

CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 27, 2015

The City Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 4:07 p.m. in the Conference Room on the 27th day of August, 2015, 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: Councilmember Allison, Holman, Miller, and Chairman Jungman

ABSENT: Councilmember Williams

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Anais Starr, Planner II
Mr. Jeff Bryant, City Attorney
Ms. Susan Connors, Director of Planning and Community Development
Mr. Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator
Ms. Jane Hudson, Principal Planner
Ms. Sara Kaplan, Retail Marketing Coordinator
Ms. Leah Messner, Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works
Ms. Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney
Ms. Syndi Runyon, Administrative Technician IV

OTHER GUESTS PRESENT: Councilmember Greg Heiple, Ward One
Mayor Cindy Rosenthal
Mr. Will Decker, 311 South Webster
Mr. Harold Heiple, 218 East Eufaula
Mr. Doug Myers, Director of Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (CART)

Item 1, being:

CLEVELAND AREA RAPID TRANSIT (CART) RIDERSHIP REPORT INCLUDING SAFERIDE AND EXTENDED SERVICE FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE, 2015.

Mr. Doug Myers, Director of Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (CART), said the first two days of classes at the University of Oklahoma (OU), CART transported 8,770 more passengers than last year and CART is five drivers short. Councilmember Miller asked what CART attributes to the new ridership numbers and Mr. Myers said the arrival of students, an increase in construction around campus, and the new 30 minute service on Main Street, Alameda Street, and Lindsey Street routes. CART is encouraging students to park at Lloyd Noble and ride a shuttle to campus. CART reached out to the community and made arrangements with Sooner Mall and Bethel Baptist Church to allow students to park in their parking lots and catch a bus at the nearest bus stop. Although CART expected an increased amount of riders, they never expected this large of an increase and it is not expected to slow down.

Mr. Myers said many cities are beginning to train their drivers in-house and he is trying to convince OU to allow him to hire someone that can train drivers in-house. He said there are a lot of students who want to drive the buses, but they do not have the training or the required licenses.

Item 1, continued:

Mr. Myers highlighted the CART ridership report for June 2015. He said CART transported 35,056 riders in June and year-to-date has transported 950,733 riders, an increase of 5%. CART transported 3,024 CARTaccess riders in June with an average of 116 riders daily. CART continues to encourage CARTaccess riders to ride free on the fixed route service and that ridership is increasing because riders like not having to schedule a ride 24 hours in advance and with fixed routes they can go where they want when they want.

The long range transportation plan goal is to have 30 minute service on all routes. He said the 30 minute service will be provided for the peak times of 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Mr. Myers said CART has a new App for Apple and Android that can be accessed at CART Norman that lets people know where the fixed route bus stops are located, bus schedules, when buses will be arriving at a stop (e.g., ten minutes out, 15 minutes out), etc.

Mr. Myers said two new Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses arrived in June and are currently being used on a limited basis until Syncromatics installs the automatic vehicle locator (AVL) tracking system, voice announcement system, and read-out displays required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Chairman Jungman asked what the accessibility features of the buses included and Mr. Myers said all buses are ADA compliant, which means they are wheelchair accessible.

Councilmember Holman is glad to see some bus stop improvements on CART's monthly report and asked the timeline of the improvements. Mr. Myers said CART is currently working with their contractor to complete the improvements by the end of the year.

Councilmember Holman said citizens have asked him about facilities at the bus hub located on Brooks Street, such as water and restrooms. Mr. Myers said it is cost prohibitive to construct a public restroom. He said CART did have two porta johns there, but the public abuses them and someone started a fire in one of them so CART is planning to remove them before the holiday season. He said CART cannot afford to pay for the damages or keep replacing them. He is not sure what to do, but is willing to listen to suggestions. Councilmember Holman asked if the bus hub will remain at that location in the long term and Mr. Myers said yes, but if CART is able to build another hub in the future they could incorporate public restrooms into the plan. Councilmember Holman asked if the Committee could get a cost estimate of installing a water fountain if that is even a possibility and Mr. Myers said yes, he will obtain an estimate to bring back to the Committee. Councilmember Allison asked if vending machines are available at the location and Mr. Myers said no. Councilmember Miller said public restrooms would be wonderful, but when you talk about liability and cost of maintenance she would rather acquire more buses than try to take care of a fixed facility. Councilmember Allison said the City maintains public restrooms through the Parks Department and felt there was something the City and CART could do to accommodate the public. Chairman Jungman asked about the normal wait time at the Brooks Street hub and Mr. Myers said generally 15 minutes. Chairman Jungman said wait time should be a consideration for whatever investment would be needed to provide public restrooms. Councilmember Allison said some people may have been riding the bus for more than 30 minutes before arriving at the location so this may be something that needs to be discussed.

Items submitted for the record

1. Cleveland Area Rapid Transit Ridership Totals for the Month of June 2015
2. Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (CART) Monthly Report, June 2015

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Item 2, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING A DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE.

Ms. Susan Connors, Director of Planning and Community Development, said at the June 25, 2015, the Community Planning and Transportation Committee (CPTC) meeting, members discussed the update to the Norman 2025 Land Use and Transportation Plan (Comprehensive Plan). The Committee requested a Request for Proposal (RFP) be drafted and brought back to the Committee for review.

Ms. Connors highlighted the proposed RFP that includes community background, planning history, scope of work that would encompass the entire City, project criteria, RFP criteria, and a selection process. She said the comprehensive plan will include community profile development; development of goals, objectives, and policies; future land use plan and map; transportation; stormwater plan; infrastructure element; technology infrastructure; economic development/redevelopment; parks, trails, and open space; housing; neighborhood revitalization; sustainability; healthy community; resiliency; special planning areas; community character and urban design; and an implementation plan.

Ms. Connors said public participation will be a large part of the Comprehensive Plan update that could consist of the following four options:

Option One

The selected firm will provide guidance on the development of citizen involvement including the formation of a steering committee to be used during the process.

Option Two

A Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) appointed by the City of Norman to assist the selected firm in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The CPAC will meet eight (8) times with the consultant to provide feedback during the development of the Comprehensive Plan. It is anticipated the CPAC will consist of 15 to 20 members who will represent the Planning Commission; City Council; Parks Board; citizens appointed by City Council from each ward; Norman Chamber of Commerce; Downtowner's Association; Norman Public Schools; University of Oklahoma; Association of Central Oklahoma Governments; Planning Department; Home Builders Association; Realtors Association; Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau; non-profit organizations; and sustainability/greenways.

Option Three

A Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) appointed by the City of Norman to assist the selected firm in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The entire CPAC will meet at least three (3) times to brainstorm ideas and issues and provide input to launch the Comprehensive Plan. Once the development of the Comprehensive Plan has begun, the executive committee of the CPAC composed of seven (7) members will meet five (5) times with the consultants to provide feedback and review draft recommendations; however, the entire CPAC will be kept abreast of progress electronically and be able to provide feedback. It is anticipated the executive committee of the CPAC will consist of seven (7) members of the entire CPAC which will consist of 15 to 20 members who will represent the Planning Commission; City Council; Parks Board; citizens appointed by City Council from each ward; Norman Chamber of Commerce; Downtowner's Association; Norman Public Schools; University of Oklahoma; Association of Central Oklahoma Governments; Planning Department; Home Builders Association; Realtors Association; Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau; non-profit organizations; and sustainability/greenways.

Option Four

The Comprehensive Steering Committee will be formed with appropriate diverse stake holders similar to those listed above, in addition, committee members will be added as members of topic area committees for detailed discussions with consultants.

Item 2, continued:

Ms. Connors said the since the last Census, the City has grown 2,000 acres (more than two sections) and 12,000 people. She said a section is 640 acres, which is a lot of land to develop and the Comprehensive Plan needs to represent that growth, predominately in the east.

Councilmember Miller asked how long the process will take and Ms. Connors said approximately 18 months.

Council Comments

Councilmember Heiple asked the cost of updating the Comprehensive Plan and Ms. Connors said \$500,000 is budgeted and it will probably cost all of that. Chairman Jungman asked if there would be money for the committee meetings and public meetings and Ms. Connors said yes, the consultant will be involved in all of those meetings so the meetings will be part of that cost. Ms. Connors said the purpose of the consultant is to frame and guide the process so the City does not want to hold meetings without them. Chairman Jungman asked if there is an alternative to spending \$500,000 and Councilmember Heiple said he would like to explore that because the City needs more Code Enforcement Officers as well as other Staff. Ms. Connors said the money has been budgeted in FYE 2016 specifically for the Comprehensive Plan update.

Chairman Jungman asked how much it would cost to develop 2,000 acres and Ms. Connors said it would be an extraordinary amount of money. Chairman Jungman said relatively, the cost for the Comprehensive Plan would be a drop in the bucket. Councilmember Holman said it costs upwards of \$5 million per mile to widen each section line road to four lanes. Ms. Connors said the consultants will let the City know how much the Comprehensive Plan update will cost. Committee members felt the consultants would be smart enough to figure out how much is budgeted and bid within that range.

Councilmember Miller suggested holding a large meeting and advertising that the City is considering an update so the public will know and tell the City what they think and where they think the City should go. She said there are so many ways to get the word out through Facebook, the City's website, Twitter, etc. She would like to tighten up the committee process and not have quite so many people to streamline the process.

Councilmember Heiple said in the Council Retreat in August, Council talked about the need for a Public Information Director and City apps to get information out to the public more effectively. Since there is no money in the budget for that position, what tool does the City have to get global communication to the public. Ms. Connors said during the Comprehensive Transportation Plan update, the consultant had tools and a public participation process where citizens were able to provide input and the Comprehensive Plan draft RFP requires the same process. Councilmember Heiple said he cannot see a way to explain to the citizens in an effective way what the City is trying to accomplish. He said it will work, but how effective will it be and how large of a net it will throw out on the community is in question. Ms. Connors said the Comprehensive Plan is not a plan everyone gets excited about, but if citizens stay involved then the tools provided will allow them stay updated, but they have to be interested. Councilmember Miller said there will be public meetings for progress reports and citizen input, but citizens need to know up front that the City is doing this and wants their input. Councilmember Heiple said the City needs a Public Information Director to do a better job of communicating with the public.

Councilmember Heiple felt the list of organizations/stakeholders in Options Two and Three are pretty representative of the City. Councilmember Allison said the City may not want a large committee, but the City may get hit by the public about the committee not involving enough people. He said the City needs to be prepared that there will be some citizens coming forward asking why the City has cut out all the participation.

Chairman Jungman would like the respondents of the RFP to tell the City how to manage a large group. He said the City has managed large groups before and it would be perfect for setting the broad strokes of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Connors said the City could require the consultant to open "vision meetings" for the public. Chairman Jungman said he agrees with Councilmember Allison that if the City has had committees with large groups in the

Item 2, continued:

past it will seem as if the City is being elitist. Councilmember Miller said as the process moves forward, people will drop out or lose interest. Councilmember Holman said any visioning meetings should be held at different locations throughout the City such as in Little Axe, Central Norman, etc. Chairman Jungman felt there would be little participation in Little Axe and Councilmember Holman said the City needs to get ideas from the people that live on the east side specifically.

Councilmember Miller suggested holding Ward meetings regarding the Comprehensive Plan and members agreed that was a good idea. Ms. Connors said the Comprehensive Plan will be a time intensive and Staff intensive process so if the Committee wants Ward meetings to be held before a consultant is hired that can be done by Wards. She said those discussions can feed into and be part of the information the City gives the consultant.

Councilmember Heiple asked if the process could be done in-house to save the \$500,000 for other projects and Ms. Connors said the City does not have the Staff to do that. She would have to have a minimum of one full time employee working on the Comprehensive Plan. Mayor Rosenthal said that would be one person to manage the process, not someone that could do all the analytical tasks that go into master planning. She said in 2004, the Comprehensive Plan Committee was created with an elite group of 20 people that resulted in a huge public backlash about the process not being open. She said the City then opened the process for applications and received 200 so if there is going to be a robust public process, the committee should not be an Advisory Committee, per se, but more of a Steering Committee that helps manage the process and guide the consultants through the public process.

Chairman Jungman asked if the RFP criteria could include points given or taken away for robust public participation. He would like to see what experience the consultant has in dealing with large groups and how they would design something for the City that is going to draw in lots of people and still make sense out of it.

Ms. Connors said there seems to be consensus for a Steering Committee as well as a robust public process as well as asking the consultant to provide their experience in working with large groups. The City also wants the consultant to provide options for public participation as opposed to identifying the four options in the draft RFP. Committee members concurred with these changes. Mayor Rosenthal said consultants usually have good ideas that have worked for them before and that helps give the public a sense of buy-in and whether the City chooses that consultant or not the City has the benefit of acquiring a variety of different suggestions.

Ms. Connors said there might be a consultant group that will have sub-consultants. Usually that would include a sub-transportation person, but the City does not need that since the City has a Transportation Plan. She said part of the cost for the consultant is bringing in specialists to address what the community needs. She said some communities have facilitators for the committees and the public process in addition to the consultants.

Chairman Jungman said in the section "Public Participation" he would like to have language stating, "We desire as a City, robust public participation." He said that way the consultant will know this is a goal and value of the City to draw in as many people as possible in a way that makes sense.

Ms. Connors asked if the RFP needs to be presented to Council as a whole or just be sent out and Chairman Jungman said he would like to see the final version at a Study Session or Conference. Mayor Rosenthal suggested the RFP be presented to Council in the September 8, 2015, Conference before being mailed to firms.

Chairman Jungman asked who would be on the RFP Review Committee and Ms. Connors said she did know yet, but she will be on the committee as well as a Councilmember and Chairman Jungman asked to be on that committee.

Item 2, continued:

Public Comments

Mr. Harold Heiple, 218 East Eufaula, said on Page 8 under Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies, it states, “the Comprehensive Plan should be developed with significant public participation” and the definition of “significant,” is meaningful or consequential. The definition does not say large and it does not say many. Also, the options on Page 10 do not state that any and every member of the public that wants to participate can. He said while there is no problem inviting public input, the problem with the 2020 Plan and 2025 Plan processes was attendance of 300 people ending up with 175 to 200 people attending the meetings. The average age of the participants were 50 years of age with the average residence in Norman being 20 years. He said an average person in Norman, Oklahoma, is not 50 years of age and has not lived here 20 years so his point is both the 2020 Plan and 2025 Plan were under represented with respect to constituencies that needed representation like families with young children who do not have the time to participate. He urged the CPTC to appoint four or five people who they feel will cover the overall spectrum of people in Norman. Mayor Rosenthal asked if Mr. Heiple is saying there were substantive deficiencies in the 2025 Plan and Mr. Heiple said yes, because the processes were pushed through too quickly. He felt a Comprehensive Plan Committee should consist of 36 to 50 members moderated by the Planning Director or another Department Director. Do not tell the public if they want to be a member of the committee to just show up because it leads to an unmanageable number that is dominated by one constituency.

Items submitted for the record

1. Memorandum dated August 21, 2015, from Susan Connors, AICP, Director, Planning and Community Development
2. Draft Request for Proposal, Professional Planning Services, for Preparation of a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Norman, Oklahoma

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Item 3, being:

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLIC COMMENTS.

None

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The meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor