

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

### **Adopted February 1, 2010**

The City of Urbana recognizes that stewardship of the city means not only addressing the needs of today's residents but planning for the future -- short and long term -- in a cohesive, coherent way. These City Council and Mayoral Goals represent the core principles we will apply over our term in office as we help guide Urbana on the path forward. They form a common point of understanding from which the planning and government of Urbana proceeds.

Our specific goals include enhancing public safety, achieving financial sustainability, promoting economic development, maintaining a vibrant, innovative downtown, working toward environmental sustainability and improving the quality of life in Urbana.

**Public safety:** Our top goal always must be to provide for the safety of our residents by maintaining sufficiently staffed and well-trained police, fire and public works departments and providing modern facilities for them to work in.

**Financial sustainability:** Our goal is to have a financially stable city, with sufficient reserves to cover periodic downturns in the economy. Longer-term, the city should investigate securing new sources of revenue that don't burden taxpayers through city ownership of public utilities, such as broadband, water and electricity/energy.

**Economic development:** To minimize the tax burden on residents, Urbana must continue to grow and attract new jobs. The city should pursue infill development whenever possible, work to enhance new development corridors to the north and east and work to attract new high-tech jobs. The city should also strive to make sure new projects are as attractive and environmentally sustainable as possible.

**A vibrant, innovative downtown:** The heart of a city is its downtown, and Urbana must continue to maintain its downtown as a vibrant, attractive place to live, work and shop. The city will strive to retain existing businesses, to attract new businesses and to fill vacant buildings and sites. The city also will begin implementing the Boneyard Creek Master Plan to transform Boneyard Creek into a downtown amenity.

**Environmental sustainability:** The city must implement and encourage environmental sustainability, including evaluating all city projects for sustainability and incorporating energy-savings systems. The city should establish partnerships and develop programs to encourage residents and businesses to adopt sustainable practices. The city council will adopt a climate action plan and work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through a variety of measures, including making the city more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

**Quality of life:** The city must take the steps necessary to ensure a high quality of life for its residents. Those steps include promoting historic preservation, diversity in the city work force and intergovernmental cooperation. The city should also work to provide affordable housing, promote public art and implement modern zoning concepts.

## 1.) Goal: Public safety

**A. Strategy:** Provide police and fire service staffing at levels needed for all neighborhoods..

- Review staffing annually during budget preparations to determine needs and available resources.
- Monitor development and population density for future fire station and personnel needs as well as exploring partnerships and financial planning for construction needs.

**B. Strategy:** Continue to identify problem properties and work to solve problems.

- Work with the ownership of problem properties and apartment complexes to reduce crime.
- Work with Lierman Avenue and Washington Street residents to address neighborhood issues.
- Continue systematic rental inspection and code enforcement, particularly with problem properties.
- Adopt an Aggravated Public Nuisance ordinance. [Spring 2010]

**C. Strategy:** Review and update ordinances.

- Review liquor ordinance. Consider tiered license fees based on occupancy.
- Develop an early warning system to identify potential problem properties.
- Investigate motel and hotel code safety issues when rooms are rented by the month.

**D. Strategy:** Address building security needs at City Facilities.

## 2.) Goal: Financial sustainability

**A. Strategy:** Secure new long-term reliable sources of city revenue. Investigate what other cities have done regarding broadband, ambulance, water and electricity/energy.

- Hire consultant to help city determine whether broadband grant proposal will pay for itself, as is, and to look at potential business models for expanding fiber to the home in Urbana. [Fall 2009]
- If the \$28 million federal broadband grant is awarded, using consultant's and other input, council will determine whether to accept or reject. [Feb 2010]
- If grant is awarded and accepted, build out of backbone network and fiber to the home in underserved areas by 2011 and determine if the City builds out to other on a partial or complete basis. There would be a cost savings of about 5 percent with continuing construction without a stop, so an initial decision in early 2011 should be considered.
- Investigate the feasibility and potential profitability of operating a city ambulance service.
- Continue to work with city of Champaign, UI and Savoy and possibly other parties to consider buying the water system and operating it as a municipal utility.
- Consider implementing a storm water utility fee; employ a consultant to perform a feasibility study and implementation plan.

**B. Strategy:** Successfully negotiate new contracts with police, fire and AFSCME unions in 2010 that the city can afford.

**C. Strategy:** Evaluate costs and benefits of development projects before implementation and follow up to see if actual results achieved.

**D. Strategy:** Work to maintain a healthy general corporate fund balance, eventually raising reserves to \$3 million, or about 10 percent of general fund spending.

- Consider implementing new fees, such as vehicle impoundment fee, towing fee, pavement degradation fee that have already been implemented or are under consideration in other cities.
- Analyze expenditures and improve efficiency to help eliminate current budget deficit.

### 3.) Goal: Economic development

**A. Strategy:** Regularly conduct a business climate survey and include all area Realtors and developers.

**B. Strategy:** Begin implementing Cunningham Avenue corridor beautification plan.

**C. Strategy:** Work to attract infill development

- Target vacant or underutilized buildings and sites, such as Jerry's IGA, former Walgreens, and Pay Less Shoes.
- Target desired uses such as a cinema, a new book store, boutiques, specialty stores, copy shop, and ice cream parlor.

**D. Strategy:** Complete and execute development agreement with Menards.

- Set timetables for road improvements and construction of store tied to state funding.
- Residential and other commercial development to follow in future years.

**E. Strategy:** Work with University of Illinois and the UI Foundation on properties of mutual interest.

- Seek active involvement of neighborhood associations and residents in the planning and design process of Orchard Downs and Pomology (Pell Farm) Tract redevelopments.
- Continue discussions on North Campus and Krannert Center District developments.

**F. Strategy:** Complete University Avenue corridor plan by spring 2010.

**G. Strategy:** Continue to pursue funding for Olympian Drive (from Apollo Drive to US 45) and extending Lincoln Avenue along its proposed alignment to Olympian Drive.

- Continue to work with neighboring property owners on proposed Olympian Drive route land use concerns.
- Examine potential connectivity of Airport Road to Lincoln Avenue for public safety and industrial development.
- Explore locations for additional industrial parks

**H. Strategy:** Continue to pursue development along Cunningham Avenue north of Interstate 74

- Market Pickrell Farm, Frasca properties, and Farm & Fleet out lots.

**I. Strategy:** Continue to administer and improve business development programs to meet business needs such as TIF Redevelopment Incentive Program and Enterprise Zone Designation.

**J. Strategy:** Continue to work with Urbana Business Association to market Urbana “as a dynamic place to live, work and do business.”

- Support efforts of grass-roots community development or neighborhood organizations.

**K. Strategy:** Continue to promote expansion and diversity of the city’s tax base.

- Explore possible annexations, including existing residential neighborhoods, and use cost/benefit ratio analysis.
- Work with the University and not-for-profit entities to limit the growth of non-taxable properties.

#### 4.) Goal: A vibrant, innovative downtown

**A. Strategy:** Update the 2002 downtown strategic plan. [May 2010]

- 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.

**B. Strategy:** Complete a professional market share study of downtown business sectors to determine marketing strategies and what types of businesses will succeed downtown.

- Draft request for proposals and complete study by spring 2010.

**C. Strategy:** Develop downtown as a destination through traditional and cutting-edge technologies.

- Study use of interactive downtown kiosks, new information technologies, and podcast walking tours.
- Bring “museum without walls” concept to downtown by marking historic buildings including the Royer Arts and Architecture District (plaques and markers).
- Install “Looking for Lincoln” wayside markers where appropriate, and identify and mark sites associated with distinguished Urbana citizens.
- Encourage University faculty and students to develop interactive or innovative technology in downtown businesses or in uses that would extend the concept of the gallery district.

**D. Strategy:** Complete a “way-finding” design to improve downtown signage and other materials that help residents find parking and other downtown attractions and businesses.

- Request for proposals to be issued and report completed. [Spring 2010]
- Develop connectivity across and to downtown with an emphasis on walking and biking.

**E. Strategy:** Continue implementation of the Boneyard Creek Master Plan.

- Coordinate with private property owners who own redevelopment properties.
- Focus on Segment 3 between Griggs Street and Broadway Avenue for first construction phase including Race Street Bridge.
- Finalize necessary easements agreements, including old railroad trestle bridge for pedestrians and Norfolk Southern railroad approvals.
- Consider additional segments as feasible and/or as prompted by redevelopment activity.

- Initiate planning, acquisition, site engineering for Boneyard beautification plan west of Main Street to Lincoln Avenue.
- Study/consider private fund-raising campaign tied to specific Boneyard phases.

**F. Strategy:** Work to complete major downtown redevelopment and infill projects.

- Restore Historic Lincoln Hotel as a viable hotel and conference center while respecting its historic character. Work with developers to promote revitalization through available initiatives, fee waivers and tax credits for local and national landmark buildings.
- Consider acquisition and environmental cleanup (seek IEPA Brownfield Site Funds) of downtown sites for potential redevelopments.
- Work with owner of Gateway Shoppes to start construction of shopping center and additional out lot development.
- Complete property acquisitions and options of city block just north of Urbana City Building and issue RFP for mixed-use redevelopment.
- Pursue/continue redevelopment of Lincoln Square Village.
- Consult with owner of County Plaza on developing new uses and applications for this space.
- Work with property owners of the blocks south of University Avenue between Race and Vine streets, to pursue redevelopment.
- Work to increase downtown housing, including both apartments and condos.

**G. Strategy:** Promote reuse of vacant or underutilized buildings

- Consider having the city become its own developer: buy empty buildings or properties and partner redevelopment and renovation projects.
- Continue/enhance start-up grant and rent incentives for galleries and businesses in Royer Arts & Architectural District.
- Consider offering city grants to any commercial business in the Royer district to clean or repair existing facades.
- Promote the Royer Arts and Architecture District as a travel destination enhancing tourism, entertainment and development.
- Consider incentive program to encourage downtown law firms to move offices into the second floor, freeing first floor for retail.

**H. Strategy:** Complete Phase 7 of downtown streetscape along Broadway Avenue to the north.

- Hire firm to complete design.

**I. Strategy:** Implement parking plan recommendations.

- Make parking deck more attractive and easier to find.
- Prepare printed material.
- Uniform parking enforcement and modernized equipment.
- Work with the downtown business community on traffic calming measures, safe and user friendly parking, and potentially testing back-in angle parking.

## 5.) Goal: Environmental sustainability.

**A. Strategy:** Adopt principles to provide overall guidance on sustainability issues including air, water, and energy.

- Evaluate all city projects with respect to sustainability, such as waste water, street lighting, energy usage, storm water runoff, and similar issues.
- Incorporate energy-saving systems, including renewable energy sources, storm water best management practices, bicycle and pedestrian facility upgrades.
- Develop innovative programs and regional partnerships to support energy efficiency of private homes, businesses and municipal buildings.

**B. Strategy:** Adopt a climate action plan [May]

- Set significant and achievable targets for greenhouse gas emissions.
- Adopt a timetable and track progress.

**C. Strategy:** Provide adequate staffing and resources to develop and implement sustainability plans and programs. Develop a green team with representatives from all city departments.

**D. Strategy:** Identify opportunities to provide incentives and promote “green construction.

- Research updating city code to promote green building.
- Seek changes in state plumbing codes to allow waterless urinals and energy-efficient plumbing vents.

**E. Strategy:** Develop financing models to fund energy efficiency programs and renewable energy projects, such as contract assessments, revolving loans or grants.

**F. Strategy:** Support proposed studies of climate change, land use and economic development projections consistent with the cost being broadly shared across interest groups in Champaign County. [Fall 2010]

- Work with Champaign County Climate Change Task Force on studies such as solar canopies.

**G. Strategy:** Develop and implement a formal energy policy for city operations.

- Include conservation, identification of non-fossil fuel sources, and potential implementation timelines.
- Continue to increase energy efficiency in all city buildings..Support energy efficiency in residential and commercial sectors by developing innovative programs and regional partnerships.

**H. Strategy:** Develop and implement a water conservation policy for city operations.

- Include conservation steps and alternatives to using potable water, such as for landscape watering. Include costs and implementation guidelines.
- Work with other cities on a regional basis on water planning issues and legislation.

**I. Strategy:** Expand recycling to include commercial recycling, construction and demolition debris recycling, explore hazardous and electronic recycling, and find a long-term solution to battery recycling.

Adopt a zero waste city goal and action plan.

**J. Strategy:** Promote production, accessibility and affordability of local farm and artisan products.

- Conduct a strategic planning process to explore the future vision, program goals and implementation steps for Market at the Square (Winter, 09-10)
- Consider creation of an advisory board for the Urbana Market composed of representatives from the city of Urbana, vendors, consumers, the Urbana Business Association and others as deemed appropriate.
- Implement use of Electronic Benefits Transfer cards at the Urbana Market.
- Encourage establishment of “Friends of the Urbana Market” not-for-profit organization to provide fundraising for educational and artistic events, infrastructure and other needs.
- Grow the Urbana Market by establishing a year-round operation on a permanent location with commercial kitchen space that can be rented by vendors.
- Leverage the Urbana Market as an economic engine to drive development of a portion of downtown Urbana as a “food district.”

**K. Strategy:** Encourage Sustainable Landscaping and Gardening.

- Establish a heritage tree program.
- Encourage the use of native species in landscaping and for pollinator well being.
- Record and mark trees of significant height and growth.
- Study providing notice when a significant tree is to be removed.
- Update city parkway tree inventory.
- Develop property owner guidelines and recommendations for use of native species in landscaping and tree plantings.
- Control the removal of topsoil from residential developments.
- Consider installation of a model community rain garden at the city building.

