

CITY COUNCIL  
PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE MINUTES  
March 11, 2011

The City Council Planning and Community Development Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 8:03 a.m. in the Conference Room on the 11th day of March, 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.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Atkins, Cubberley, Griffith, and  
Chairman Butler

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Cindy Rosenthal  
Councilmember Carol Dillingham  
Councilmember-Elect Roger Gallagher  
Ms. Susan Connors, Planning and Community  
Development Director  
Mr. Ken Danner, Development Manager  
Mr. Doug Koscinski, Current Planning Manager  
Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works  
Mr. Tom Knotts, Planning Commission Liaison  
Ms. Leah Messner, Assistant City Attorney  
Mr. Blaine Nice, Assistant City Attorney  
Mr. David Riesland, Traffic Engineer  
Mr. Wayne Stenis, Planner II  
Ms. Karla Chapman, Administrative Technician

DISCUSSION REGARDING SCOPE OF STUDY FOR A COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN.

Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, said the Encompass 2035 Transportation Plan (Encompass 2035) is in the latter stages of adoption and Staff will be sharing some interesting issues pertaining to Norman that were discovered during the planning cycle. He said Staff researched Comprehensive Transportation Plans (CTP) in the Big 12 Cities including Ames, Iowa; Austin, Texas; Boulder, Colorado; College Station, Texas; Columbia, Missouri; Lawrence, Kansas; Lincoln, Nebraska; Lubbock, Texas; Manhattan, Kansas; Stillwater, Oklahoma; and Waco, Texas, and said each of the Big 12 cities has interesting and unique features to their CTP.

Mr. David Riesland, Traffic Engineer, said a CTP would assist in developing a transportation system that is appropriate to the land uses it serves and contain a needs assessment and future recommendations for all transportation modes. He said a CTP also provides policies and funding strategies to guide the plan's implementation.

Elements of the CTP include public involvement; data collection; existing conditions analysis; review of critical intersection and/or locations; travel forecasting; future conditions analysis; identify transportation needs and/or recommendations; and transportation funding/implementation strategies.

The 1988 Norman Transportation Master Plan recommended:

- Construction of Front Street from Robinson Street to Eufaula Street
- Upgrade of Eufaula Street to a two-lane divided major collector roadway
- Lindsey Street be upgraded to a four-lane undivided highway
- A Tecumseh Road interchange
- Widen a number of existing streets including intersection improvements
- Short-term, intermediate-term, and long-term improvements with costs estimates for each
- Highlights of short-term solutions include construction of Front Street
- Highlights of intermediate-term solutions include Robinson Street/Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) grade separation
- Highlights of long-term solutions include Lindsey Street/BNSF grade separation and depressing Lindsey Street through Oklahoma University (OU) campus

Mr. Riesland said many of the recommendations were thought to be too controversial and the Study conducted for the 1988 Norman Transportation Plan was never adopted, but has been useful for Staff to use in identifying projects that needed to be implemented over the years. Councilmember Cubberley stated it was interesting to see that the same issues that the City faced in 1988 are still present today.

The Encompass 2035 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. Mr. Riesland said the Transportation Model was run against the Encompass 2035 in early 2011 and the plan is on target to be completed by end of March 2011.

Mr. Riesland said a typical planning cycle consists of three and a half years to develop base year data and a year and a half to run and refine the model. He said the Oklahoma City Area Rapid Transit System (OCARTS) does not just look at streets and highways, but all modes of transportation and provided information on the Encompass 2035 mapping for multi-modal improvements for transit, freight, trails, and streets and highways. He said the projects initiated by Norman, involved everything from streets and highways to bicycle trails and other transit projects.

In order to develop goals to determine the regions vision, OCARTS solicited public input through direct interaction and communication, web and new media technologies, and a comprehensive survey. Mr. Riesland said the survey asked citizens how they would prioritize improvements to the current multi-modal transportation. He said the top three areas were maintenance of existing roads, passenger rail, and public bus service, but also included (in priority order) wider streets, bike paths and lanes, expansion of Amtrak, seniors and disabled, and sidewalks. Councilmember Butler stated this comprehensive survey was based on demographic data and was very well representative of the population at large. Mr. O'Leary agreed and suggested Staff should conduct a similar survey for Norman.

