



City of Lawton

Lawton City Hall
212 SW 9th Street
Lawton, Oklahoma
73501-3944

Library of Tomorrow Council Committee

Special Meeting Agenda

Friday, December 12, 2025

2:00 PM

Lawton City Hall
Wayne Gilley Auditorium
Conference Room

Recommending Body

"Official action can only be taken on items listed on the agenda. As a recommending body, the Committee may review and discuss agenda items, propose and enact floor amendments, and then choose to make a recommendation to the City Council or provide direction to the City Manager. The Committee may also defer items for further review, refer matters to the City Attorney, or send items to standing committees, boards, commissions, or authorities for additional study. In some cases, items may be postponed to a later date or removed from the agenda entirely."

Meeting Called to Order

Statement of Compliance with Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, 25 O.S. 301-314

Roll Call

Introduction of Guests

Business Items

1. Discuss the creation of the Library of Tomorrow Strategic Plan, including the suitability of the current library facility, possible renovation or relocation options, the community-centered purpose and vision of a modern library, updates to programs and services including digital and STEM offerings, facility and technological needs, and long-range planning goals, and take action as deemed necessary.

Adjournment

The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48 hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

Item Title:

Discuss the creation of the Library of Tomorrow Strategic Plan, including the suitability of the current library facility, possible renovation or relocation options, the community-centered purpose and vision of a modern library, updates to programs and services including digital and STEM offerings, facility and technological needs, and long-range planning goals, and take action as deemed necessary.

Initiator: Randy Warren, Councilman - Ward 8

Information Source: Randy Warren, Councilman - Ward 8

Background:

On November 3, 2025, the City Council received a report and considered approving the plans and specifications for Project EN2201 – Library Ceiling Renovation. During that discussion, the Council approved a moratorium on non-essential maintenance expenditures at the main library facility and established a committee—appointed by the Mayor and chaired by Councilman Randy Warren—to develop a comprehensive Library of Tomorrow Strategic Plan and return a written report within 120 days of the November 3 meeting (deadline: March 3, 2026).

Following voter approval of the ceiling replacement project under the CIP, engineering review revealed that in order to safely perform the ceiling work, the library collection and public operations would need to be entirely moved out of the building for the duration of construction. During this assessment, the engineer also identified aging HVAC systems requiring replacement and additional infrastructure concerns typically found in a 50-year-old structure. Because the library would already require a full temporary relocation—at significant cost—to an external facility for ceiling and mechanical repairs, and then require a second move back into the current building, the Council discussed whether it was fiscally prudent to undertake two full relocations or whether a long-term solution should be evaluated instead.

Central Plaza was initially considered only as a temporary relocation and storage location during ceiling replacement. However, once the true scope and cost of rehabilitating a 50-year-old facility became clearer, the Council determined that all long-term options—including renovation, modernization, relocating to Central Plaza, constructing a new stand-alone purpose-built facility, or retaining the library in its present location—should be analyzed comprehensively to determine the most responsible use of taxpayer resources.

The committee will include representation from the City, the library, community stakeholders, and education/technology partners. The Chief Executive Officer of the Fires Innovation Science & Technology Accelerator (FISTA), which manages Central Plaza, will serve as an ex-officio member. This participation will provide helpful coordination should the Committee determine that Central Plaza is a viable location option, but does not imply any preference, expectation, or predetermined decision regarding library location.

The newly formed Library of Tomorrow Committee is tasked with evaluating the core components that will shape the future direction of the Lawton/Fort Sill Public Library system, including but not limited to:

Library Location

Assess the suitability of the current facility; evaluate renovation, modernization, or full replacement; consider all feasible relocation options—including but not limited to Central Plaza or constructing a new stand-alone purpose-built facility elsewhere in Lawton or Fort Sill. All options remain open. Any consideration of Plaza-related or co-location opportunities will be evaluated strictly for advantage and feasibility, not as a predetermined outcome

Primary Purpose & Vision

Define the role of a modern public library in a growing and evolving community, including literacy, digital learning, STEM integration, cultural enrichment, and collaborative spaces for families, students, and lifelong learners.

Programs & Services

Identify enhancements to library offerings such as digital access, youth and family programming, makerspaces, community meeting rooms, workforce development resources, expanded outreach services, and alignment with citywide initiatives supporting education and opportunity.

