



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

*Planning Division*

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

**TO:** Urbana Plan Commission

**FROM:** Robert Myers, AICP

**DATE:** March 30, 2007

**SUBJECT:** Review and Formal Acceptance of the IL Route 130/High Cross Road Corridor Plan

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### **Introduction & Background**

In 2003, the City of Urbana received an Illinois Tomorrow Grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation to prepare a Corridor Plan for the Route 130 Corridor. The primary goal of the study is to promote logical development that considers interconnectivity of land uses and transportation networks for the City of Urbana, its rural surroundings, and the urbanized area.

The Corridor Plan was prepared by staff of the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) under the direction of the City of Urbana (lead agency) and other participating agencies, including Champaign County, Somer Township, Urbana Township, and the University of Illinois. The Corridor Plan was timed so as to accommodate completion of the City's 2005 Comprehensive Plan. Over the three years of its preparation, the Corridor Plan pursued an extensive public involvement process that was used to inform the Preferred Scenario for transportation improvements in the study area.

The final version of this Plan has been completed. The Urbana Plan Commission is asked to review and recommend to the City Council whether or not to officially endorse the Plan.

The Corridor Plan is a lengthy document, and includes several hundred pages documenting the public involvement process and the transportation modeling effort. Plan Commissioners and Councilmembers are being provided with a digital version of the Plan in CD format, unless a paper copy has been requested. Copies of the Plan may also be downloaded from:

**<http://www.ccrpc.org/planning/transportation/130>**

or purchased directly from the Regional Planning Commission at 328-3313 according to their website instructions.

Additional background material on the Plan and on the public involvement process is also available at the website noted above.

## **Discussion**

The IL 130/High Cross Road Corridor study area is comprised of an eight-mile segment of that roadway, extending from Ford Harris Road on the north to Old Church Road on the south. The Plan focuses on both transportation and land use issues throughout this diverse corridor.

Goals for the study area included the following:

- Improve mobility
- Improve safety
- Improve accessibility
- Preserve the environment
- Serve residential communities
- Serve planned regional commercial centers

The preferred alternative includes 17 specific recommendations, including improving roadways, widening existing roadways, constructing bicycle and pedestrian paths, installing and modernizing traffic signals, and planning for the urban design of anticipated development. Figure 2-1 of the Corridor Plan (attached to this memo) illustrates the Preferred Alternative Transportation Projects resulting from the traffic modeling and public involvement process. This exhibit shows proposed roadway improvements without additional lanes for Route 130 north of Interstate 74 and additional lanes for Route 130 south of Interstate 74. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements are shown as a network of paths feeding into and along Route 130 south of the Interstate. Bridge improvement projects are also shown at two locations north of the Interstate.

Some of the significant aspects of the Preferred Alternative are:

- Use of an extensive public input process in formulating and ranking improvements
- Recognition of the differing land use goals for the Route 130 corridor north and south of the Interstate.
- Enhancement of mobility for all forms of travel – not only for automobiles.
- Strongly reflects the goals and future land uses shown in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. No changes to the Comprehensive Plan's future land uses are being recommended.

CCRPC has employed an open process seeking extensive public input from stakeholders and the general public alike. Stakeholder participants have included corridor users, conservation advocates, private property owners, development and business interests, and various governments, including the Illinois Department of Transportation, the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit

District, and the City of Urbana (Plan Commissioners, City Council members, and City staff). The following summarizes the Plan's extensive public input process.

**March 2004: Kick-Off Open House**

This meeting was a chance for the public to meet staff and learn about the existing transportation and land use conditions in the study area. Attendance: 60 participants.

**September 2004: Question and Answer Session**

The public was invited to ask questions of public agencies (i.e. City of Urbana, CU-MTD, CCRPC, etc.) regarding the intent and scope of the corridor study. Attendance: 135 participants.

**Year 2005: On Hold**

Work on the Plan was placed on hold to take advantage of the impending completion of the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan.

**February 2006: Public Workshop**

Using a "strings and ribbons" interactive activity, participants indicated which potential projects they desired to see completed in the corridor. Attendance: 64 participants.

**April 2006: Business and Developer Focus Group**

Using the same format as the February workshop, business owners and developers in the corridor identified preferred projects. Attendance: 15 participants.

**June 2006: Public Workshop**

Participants voted on a preferred scenario out of four possibilities derived from public workshops. Attendance: 52 participants.

**October 2006: Public Workshop**

Public workshop to present the preferred alternative, and further input was solicited by having participants identify design preferences for the corridor. Attendance: 68 participants.

**December 2006: Public Open House**

The draft Plan was available for viewing at the Urbana Free Library, with staff available to answer questions. Attendance: 44 participants.

**January 2007: Public Review Period**

The draft Plan was available for viewing and comments at the CCRPC offices. Staff reviewed the Plan with the Plan Commission and City Council to obtain additional input on behalf of the City.

A summary of changes in the Plan, based on final draft plan comments, is attached as Exhibit B. For more detailed information on the background of the Plan, please refer to the introductory

chapters of the draft document and to the information posted on the website.

## **Action Requested**

City staff requests that the Plan Commission review and recommend approval to the City Council of the final IL 130/High Cross Road Corridor Plan.

Prepared by:

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Matt Wempe, Planner II

Attachments:      Exhibit A: IL 130/High Cross Road Corridor Plan FINAL (CD)  
                            Exhibit B: Summary of Changes to the Final IL 130/High Cross Road  
  Corridor Plan