



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Mayor Laurel Lunt Prussing

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, FAICP, Director

DATE: April 12, 2012

SUBJECT: A request to adopt the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan as an element of the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan (Plan Case 2170-CP-12)

Introduction and Background

Pursuant to Council goals, the Urbana Zoning Administrator is requesting that City Council adopt the final draft of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan as an element of the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan. The 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan contains goals and strategies for the area in and around downtown Urbana. This plan will replace the 2002 Downtown Strategic Plan as the guiding document for policy and planning decisions in the planning area.

Since the 2002 Strategic plan was adopted there have been several changes to downtown in terms of physical development as well as in the policies and programs administered by the City and other entities. The new plan is a response to those changes, and includes a vision for future development based the current state of downtown.

Public input was a key element in the compilation of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan. The planning process was guided by the Downtown Plan Steering Committee – a group of residents, property owners, businesses, and public agencies with a stake in downtown. Resident and stakeholder comments were gathered through an extensive effort, including visioning meetings, surveys and forums. Draft elements of the plan were presented at an open house and at the Market at the Square. In addition to general public input, stakeholder groups such as property owners, businesses, and public facilities were invited to stakeholder forums to articulate their vision for downtown.

The final draft of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan and its appendices are available on the City of Urbana web site at the following address: <http://urbanaillinois.us/downtown/draft>. For printed copies

or CDs with all of the plan documents, please contact the Urbana Community Development Services Department at (217) 384-2440, or tmandel@urbanaininois.us.

Discussion

Planning Process

The 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan was initiated in response to the following 2010 City Council Goal:

Goal F: A vibrant, innovative downtown

A. Strategy: Update the 2002 downtown strategic plan

- Work with stakeholders on visioning for downtown and a goal-setting process.
- Hire design firm to obtain updated visualizations of downtown.
- Create an overarching downtown vision statement and executive summary of existing plans.
- Assign priorities and timelines to existing plans for downtown and develop several scenarios based on potential redevelopments.

The Downtown Plan Steering Committee was formed in April 2010 to help guide development of the plan. The steering committee met monthly, taking input from the public, participating in exercises to create the vision for the plan, and reviewing the draft components of the plan as it was written. Staff would like to thank all of the members of the steering committee for their hard work and dedication throughout the process. The steering committee was chaired by Councilmember Dennis Roberts and composed of the following members, including the Chair of the Plan Commission:

Carolyn Baxley, Property/Business Owner
Chris Billing, Berns Clancy Associates
Brandon Bowersox, City Council
Gary Burgett, Business Owner
Deb Lissak, Urbana Free Library
Ilona Matkovszki, Resident
Vicki Mayes, Urbana Park District
Amanda McWilliams, Business Owner
Mike Monson, Urbana Chief of Staff
Dorothy Neumann, Resident
Nicole Pion, Independent Media Center
Michael Pollock, Plan Commission Chair

Dennis Roberts, City Council
Randy Rose, Health Alliance
Don Schlorff, Busey Bank
Allen Strong, Business Owner
Susan Toalson, Former Director, Urbana Business Association
Katy Vizdal, Independent Media Center
Bill Volk, Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District
Jim Webster, Lincoln Square Village
Preston Williams, Urbana School District Superintendent
Paul Wirth, Business Owner

Hitchcock Design Group (HDG), of Naperville, Illinois, was retained by the City to provide visualizations of how downtown could look in the future with implementation of the plan. HDG also assisted with a staff charette, and worked on a SketchUp model of key redevelopment sites downtown. As a separate effort, Hitchcock worked with Business Districts Incorporated to provide site plans for the key redevelopment sites in the Downtown Market Study.

Public input on the plan was extensive. The City reached out to the public and stakeholders through several methods, including direct mailing, the City web site, posters and fliers, and a Facebook page. Public input was also collected through several events throughout the process, including:

- Visioning Workshop
- Image Preference and Visioning Survey
- Stakeholder Forums
- Open Mic Forum
- Open House & Market at the Square

A detailed description of these events can be found in the plan. In addition to these major efforts, input was continuously collected via email, Facebook, and at presentations to the Downtown Plan Steering Committee.