Central Plaza & FYSI (FISTA Youth Science Institute) – Optional Consideration Only

Analyze, if relevant, opportunities arising from proximity to or placement within Central Plaza—the future home of the FYSI hands-on STEM museum. The FYSI facility is currently planned through a \$10 million CIP-funded project exclusive to FYSI. This CIP project does not include or assume any library component.

Committee analysis may explore optional advantages of proximity or independence, including scenarios where the library:

1. Operates as a fully independent, stand-alone facility at the Plaza
2. Coexists at the Plaza with no programmatic integration
3. Pursues selective partnerships with FYSI
4. Locates elsewhere entirely
5. No integration, co-location, or Plaza-based selection is implied or predetermined.

Facility Needs

Examine modern library and civic facility standards, flexible space layouts, technology integration, safety, accessibility, parking, security, mechanical systems, and long-term sustainability. Evaluate the long-term viability of rehabbing the current structure versus new construction.

Long-Range Planning

Ensure the final strategic plan aligns with citywide goals, including Kids First, PROPEL 2040, Downtown redevelopment, workforce readiness, STEM education, and responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources. Assess how renovation, modernization, Plaza location, or stand-alone new construction scenarios affect operational costs, programming potential, and community accessibility across the next several decades.

Today's discussion will help frame the committee's direction as it begins drafting the Library of Tomorrow Strategic Plan. Input from this meeting will guide the development of a transparent,

community-driven, forward-looking strategy that evaluates all options equally and positions the Lawton/Fort Sill Public Library for long-term success.

Correlation to the True North Statement:

A Community of Choice Where Families Thrive; Our Pursuit of Excellence

Exhibit:

Library of Tomorrow Committee Public Information Sheet

Key Issues:

N/A

Funding Source:

N/A

Recommended Action:

Discuss the creation of the Library of Tomorrow Strategic Plan, including suitability of the current library facility, possible renovation or relocation options, the community-centered purpose and vision of a modern library, updates to programs and services including digital and STEM offerings, facility and technological needs, and long-range planning goals, and take action as deemed necessary.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Library of Tomorrow Committee Public Information Sheet

Library of Tomorrow Committee – Public Information Sheet

Clarifying the purpose, process, and facts surrounding the library discussion.

Why is the City reviewing the future of the library?

This review began after voters approved funding to replace the **ceiling** in the existing library. When engineers began planning the work, they advised the City that:

- The entire library would need to be **emptied and moved to an external facility** during construction.
- Several major **HVAC units were failing** and would also require replacement.
- Additional concerns common to a **50-year-old building** (roofing, plumbing, electrical, and structural efficiency issues) would still remain even after the ceiling project.

Because of this, the City realized it would need to **move the library once**, perform repairs, and then **move it back again**—a double relocation at a significant cost.

Central Plaza was initially explored **only as a temporary relocation and storage option** during construction. But once the scope of needed building repairs became clearer, the City asked a broader question:

If the library must be moved out anyway, and if major long-term repairs are required, should we study all options now rather than spend money to move the library twice?

This is why the City established the **Library of Tomorrow Committee**.

What is the Committee doing?

The Committee will study all options equally, including:

- Renovating the current library
- Modernizing the existing structure
- Relocating the library
- Building a brand-new stand-alone facility
- Considering optional scenarios at Central Plaza
- Keeping the library exactly where it is

No decisions have been made.

The Committee will return a report to the City Council by **March 3, 2026**.

What about Central Plaza and FYSI?

- The **FYSI (FISTA Youth Science Institute)** is a hands-on STEM museum funded by a **\$10 million CIP project**.
- This project is **only for the FYSI facility**, not the library.
- No library funding or relocation to the Plaza has been approved.
- The library could be independent at the Plaza, partner lightly with FYSI, or have no connection to FYSI at all.
- The library may also remain in its current location or move elsewhere entirely.

The FISTA CEO will participate **only as an ex-officio member**, providing information *if* the Committee explores Plaza-based options. This does **not** signal a predetermined decision.

What happens next?

Between now and March 2026, the Committee will:

- Hold meetings
- Review the building's condition
- Evaluate all location and construction options
- Consider long-term costs and operations
- Explore programming, technology, and community needs
- Gather community input

The City Council will consider the final plan publicly.

Key Point

No final decisions have been made about the library's location or design.

The City is studying all options so it can make the most responsible, cost-efficient, and future-focused decision for families, taxpayers, and the Lawton/Fort Sill community.
