



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

*Planning Division*

### m e m o r a n d u m

**TO:** Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

**FROM:** Elizabeth H. Tyler, FAICP, Director

**DATE:** Thursday, November 3, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Plan Case No. 2154-CP-11: A request by the Urbana Zoning Administrator to amend the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan to adopt a Complete Streets Policy

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## Introduction & Background

This agenda item is a proposed amendment to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan setting forth the City's commitment to the concept of "complete streets." The Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) reviewed the proposed amendment on September 20, 2011 (minutes attached). The Urbana Plan Commission held a public hearing on the proposed text amendment at their October 13, 2011 meeting and voted 8 ayes and 0 nays to forward the proposed amendment to City Council with a recommendation for approval.

The term "complete streets" describes an integrated transportation network designed, constructed, and maintained to allow safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, whether traveling by foot, bicycle, motor vehicle, or transit, and regardless of age or physical abilities. The City of Urbana's design, construction, and maintenance of transportation facilities already incorporate complete streets concepts, but City staff is looking to formalize and fully integrate these practices as policies.

### *Policy Basis*

The impetus for a complete streets policy comes from the 2010 Urbana Mayor and City Council Goals, the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, and the 2008 Urbana Bicycle Master Plan. The relevant policy statements are presented as follows:

### **2010 Urbana City Council and Mayor Goals**

*Strategy L: Become a multimodal, bike and pedestrian-friendly community that supports sustainable transportation.*

- *Adopt a complete streets policy. Include alternative roadway configurations, such as bike boulevards, that give priority to pedestrian, bicycle and public transit modes. For intersection projects, include roundabouts, and other technologies among the alternatives considered.*

## 2005 Comprehensive Plan

*Cornerstone Goal Mobility: The elements for keeping Urbana accessible to everyone by promoting a safe, multi-modal transportation system with high-quality and efficient infrastructure.*

Goal 44.0 Provide for the safe, efficient, and cost-effective movement of people and goods within, through, and around the City.

*Objectives*

44.2 Reduce the number and severity of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular crashes.

Goal 46.0 Improve access to transportation modes for Urbana residents.

*Objectives*

46.1 Work to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access throughout Urbana.

Goal 47.0 Create a multi-modal transportation system.

*Objectives*

47.8 Make it easier for people to switch from one transportation mode to another.

47.7 Promote bicycle/pedestrian access to major activity centers.

Goal 49.0 Avoid development patterns that can potentially create an over-dependency on the automobile.

*Objectives*

49.1 Promote alternatives to automobile travel, through provision of sidewalks, pedestrian access, bicycle pathways, and high quality transit service.

49.3 Improve access to alternative transportation modes within neighborhoods.

Goal 50.0 Ensure adequate transportation facilities for new growth.

*Objectives*

50.1 Ensure that new developments provide easy access to pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as automobiles and mass transit vehicles.

## 2008 Bicycle Master Plan

Urbana Bicycle Master Plan Goals:

1. Increase bicycle mode share in Urbana for all trip purposes by 50% in the next five years.
3. Substantially expand the bicycle network.

## Comprehensive Plan Amendment

The proposed amendment would add an objective to page 53 of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan outlining the City’s commitment to a complete streets policy and an implementation strategy on page 103 to implement the policy. Currently, there is no explicit reference to complete streets in the Comprehensive Plan, as the term was relatively new when the plan was written.

Amend 2005 Comprehensive Plan to include the following (text to be added underlined):

Goal 47.0 Create a multi-modal transportation system.

### *Objectives*

47.8 Use complete streets concepts in designing, constructing, reconstructing, and maintaining roadways and public rights-of-way.

In addition to adding Objective 47.8, the proposed text amendment would add following Implementation Strategy to the Implementation Program:

Implementation Strategy	Type of Strategy	Related Goals / Objectives	Related Maps	Timing	Responsible City Agencies	Other Responsible Entities
<u>Update appropriate documents such as the Urbana Subdivision and Land Development Code to reflect the complete streets policy.</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>47.7</u>		<u>Near Term</u>	<u>Community Development; Public Works</u>	

## Discussion

The term “complete streets” describes a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motor-vehicle drivers, public transportation riders and drivers, and people of all ages and abilities, including children, youth, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. A complete streets policy means that in designing streets, the City will consider whether a complete street treatment is appropriate in every future street construction, reconstruction, and maintenance project.

