



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, AICP, Community Development Services Director

DATE: September 6, 2007

SUBJECT: An Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance (University Avenue Illinois Tomorrow Corridor Planning Study Grant)

Description

City Council is requested to adopt an Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance in order to receive a planning grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation in the amount of \$162,000. The revision to the Annual Budget Ordinance must also include \$18,000 in match funds to be provided by the participating agencies. The participating agencies include: City of Urbana, City of Champaign, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (CU-MTD) and Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC). Adoption of the Ordinance for the total project cost of \$180,000 will allow for project planning activities to begin.

Background

The City of Urbana, City of Champaign, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District and the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission recognize that University Avenue serves as the primary connection between the downtowns of the City of Urbana and Champaign. In addition University Avenue provides for access to the University of Illinois as well as two major medical facilities. To realize the potential of University Avenue as a major corridor, the CCRPC applied on behalf of Urbana, Champaign, the University and CU-MTD for an Illinois Tomorrow Corridor Planning Study grant through the Illinois Department of Transportation. The City of Urbana was designated as the lead agency. (See attached grant application)

The Illinois Tomorrow Corridor Planning Study grant has been approved in the amount of \$162,000. The funds will be used to complete a study to determine how safety and mobility can be improved for all modes of transportation along the University Avenue Corridor, and how revitalization of the streetscape and building facades will promote economic vitality along the corridor.

As the lead agency, Urbana has entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation. Match funds in the amount of \$18,000 are proposed to be provided by the participating agencies as follows:

City of Urbana	\$4,000
City of Champaign	\$4,000
University of Illinois	\$4,000
CU-MTD	\$3,000
CCRPC	\$3,000.

An agreement between the participating agencies is currently being reviewed. The City of Urbana will contract with CCRPC to complete the corridor study and provide all necessary documentation as required by the Illinois Tomorrow Corridor Planning Study grant. A Contract for Technical and Planning Services with CCRPC is currently being reviewed.

Fiscal Impact

The Illinois Tomorrow grant will have a positive impact on the City by providing funds to complete a corridor study for University Avenue. The corridor study will identify means to improve University Avenue in relation to transportation, streetscape, and redevelopment opportunities. The majority of the cost of the study will be borne by the Illinois Tomorrow Corridor Planning Study Grant Program. The City's total net financial commitment for the study is projected to be \$4,000.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Council adopt the attached Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance to allow City use of the Illinois Tomorrow Corridor Planning Study grant award.

Prepared by:

Lisa Karcher, Planner II

Attachments: Draft Ordinance
 Grant Application

ORDINANCE NO. 2007-09-103

**AN ORDINANCE
REVISING THE ANNUAL BUDGET ORDINANCE
(University Ave. Corridor Study)**

WHEREAS, the Annual Budget Ordinance of and for the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007, and ending June 30, 2008, (the "Annual Budget Ordinance") has been duly adopted according to sections 8-2-9.1 et seq. of the Illinois Municipal Code (the "Municipal Code") and Division 2, entitled "Budget", of Article VI, entitled "Finances and Purchases", of Chapter 2, entitled "Administration", of the Code of Ordinances, City of Urbana, Illinois (the "City Code"); and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the said City of Urbana finds it necessary to revise said Annual Budget Ordinance by deleting, adding to, changing or creating sub-classes within object classes and object classes themselves; and

WHEREAS, funds are available to effectuate the purpose of such revision; and

WHEREAS, such revision is not one that may be made by the Budget Director under the authority so delegated to the Budget Director pursuant to section 8-2-9.6 of the Municipal Code and section 2-133 of the City Code.

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

Section 1. That the Annual Budget be and the same is hereby revised to provide as follows:

FUND:	Capital Improvements	
INCREASE EXPENSE	Univ. Ave. Study Costs	\$180,000
INCREASE REVENUE	State IDOT Grant	\$162,000
INCREASE REVENUE	Other Agencies Match	\$ 14,000
REDUCE	Fund Balance (Urbana Match)	\$ 4,000

Section 2. This Ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and approval and shall not be published.

Section 3. This Ordinance is hereby passed by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the corporate authorities then holding office, the "ayes" and "nays" being called at a regular meeting of said Council.

PASSED by the City Council this _____ day of _____,

_____.

AYES:

NAYS:

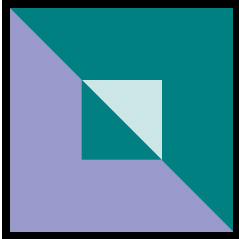
ABSTAINED:

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this _____ day of _____,

_____.

Laurel L. Prussing, Mayor



Illinois Tomorrow University Avenue Corridor Unification Study

General Information

Local Metropolitan Planning Organization

Champaign County Regional Planning Commission

Local Agency Sponsor (County or Municipality)

City of Urbana

MPO Contact Information

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Champaign County Regional Planning Commission
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Local Agency Sponsor Contact Information

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Part of commercial corridor on University Avenue with Carle Hospital in background.

Project Title

University Avenue Corridor Unification Study

Total Project Cost: **\$180,000**

Local Match Amount: **\$18,000**

Local Match Sources

City of Urbana, City of Champaign, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission

Project Study Area

The proposed study area is a **2.5 mile long corridor** bounded by State Street to the west, running east along University Avenue to Maple Street in Urbana, and extending north along Cunningham Avenue (US 45) to where it intersects the Saline Drainage Ditch. Boundaries along University Avenue extend approximately two blocks to the north and south (please refer to study area map (page 8)).



A mix of small commercial buildings with minimal streetscape and site development on Cunningham Avenue north of University Avenue.

Major corridors in the study area include:

- Lincoln Avenue, a north-south arterial that crosses University Avenue, creating one of the largest and busiest intersections in the urbanized area. This intersection is complicated by rail track running northwest-southeast through the intersection.
- US 45, which traverses Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy and follows University Avenue between Cunningham Avenue in Urbana and Neil Street in Champaign.
- US 150, which likewise shares University Avenue with US 45.

Project Description

University Avenue is the principal connector between the downtowns of Champaign and Urbana and links those areas to the community's principal medical facilities and the University of Illinois. The five-lane cross section and heavy traffic also make it a barrier dividing the hospital campuses and historically African American neighborhoods from the rest of the community. The character, age, intensity and viability of development varies greatly along the length of the corridor. The University Avenue corridor presents some of the most compelling redevelopment opportunities in the community if they can be addressed in a coordinated manner.



Strip mall with inter-mixed parking at corner of University Avenue and Broadway Avenue.

The proposed study will examine how safety and mobility can be improved in the corridor for all transportation modes through access management, intelligent transportation systems technologies, and other context sensitive solutions. In addition, it would determine how economic revitalization can occur through innovative streetscaping, landscaping, and façade improvements that focus on the pedestrian scale and drawing motorists off the roadway corridor and into the community.

Study Products

A plan that includes:

- Modal and transportation management alternatives and potential policy changes that could improve corridor mobility;
- A short (5-10 years) and long range (20 years) list of needs and potential projects;



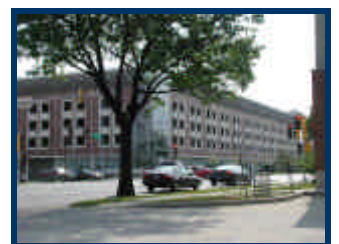
- Design guidelines for alternative transportation mode facilities and/or amenities, streetscaping, landscaping, and façade improvements;
- Recommendations for the location, design, and management of parking within the corridor;
- Recommendations for bicycles and pedestrian accommodation in the corridor; and,
- A list of locations and issues requiring additional detailed engineering analyses.

Current documents that relate to the proposed study

- The *Transportation Improvement Program FY 2006-2008* (2005) outlines prioritized projects for the next three fiscal years, and includes several projects that relate to this corridor in terms of traffic signals, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and streetscaping.
- The *City of Urbana Comprehensive Plan (2005)* identifies goals for city development. The plan also identifies future land uses and transportation maps for the city.
- The *City of Champaign Comprehensive Plan Update (2002)* details goals and objectives that relate to parts of the study area.
- *Access Management Guidelines (2001)* provides recommendations for providing access to facilities and buildings on major corridors in the urbanized area.
- The *University of Illinois Campus Master Plan (2000)* offers analyses and recommendations about the development of the University of Illinois Campus, which borders the study area to the south. An update is underway that will affect access and travel movements within the study area.
- *CUUATS Long Range Transportation Plan 2025 (2004)* identifies goals and implementation measures for the urbanized area, including improving access management, development patterns, and promoting alternative transportation modes in core areas of the community, including parts of the study area.
- The *Champaign County Greenways and Trails Plan (2004)* identifies recreational trails and greenways in Champaign County; it includes projects that would link several parts of the study area to existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- The *City of Champaign Downtown Plan (1992)* and the *City of Urbana Downtown Plan (2001)* offer urban design and streetscape concepts that could contribute to the proposed study area's revitalization.
- The *Carle Master Plan (1995)* details how hospital campus long-term development plans mesh with surrounding residential and open space areas.
- The *Cunningham Avenue Redevelopment Plan (2001)* provides direction for commercial redevelopment of Cunningham Avenue (US 45) north of University Avenue using tax increment financing.



City of Champaign Police Station and historic Cattle Bank on corner of University Avenue and First



University of Illinois Parking Garage, occupying a full block of frontage on University Avenue, completed this year.

- The *North Campus and King Park Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan and Projects* (1990) is a neighborhood plan for residential development north of University Avenue including limited commercial redevelopment near **Provena Covenant Medical Center**.

Related and Previous Work

- Currently, the City of Urbana Public Works Department **is constructing** a bicycle path along Goodwin Avenue between Springfield Avenue and Bradley Avenue, which will cross the railroad and University Avenue. According to the FY 05-07 Transportation Improvement Program, Federal Enhancement funding in the amount of \$278,400 has been allocated for fiscal year 2005 **along with a local match of \$107,600**.
- **The City of Urbana and the University of Illinois completed signal modernization and turning lane improvements at the intersection of University Avenue and Goodwin Avenue in fiscal year 2005; state and local agencies paid the \$300,000 project cost.**
- **Also in fiscal year 2005, the University of Illinois completed a 1600 space multi-level parking deck at a prominent University Avenue corner; this has affected traffic conditions in the study area which could benefit from further study.**
- Traffic signal coordination was completed for University Avenue between Wright Street and Cunningham Avenue in 2002 to improve traffic mobility during peak traffic hours.
- Also in 2002, the intersection of University Avenue and Cunningham Avenue (US 45) was upgraded with additional turning lanes and signals.
- There are several Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts near or including parts of the University Avenue corridor; previous efforts have funded streetscaping and other investment in the area.
- The majority of the corridor is contained within the City of Champaign-Champaign County Enterprise Zone or the Urbana Enterprise Zone, which could facilitate reinvestment in the area.

Participating agencies/partners

The principal agencies involved in the study are the State of Illinois, City of Urbana, City of Champaign, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, and the University of Illinois. The local agencies would be responsible for funding the local match, planning efforts (consultant or in-house work), data provision and analysis, and public involvement efforts.

Other agencies that may be called upon for involvement in the study include, but are not limited to: Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District, Urbana Park District, Champaign Park District, Carle Hospital, Provena Covenant Medical Center, and other business interests in the corridor.



Project timeline

The anticipated time to complete the study is 18 months.

What current issues prompted the need for this project? How are those needs incorporated into this project?

Traffic volumes in the University Avenue corridor are some of the highest in the urbanized area. As part of the study, optimizing traffic mobility and improving pedestrian safety in the corridor and its adjacent streets is a significant factor.

The significant number of access points along the corridor promote delays in traffic movement and increased danger to passing pedestrians and bicyclists. The study would look at how to optimize access to the establishments along the corridor using CUUATS Access Management Guidelines.

Truck traffic on University Avenue and side roads in the corridor often negatively impacts traffic flows as they block through traffic with turning movements and load/unload their trailers. The study would look at how to optimize cargo delivery and truck movement in the corridor.

Transit service on University Avenue, especially around Carle Hospital, often inhibits the level of mobility for other motorists; the study would consider how to improve this situation.

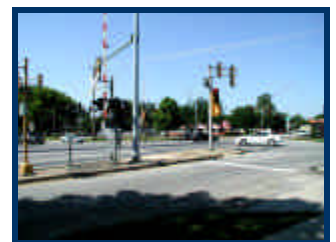
There is a general lack of bicycle facilities in the proposed study area. University Avenue is a barrier for bicycle travel, as the state does not permit bicycle facilities on state routes. In addition, rail track that generally runs parallel to University Avenue provides an obstacle for north-south traveling bicyclists. Local agencies would like to evaluate how improvements can be made for both commuter and recreational bicyclists traveling in the area.

Parking is often an issue for commercial and institutional establishments. Providing adequate surface parking could interfere with the creation of a continuous safe and pleasant pedestrian environment on the street. The study will include analyses and provisions for parking to optimize convenience, safety, access, redevelopment opportunities and environmental quality.

Land use in the study area is primarily commercial in nature. Within the corridor, obsolete strip malls are juxtaposed with modern buildings and underutilized properties. There are also University buildings and hospital facilities that lend their own unique designs to the area. A principle goal of the study is improving the function and image of the



Illinois Terminal Intermodal Transportation Center, on west end of proposed study area.



Intersection of University Avenue and Lincoln Avenue, where rail line crosses diagonally through

corridor as a major thoroughfare and gateway to the University. It will also focus on improvements so that pedestrians and other travelers would feel comfortable and secure conducting business there. The study will also look at reinforcing the connection between the two downtowns, encouraging new investment and supporting existing investment in the area.



East side of Downtown Champaign, where on-street parking for businesses is limited.

The intense development of the University Avenue corridor contrasts with the adjacent residential neighborhoods. The study will also examine the transition at the corridor edge and management of spill-over traffic and other impacts.

Two waterways in the study area, the Boneyard Creek and the Saline Drainage Ditch, bring numerous benefits to the area and raise planning issues. In the University District, the Boneyard was channelized to rectify flooding problems and turned into a shared-use path for bicycles and pedestrians. **Similar measures would be considered as part of this study.**

Finally, the study area is lacking landscaping and streetscape improvements in many areas. Good landscaping influences pedestrian and motorist movement, invites people to an area, provides a sense of place for an area, promotes a healthier environment, and draws the attention of potential investors. The study would evaluate current conditions and make recommendations for creating a unified urban streetscape throughout the corridor.

How does this project relate to and/or promote the Illinois Tomorrow Corridor Planning Grant Program goals?

Preserving open space: Any recommendation stemming from the corridor study would ensure that the amount of existing open space would be maintained or expanded upon, consistent with local Greenways and Trails planning efforts.

Congestion relief: One of the main goals of this study is to relieve congestion in the corridor by promoting alternative transportation modes, improving travel mobility, and optimizing access to adjacent land uses.

Cooperative inter-jurisdictional relationships: The study will be a joint effort of the Cities of Urbana and Champaign, the University of Illinois, and the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, the local area MPO. The municipalities have worked together on previous projects, which have often included other agencies, both public and private. Successful completion of the corridor study will depend on the existing strong relationships in information sharing, data collection, and planning efforts.



Leal Park on University Avenue



Balanced economic development policies: An anticipated product of the corridor study is to recommend practices that will economically revitalize the more blighted areas of the corridor and improve the image of the community. Such recommendations, if implemented, will foster more economic development in both Urbana and Champaign, if not the surrounding region.

Contiguous and infill development and redevelopment: The University Avenue corridor is in the center of the community, thus negating the possibility for “leapfrog” development. This project will examine ways to densify the corridor by optimizing the mix of building areas and parking in various forms. Redevelopment in the corridor will reduce greenfield development on the periphery.

Development in areas with existing transportation and utility infrastructure: No new infrastructure is anticipated to be necessary as an outcome of the study process. Promoting development at optimum densities in the corridor will take best advantage of the existing infrastructure.

Development in areas with currently available housing: There are numerous residential areas surrounding the University Avenue corridor on both north and south sides.

Enhanced travel choices: As previously mentioned, the provision of alternative transportation modes will be a principal factor in the corridor study. Creating more pedestrian-friendly areas, including the possibility of transit-oriented development design concepts, are options that will be discussed during the planning process.

Creation of public-private coalitions: Significant relationships with both public and private entities are anticipated during the corridor study process, especially with adjacent business owners and medical facilities representatives. The study will build on existing relations like those behind the Carle Master Plan.

Collaboration among local governments and development industry, labor, public interest, and environmental organizations: All planning processes that include the Regional Planning Commission include extensive public involvement measures.

Minimization of infrastructure cost to taxpayers: The proposed corridor study will allow local agencies to optimize the use of existing facilities, thus minimizing new infrastructure costs.

Study Area