The Encompass 2035 selection criteria was developed to cover several different aspects including:

- 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

Mr. Riesland provided an overview of the Level of Service (LOS) map that included everything currently on the ground and committed through the end of the Federal fiscal year. He said the red lines on the LOS map represented a LOS “F,” and said the new portion of Tecumseh Road would be a LOS “A,” Robinson Street would be LOS “C” or “D,” and Lindsey Street/OU Campus would be rated LOS “F.”

Mr. Riesland said Norman 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. He said the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) decided any roadway that did not start out with a LOS “D” or worse would not be considered for improvement. Mr. Riesland highlighted the Encompass 2035 project submittal procedures and said street and highway widening submittals went through a LOS filter. Any submittal containing extended vision for bicycle or transit elements did not have to go through the LOS filter, but did have to go through an evaluation/selection process. Maintenance and approved bicycle/pedestrian elements did not have to go through either the LOS filter or the evaluation/selection process, but instead went directly to the third submittal step, fiscal constraint.

Staff developed a list of Encompass 2035 projects utilizing the Norman 2025, OCARTS 2030 Plan, current Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), specifically the unfunded projects identified by Council as transportation desires, and the Encompass 2035 Level of Service (LOS) map. Mr. Riesland said Staff submitted a total of 34 projects, some were new while others were part of previous plans. He said the purpose of submitting all projects (new or old) is because Staff is trying to position the City to be able to apply for future federal funding. Councilmember Cubberley felt Staff needed to keep stressing that very point; that just because the project has been submitted does not necessarily indicate it will be the exact project the City would implement, i.e., could be a smaller scale project done with federal funds.

The Encompass 2035 projects submitted by City Staff include:

- Alameda Street – Four lanes to 36<sup>th</sup> and two lanes with 10’ paved shoulders east to Lake Thunderbird
- 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue East – Four lanes from Highway 9 to Franklin Road
- 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue East – Two lanes with 6’ paved shoulders from Alameda Street to Stella Road
- 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue East – Two lanes with 6’ paved shoulders from Highway 9 to Bethel Road
- Franklin Road – Four lanes from I-35 to 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue West
- Franklin Road – Two lanes with 6’ paved shoulders from 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue West to 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue East
- 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue East – Four lanes from Lindsey Street to Robinson Street
- Lindsey Street – Four lanes from 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue East to 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue East
- Lindsey Street – Five lanes from 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue West to Berry Road
- Lindsey Street – Three lanes from Berry Road to Elm Street
- Lindsey Street – Three lanes from Jenkins Avenue to Elm Street (with reconstruction)
- Lindsey Street – Railroad underpass
- 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue West – Four lanes from Tecumseh Road to Indian Hills Road
- 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue West – Four lanes from Robinson Street to Indian Hills Road
- Indian Hills Road – Four lanes from I-35 to 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue West
- Imhoff Road – Four lanes from Classen Boulevard to 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue East
- Porter Avenue – Four lanes from Rock Creek Road to Indian Hills Road
- Porter Avenue – Five lanes from Alameda Street to Gray Street
- Highway 9 – Four lanes from 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue East to City Limits
- Highway 9 – Six lanes from I-35 to 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue East
- 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue East – Six lanes from Classen Boulevard to Indian Hills Road
- 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue East – Four lanes from Highway 9 to Cedar Lane

- 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue West – Four lanes from Tecumseh Road to Rock Creek Road
- Berry Road – Four lanes from Robinson Street to Imhoff Road
- Classen Boulevard – Four lanes from Lindsey Street to 3500' South
- James Garner Boulevard – one Northbound lane from Robinson Street to US 77
- James Garner Boulevard – Two lanes from Robinson Street to Acres Street with University Boulevard Extension
- James Garner Boulevard – Two lanes from Main Street to Tonhawa Street (with realignment)
- Jenkins Avenue – Four lanes from Constitution Street to Lindsey Street
- Main Street – Downtown West Enhancement and Pedestrian Amenities
- Main Street – Downtown West Safety, Street, and Sidewalk Replacements
- Main Street/Gray Street – West Terminal Realignment
- Imhoff Road – Widening from Highway 9 to Chautauqua Avenue or Jenkins Avenue
- Flood Avenue – Widening from Robinson Street to Main Street

Mr. Riesland said a total of 201 projects were submitted by member entities to be considered for Encompass 2035, with Norman having the highest ranked project in the region (Lindsey Street between Jenkins Avenue and Elm Avenue). He said Norman also has nine of the top 15 projects in the region and every Norman project will be included in the Encompass 2035.

Mr. Tom Knotts, Planning Commission Liaison, asked what portion of State Highway 9 is the City's responsibility and Mr. O'Leary said State Highway 9 is completely the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) responsibility. Mr. O'Leary said both State Highway 9 and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue are on the Encompass 2035 Project list because they are streets located in Norman.

The scoping process for the Norman Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is in the interim stage of identifying the potential projects needed to define the City's transportation system. It will involve a fairly extensive public involvement process with numerous public meetings to talk through the deficiencies in the existing system and identify areas that should be considered off-limits. Mr. Riesland said public focus group meetings would be held to discuss the goals and interests of the group and will include roads and vehicles, non-motorized transportation, traffic control and/or calming, and other transportation. The data compiled would then be ready for modeling versus existing conditions in the future CTP.

Mr. Riesland highlighted the transportation system goals for each of the Big 12 cities except for Lubbock and Stillwater, because neither currently have CTPs. He said Staff also researched other cities in Oklahoma including Edmond, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Broken Arrow, and Lawton. He said Tulsa and Broken Arrow both have elements of a Transportation Master Plan, but not a CTP.

Mayor Rosenthal asked how Staff could educate citizens to get out of their vehicles and stated London charges fees to people/vehicles when driving into congested areas. She wondered if Norman could create a similar concept and asked Staff to research. Mr. Riesland said non-motorized travel, transportation choices, and environmental stewardship was emphasized in the transportation system goals for a lot of the Big 12 cities. Councilmember Butler agreed and felt it was very important to educate citizens about what is going on in other communities around the world.

Councilmember Griffith said most of the Big 12 cities discussed their aviation facilities in their transportation system goals and felt the City has an incredible resource in Max Westheimer Airport (MWA) that can not be ignored. He wondered if MWA could possibly become a small plane regional hub and take some of the traffic congestion away from Will Rogers Airport. Mr. O'Leary agreed MWA is a great asset to the City, but the City does not manage the MWA. He said the City may want to invite MWA officials to discuss long range transportation issues.

Councilmember Griffith felt parking issues needed to be discussed when developing the CTP and Mr. O'Leary agreed that parking should and will be a topic. Mr. O'Leary said a Parking Study was done in 2003 but isolated to only the downtown and campus areas. He felt it was a good study but it was very controversial and is currently not being used by Staff.

Current City resources include \$30,000 set aside in FYE 2012 for scope developments and should be sufficient to hire a consultant to assist with scope development for a CTP. Encompass 2035 can serve as a basis for a CTP Study, as well as the un-adopted 1988 Master Plan and an extensive traffic count database. Mr. O'Leary said the Greenway Trails, Parks, and Storm Water Master Plans can also give baseline information so that some work would not have to be re-done. Mr. Riesland said in the meantime Staff can research potential consulting firms to assist with the CTP scope development and prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the CTP scope development. He said Staff can also assist with and participate in the public involvement process and compile a list of what might be important to include as elements in Norman's CTP, based on all the other CTPs in the region. He said Staff will also provide more research on CTPs discussed today, i.e., how old, the cost, etc.

