CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE MINUTES

January 28, 2013

The City Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 5:30 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room on the 28th day of January, 2013, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in 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 Gallagher, Jungman, and Chairman Griffith
ABSENT:	Councilmember Williams
STAFF PRESENT:	Mayor Cindy Rosenthal Councilmember Robert Castleberry Councilmember Linda Lockett Councilmember Dave Spaulding Ms. Susan Atkinson, Planner I Mr. Jeff Bryant, City Attorney Ms. Susan Connors, Planning and Community Development Director Mr. Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Transportation Traffic Engineer Ms. Leah Messner, Assistant City Attorney Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works Mr. David Riesland, Traffic Engineer Ms. Karla Chapman, Administrative Technician

Item 1, being:

CART RIDERSHIP REPORT INCLUDING SAFERIDE AND EXTENDED SERVICE.

Mr. Cody Ponder, Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (CART), forwarded the CART Ridership Report for December 2012, which was distributed to the Committee. Chairman Griffith asked if anyone had any comments and/or questions regarding the CART report and no comments and/or questions were received.

Items submitted for the record
1. Cleveland Area Rapid Transit Ridership Totals for the Month of December 2012

Item 2, being:

CONTINUED DISCUSSION REGARDING A DRAFT ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICT.

Ms. Susan Connors, Director of Planning and Community Development, said the Community Planning and Transportation Committee (CPTC) discussed the draft outline of a High-density Residential (HDR) zoning ordinance at the December 17, 2012, CPTC meeting. She said the HDR draft is based on public input gathered during the high-density community dialogues, as well as Committee comments and Staff research. Ms. Connors said the Committee discussed the potential conflict between honoring public input favoring less high-density and lower building heights with developers stated requirements for economic viability if design parameters were too restrictive. During public comment, residents of neighborhoods adjacent to Campus Corner spoke of the importance of not allowing new development to overwhelm the existing sense of place of Campus Corner and surrounding areas. Members of Norman's development and business community, including developers seeking to build high-density residential in the Campus Corner area, asked for a specific height limit of 75 feet as opposed to defining height by number of stories and advocated for the use of Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR) as a flexible method for regulating building height and mass.

Item 2, continued:

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Committee requested Staff: 1) research a numerical definition for height of a story; 2) continue investigating density or FAR as a regulatory technique; 3) continue to research issues surrounding the economic viability of high-density development in Norman; and 4) develop a map that more clearly defines the boundary for Campus Corner.

Researching Economic Viability

Staff consulted with development professionals to gather information about what does and does not work when building high-density residential developments. Ms. Connors said the research deals most specifically with issues related to development of high density in Campus Corner rather than in other parts of central Norman. She said the recent interest in high-density development in Norman has focused in and around Campus Corner, so data on development costs in that area is most readily available. Staff research includes:

1. Hare and Hare (OHH): Staff requested OHH prepare detailed economic analyses of potential development scenarios since they are familiar with Norman having worked with the City on the Porter Avenue Corridor planning effort in 2008-2010. Staff provided OHH data by developers currently seeking to build high-density residential in the Campus Corner area and served as a neutral analyst.
2. Mr. Richard McKown's Level Urban Apartments in Oklahoma City: Staff toured this high density, mixed use development located near Bricktown and Deep Deuce that is near completion.
3. Mr. Brewster McKracken, former two-term Austin, Texas, City Councilmember: Staff interviewed Mr. McKracken because he was an Austin Councilmember during the time that high-density developments targeting students were first being considered in the area west of the University of Texas campus.