On February 6th, 2012, the Downtown Plan Steering Committee voted to forward the draft plan to Plan Commission with a recommendation for approval. At their March 8, 2012 and April 5, 2012 meetings, the Urbana Plan Commission held a public hearing regarding the proposed plan. The Plan Commission offered minor changes to the Concept Plan map (including the addition of key connections along major streets) and the Vision Statement (addressing the economic aspect of downtown). On April 5, 2012, the Plan Commission voted 8 ayes to 0 nays to forward the case to Council with a recommendation for approval.

Plan Overview

The plan consists of seven major components, as well as an executive summary and an extensive appendix. The major components of the plan include:

- The *Background* section gives a context to downtown and tells the developmental history of the area. It also summarizes the major plans and studies that impact downtown.
- *Planning Process* overviews the public input and how the plan was formed.
- *Trends and Issues* inventories data such as current zoning and land uses, and analyzes existing demographic conditions and trends.
- *Vision and Goals* include the vision statement, as well as the major goals for the plan. Each goal has several objectives that work toward its achievement.
- *Design Concepts* includes a Concept Plan Map that details how downtown should be improved, and includes notations of miscellaneous development sites and improvements.

- *Redevelopment Sites* contains a detailed discussion of four of the key redevelopment sites that have been identified and analyzed in the Downtown Market Study.
- *Implementation* is the final section. It details the 65 projects and action items that the City will need to undertake in order to achieve the vision and goals. There is also a table that lists all of the action items, along with suggestions for who should oversee the actions and a timeframe for implementation.

Vision

The vision statement for downtown was created based on public input and was composed by the Downtown Plan Steering Committee. It states:

Downtown Urbana is the heart of our city. It is built at a human scale and embraces the historic urban fabric, while also promoting a high quality of compatible new building development in appropriate locations. It is an economically vibrant environment with welcoming public spaces and an active arts and culture scene. Downtown is accessible to all and well connected to surrounding neighborhoods and to the University. The mix of businesses, residences and other attractions in our downtown helps to promote sustainable, healthy lifestyles.

Goals & Objectives

There are seven key goals outlined in the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan. Each goal has six to eight related objectives. The seven goals are as follows:

- *Strengthen economic activity in downtown Urbana.*
- *Promote context-appropriate urban-style infill development to extend downtown's core character.*
- *Increase downtown's vitality by attracting more residents and visitors.*
- *Develop engaging public spaces and streetscapes.*
- *Improve mobility to and within downtown.*
- *Protect and enhance the character of downtown.*
- *Reduce downtown Urbana's environmental impact.*

Concept Plan Map & Redevelopment Sites

The Concept Plan Map divides downtown Urbana into four areas based on their design character and uses. It also contains notations and indicators for specified redevelopment sites, infrastructure improvements, and other suggested ideas for improving downtown. The four areas are:

- The *Downtown Core* (shaded orange) represents Downtown's solid core of traditional urban style of development. This area is what residents most associate with downtown Urbana.

- The *Outer Downtown* (shaded purple) consists of the areas immediately surrounding the core. The character of the core area should be extended to this area as it develops. A proposed design review overlay district will help ensure that development is built in character with this vision.
- The *Expanded Downtown Commercial* areas (shaded brown) are within the downtown study area, but are not comfortably accessible to pedestrians. These areas include regional retail attractors for grocery, restaurant, and retail uses.
- *Near-Downtown Residential* areas (shaded gray) provide downtown with a large population of potential customers and employees.

Implementation

The final section of the plan discusses key projects and contains a complete list of actions designed to accomplish the goals of the plan. Although implementation of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan can be accomplished over a number of timeframes, some key projects and action items will be completed in the next few years. For example, the Boneyard Creek Improvements Project (Phase I) will have an immediate impact upon its completion in 2014. Another key implementation item is the creation of a design review overlay district for downtown to ensure new developments are built in harmony with the walkable character of downtown Urbana's core. Economic development programs will also play an important role in achieving the vision for downtown Urbana.

In order to adopt the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan, City Council is being asked to approve an ordinance to adopt the plan as an element of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. As an element of the Comprehensive Plan, the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan would be adopted as official policy, and not merely an advisory document.

