



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, Community Development Director

DATE: September 4th, 2015

SUBJECT: **Economic Development Activities Report for August 2015**

Business and Development Activity

Downtown Urbana

- Strawberry Fields held an official ribbon cutting ceremony with Urbana Mayor Prussing, Champaign Mayor Feinen, and Councilman Smyth on August 31st at 306 W Springfield Avenue.
- See You CD & Vinyl officially became a new tenant at 123 West Main Street (Main Street Plaza), and will be replacing Error Records. The new store plans to feature an expanded selection of audio media, in a more varied selection of genres.
- Dr. G's Brainworks plans to expand having recently leased the former beauty salon space in Lincoln Square Mall. They plan to feature children and young adult event programming as well as tutoring space.
- Façade construction is complete at the AirUrbana Outdoor Market at 204 West Main Street and a gravel patio has been laid between the finished shipping container structures.
- Expansion of Community Center for the Arts (C4A) into part of the Corson Music's Guitar Center space at 202 West Main Street is complete. Corson Music's Guitar Center will continue to sell products in a portion of the floor space.
- Plans have been submitted for a renovation of the former Corkscrew property at 203 North Vine Street for a new Sherwin Williams store.
- Plans are under review for the renovation of the Stephens Building at 218 West Main Street.
- Work is completed on the construction of outdoor seating at the Silvercreek Restaurant overlooking the Boneyard Creek.
- CU Karate-Do plan to open at 301 South Race Street (owned by the UFL) in the coming weeks, featuring a full class schedule with offerings for multiple experience levels.
- St. Patrick's Church at 708 West Main Street continues to undergo renovations for an addition to their space.
- A final inspection has been performed for the second-story expansion of A-Plus VIP Lounge to include a karaoke bar at 214 West Main Street.
- Work is nearing completion for the expansion of Heel-To-Toe into 108 ½ West Main Street to accommodate Innovative Bracing.
- Work is completed on an expansion of Amara Yoga & Arts into the space formerly occupied by the Great Impasta at Lincoln Square. They plan to offer an expanded set of classes in the space beginning after Labor day.
- The Redeemer Church has begun making improvements at their new location of 202 West Illinois Street.

- Lumen and Single Stereo opened at 111 Goose Alley. An official ribbon cutting ceremony was held on September 1st with UBA and City staff.

University-Medical

- Foundation work is nearly complete at Lincoln and Western Avenues for an 84-unit apartment building.
- Plans are under review for BBQ Chicken Express, to be located at Gregory Place East.
- Work continues for the Bab+ Korean restaurant at Gregory Place East.
- Work continues for the Campus Circle apartment complex on University Avenue.
- Construction is underway for the expansion of the CUMTD facility at 1101 East University Avenue.

Philo Road

- Studio Vida opened at 1720 South Philo Road, Suite A and will hold an official ribbon cutting ceremony with the UBA, Mayor, and City Staff on September 4th at 10:30am.

North Lincoln Avenue

- Plans have been submitted for the construction of Henson Disposal's construction materials recycling facility at 910 Saline Court.
- Leek and Sons Funeral Home of Danville submitted plans for the construction of a new funeral home at 1215 Bradley Avenue.

Cunningham Avenue

- The demolition of the former Hanford Inn is nearly complete pending final review.
- Renovation is nearing completion for the new Urbana Boulders rock climbing gym at 1502 North Cunningham Avenue, in the Northgate Shopping Center.
- Plans have been approved for two, 20-unit apartment buildings at Eastland Apartments located at 1905 N Cunningham Avenue. The project is pending a demolition of the existing on-site structures.