OHH Consultants Economic Analyses

OHH established a set of assumptions as a basis to perform cash-flow analyses of data provided to Staff by B3 Group, the Elsey Brothers, and BLW Architects and conducted a variety of multi-year cash-flow analyses based on building heights of four and five stories. Four to five stories were tested because that is the maximum feasible height for "stick" or wood construction which could include a concrete podium that can be used for the base of the building or can serve as a ground floor parking structure. Buildings *above* five stories require concrete and steel construction which changes the cost dynamics of a project, adding $5.00-$12.00 per square foot to total construction costs. Developers requested that the allowed height be 75 feet which is the height allowed before a building is designated as a "high-rise building" in the International Building Code (IBC). A "high-rise building" must comply with additional regulations in the IBC, such as construction type, emergency systems, and elevator installation. A ground story is between 12-16 feet tall and upper stories are between 10-13 feet tall. Using these assumptions, the tallest four-story building would be a maximum of 55 feet high and the tallest five-story building would be 68 feet high. OHH made several observations about the prospect of high-density development to include:

- Four primary factors drive the cost of development, particularly in Campus Corner:
    1. Parking garage construction ($13,000 - $17,000 per stall/ $350,000 per level)
    2. Land costs
    3. Density
    4. Height
- A building height of 55–60 feet, (four stories) would be the minimum height in Campus Corner allowing projects that could be economically viable.
- If 100% lot coverage is allowed so developers can reach economic goals, then open space requirements can only be met through the use of elevated devices such as balconies and roof-top gardens.
- If the community is to gain any benefit from higher density development at 100% coverage, the architecture must be high quality.
- The use of Stepbacks as a technique to allow additional height while preserving the street wall will negatively affect the overall economic viability of a project.
- A unit total between 120-148 units could be economically viable at 18% or above Internal Rate of Return (IRR) and could be realistic in the current market provided that land costs could be removed from the transaction.
- OHH recommends the administration of higher density zoning in Norman through the use of community-supported design guidelines administered by a Council appointed Design Review Committee or Architectural Review Board.

Item 2, continued:

Staff Tour of Level Urban Apartments in Oklahoma City
Mr. McKown found that a four-story building that wraps around an interior parking structure was most economically feasible to build and created the most attractive streetscape for this urban setting. The development also includes two (2) 2,700 square foot ground-floor commercial units. Though the development is not yet complete, it is fully leased with a waiting list of prospective tenants.

Staff Interview with Mr. McKracken, former Austin, Texas, Councilmember
Mr. McKracken touted the success of multiple West Campus high-density developments in Austin, but stressed before they were built, the City of Austin developed an overlay district for high density infill with broad citizen participation and support. He said the plan established which areas were suitable for higher density re-development and which lower density residential areas would be protected. Mr. McKracken concluded having the plan and the overlay zone has allowed strategic re-development to proceed with community support and has given property owners the confidence that single-family neighborhoods will be protected.

Campus Corner Area Map
The Committee requested Staff provide a map of Campus Corner as a basis for discussion. Campus Corner has never been defined as a district with specific boundaries, rather as a district defined by local custom, land use, and zoning. Staff provided a map depicting two views of Campus Corner boundaries: the Norman 2025 Land Use Plan and Campus Corner as defined by land use as observed by City Staff. The residential area east of Campus Corner between DeBarr east to the railroad tracks is often referred to as the Debarr Neighborhood. For Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) purposes the area is also included in the Larsh-Miller Neighborhood. Though not a locally designated historic district, the Debarr District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991. Staff felt the DeBarr Neighborhood is an area influenced by Campus Corner and suggested that regulations that pertain to Campus Corner be extended to this area.

Pros and Cons of Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR) Versus Specific Definition of Density
Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR) is a ratio of a building's floor space compared to total area of a site. It is primarily used to control the overall bulk of buildings and determine how much of a lot can be covered relative to the height of a building on that lot. An example of an allowable FAR of 2.0 could mean any of the following: two-story building over entire site; four-story building over half the site; and/or eight-story building over one-quarter of the site.

The specific definition of density is a method of setting limits on the density in a specific area or zoning district. Currently in Norman only the Mixed-Use Development (MUD) zoning district defines density limits to 30 dwelling units per acre. Conventional zoning wisdom has held that limiting the density of a district preserves quality of life in that place; however, using du/acre can convey a false sense of control over actual density because this measurement addresses neither the number of bedrooms per unit nor the number of cars associated with those bedrooms.

