue between State Highway 9 and Lindsey Street to form alternative portals to the University of Oklahoma (OU) campus. Other ideas the subcommittee will review include changing Main Street and Gray Street to two lanes with the third lane being used as a buffer and changing Porter Avenue from four lanes to three lanes and enhancing bicycle and pedestrian access along that corridor.

Councilmember Jungman asked why there are no bike lanes on urban arterial roadways in the design and Mr. Haas said the idea is to construct five to ten foot multi-purpose sidewalks or pathways along the edge of the roadway to get bicycles off the road onto safer paths.

Mayor Rosenthal said she understands the concept of special corridors and asked if the corridors would be designed individually based on what would work in that particular corridor and Mr. Haas said yes, special corridor designs are unique and there will be flexibility for long range transportation improvements.

Mr. Haas said, to date, the subcommittee has reviewed existing transportation conditions consisting of roadway networks; access management (existing impediments); daily traffic volumes; daily congestion in major corridors; parking inventory and demands; freight movements and impact; aviation land use and access; roadway inventory and maintenance; system improvements; passenger rail service; bike and pedestrian accommodations; sidewalk gaps and planned projects; and transit service.

Mr. Haas said future subcommittee meetings will include the review of programs and policies as well as short and long-range transportation improvements and there will be several public meetings and workshops. He said all information is placed on the E-Builder website to provide easy access. The CTP can also be accessed on social media sites including the City's website, Facebook, and Twitter.

Councilmember Kovach liked the treatment of special corridors because there are unique situations in those areas and breaking those out and performing overlays is a good idea. Mayor Rosenthal agreed and felt the CPT design standards fit what is currently on the ground and complete streets is a good concept. She said the community seems to be embracing the overall concept of complete streets and Norman is behind the curve on this issue. She said making that an essential part of the design is critical. Councilmember Kovach said the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) gives higher readiness points for complete streets.

Councilmember Kovach said the CPT includes a rail stop on Tecumseh Road and asked if the subcommittee had discussed park and ride concepts and Mr. Haas said no, the subcommittee has only discussed where rail stops should be located. Councilmember Holman suggested a rail stop be located at Rock Creek Road and Flood Street.

Councilmember Williams said the CPT is looking at funneling traffic from the north/south to other areas such as Sooner Road and Western Avenue and asked the reasoning for not having bike lanes on those streets and Mr. Haas said it is about safety purposes. He said proposals are for multi-modal paths or sidewalks to get riders onto adjacent corridors instead of on-street bike lanes.

Mayor Rosenthal said as the City moves forward with special corridor considerations, it is important to meet with stakeholders for input.

Ms. Joy Hampton, The Norman Transcript, asked the cost for one mile of a ten foot wide concrete multi-modal path and Mr. O'Leary said \$600,000 per mile. She asked how much it would cost to stripe one mile of the street for a bike lane and Mayor Rosenthal said there are a lot of variables and it is impossible to pull one figure out of the air for a per mile cost because it depends on what else is occurring in the area. Ms. Hampton felt paint would be a lot cheaper and Mr. O'Leary said if the roads were safely wide enough for bike lanes he is sure the CPT would have included them in the plan. Ms. Hampton said she did not understand the proposed Bike/Pedestrian Plan. She said every Bicycle Committee meeting she has attended she has been told that because of curb cuts sidewalks are not safe, roads are safe and she is not seeing how a multi-modal path will get her from her home to a place of business. She said the multi-modal paths all seem to be for recreational riders and she does not see any type of lifestyle community bike routes. Mr. Haas said as part of the open house in September there will be a bike specialist present to answer questions regarding the Plan.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Norman Comprehensive Transportation Plan," CTP update, City Council Study Session, September 10, 2013

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor