



Council Report

City of McAlester

www.cityofmcalester.com

March 25, 2025

Council approves TIF district project parameters

City councilors voted to approve and adopt ordinances for a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district along George Nigh Expressway in McAlester.

This action outlines the anticipated parameters of the TIF agreement. City Attorney John T. Hammons said this means the council agrees to forgo \$10 million of tax collections in return for the developer's anticipated investment of \$48 million in the project with no risk placed on the City for the project. The TIF district is planned to operate until June 30, 2034 or until it generates \$10 million in funding — whichever comes first. The TIF district does not require the City to pay any upfront costs because a portion of new tax revenue generated within the district is reinvested into the area.

Voting yes were Mayor Justin Few, Ward 1 Councilor Levi Gilmore, Ward 2 Councilor Robin Woodley, Ward 3 Councilor Chris Stone, Ward 5 Councilor Billy Jack Boatright, Ward 6 Councilor Kevin Beaty. Ward 4 Councilor Randy Roden abstained from voting.

The Mid-McAlester TIF Review Committee held several meetings before it voted Feb. 24, 2025 to recommend the proposed district plan to the City Council. The project plan aims to spur private investment, create jobs, and revitalize three parcels of land in McAlester near U.S. Highway 69.

The project plan will be required to go through City processes, meet state and federal regulations, and require City Council approval. Citizens provided input at two public hearings and the developer aimed to address some of their concerns.

Ad valorem tax apportionment will begin immediately upon ordinance approval, ensuring the city captures the lowest base value for properties in the district. Sales tax collection will start either with the first sale within the district or by July 15, 2026, with 90% of collections going to the developer.

A portion of the funding, 2% annually for the life of the TIF, will be directed to the Frink-Chambers school district. The TIF does not fall inside the McAlester Public Schools district — but because the project is inside McAlester city limits, the district will continue to benefit from a quarter-cent sales tax.

Upcoming events

April 5-6
KMB Spring Cleanup
— 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays
— Noon to 3 p.m. on Sundays.
— McAlester residents can dump bulk trash, metals, tires, and more.

April 8
City council meeting
— 6 p.m.

April 12-13
KMB Spring Cleanup
— 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays
— Noon to 3 p.m. on Sundays.
— McAlester residents can dump bulk trash, metals, tires, and more.

April 22
City council meeting
— 6 p.m.

April 25-26
Citywide Garage Sale
— Register your garage sale for free at travelmcalester.com.

Council Report details elements in the latest McAlester City Council meeting as part of the city's efforts to broaden communication with the public. City council meetings are open to the public, with agendas, minutes, packets and more information available at www.cityofmcalester.com. Action reported in these updates is tentative until the Council approves the meeting minutes at the next meeting.

More info

Anyone can view the full agenda and the agenda packet online under City Council Documents. Anyone can watch video from the meeting on the City of McAlester's YouTube account.

Actions reported here are tentative until the council approves the meeting minutes.

Did you know...

Citizens can sign up to receive alerts from the City of McAlester and to submit service requests to the City.

The City's app, McAlester Connect, is available in the app store for citizens to receive notifications, submit service requests, and more.

Anyone can download the app by searching for "McAlester Connect" in your app store on your phone.

Then create an account to start submitting requests for City services and to stay updated on everything going on in the City of McAlester.

Recognition and awards

Mayor Justin Few signed a proclamation declaring April 2025 as Autism Awareness And Acceptance Month in McAlester.

This serves as a reminder to celebrate individuals with autism and promote understanding, inclusion, and acceptance in our community. The City of McAlester is honored to take part in the annual observance of Autism Awareness Month and World Autism Day to address the diverse needs of individuals and families affected by autism.

Consent agenda

Council members voted on the following under the consent agenda:

- approve the minutes from the March 11, 2025, regular meeting;
- approve the minutes from the March 11, 2025, special meeting;
- approve the minutes from the March 13, 2025, special meeting;
- approve claims for March 5-18, 2025;
- indefinitely postpone Tort Claim No. 216351-1-LN filed by City of McAlester
- concur with the Mayor's appointment of Dr. Janet Wansick to the McAlester Regional Health Center Authority for a term to expire February 28, 2031;
- concur with the Mayor's reappointment of Lester Cashmere to the McAlester Regional Airport Advisory Board for a term to expire March 31, 2027;
- concur with the Mayor's reappointment of Jeff Wolf to the McAlester Regional Airport Advisory Board for a term to expire March 31, 2027;
- approve the purchase of a Monster Flow Tester with Adapter and Fittings at the cost of \$1,600.00 from Davenport Fire Equipment Sales, LLC. The Monster Flow Tester with Adapter and Fittings will be purchased with funds from the City Of McAlester's Fire Department portion of the County quarter cent excise tax for fire services.