Public Arts Program

- Two new artworks have been installed at the Urbana Business Association Office and the Urbana Civic Center, as part of the Murals on Glass initiative. Phil Strang's *Arles Morning* was installed on the windows of the Urbana Business Association office (111 W. Main Street), and Nathan Westerman's *Slat Paintings* was installed on the windows of the Civic Center (108 E. Water Street) on August 28. There will be a dedication event to honor both artists on Friday, September 4, at 3:00pm.
- The Urbana Art Expo will take place at the Urbana Civic Center on Sunday, September 13th, from 10:00am to 5:00pm. This inaugural year will feature 23 local and regional artists participating in the juried fine art exhibition and sale. The artists are Langston Allston, Roberta Bennett, Don Briskin, Allen Creamean, Beth Darling, Fred Delcomyn, Heather Dent, Kathryn Fitzgerald, Caroline Goldsmith, Travis Hocutt, Suzanne Keith Loechl, Sam Logan, Maria Ludeke, Karissa McDermott, Christina Nordholm, Ellie Pinzarrone, Erica Robertson, Carolina Rodriguez, Lynn Hawkinson Smith, Michael Owen Thomas, Jana Uebele, Sendra Uebele, and Nathan Westerman. A Facebook page and a website (www.urbanaartexpo.com) have been created to promote the event. The Urbana Art Expo is presented by the Urbana Public Arts Program in collaboration with 40 North: Champaign County Arts Council, and is supported by the Urbana Park District and the Champaign Park District. The Expo is free and open to the public.
- *Arts in the Schools*, a project-based art education grant, is now accepting applications. Deadline for proposals is October 2, 2015. Schools, artists, arts organizations, and community groups are encouraged to apply, and up to \$3,000 will be awarded to projects involving schools in the Urbana School District #116. Grant guidelines and application package are available to download

at www.urbanaininois.us/artsgrants.

- In the August episode of *Art Now!*, commissioner Ginny Waaler interviewed Mike Trippiedi, a local actor, director, and screenwriter. The September episode features local abstract expressionist Jess Beyler. See episodes at <http://www.urbanaininois.us/artnow>.
- The current featured Artist of the Corridor is Ellie Pinzarrone, local artist and art educator, and founder of Ellie Pinz Studio at [co][lab]. An opening reception was held at the City Building lobby on Friday, August 28.
- In August, Art at the Market occurred during National Farmers Market Week, and featured local band Bones Jugs N Harmony. The Art workshop was led by Rachel Storm, who taught children to make friendship bracelets and encouraged visitors to create a giant bracelet by sharing their ideas on what friendship means. On September 12th, Art at the Market will consist of a hula hoop-making workshop with Braswell Magic and a performance by Rebecca Rego & the Trainmen.

Marketing and Events Activity

- The Marketing Coordinator began working with a local graphic designer, David Michael Moore, to update the City's general welcome brochure with a target audience of visitors and residents new to the community.
- Staff updated the New Residents section of the City's public website.
- 1,500 "Downtown Guide to Restaurants and Retail" were submitted to be included in VIP tote bags at the upcoming Pygmalion Music Festival.
- The September edition of "It's All About U" will air on Mondays at 6:00pm on UPTV or can be viewed on YouTube.
- The third Food Truck Rally was held in Downtown Urbana on Tuesday, August 25th. The popularity of the third rally continued the momentum of the previous events, and attracted an additional food truck to the lineup. The length of the three-month series was reconsidered based on positive feedback from the food truck owners and customers, and the series will be extended to the last Tuesday of September and October from 11:00am to 2:00pm.
- Community Development staff assisted the Urbana Fire Department with distributing Urbana marketing items at the UIUC dorm move-in on August 20th.
- City staff and officials attended University of Illinois Willard Airport brand unveiling, which features a new website www.iFlyCU.com, logo, and marketing strategy.



Urbana's Market at the Square

- The Market at the Square Director and market staff hosted programming on August 8th to celebrate National Farmers Market Week (August 2nd-9th). Celebrations included the reading of a proclamation by Mayor Prussing, Art and Performance activities courtesy of the Urbana Public Arts Program, and distribution of promotional potholders and seasonal recipe cards. The Market also joined forces with The Land Connection Champaign Farmers' Market to host an Instagram contest in which Market customers posted photos of their 'market haul' for a chance to win a gift basket of farmers market products worth over \$150. The joint effort also included a full page ad on the back page of the August 4th News-Gazette.

- The weekly Farm Fresh and Fast cooking segment continues on WCIA News Channel 3's ciLiving program. The segment appears every Thursday at 4 p.m.
- The Market at the Square Director appeared on WCIA's Currents series on August 28th, and discussed supporting a healthy lifestyle through shopping locally at the farmers market.
- The Market at the Square Director along with Maria Ludeke of Creative Health hosted a Farm Fresh cooking class on August 13th at Common Ground Food Coop featuring in-season local produce.
- The Local Flavors Dining Series, a program of Buy Fresh, Buy Local Central Illinois, continues at Urbana and Champaign Restaurants.
- Natalie Kenny Marquez, as President of the Illinois Farmers Market Association, will be helping to plan the 2016 Illinois Farmers Market Association state-wide conference on February 17th and to implement the first ever Illinois Farmers Market Manager Certificate Program.

Other Updates

- Economic Development staff held the third of four Development Luncheons for the year on Tuesday, August 18th – Green Built in Urbana-Champaign with panelists Sue Dawson, Scott Bahr, and Scott Tess– which was featured in an article in Smile Politely (http://www.smilepolitely.com/tech/urbana_sponsors_panel_discussion_on_green_built_in_urbana-champaign/)
- Libby Horwitz began work as Economic Development Specialist. Libby Horwitz moved from Philadelphia, PA where she completed her Masters in Urban Planning. Before beginning work with the City of Urbana, she worked for a Business Improvement District, a Community Development Corporation, a company specializing in assisting municipalities with affordable housing work, and served as a Community and Organization Development Volunteer in the Peace Corps in Albania.

Memorandum



TO: Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor
FROM: Jessica Snyder, Interim Executive Director
DATE: September 1, 2015
SUBJECT: Urbana Business Association Activities Report for August 2015

Membership Growth

In the month of August, the UBA has seen the addition of one new member—Strawberry Fields Natural Food Store, at the business leader level. The UBA is excited to welcome one of Urbana's signature institutions back to our business community, and is working alongside them to spread the word about their grand reopening.

Sweetcorn Festival

The Sweetcorn Festival was held Friday, August 28, and Saturday, August 29. Set-up of tents, vendors, stages and other contracted equipment ran smoothly and swiftly. The weather on Friday was near perfection, and made for great crowds that gathered to learn, shop, and eat at nearly 80 different vendor booths. Friday night's headlining entertainment (The Psychedelic Furs and The Church), performed a great set to adoring fans and new listeners. In addition to the Main Stage entertainment, patrons also enjoyed performances on two other stages: One Community Together and CU Folk and Roots. The performances on Saturday night (headlining act: Berlin), saw the same positive reception.

This year's event was made possible with the assistance of approximately 600 volunteers manning a variety of areas including beer stands, soft drink stations, ticket booths, the corn tent, recycling station, check-in tables, back stage crew, ice delivery, and the sanitation team. Volunteers were rewarded with a keepsake t-shirt, food and non-alcoholic beverages, and corn bucks providing them a free ear of corn and endless thanks from festival staff.

The Sweetcorn Festival saw an overhaul of its branding; including a new logo and website, streamlined and cohesive signage at the festival, and new banners adorning the Main Stage. Feedback on these changes was overwhelmingly positive.

For the first time in recent history, the festival completely ran out of corn. 20,000 ears were purchased, and every last ear was consumed. Though the lines to the corn tent were long, this did not deter the hard working volunteers that diligently put in extreme effort to serve festival patrons.

Promotion of the festival was carried on all the area radio and television stations, social media channels, and various other marketing avenues throughout the month leading up to the event. Follow-up coverage of the festival across radio, television, and print has been positive.

Holiday Market

Planning is moving forward with the 2015 Holiday Market with sixteen vendors already signed up to participate. Promotion of this event is in process and will begin in full force in early October.