Both FAR and density methods have strengths and limitations and neither addresses height limits for buildings nor do they control any issues related to the compatibility of the building with its surrounding context. Staff highlighted pros and cons for each method and distributed exhibits depicting one-story, two-story, four-story, and eight-story buildings using FAR 1.0 through 4.0 over entire site, one half of site, and quarter of site.

Conclusions

- The minimum height for a higher density building is four stories in order for the project to be economically viable.
- A building taller than four stories could potentially add amenities such as ground floor retail or enhanced architectural detailing.
- Density is used more commonly than FAR in ordinances. Neither is perfect and both need to be accompanied by design guidelines to achieve high quality, compatible development.
- Design guidelines should be flexible to allow for varied architectural styles.
- Densities at or above 100 du/acre are more likely to achieve a reasonable IRR.
- Parking garages are necessary to make projects compact on smaller parcels.

Item 2, continued:

- Given the right location, residents will walk more to surrounding amenities and adding density will attract additional amenities.
- Density should be located in the right place and locations should be chosen to protect the surrounding area.
- The four primary drivers of the cost of high-density development are: the cost of land; the density of a project; the height of the buildings; and the requirement for the parking garage.

Councilmember Jungman said OHH only identified seven scenarios out of 18 that generated a positive cash flow or IRR so it appears the research data brought forward for the proposed developments will not work and Ms. Connors agreed stating it was perplexing to Staff as well. Councilmember Castleberry said developers are constructing high-density developments all the time and are making it work. Chairman Griffith said 10-12% is a common IRR and Ms. Connors said based on industry standards, 18% IRR is preferred. Councilmember Jungman stated that the research reflected four stories showed a greater return than five stories and Staff said that is correct. Councilmember Castleberry said research also reflected that three story high-density developments were not viable and Staff agreed.

Councilmember Lockett said she would rather have a high-density ordinance that reflected a 75-foot standard versus number of stories and does not want regulations to limit progress for Norman. She said some of her constituents are excited about high density in the Campus Corner area and felt high-density targets all ages, not only student housing. Councilmember Lockett felt Campus Corner is a great area for high density and it will bring a new energy to Norman. Councilmember Jungman felt that high density needs to be defined as to what will and will not work for the Campus Corner area. Mayor Rosenthal said all projects presented are primarily for student housing projects and Staff research reflected a high-density three story development was not particularly viable. She said citizens who attended the high-density community dialogues expressed a clear opinion about not allowing high density to change the image for the Campus Corner area. Councilmember Castleberry suggested a high-density special use zoning or overlay district would be more sensitive to the Campus Corner area.

Councilmember Jungman agreed the high-density ordinance needed to be flexible and felt in order to move forward the City should start out smaller such as decide the number of stories versus a 75 foot limit for the Campus Corner to determine what will work. Councilmember Castleberry said a 75 foot limit does not mean that every project will be 75 feet tall. Chairman Griffith said during the high-density community dialogues the community indicated they were comfortable with high density, but requested specific rules regarding high density in the Campus Corner area. Councilmember Castleberry said it is not fair to say the community as a whole participated in the community dialogues because typically the participants were only citizens who lived or had businesses in and around the Campus Corner area and Councilmember Gallagher said the same situation applies for any public meeting/community dialogue whether high density or otherwise. Councilmember Gallagher said he can only envision a four story, or lower, high-density development in the Campus Corner area and Councilmember Jungman agreed. Councilmember Gallagher felt it is not Council's job to make requirements that would be easy for developers but rather requirements that will maintain Campus Corners' image. Councilmember Lockett felt that it is Council's duty to give developers the opportunity to have options, whether the projects are high density or not, when developing or building.

Chairman Griffith asked the Committee if the consensus was to move forward with a maximum height for the Campus Corner area to be no more than four stories and Councilmember Castleberry disagreed and said three Councilmembers felt the maximum height should be 75 feet for the Campus Corner area.

Ms. Ann Groff, 806 Mockingbird, said she only heard two Councilmembers at tonight's meeting state they were in favor of the 75 foot limit and Councilmember Castleberry said Councilmembers Williams, Spaulding, and himself were in favor of the 75 foot limit for Campus Corner. He said Councilmember Williams was unable to attend tonight's meeting but sent an email stating he was in favor of 75 foot limit in the Campus Corner area. Councilmember Lockett said she favored the 75 foot limit and Councilmember Spaulding said although he is not a CPTC Committee member he also favored the 75 foot limit in the Campus Corner area.

Mayor Rosenthal felt that there is some faulty information in Councilmember Williams' email because he states that the Staff said in their memo that four stories is economically viable, and if Staff is correct, another two stories (for parking) would need to be added. She said the assumptions in the economic analyses is that the parking garage is in the four stories.

Item 2, continued:

Councilmember Castleberry said he thought Staff's research indicated 68 feet was four stories and Mayor Rosenthal felt the Committee needed to be honest with people, stating 75 feet is 7 stories.

Councilmember Jungman said Staff's research is unbiased and states the IRR is diminished for developments that exceed four stories; therefore, the statement a development must be at least 75 feet in order to be viable is unfounded. Councilmember Castleberry said cost of construction may go down in the future, therefore making a 75 foot structure more viable to build.

Councilmember Jungman said the final report of the community dialogue clearly states the citizens preferred no more than three stories and while there may be some wiggle room, he felt the 75 foot limit is based on zero public input and information. Councilmember Gallagher asked how high the Vista Building is in feet and Staff said it was six stories, but was not certain the height in measurement of feet. Councilmember Castleberry said a developer could not build a six story structure with a 75 foot limit and Ms. Connors said they could if they chose to have lower ceilings.

Mr. Sean Rieger, Attorney for Builders Association of South Central Oklahoma (BASCO), and representative for Elsey Brothers, encouraged the Committee to think about opportunity and flexibility and suggested the Committee allow the market to determine success of a project. He said the proposed high-density ordinance discusses minimum height and felt that a 75 foot limit is not unreasonable. Mr. Rieger urged the Committee to consider 75 feet as the limit. Councilmember Jungman felt if 75 feet is approved as the limit, every proposed 75 foot high-density project in the Campus Corner area that comes before Council could be opposed by constituents in the Campus Corner area. Councilmember Castleberry felt it was important to have the height limit versus the number of stories because the height of the story is not mandatory; therefore, if each story was 19 feet or more, a four story building would be taller than 75 feet. Mr. Jeff Bryant, City Attorney, felt addressing the height limit for each story of the structure; the number of stories; and the height limit for the overall structure would allow flexibility, i.e., four stories and/or the maximum height of 55 feet, etc., and asked Staff to add language to the proposed ordinance.

Ms. Barbara Fife, 323 West Boyd Street, said she is a Campus Corner business owner and felt the charm of Campus Corner is huge and a high-density height limit is needed for this area. She asked the Committee to consider the traffic and parking issues that currently exist in the Campus Corner area and felt allowing high density would almost certainly create more traffic and parking issues.

Mr. John Woods, Norman Chamber of Commerce, felt the perception that height can not be charming and add ambiance to communities is incorrect and felt the existing structures in the Campus Corner area, specifically the two apartment complexes and an office building, are not charming and beautiful. He said building a nice compact high-density structure that would include architectural features, have two stories of parking garage with four stories of units is something that can be attractive. Mr. Woods suggested that the Committee not equate height with lack of charm and do not equate lack of height with immediate charm. He felt high-density criteria should include high standards, material, and quality; and encouraged Council to judge each proposed project on an individual basis and if the project does not fit the Campus Corner area – Council should vote it down. Mr. Woods felt this Committee should not set a standard that potentially could reject a beautiful project that would fit the Campus Corner area, create customers, and create a walkable living area that would be environmentally friendly. Councilmember Jungman said there is a lot of truth to what Mr. Woods said and suggested the Committee consider appointing a high-density design review committee. He felt a review committee could take some of the flexible guidelines for structures above three stories and translate them into something that can work for everyone, thus creating a nice project. Mayor Rosenthal agreed that the Committee should discuss a high-density review board and requested Staff bring back information. Councilmember Jungman said clear direction regarding high density should be given so that proposed projects are of high quality and good for the area which will reduce conflict at Council meetings.