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

- Work with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission to implement the Bicycle Master Plan by implementing current recommendations and by continuing to plan for bicycle facilities as the city expands or redevelops.
- Work with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission to develop ongoing, communitywide bicycle safety education programs such as the bicycle safety video being prepared jointly by Champaign and Urbana, or working with Drivers’ Education curricula.
- Make sure the police and public works departments and bicycle commission provide appropriate enforcement, education and signage for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Apply for and receive Bicycle Friendly Community designation by 2010-11.
- Launch a bicycle parking retrofit program to help existing businesses add appropriate bicycle parking hardware. Need a funding source.
- Support public transportation, including CUMTD improvements and high-speed passenger rail.
- Continue to enact Safe Routes to School improvements as funds become available.

- 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.
- Improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists at Windsor Road and Race Street.
- Continue identifying and prioritizing improvements at problematic intersections.
- Continue to work with other agencies on regional bike facilities such as the Rails to Trails path between Urbana and Danville.

## 6. Goal: Quality of Life

### A. Strategy: Enhance historic preservation and preserve older housing stock

- Encourage creation of a historic district on Elm Street between Buena Vista and Cedar Street.
- Encourage creation of historic corridors with national designations.
- Create incentives to convert grandfathered boarding houses back to single-family houses.
- Work to conserve single-family homes and neighborhoods through measures that encourage owner occupancy and reinvestment in current housing stock.

### B. Strategy: Zoning/comprehensive plan or ordinance changes.

- Consider ordinance amendment reducing the number of parking spaces required for commercial developments.
- Modify development regulations to encourage bioswales and alternatives to detention basins.
- Develop and enact an industrial noise ordinance that limits noise generated after normal business hours from industries and commercial businesses.
- Consider enacting city impact fees for development to help pay for new roads, park-land dedication, and school sites.
- Consider enacting form-based zoning (ie. where development is dictated by desired building forms rather than by minimum regulations) in downtown and commercial areas.
- Reduce impact of off-street parking in single-family neighborhoods through improved backyard green space requirements, including establishment and enforcement of no-gravel, no-paved-over backyard requirements for grandfathered properties with single-family (R-1, R-2, R-3) underlying zoning.
- Improve cross-department coordination of code enforcement efforts

### C. Strategy: Promoting diversity.

- Continue to work to improve effectiveness of city Equal Employment Opportunity contract compliance program.
- Participate in multi-jurisdictional efforts to increase minority contractor hiring and business growth.
- Continue to work toward increasing diversity within the city workforce to more closely mirror the city's demographics.
- Continue to work toward creating a city work culture more conducive to diversity.
- Publish an annual report for the City Council with metrics on the work force including diversity issues, affirmative action, training, retirements, staff changes, and similar issues.

**D. Strategy:** Promote continued intergovernmental cooperation

- Continued cooperation with Urbana School District (Safe Routes to Schools, technology, energy efficiency grants, green schools, etc.).
- Continued cooperation with Urbana Park District.
- Complete design of new city website and related staff training. [February 2010]
- After official 2010 Census results are received and new county precincts are determined, use a transparent process to draw a new Urbana ward map so that wards are contiguous and balanced fairly for population per Federal and State requirements.
- Adopt the Mayor's Action Challenge for Children and Families sponsored by the National League of Cities <http://www.mayorsforkids.org/principles.php>.
- Conduct annual training for council, boards, and commissions.
- Continue to seek intergovernmental cooperation with Champaign, Savoy, Champaign County and other entities to pursue economic development opportunities.
- Work with park district and school district to make sure recreational facilities are available to Lierman/Washington and King Park area youth.
- Explore the use of neighborhood community centers to serve the needs of youths and adults related to education, training, guided activities and communication technologies in target areas of Urbana, including the possibility of working with the school district at Prairie and King Schools.
- Improve programs to give youth hands-on exposure to the building trades and other vocational training opportunities.

**E. Strategy:** Support greater community programs of interaction between Urbana and our sister city international partner, Zomba, Malawi, Africa.

- Work with local schools, churches and community groups
- Determine if an additional program should be developed in Brazil

**F. Strategy:** Continue to promote public art.

- Support placement of public art throughout the city.
- Continue to support the Public Arts Commission and their programs.
- Complete "Art in the Park" project north of the city building.

**G. Strategy:** Continue to promote additional affordable housing opportunities

- Work with Housing Authority of Champaign County on redevelopment plans for Dunbar Court.
- Identify partners for the Kerr Avenue energy- efficient housing project and move forward with construction.
- Complete housing needs study and reflect results in updated Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plans for use of CDBG and HOME consortium funds.
- Examine capacity of homeless shelters, family shelters and SRO's and promote resources to meet shelter needs.
- Continue to address the issues of tenant relocations resulting from nonpayment and/or condemnations.