More council action

Council members also discussed the following agenda items:

- Councilors voted to approve a non-binding agreement indicating their intent to participate in a groundbreaking regional energy park project, marking a significant step toward economic growth for McAlester and southeastern Oklahoma. Councilors voted in favor of joining the City of Atoka and other regional municipalities in a collaborative effort to develop a large-scale energy park. This project, designed to meet the energy needs of large data centers, will include the construction of a one-gigawatt power facility, generating its own energy and providing reliable power for the data centers without relying on the public grid. Atoka Mayor Brian Cathey and project partner John Hardy presented the initiative to the McAlester City Council, highlighting the economic benefits the project will bring to the region. The energy park is expected to create 150 to 250 jobs in Atoka, with additional opportunities in McAlester as workers seek housing and accommodations in the area — all with no financial commitment placed on McAlester. The project, valued at \$4 billion, aims to provide a self-contained power supply to support the growing demand for energy in the data center industry.

More info

Anyone can view the full agenda and the agenda packet online under City Council Documents. Anyone can watch video from the meeting on the City of McAlester's YouTube account.

Actions reported here are tentative until the council approves the meeting minutes.

Did you know...

The City of McAlester Senior Center offers a daily lunch program, plus tons of activities each week and month, like bingo, dominoes, bunco, a monthly jamboree, various card games, board games, low-impact senior fitness, guest speakers and more.

Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. at the J.I. Stipe Center and the suggested donation is \$2 per meal. Lunch schedules are posted weekly on the City's Facebook page.

Anyone at least 60 years old is eligible to register, or to be registered by a loved one, by calling 918-715-3442.

More council action

- Councilors voted to approve an Ordinance of the City of McAlester, Oklahoma, amending McAlester City Code, Chapter 82 Parks, Water Activities and other Recreation, Article V Public Trail Regulations; repealing all conflicting ordinances providing for severability and declaring an emergency; and authorizing the mayor to sign the ordinance. This action essentially includes e-bikes into McAlester's ordinances for trails. This does follow with the state laws as far as the class one, two and three electric assisted bicycles, and they do have the miles per hour for each of the different classes. This action includes several amendments to the ordinances as included in the meeting agenda packet.

- Councilors voted to approve a request to rezone certain lots in McAlester from R-1B (Single-Family District) to C-3 (General Commercial District) for a 47,552 sq. ft. basketball training facility. The facility will offer training, fitness programs, leagues, camps, and clinics, and it meets all zoning requirements, including setbacks and parking. No written objections were received, and one neighboring property owner raised concerns about a 10th Street curb apron, which will remain unchanged. The Planning Commission approved the request on March 4, 2025.

- Councilors also heard a staff report from Tourism Manager Billy Sumner, who highlighted upcoming events and the economic impact of tourism. He emphasized that tourism is funded by the city's lodging tax and works to attract visitors through event promotion, partnerships, and marketing efforts. Notable upcoming events include the Downtown Art Walk, the McAlester Italian Festival, the Dancing Rabbit Music Festival, and the International Jefferson Highway Convention. Sumner also shared data showing how tourism boosts local revenue, citing a recent event that generated an estimated \$138,000 in local spending. He encouraged residents and businesses to engage with McAlester's tourism website (travelmcalester.com) and social media for event updates and promotional opportunities.

City council

The McAlester City Council is comprised of six Council members and Mayor elected by the citizens of the city.

The Council is responsible for setting the goals, policies, and laws (ordinances) of the City, and hires and supervises the City Manager, who acts as CEO of the City in managing the day-to-day operations.

The McAlester City Council meets regularly on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in Council Chambers on the first floor of City Hall at 28 E. Washington Ave., McAlester, OK 74501.

Council meetings are open to the public and can be viewed on the City of McAlester's YouTube Channel.

Citizens can check in which ward they reside on the city wards map, check out how to contact a council member, and view meetings dates and information online at www.cityofmcalester.com by clicking on Government tab and then clicking the City Council page.

Council Members



Justin Few
Mayor



Levi Gilmore
1st Ward



Robin Woodley
2nd Ward



Chris Stone
3rd Ward



Randy Roden
4th Ward



Billy Jack Boatright
5th Ward



Kevin Beaty
6th Ward
Vice Mayor