

CITY COUNCIL
JOINT CITY COUNCIL PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
January 14, 2011

The City Council Planning and Community Development Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 8:05 a.m. in the Conference Room on the 14th day of January, 2011, 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.

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

PRESENT: Councilmembers Atkins, Griffith, and Chairman Butler

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

PRESENT: Councilmembers Butler, Kovach and Chairman Quinn

ABSENT: Councilmember Cubberley

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mayor Cindy Rosenthal
Ms. Susan Connors, Planning and Community
Development Director
Mr. Ken Danner, Development Manager
Mr. Doug Koscinski, Current Planning Manager
Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Traffic Engineer
Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works
Mr. David Riesland, Assistant Traffic Engineer
Mr. Wayne Stenis, Planner II
Mr. Tom Knotts, Planning Commission Liaison
Ms. Andrea Wekmuller-Behringer, Program Coordinator,
Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
Ms. Karla Chapman, Administrative Technician

PRESENTATION FROM A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GOVERNMENTS (ACOG) REGARDING THE COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE OKLAHOMA CITY AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (OCARTS), REFERRED TO AS "ENCOMPASS 2035," INCLUDING A STAFF PRESENTATION OF PROJECTS TO BE SUBMITTED BY NORMAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PROPOSED PLAN.

Councilmember Butler said the Planning and Community Development Committee (PCDC) has been discussing how to approach the 2025 Land Use Plan (2025 Plan) update and today's meeting is a result of recent conversations to develop a genuine Transportation Plan instead of appending a small cursory to the 2025 Plan.

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, said Council requested Staff examine comprehensive transportation planning for the City, but felt it was important to start discussions that include the entire metro area. He said Encompass 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (Encompass 2035) is a great foundation for Norman's own internal planning and requested Council input for the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) project applications that are relevant to the Encompass 2035 Plan. He felt the ACOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) has a direct linkage to today's presentation on Encompass 2035 and said the deadline for Encompass 2035 project applications is today, January 14, 2011.

Ms. Andrea Wekmuller-Behringer, ACOG Program Coordinator, and Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Traffic Engineer, provided an overview of the ACOG planning process, data collection and analysis, transportation model development, development of goals and public involvement, project selection criteria, and Norman projects.

Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer, said ACOG is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS) area and Transportation Planning and Data Services Division (TPDSD) is responsible for all activities related to Regional Transportation Planning (RTP), i.e., all Federal railway planning and construction funds are funneled through TPDSD. She said the Federal monies come with many requirements and TPDSD makes certain all obligations are fulfilled, one being a Long Range Transportation Plan available and approved by member entities. Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said the most recent RTP, Encompass 2025, is the sixth plan and is usually updated every five years with a minimum 20 years planning horizon. The Encompass 2025 includes 37 communities, over 2,085 square miles and has base year data from 2005 to forecast data 2035. TPDSD is currently running the Transportation Model and anticipates a completion date of March, 2011.

The TPDSD typical planning cycle consists of three and a half years of developing base year and future demographic information, i.e., land use, population, employment, and school enrollment. Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said ACOG worked closely with City Staff to make certain all appropriate data was collected and supplied to the Travel Demand Model in order to understand the current ground data and the direction in which TPDSD should go. She said this step has been completed and all the numbers were approved by the TPDSD Policy Board.

Goals were established in coordination with City Planning Staff, local elected officials on the TPDSD Policy Board, and input received from the general public. Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said after the goals were established, the next step was to look at the *new* travel demand model, which is a major tool used to forecast traffic for the region. TPDSD looked at what the traffic was predicted to be for the next 30 years and determined deficiencies based on the old system and the new Travel Demand Model. Once the deficiencies were evaluated, all the data was brought back to the Policy Board. The Policy Board ultimately had the decision of what was brought into the Encompass 2035 Plan.

Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer provided an overview of socio-economic information; current and future land use data; growth model calibration and parameterization; and mapping multi-modal improvements. The 2035 figures show the population is predicted to grow 36.1%, employment growth will change 38.5%, and the population density will be 703 per square mile, which is a steady growth and has been the trend for many years. Historical trends, along with the City's Comprehensive Plan, are used to determine where potential commercial or residential development(s) will be built. All data is supplied to the Growth Allocation Model which also requires extensive land use data, i.e., school district(s), historical trends, household income, and existing density and helps to allocate future population and commercial developments. Transit, freight, and rail improvements are collected, along with the street and highway improvements in order to have the latest and greatest transportation network possible.

All data, i.e., socio-economic for base year, land use information, forecasted population employment for 2035, etc., is plugged into the Travel Demand Model. The model equations are based on the results of the 2009 Household Travel and Transit Surveys and such data has not been completed since the 1970's because it is a very expensive process. The base year network was validated against 2005 traffic counts and the 2035 traffic projections rely on the accuracy of the base year network calibration and validation.

Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said projections are only as good as the base year and TPDSD went through a very rigorous validation process. She said the Travel Demand Model is a complex tool to use, but what ultimately guides the Long Range Transportation Plan is the vision.

The Encompass 2035 selection criteria is based on approved goals and strategies for a sustainable, multimodal transportation network and needed project selection criteria to support the region's goals and its vision of a comprehensive transportation system. She said the criteria was developed to encompass several different

aspects and cover all 10 goals/strategies and a Member's Task Force was formed to help formulate the selection criteria to include:

- Support local planning efforts
- Increase safety and reduce congestion
- Address identified safety hotspots
- Integrate multiple transportation modes
- Provide options
- Serve regional activity and employment centers
- Integrate with existing infrastructure
- Support mixed use development
- Support regional freight movement
- Improve access to/from environmental justice tracts
- Improve accessibility for mobility impaired and disabled
- Support existing density
- Avoid impact to culturally or environmentally sensitive lands
- Reduce ozone precursor emissions

Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer provided an overview of a Level of Service (LOS) map that included everything currently on the ground and committed through the end of the Federal fiscal year. She said if ACOG chose not to spend any more money the LOS would be "F". She said ACOG decided any roadway with a LOS "D" or worse needed to be looked at for improvement and the LOS map was forwarded to member entities. Each entity had the opportunity to look at the LOS map, take a particular area, and see what projects need to be considered for the Encompass 2035 Plan.

Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said the call for projects opened December 13, 2010, and ends today, January 14, 2011, and entities can submit an application on-line. ACOG Staff will review all project submissions by February 3, 2011.

Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer highlighted the points and overall impacts for the policy goals and criteria and the total points available are 135 per project. She felt the truly inter-modal projects, i.e., includes street and highway improvements as well as transit, bike, and pedestrian improvements, will typically receive the most points. High quality projects with only roadway widening but no sidewalks, bike lanes, or transit would probably only receive 80 to 90 points. The emphasis on inter-modal was placed on purpose because options were being missed and ACOG wanted to give those projects having different modes of traffic a chance.

Maintenance and approved bike/pedestrian projects do not have to go through the criteria process because maintenance money is set aside to assist with street maintenance and bike/pedestrian improvement projects. Projects approved by entity Master Trail Plans, will automatically make it into the Encompass 2035 because of the emphasis placed on different options other than street roadways. Transit, extended bike/pedestrian not currently in an entity approved Master Trail Plan, and Street and Highway Widening projects all have to go through the criteria selection process. ACOG did not request any safety projects for intersection improvements because any project not in the Long Range Transportation Plan can not be moved forward, therefore restricting ACOG to a list of safety projects. All street and highway widening projects must go through the 2035 LOS "filter" and it would make sense to widen those streets/highways with LOS "D" or worse. However, it would not make sense to widen those streets with LOS "A", "B", or "C" unless they are parallel to a heavily congested street and, if built up, would relieve some of the traffic. All projects will go through a submittal evaluation and will ultimately be submitted to the Policy Board for approval and revenue projections for the Encompass 2035 are just under \$10 billion.