Mr. John High, 1705 Dakota Street, said the Committee/Councilmembers should work together and consider what people living in and around the Campus Corner area want. Councilmember Castleberry asked Staff if there is a height limit on commercial construction in the Campus Corner area and Staff said no.

Mr. John Lungrund, 318 East Main Street, said he owns property in and around the Campus Corner area and asked the Committee the height limit for areas outside of Campus Corner and felt a lot of people wanted more developments that allowed walkability.

Item 2, continued:

Ms. Cheryl Clayton, 503 Tulsa Street, said the Committee needed to discuss density because it is an issue too and density will add traffic to an area. She said the height of the Sarkey's building located on Campus Corner has been mentioned but she felt the height of the building is not an issue because of all the open space around the building. Ms. Clayton said the Campus Corner property is much different for the proposed high-density development and said the project would be (more) acceptable if the proposed development allowed a serious amount of open space.

Mayor Rosenthal said in reference to Ms. Clayton's comments, she also felt density will add traffic. She said the proposed ordinance addresses site development standards stating high density must be located within two blocks of an arterial street and must be adjacent to a collector street if not fronting on an arterial street but felt additional language needed to be added to the ordinance stating the extra traffic created by high-density projects must be absorbed in the surrounding streets while still maintaining an adequate level of service. Mayor Rosenthal felt a zoning ordinance should not be created that can produce grid lock to an area and requested Staff add language that will adequately address the issue, whether in the general description or otherwise. She said traffic studies are required but the language does not state how it plays into the high-density considerations. Chairman Griffith said as he understands it currently, a level of service is established for a given street or road and then based on the project an evaluation is made as to how much the new project will be absorbed by the Level of Service (LOS) without adding a burden to the street or area. Councilmember Castleberry asked if Council would be bound to the traffic study should a traffic study come forward stating the project will not impact the LOS/traffic for the area even though common sense would agree the project would create grid lock. Councilmember Gallagher felt that the point Mayor Rosenthal is making is that Boyd Street is not an arterial street and a high-density project would cause the surrounding collector streets to become arterial streets. Mayor Rosenthal said her point is in reference to the right location where high density could be developed and the traffic impact produced by high-density projects could be addressed.

Ms. Jamileh Wilcox, 322 South University Boulevard, said during the high-density community dialogues held last summer the participants repeatedly felt that the high-density projects should only be allowed on arterial streets and asked why the proposed ordinance expanded allowing high-density development to be "...located within two blocks of an arterial street ...". Ms. Connors said Staff included the language as an option for Council to consider. Chairman Griffith said the proposed ordinance is only in draft form and Councilmember Jungman felt the LOS should be added to the proposed ordinance.

Ms. Ann Groff, 806 Mockingbird Lane, said Boyd Street is a two lane street and felt high density would create more traffic. She said currently when delivery trucks are in the area it causes traffic problems; therefore, she believes more density (people) will create traffic problems.

Councilmember Castleberry asked Staff if Boyd Street is an arterial street and Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, said a portion of Boyd Street is classified as a major arterial and a portion is classified as a minor arterial. Councilmember Castleberry asked Staff to explain arterial, major arterial, minor arterial and collector streets to the Committee and audience. Mr. O'Leary said the Norman 2025 Land Use and Transportation Plan (LUP) states *principal arterials* distribute traffic throughout the City and link major community-wide traffic generators, which includes all highways within or passing through urbanized Norman. Arterials require a minimum of four travel lanes and additional lanes, turn lanes, medians, and right-of-ways (ROW) may be required based upon traffic generation or unique conditions. *Minor arterials* are intended to distribute traffic throughout the City and link major community-wide traffic generators, but due to limited ROW or adjacent land development can not or need not be constructed to the Principal Arterial standard. A minor arterial will typically consist of two travel lanes, with turn lanes required at intersections with all other arterials and sometimes with collectors. *Urban collector streets* allow traffic to move from the local street system to the arterial system and typically have two travel lanes, with turn lanes required at some intersections including all arterials.