The tentative next steps are to form a Citizen Steering Committee, develop scope of project, select a consultant to prepare the CTP Study, and decide whether to perform a Norman 2025 Plan update in concurrence with the CTP.

Mr. Riesland highlighted a potential time line to the Committee beginning with Staff issuing an RFP for scope development by May 2, 2011, followed by selecting a consultant for scope development by June 1, 2011. He said a consultant contract could be on the June 21, 2011, agenda for Council consideration and a Citizen Steering Committee would be formed by July 1, 2011. The consultant who is awarded the contract would begin the scope development on July 15, 2011, and complete the scope development by December 31, 2011. He said following the scoping process and pending FYE 2013 budget availability, staff would anticipate beginning a CTP on July 1, 2012.

Mr. O'Leary said Council may desire to break down the CTP into phases stating a CTP does not need to be done in one year, but can be done in one to three years. Councilmember Dillingham felt the first step is to form a Public Steering Committee in order to begin some level of public education and envisions the Public Steering Committee recommending to Council to move forward with a CTP process. She felt most citizens would appreciate a CTP study because traffic congestion is an issue, but with the current economic times it will be very important to make certain every step includes some form of public education to gain public acceptance for a CTP.

Mayor Rosenthal asked Staff how a CTP Study should coordinate with a Lindsey Street Widening Project (LSWP) and how the City should proceed so as to not intimidate the Lindsey Street stakeholders. Councilmember Dillingham agreed and said that is precisely why it was so important to get public education started as soon as possible. Councilmember Cubberley said the CTP will be a two to three year process and felt a decision will need to be made on the LSWP much sooner in order to be on target with I-35 improvements. He felt the LSWP and the CTP will be two separate processes and Council agreed. Mr. O'Leary said staff will be meeting with ODOT mid to late April 2011, to discuss the final environmental assessment hearing on the entire I-35 corridor. He said at that time ODOT will release their plans about site design recommendations, timing, etc., and he felt construction could begin as early as spring 2012 for the Main Street Interchange. The Committee felt Staff should start the planning discussions on the LSWP after the April environmental assessment meeting with ODOT.

Councilmember Butler said it would be very important to involve OU and coordinate the City's plans with OU's plans. Mr. O'Leary agreed and said discussions should also include ODOT, Cleveland County, OU Aviation officials, etc. Councilmember Cubberley said it was critical to include ODOT and OU in the

stakeholder group because if they do not accept the proposal(s), then a CTP, LSWP, and other important projects will not move forward.

Mr. Knotts asked Staff if they envisioned a local firm to perform the CTP scoping and Mr. O’Leary suspects it will be a large regional and/or national firm that specializes in this field. He said it will be a true qualification-based selection process, as well as, based on any similar projects a firm may have successfully conducted that would relate to Norman’s specific CTP needs. He said just as with the Storm Water Master Plan (SWMP) contractor, Council may want to choose a firm to begin the scoping process and eventually award them the full contract but only after the selection process is completed.

Mr. Knotts asked what the Planning Commission’s (PC) role will be in the CTP process and Mayor Rosenthal felt PC representative(s) should be included in the stakeholder group.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION.

Councilmember Butler wondered if it would be a good approach to offer short-term measures for low-impact development and felt opportunities may be lost while waiting to move forward on the proposed Water Quality Protection Zone (WQPZ) Ordinance, in terms of waiting until the ideal criteria and conditions present themselves. She requested Staff research ideas and felt a manual giving suggestions and methods as interim steps until the proposed WQPZ was adopted would be helpful. She suggested Staff look again at the cities researched during the development of the proposed WQPZ to see what techniques they used. Mr. O’Leary said Staff has some really good examples, specifically from Broken Arrow, that could be presented at a future Planning and Community Development Committee (PCDC) meeting.

Items submitted for record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, “Comprehensive Transportation Plan, City of Norman, Council Planning and Community Development Committee,” dated March 11, 2011

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 a.m.

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Attest: City Clerk

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Mayor