Councilmember Butler asked how ACOG will account for nationwide monies being put towards passenger rail and Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said ACOG has a Staff member who is a revenue guru. She said there are quite a few new funding sources and it is a professional judgment of whether Oklahoma will have passenger rail in the future or not. She said ACOG has been a little more conservative in order to make certain there will not be any over extending, but felt ACOG does take everything in to account.

Councilmember Kovach asked how projects will be weighed parallel to passenger rail and Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said this is a very difficult subject because Oklahoma does not own all the railroad tracks or rail lines. She said the few rail lines that are owned by Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) are not suitable for creative passenger rail, but ACOG has planned to do a Regional Commuter Rail Alternatives/Analysis (RCRAA) Study to determine how feasible it would be to have commuter rail lines to Norman, Edmond, Del City, and Midwest City. Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said the RCRAA Study may show a need for passenger rail and show it to be an investment opportunity that provides great transit options, but ODOT does not own the rail way rights-of-way (ROW), and must work with Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Union Pacific (UP) who can not at this time accommodate a lot of passenger rail. She said additional studies are sometimes uncomfortable issues but, unless they are in place additional federal funding may not be obtained.

Councilmember Griffith asked if ACOG has a “dream plan” for railway design and Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said ACOG Staff will run a transportation model parallel to commuter rail routes to determine how they might perform, although it can not be a part of a Long Range Transportation Plan because there is currently no funding set aside for commuter rail. She said direct/exact route to rail line has not been laid out but the corridors that would be serviced by commuter rails have been determined by ACOG.

Mr. Lombardo said within the last twelve months Council approved Staff to amend the current OCARTS Plan due to the Cedar Lane Road widening request which was not identified as a four lane facility. He said Staff is trying to position the City to be able to apply for future federal funding for projects the Council believes are important to our community over the next 20 years. Staff first looked at the Norman 2025 Plan to identify what segments of road are classified as four lane arterial that currently are *not* a four lane arterial and developed a list of those projects. The 14 uncompleted elements of the Norman 2025 include:

Norman 2025

- Alameda Street – Four lanes to 36th and two lanes with 10’ paved shoulders east to Lake Thunderbird
- Franklin Road – Two lanes with 6’ paved shoulders from 24th Avenue West to 48th Avenue East and four lanes from I-35 to 48th Avenue West
- Imhoff Road – Four lanes from Classen Boulevard to 24th Avenue East
- Indian Hills Road – Four lanes from I-35 to 48th Avenue West
- Lindsey Street – Four lanes from 36th Avenue West to Berry Road
- Porter Avenue – Four lanes from Rock Creek Road to Tecumseh Road
- 24th Avenue East – Four lanes from Lindsey Street to Robinson Street
- 36th Avenue West – Four lanes from Tecumseh Road to Indian Hills Road
- 48th Avenue East – Two lanes with 10’ paved shoulders from Highway 9 north to Indian Hills Road and two lanes with turn lanes from Robinson Street to Indian Hills Road
- 120th Avenue East – Two lanes with 6’ paved shoulders from Alameda Street to Stella Road
- 156th Avenue East – Two lanes with 6’ paved shoulders from Highway 9 to Bethel Road

Mr. Lombardo said the next step Staff looked at was the current OCARTS 2030 Plan and looked for roadway segments that are called to be something different than what they currently are at this time. The uncompleted 12 elements of the OCARTS 2030 Plan include some State Highways and are listed as follows:

OCARTS 2030

- Franklin Road – Four lanes from I-35 to 48th Avenue West
- Highway 9 – Four lanes from 24th Avenue East to City Limits and six lanes from I-35 to 24th Avenue East
- Indian Hills Road – Four lanes from I-35 to 48th Avenue West
- Lindsey Street – Five lanes from I-35 to Berry Road
- Porter Avenue – Four lanes from Rock Creek Road to Robinson Street

- 12th Avenue East – Six lanes from Classen Boulevard to Indian Hills Road and four lanes from Highway 9 to Cedar Lane
- 24th Avenue East – Four lanes from Lindsey Street to Robinson Street
- 36th Avenue West – Four lanes from Tecumseh Road to Indian Hills Road
- 48th Avenue West – Four lanes from Robinson Street to Indian Hills Road and four lanes from Highway 9 to Franklin Road

Mr. Lombardo said Staff then looked at the City's budget, specifically the unfunded projects identified by Council as transportation desires and developed a 21 item list of uncompleted elements of the Current Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) to include:

Current CIP

- Berry Road – Four lanes from Robinson Street to Imhoff Road
- Classen Boulevard – Four lanes from Lindsey Street to 3500 feet south
- Franklin Road – Four lanes from I-35 to 60th Avenue West
- James Garner Boulevard – One North bound lane from Robinson Street to US 77 and two lanes from Robinson to Acres with University Boulevard Extension also two lanes from Main Street to Tonhawa Street with realignment
- Jenkins Avenue – Four lanes from Constitution Street to Lindsey Street
- Lindsey Street – Four lanes from 24th Avenue East to 36th Avenue East and five lanes from 24th Avenue West to Berry Road and three lanes from Berry Road to Elm Avenue and three lanes from Jenkins Avenue to Elm Avenue with reconstruction and railroad underpass
- Main Street – Downtown West enhancement and pedestrian amenities and downtown West safety, street, and sidewalk replacements
- Main Street/Gray Street – West terminal realignment
- Porter Avenue – Five lanes from Alameda Street to Gray Street
- 12th Avenue West – Four lanes from Tecumseh Road to Rock Creek Road
- 24th Avenue East – Four lanes from Alameda Street to Robinson Street
- 36th Avenue West – Four lanes from Tecumseh Road to Franklin Road
- 48th Avenue East – Rural principal arterial Indian Hills Road to Highway 9 and four lanes from Indian Hills Road to Robinson Street

Mr. Lombardo said Staff finally took the Encompass 2035 Level of Service (LOS), provided by OCARTS, and provided a slide depicting two segments Staff felt needed to be added. He said there were actually five segments but three were impossible to do in terms of adding more capacity. He said the two following segments may not be practical to do, but Staff wanted to make certain the City would be in a position to apply for federal funding if future Council(s) approved the projects:

- Imhoff Road – widening from Highway 9 to Chautauqua Avenue or Jenkins Avenue
- Flood Avenue – widening from Robinson Street to Main Street

Mr. Lombardo said Mr. David Riesland, Traffic Engineer, completed the online submission projects that ACOG will review and score. He said there will be a series of ACOG meetings between now and the end of February 2011, where different ACOG Committees will be looking at the overall picture for the region. He said one particular meeting will focus on regional projects and if a need is shown for more discussion on the infamous "outer loop", surrounding Communities may have an opportunity to discuss how to approach and receive more clarification on the issue.

Mr. O'Leary said even with all the data plugged in and improvements that could occur, the LOS will still be unacceptable for Norman and I-35 and a transit system would be a great solution if it can be factored in to the equation. Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer reiterated the travel model is only a tool to assist with problem areas and is not the deciding factor.

Mayor Rosenthal felt Staff should clarify which Encompass 2035 projects can be identified as multi-modal corridors, i.e., Lindsey Street, Front Street, Porter Avenue, Alameda Street, and Main Street, and Mr. Lombardo said that has been Staff's approach when submitting the online projects. Councilmember Butler felt there also needs to be regional discussions in reference to what pathways and/or corridors need to be heavily focused on in terms of being multi-modal and Ms. Wekmuller-Behringer said such discussions have taken place. She said OCARTS has taken all the entities' Master Trail Plans and/or Bike/Sidewalk Trail Plans and plotted those on a map.

Items submitted for record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "*Encompass 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan Development for Central Oklahoma*," dated January 14, 2011, presented by Andrea Wekmuller-Behringer, ACOG Program Coordinator, and Angelo Lombardo, City Traffic Engineer

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 a.m.

Attest: City Clerk

Mayor