Mr. Joe Bogan, 401 East Boyd Street, Unit 401, said he attended the high-density community dialogues and in his opinion, a 75 foot building would not look good to him. He understands beauty is in the eye of the beholder and understands as well the struggles between developers who want to construct high density in the Campus Corner area and the business owners and citizens who lived in the Campus Corner area. Mr. Bogan said if the high-density project scheduled on February 12, 2013, Council agenda is approved the current and ongoing discussion regarding high density will be mute.

Item 2, continued:

Mr. Chris Elsey, Elsey Partners, Manhattan, Kansas, said density considers units per acre and felt that is not a good measure of how people will live in high-density projects. He felt FAR is more suitable and controllable for high density. Mr. Elsey said Elsey Partners is proposing to develop a two story concrete podium for the parking garage and four levels of wood frame construction on top of the parking garage. He said the development will look like a six story building but will be less than 75 feet tall.

Mr. Eric Kozlowski, 824 South Lahoma Avenue, said he is an architect and has designed many building using the density standard. He felt the Campus Corner area is special and a traffic requirement should be given for high-density developments. Mr. Kozlowski felt Floor Area Ratio (FAR) can be used by developers to manipulate a project. He felt high-density development will be better-suited if the high-density ordinance had a standard using density rather than FAR, but felt using both standards (density and FAR) might be appropriate especially in the Campus Corner area.

Ms. Jayne Crumpley, 423 Elm Avenue, said the proposed ordinance states one parking spot per bedroom but does not reference any parking for visitors. She felt people will park in the neighborhoods surrounding high-density projects if more parking spots were not required.

Mr. Stephen Koranda, Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCVB), said more restaurants, grocery stores, shopping, and entertainment, etc., will be needed when areas are developed, thus creating more density. He felt Norman's tax base will grow if new high-density developments are constructed.

Mr. Bryan Elsey, Elsey Partners, Manhattan, Kansas, felt the belief that more spaces are needed for visitor parking within a high-density development is a parking myth. He said there is research that shows 65% of the parking spaces are available anytime, day or night, at apartment complexes and encouraged anyone in attendance to research apartments, high density or otherwise, to determine for themselves.

Chairman Griffith requested Staff bring back information regarding a Design Review Board and language addressing LOS for streets; standards that will "marry" building height with the number of stories; and requested Staff look at a total of 100 -150 units (since research showed this number to be economically viable) that could use standards for either density and/or FAR depending on the project, area, and compatibility of the high-density development. Councilmember Jungman said he is all for flexibility and felt if both traffic and compatibility are addressed he would not oppose high density in the Campus Corner area.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint Presentation entitled, "High-density Residential Development," dated January 28, 2013
2. Memorandum dated January 28, 2013, from Ms. Susan F. Connors, AICP, Director of Planning and Community Development, to Chairman and Members of Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee, with Exhibit A, High-density Residential: Campus Corner and DeBarr Neighborhood, Exhibits B-1 through B-10: subject property reflecting various Floor to Area Ratio (FAR)
3. City Council Community Planning and Transportation Minutes dated December 17, 2012 with Attachment A, High-density Residential Zoning District Draft 1, dated December 17, 2012
4. Email from Councilmember Chad Williams to Steve Lewis and Brenda Hall dated January 28, 2013
5. Sign In Sheets for the Community Planning and Transportation Committee meeting dated January 28, 2013

Item 3, being:

UPDATE REPORT REGARDING THE CITY OF NORMAN WAYFINDING SIGNAGE STUDY.