Summary of Findings

1. The current 2002 Downtown Strategic Plan was adopted in 2002 as an element of the 1982 Comprehensive Plan.
2. In 2005 the City of Urbana completed a new Comprehensive Plan containing goals and objectives related to the redevelopment of downtown Urbana, adopted under Ord. No. 2005-03-050.
3. The 2010 City Council Goals included a goal and objectives to update the 2002 Downtown Strategic Plan.
4. The 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan was compiled with guidance from and approved by the Downtown Plan Steering Committee, composed of stakeholders including residents, business and property owners, and public facility managers.

5. The 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan is based on input from key stakeholders and the public in general collected through several meetings, forums, and online.
6. The 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan addresses important trends and issues facing downtown Urbana, sets out a vision for downtown and recommends goals and offers implementation strategies which outline the projects, policies and programs to be implemented and identifies responsible parties for those items.
7. The 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan will serve as a supplement to and amendment of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, with the goals and policies of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan to be utilized as the guiding document for planning and development in that area.
8. Adoption of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan meets Illinois Municipal Code requirements concerning procedures for adoption of and amendments to comprehensive plans.
9. Plan Commission held a public hearing on March 8, 2012 and April 5, 2012 regarding adoption of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan and recommended the City Council adopt the plan as amended.

Options

In Plan Case 2170-CP-12, the City Council may:

- a) Approve the adoption of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan as an amendment to the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan.
- b) Approve the adoption of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan as an amendment to the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan, with recommended changes.
- c) Deny the adoption of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan as an amendment to the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendation

At their March 8, 2012 and April 5, 2012 meetings, the Urbana Plan Commission held a public hearing regarding the proposed plan. Plan Commission offered minor changes to the Concept Plan map and the Vision Statement, which have now been incorporated into the draft plan. On April 5, 2012, the Plan Commission voted 8 ayes to 0 nays to forward Plan Case No. 2170-CP-12 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for **APPROVAL** as an element of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, as amended. The draft presented to the City Council for approval includes changes requested by the Plan Commission.

Prepared by:

Jeffrey Engstrom, AICP
Planner II

Attachments:

Draft Ordinance to Adopt the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan as an Element of the Comprehensive Plan

ORDINANCE NO. 2012-04-041

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF URBANA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005

(2012 Downtown Urbana Plan - Plan Case No. 2170-CP-12)

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

WHEREAS, the 2005 Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives, policies, future land use maps, and other recommendations pertaining to the entire City; and

WHEREAS, the 2005 Comprehensive Plan states that Neighborhood Plans may be adopted and considered an extension of the Comprehensive Plan in order to address specific issues that arise in a defined neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, changing conditions in Downtown Urbana warrant the update of the 2002 Downtown Strategic Plan, specific to the area which will address concerns of the residents and area stakeholders, as well as provide a context for agency plans adopted within the area; and

WHEREAS, after due publication and proper legal notification of a public hearing on March 8, 2012, which was

continued on April 5, 2012, the Urbana Plan Commission voted 8 ayes to 0 nays to recommended that the Urbana City Council adopt the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan as an official amendment to 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that it is in the public interest to adopt an amendment to the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan to provide a detailed plan to achieve these public policies.

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

Section 1. The attached document entitled "2012 Downtown Urbana Plan", dated April, 2012, and incorporated herein by reference is hereby adopted in whole as an amendment to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan of the City of Urbana, as amended, and replaces the 2002 Downtown Strategic Plan.

Section 2. The City Clerk is directed to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form by authority of the corporate authorities and thereafter file a certified copy in the Champaign County Recorder's Office in conformance with Chapter 65, Section 11-12-7 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/11-12-7).

Section 3. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon the expiration of 10 days after the date of filing notice of the adoption of the comprehensive plan amendment with the Champaign County Recorder, in conformance with Chapter 65, Section 11-12-7 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/11-12-7).

PASSED by the Corporate Authorities this _____ day of _____, 2012.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAINS:

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this _____ day of _____, 2012.

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 _____, 2012, the corporate authorities of the City of Urbana passed and approved Ordinance No. _____, entitled: **"AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF URBANA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2005** (2012 Downtown Urbana Plan - Plan Case No. 2170-CP-12), 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 _____, 2012, 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 _____, 2012.