Since each complete street is unique, it is impossible to give a single description. But ingredients that may be found on a complete street include sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), comfortable and accessible transit stops, frequent crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and more. A complete street in a rural area will look quite different from a complete street in a highly urbanized area, but both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road. Below are annotated examples of complete streets:



*Goodwin Avenue at Illinois Street, Urbana.*

Wide sidewalks, curb extensions, and well-marked crosswalks help pedestrians travel through the intersection. On-street bicycle lanes provide bicyclists a dedicated space, keeping them segregated from automobile traffic. Striping narrows the travel lane, keeping speeds at appropriate levels.



*Philo Road south of Florida Avenue, Urbana.*

This transit shelter on Philo Road provides ample room for transit riders without obstructing pedestrians or bicyclists on the sidewalks.



*Windsor Road and Vine Street, Urbana.*

This crosswalk in front of Meadowbrook Park is accessible for pedestrians of all abilities. This crosswalk provides accessible curb cuts, highly visible striping, and an island in the middle of the street, effectively shortening the time needed to cross lanes of traffic.



Here, the pedestrian environment is improved with wide sidewalks, curb bulb-outs (which shorten the time needed to cross the street), and pedestrian traffic signals. Motorists have plenty of on-street parking, and the wide lanes allow trucks and buses to pass through comfortably. Cyclists can easily share the lane with cars. The bulb-outs give motorists an expanded degree of vision, as parked cars do not interfere with sightlines down the intersecting street.

Photo: [www.flickr.com/photos/completestreets](http://www.flickr.com/photos/completestreets)



*Typical residential street in older sections of Urbana.*

On narrow streets in residential areas with slow-moving traffic, the addition of sidewalks makes the street complete. Bicyclists can easily ride along the main travel lane.



This two-lane road accommodates motorized traffic and bicyclists who are comfortable sharing the lane. Pedestrians and cyclists are welcome on the shared use path that runs parallel to the road.

*Photo: Dan Burden, Walkable & Livable Communities Institute*



In rural areas, a wide shoulder helps pedestrians, bicyclists, and families with strollers travel from one place to another without needing a car.

*Photo: Dan Burden, Walkable & Livable Communities Institute*



*Urbana Shared Use Lane Signs and Road Markings.*

The addition of a 'Bikes May Use Full Lane' sign and share the road markings on the road alert automobile drivers that bicyclists may be present and informs them of bicyclists' right to use the full lane.

## *Benefits of Complete Streets*

Complete streets policies meet the needs of communities because of the many benefits they provide. Here are some of the key benefits:

1. *Safety.* Complete streets improve safety. A Federal Highways Administration safety review found that streets designed with sidewalks, raised medians, improved bus stop placement, traffic-calming measures, and treatments for disabled travelers improve pedestrian safety. Some features, such as medians, improve safety for all users, as they enable pedestrians to cross busy roads in two stages, eliminate mid-block left-turning motorist crashes, and improve bicycle safety.
2. *Health.* Complete streets encourage walking and bicycling for health. The National Institute of Medicine recommends fighting obesity by establishing ordinances to integrate construction of sidewalks, bikeways, and other places for physical activity into new development. One study found that 43% of people with safe places to walk within 10 minutes of home met recommended activity levels; among individuals without a safe place to walk, just 27% were active enough.
3. *Sustainability.* Complete streets address climate change and oil dependence. The potential to reduce carbon emissions by shifting trips to lower-carbon modes is significant. The 2001 National Household Transportation Survey found 50% of all trips in metropolitan areas are three miles or less and 28% of all metropolitan trips are one mile or less – distances easy to walk, bike, or hop on a bus or train. Yet 65% of the shortest trips are made by automobile, in part because of incomplete streets that make it dangerous or unpleasant for other modes of travel. Complete streets would help convert many of these short automobile trips to multi-modal travel. Simply increasing bicycling from 1% to 1.5% of all trips in the U.S. would save 462 million gallons of gasoline each year. Using transit has already helped the United States save 1.4 billion gallons of fuel each year, which is a savings of 3.9 million gallons of gasoline every day.
4. *Livability.* Complete Streets foster strong communities. Livability refers to the environmental and social quality of an area as perceived by residents, employees, customers, and visitors. This includes safety, health and well-being, economic opportunity, social equity, the local environmental quality, and preservation of valued cultural and environmental resources. Complete streets play an important role in livable communities, where all people – regardless of age, ability or mode of transportation – feel safe and welcome on the roadways. A safe walking and bicycling environment is an essential part of improving public transportation and creating friendly, walkable communities.

For additional information on complete streets, two good sources are [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org) and [www.walkable.org](http://www.walkable.org).

## *Urbana Subdivision and Land Development Code & Urbana Manual of Practice*

Following adoption of the Complete Streets amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, City staff will prepare amendments to the Urbana Subdivision and Land Development Code to incorporate

Complete Streets practices. City staff will take these amendments to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission for review and comment before forwarding them to the Urbana Plan Commission and City Council for adoption.

### **Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission Review**

On September 20, 2011, the Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission reviewed the proposed text amendment. The Commission recommended including ‘and public rights-of-way’ to ‘roadways’ in the proposed goal 47.12, as the definition of ‘roadway’ does not always include shoulders and sidewalks. Staff has updated the proposed text amendment accordingly. Following discussion (minutes attached), the Commission unanimously recommended adoption of the proposed text amendment to add a complete streets policy to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan.

### **Urbana Plan Commission Public Hearing**

On October 13, 2011, the Urbana Plan Commission held a public hearing for the proposed text amendment. City staff presented the proposed amendment and answered clarification questions from the Plan Commission (minutes attached). The Plan Commission then voted 8 ayes and 0 nays to recommend that the City Council approve the proposed text amendment.

## **Summary of Findings**

1. Urbana Mayor and City Council adopted the Urbana City Council and Mayor Goals on February 1, 2010 which included a goal of environmental sustainability and a sub-strategy to achieve that goal of adopting a Complete Streets policy (Strategy L).
2. The 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan was adopted in April 2005 with a cornerstone goal of “Mobility: The elements for keeping Urbana accessible to everyone by promoting a safe, multi-modal transportation system with high-quality and efficient infrastructure” and goals and strategies related to achieving this cornerstone goal of mobility.
3. The Urbana Bicycle Master Plan was adopted in April 2008 with goals of increasing bicycle mode share in Urbana and expanding the bicycle network.
4. The proposed text amendment to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan will amend *Goal 47.0 Create a multi-modal transportation system to include Objective 47.12 Use complete streets concept in designing, constructing, reconstructing, and maintaining roadways and public rights-of-way.*
5. The proposed text amendment will amend the Implementation Program to include an implementation strategy to *Update appropriate documents such as the Urbana Subdivision and Land Development Code to reflect the complete streets policy.*
6. On September 20, 2011, the Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission reviewed the proposed amendment and unanimously recommended its adoption.

7. On October 13, 2011, the Urbana Plan Commission held a public hearing on the proposed text amendment and voted 8 ayes and 0 nays to recommend that the City Council approve the proposed text amendment.

## **Options**

The Urbana City Council has the following options regarding Plan Case 2154-CP-11:

1. Approve the amendment as presented;
2. Approve the amendment with specific modifications; or
3. Deny the requested amendment.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the evidence presented in the discussion above, the Urbana Plan Commission, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission, and staff recommend that the City Council **approve** the proposed amendment.

Prepared by:

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Rebecca Bird, Planner II

Attachments: BPAC & Plan Commission minutes



ORDINANCE NO. 2011-11-118

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF URBANA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005

(Complete Streets amendment - Plan Case No. 2154-CP-11)

WHEREAS, the Urbana City Council on April 11, 2005 in Ordinance No. 2005-03-050 adopted the Comprehensive Plan 2005; and

WHEREAS, the term "complete streets" describes an integrated transportation network designed, constructed, and maintained to allow safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, whether traveling by foot, bicycle, motor vehicle, or transit, and regardless of age or physical abilities; and

WHEREAS, Urbana Mayor and City Council requested adoption of a complete streets policy in the 2010 Urbana City Council and Mayor Goals; and

WHEREAS, the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and the 2008 Urbana Bicycle Master Plan support adoption of a complete streets policy; and

WHEREAS, after due publication, a public hearing was held by the Urbana Plan Commission on October 13, 2011 concerning Plan Case No. 2154-CP-11; and

WHEREAS, the Urbana Plan Commission voted 8 ayes and 0 nays to forward the case to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation to approve the request that the Comprehensive Plan be amended to include a complete streets policy; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS, as follows:

Section 1. The City of Urbana 2005 Comprehensive Plan, as amended, is hereby amended as follows:

Amend 2005 Comprehensive Plan to include the following (text to be added underlined):

Chapter IV. Goals and Objectives

Goal 47.0 Create a multi-modal transportation system.

*Objectives*

47.8 Use complete streets concepts in designing, constructing, reconstructing, and maintaining roadways and public rights-of-way.

Chapter VII. Implementation Program

Implementation Strategy	Type of Strategy	Related Goals / Objectives	Related Maps	Timing	Responsible City Agencies	Other Responsible Entities
<u>Update appropriate documents such as the Urbana Subdivision and Land Development Code to reflect the complete streets policy.</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>47.7</u>		<u>Near Term</u>	<u>Community Development; Public Works</u>	

Section 2. The City Clerk is directed to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form by authority of the corporate authorities. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in accordance with the terms of Chapter 65, Section 1-2-4 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/1-2-4).

PASSED by the City Council this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAINS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

**CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION IN PAMPHLET FORM**

I, Phyllis D. Clark, certify that I am the duly elected and acting Municipal Clerk of the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois.

I certify that on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011,

The corporate authorities of the City of Urbana passed and approved Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_, entitled "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF URBANA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005 (Complete Streets amendment - Plan Case No. 2154-CP-11)" which provided by its terms that it should be published in pamphlet form. The pamphlet form of Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_ was prepared, and a copy of such Ordinance was posted in the Urbana City Building commencing on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011, and continuing for at least ten (10) days thereafter. Copies of such Ordinance were also available for public inspection upon request at the Office of the City Clerk.

DATED at Urbana, Illinois, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011.

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**Date:** Tuesday September 20, 2011

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** City Council Chambers, City of Urbana, 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL

**Members Present:** Gary Cziko, Brandon Bowersox, Ray Spooner, Susan Jones, Morgan Johnston, Bryan Lake, Michelle Guerra

**Staff Members Present:** Brad Bennett

**Absent:** Barak Rosenshine, Audrey Ishii,

### **New Business**

#### 2. Complete Streets – Comprehensive Plan text amendment—Rebecca Bird

This agenda item is a proposed amendment to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan setting forth the City's commitment to Complete Streets. Currently there is no reference to Complete Streets in the Comprehensive Plan. Goal 47.0 would add an objective to read:

*47.12 Use complete streets concept in designing, construction, reconstruction and maintaining roadways adding: (and public rights of way)*

Discussion ensued. Brandon Bowersox made a motion to add this objective 47.12 to the implementation program and the addition of *and public rights of way*.

Brad Bennett made a motion seconded by Susan Jones; upon verbal voice vote the motion carried to add Objective 47.12. This will be sent on to the Plan Commission and then on to City Council.

#### **Adjournment**

Brandon Bowersox adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.  
This meeting was recorded on video tape.

**MINUTES OF A RESCHEDULED MEETING**

**URBANA PLAN COMMISSION**

**DRAFT**

**DATE:** October 13, 2011

**TIME:** 7:30 P.M.

**PLACE:** Urbana City Building – City Council Chambers  
400 South Vine Street  
Urbana, IL 61801

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Carey Hawkins Ash, Andrew Fell, Tyler Fitch, Dannie Otto, Michael Pollock, Bernadine Stake, Mary Tompkins, Marilyn Upah-Bant

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Lew Hopkins

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jeff Engstrom, Planner II; Rebecca Bird, Planner I; Teri Andel, Planning Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Susan Taylor

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**NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Plan Case No. 2154-CP-11: A request by the Urbana Zoning Administrator to amend the 2005 Comprehensive Plan to adopt a Complete Streets Policy.**

Rebecca Bird, Planner I, presented this case to the Plan Commission. She began by describing “complete streets”. She explained that the proposed amendment came from the 2010 Urbana City Council and Mayor Goals and how the proposed amendment would alter the goals and objectives of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. She mentioned that the 2008 Bicycle Master Plan supports the proposed amendment. She referred to the photos on pages 4 and 5 of the written staff report. She discussed the reasons for implementing complete streets policies. She mentioned that the Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission reviewed the proposed amendment and recommended adoption. She reviewed the Plan Commission’s options and presented City staff’s recommendation.

She referred to and talked about the photos on pages 4 and 5 of the written staff report. She reviewed the four key reasons for implementing complete streets policies, which are: 1) safety; 2) health; 3) sustainability; and 4) livability.

She stated that the proposed Complete Streets Policy has been reviewed and is supported by the Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission. If the proposed amendment is adopted, City staff will then prepare amendments to other related documents to work out the details of how to implement the Complete Streets Policy.

Ms. Bird reviewed the options of the Urbana Plan Commission and presented staff's recommendation. She asked if there were any questions about the proposed amendment.

Ms. Upah-Bant inquired as to whether there would be a map that shows what will be treated as older residential areas and what areas will have bicycle paths. Ms. Bird responded by saying that the idea of complete streets is that particularly in the parts of the City where development has already happened there is no prescription so it depends completely on the context. What is written into the Manual of Practice that the City's Public Works Department is working on would mostly be about new development. When the Capital Improvement Plan allows the City to reconstruct or even resurface a road, City staff will look to see if it would be appropriate to add a bicycle facility. They would use the map in the adopted Bicycle Master Plan. However, there would not be any such guide or map provided in the proposed Complete Streets Policy that says what they should do in specific areas.

Ms. Stake wondered whether the City had plans to widen streets in the older areas. Ms. Bird replied that it would be very unlikely for a residential street to be widened because it is very expensive, and these types of streets do not carry high volumes of traffic travelling at high speeds. However, there are places where the sidewalks do need to be improved, especially around the schools, and some of those could involve widening the existing sidewalks. In the Safe Routes to School plan, there are maps for each of the schools that show how children are funneled onto particular routes. The ideal would be to have wide sidewalks on these particular routes.

Chair Pollock wondered if since the proposed amendment would be a guiding principal, would it instigate a change to the standards for the width of streets and sidewalks being constructed in new residential developments? Ms. Bird replied that City staff has had some discussions about this. In fact, in new residential areas, developers are constructing larger driveways to provide adequate parking. As a result, there is a lesser need for parking on the streets. Therefore, the City of Champaign has reduced their standards for street widths and included requirements for bicycle paths. If the City of Urbana staff proposed such changes, those changes would come before the Plan Commission for review and to make a recommendation to City Council.

Ms. Stake commented that in Stone Creek Subdivision, the sidewalk is in the middle of the road. She asked if an amendment similar to the one in the City of Champaign was made to the Urbana Subdivision and Land Development Code would it prohibit sidewalks being constructed in the middle of the street. Ms. Bird stated that she would look into this. Ms. Stake remarked that having a sidewalk in the middle of the street is too dangerous for children and older people. Chair Pollock explained that this was a request by the Atkins Group when they submitted plans for Stone Creek Subdivision. They wanted the sidewalk to be in the middle of the street as part of their design.

With no further questions from the Plan Commission for City staff, Chair Pollock opened the hearing up for public input. There was none, so he closed the public input portion of the hearing and opened it up for Plan Commission discussion and/or motion(s).

Ms. Stake moved that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2154-CP-11 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval. Mr. Fitch seconded the motion.

Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Mr. Fell	-	Yes	Mr. Fitch	-	Yes
Mr. Otto	-	Yes	Mr. Pollock	-	Yes
Ms. Stake	-	Yes	Ms. Tompkins	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes	Mr. Ash	-	Yes

The motion was passed by unanimous vote.