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, said wayfinding is a program/plan designed to help visitors find their way around a new environment and the program/plan should be intuitive; easy to quickly grasp, including crossing cultural and language barriers; and generally include signs, symbols, colors, and images. He said on January 10, 2012, Council approved Contract No. K-1112-105, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City, Norman Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), and Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCVB) for development of a Wayfinding Plan.

Item 3, continued:

Mr. O'Leary said the City, Chamber, and NCVB each will provide up to $20,000 in funding toward the cost of the Wayfinding Plan. On January 27, 2012, Council approved a Request for Proposal No. RFP-1112-46 to select a consultant team. The Public Works Department received eight proposals for the Signage and Wayfinding project, each proposal was scored independently by the Selection Committee, and C.H. Guernsey was selected.

Mr. O'Leary said Council approved Contract No. K-1112-130 with C. H. Guernsey and Company/Kolar Team on May 22, 2012, for development of a Signage and Wayfinding Plan, and several Stakeholder meetings, Committee meetings, and open houses were held between June 14, 2012, and October 18, 2012.

Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Transportation Traffic Engineer, said wayfinding plans are intended as an economic and business development tool to increase visits to Norman destinations by providing clear and inviting directions. He said the economic benefits are especially important to Norman where tourism, convention business, and sales tax generation are significant to the City's economy. Local businesses will benefit even if they are not in designated districts because wayfinding routes purposefully lead users past their businesses. Additional goals of a wayfinding plan include building awareness of all Norman has to offer; drawing visitor traffic off of I-35 and into the heart of the city; effort to maximize tourism, improve community image, and unite as one destination; helps visitors avoid getting lost and wandering through neighborhoods.

C.H. Guernsey and Company and Kolar Team's project goals and objectives are as follows:

- Design easily understood, user-friendly, distinct navigational systems guiding visitors to and from City destinations;
- Promote tourist, historical, and cultural destinations, as well as support and assist the local retail market;
- Build upon existing identity for the City, reflected in the wayfinding components and overall marketing; and
- Identify potential funding sources for future wayfinding implementation.

Mr. Lombardo said the consultant began building a brand for the wayfinding signage and began identifying the hierarchy and routing of Norman's transportation system which would determine what, where, and how the wayfinding signage would be installed. The hierarchy and routing for Norman is as follows: US 77 – southbound only, Tecumseh Road, Robinson Street, Main Street, Lindsey Street, and Highway 9.

The MAJOR destinations would be the first wayfinding signage project(s) because they have the largest attendance figures and draws from a national and regional audience. He said Interstate 35 is the backbone of Norman and the City worked with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) to develop a master list of the major destinations which was evaluated based upon ODOT criteria as follows:

- Publically owned facilities (casinos would not apply)
- Not-for-profit organizations
- Educational institutions serving over 400 attendees
- Providing services to the general public (w/capacity of over 200 visitors)
- Annual attendance (minimum 10,000)
- Regional significance
- Host to major events

The second wayfinding signage project(s) would be the PRIMARY destinations and districts which are primary streets that lead from the Highway and/or Interstate. Primary destinations have large attendance figures and draw from a regional audience.

The third wayfinding signage project(s) would be the SECONDARY/TERTIARY destinations which are street trailblazing and pedestrian signage. Secondary and tertiary destinations appear on primary streets within districts and corridors.

Item 3, continued:

The **hierarch/routing**, major and *primary* destinations include:

- **U.S. 77 (southbound only)**:
  - Max Westheimer Airport
- **Tecumseh Road**:
  - Norman Healthplex
  - University North Park
    - *Norman Conference Center*
  - Max Westheimer Airport
- **Robinson Street**:
  - Cleveland County Fairgrounds
  - Griffin Park
    - *Griffin Hospital*
    - *Westwood Park*
  - Norman Regional Hospital
  - University North Park
    - *Norman Conference Center*
  - Max Westheimer Airport
- **Main Street**:
  - Campus Corner
  - Downtown
    - *Courthouse*
    - *City Hall*
    - *Public Library*
    - *Santa Fe Depot*
    - *Sooner Theatre*
  - University of Oklahoma
- **Lindsey Street**:
  - Norman Welcome Center
  - University of Oklahoma
  - Oklahoma University (OU) Memorial Stadium
- **Highway 9**:
  - Lake Thunderbird
  - Lloyd Noble Center
  - Museum of Natural History
  - National Weather Center
  - Norman Economic Development Coalition (NEDC) Center

Mr. Lombardo said a wayfinding plan allows the opportunity for a third signage project for secondary/tertiary destinations such as street trailblazing and pedestrian signage. He said the plan would also acknowledge making provisions to incorporate potential future additions to the system, i.e., potential future districts, corridors, and destinations. Mr. O'Leary said the City needed a system that would include first, second, and third signage projects but he said Council would approve each plan individually, therefore determining the progress and pace of the plan.

The plan would offer and maintain district icons, color palettes, typography, patterns, etc. Staff provided slides depicting the sign family, i.e., signage that would be on I-35, vehicular, parking, transit, bus stops, neighborhood gateways, neighborhood street signs, and pedestrian signs. He showed examples of signage indicating branding features elements for the City of Norman, the University of Oklahoma (OU), etc.

Councilmember Gallagher asked the cost of sign installation for the Wayfinding Plan and Staff said the signage would be constructed in-house and cost approximately $2,000 per sign. Councilmember Lockett asked if the final report would include a cost estimate for each unit sign plus the cost for the entire signage plan and Staff said yes. Mr. O'Leary reminded the Committee that Council would approve the entire Wayfinding Plan; however, each wayfinding signage project would come forward for Council consideration and approval on an individual basis.

Item 3, continued:

Councilmember Castleberry asked why signage was needed since most people have google apps and Staff said googling addresses and/or directions can be distracting while driving. Mr. Stephen Koranda, Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCVB), agreed and said google apps can also be incorrect.

Staff provided pictures of wayfinding signage for the City of McAlester and said they are very nice but also very expensive. Staff said Council can choose to adopt similar signage for certain areas of the city rather than citywide. Councilmember Jungman said he would like Staff to bring forward wayfinding signage options that were a little more dramatic, possibly more color, and Staff said more color would mean more cost. Councilmember Lockett felt the McAlester signs had too much color and were too busy.

Mayor Rosenthal said she prefers the strong brand, not several brands, for wayfinding signage, i.e., one branding feature element on all signage such as only City of Norman logo versus using OU, NCVB, or other logos, and Councilmembers Jungman and Spaulding agreed. Councilmember Gallagher agreed and felt one strong brand is better. Mayor Rosenthal asked if OU has agreed that their symbol can be used on the wayfinding signage because OU's permission must be obtained in order to use their logo and generally a fee must be paid as well. Councilmember Castleberry asked if Staff received help from the art community when designing the wayfinding signage and Mr. O'Leary said yes.

Staff will finalize the Wayfinding report in February 2013 and bring for Council consideration in March 2013 at which time the graphics, colors, brand, etc., will be recommended. Staff will meet with ODOT concerning the I-35 signage and a pilot project to develop sign specifications and major/primary sign installation on Main Street will come before Council for consideration in July 2013. Staff will prepare a grant application or other funding opportunities through the federal transportation fund program in July 2013. Mr. O'Leary said the wayfinding signage colors must be approved at both the state and federal levels in order to apply for grants. In December 2013, Staff will prepare the city FYE Capital Improvements Projects (CIP) Budget, to include the Wayfinding Signage Plan and the implementation of other Wayfinding Plan elements in partnership with community stakeholders.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint Presentation entitled, "City of Norman Signage and Wayfinding Plan, Plan Update," presented by Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, dated January 28, 2013
2. Example of Wayfinding Signage from the City of McAlester

Item 4, being:

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION.

None.

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

City Clerk

Mayor