**H. Strategy:** Address space needs deficit at City Facilities.

- Complete a space needs study and master plan.
- Identify funding source for plan improvements.
- Consider interim storage facility to address immediate need for space.



## MEMORANDUM

**To: Council members and Mayor Prussing**

**From: Mike Monson, chief of staff; Elizabeth Tyler, director of Community Development; William Gray, Public Works director**

**Date: May 13, 2011**

**Re: Council goals update**

This is the second update of the council goals that were adopted by the city council in February 2010.

### **1.) Public Safety**

**Strategy A:** Due to the city's budget situation, two police officer positions and one firefighter position are being held vacant. These vacancies will likely remain in place at least until contract negotiations are settled with the police and fire unions and the city can determine its future financial obligation.

Police Chief Pat Connolly said he believes Urbana needs to hire more police officers and said comparisons with other cities show that the city has fewer police officers than most other cities on both a per capita and calls-for-service basis. He said the department will continue to focus on community-oriented policing.

Fire Chief Mike Dilley said his department is getting by being short one firefighter, but he said he isn't sure the vacancy is resulting in significant savings because the IAFF contract with the city requires that there be three firefighters on each apparatus in each fire station, meaning the department resorts to overtime if there is a staffing shortage. Longer term, Dilley said he would like to add an inspector in the prevention division.

As far as needing any new fire stations, Dilley said he thinks the city will need to construct a new fire station in southeast Urbana over the next five to 10 years. He said a station near the current Carle Clinic would be a good site and that firefighters at the current station on South Philo Road would simply move to the new station, meaning new firefighters would not have to be added. A

new station would cost in the neighborhood of \$2 million, he said. The current station on South Philo Road could be used by the prevention division, he added.

**Strategy B:** The Executive, Community Development, Police and Fire departments continue to work together to address challenges posed by problem properties. Using program income from prior grants projects, the city is working with Aspen Court to fund improvements for 11 of the affordable units, which will allow the owner to fund other site improvements. The city continues to work with the owner and manager of Urbana townhomes to require code corrections. Recently, two of the Urbana Townhomes buildings were condemned and will need to be demolished if not upgraded. All residents of these buildings have been or are being relocated to other housing.

Also, in the Washington/Lierman area, the city is working with the owner of the GOA complex to potentially receive rental rehabilitation funds as a part of an Annual Action Plan amendment. Elsewhere in Urbana, the city worked closely with the condominium association of Country Club Apartments and the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District and Illinois American Water Company to establish payment plans to ensure that the buildings would not have utility shut-off due to non-payment of bills by the former manager/developer. This cooperative intervention helped to prevent tenant relocations from the complex.

In southeast Urbana, Urbana police and the legal department are working with an apartment owner to provide improved security under the aggravated public nuisance ordinance adopted last year. Two of the apartment owner's buildings have generated an excessive number of police calls.

**Strategy C:** The city council this month is expected to pass an ordinance establishing an annual hotel-motel business license for the city's 17 hotels and motels. The \$150 annual license will give the city a highly effective tool when attempting to get a motel owner to comply with city fire prevention and property maintenance codes, as the license to operate can be pulled in the face of continued noncompliance.

The city's Community Development and fire departments have also begun a joint inspection program for all of the city's hotels and motels where each hotel room will be thoroughly inspected every two to three years. The inspections also will help identify situations where tenants are using a hotel room as a de facto apartment and staying longer than 30 days at a time. To date, three hotels have been inspected.

**Strategy D:** The city has just this month begun installing security systems on the second floor of the city building. The two second-floor doors from the council stairwells now have number combination locks that must be punched correctly to enter the second floor. Within a few weeks, a glass wall and a door will be installed at the main second floor entrance, near the police secretary's office, and people will need to be "buzzed" through to enter the executive area. The system is expected to cost the city about \$10,000. The old, small elevator in the council chambers will be either converted to employees only, or put out of service altogether, according to Pat Pioletti, public facilities manager.

## 2.) Financial Sustainability

**Strategy A:** AMEC Earth & Environment of Indianapolis was hired last July for \$102,000 to conduct a feasibility study for creating a storm-water utility fee and has made substantial progress since that time. AMEC is performing the same function for the city of Champaign.

Urbana civil engineer Brad Bennett said meetings with about 25 key ratepayers will begin in late May and continue through June, including with entities such as the University of Illinois and Carle Foundation Hospital. The storm-water utility fee will be based upon the amount of impervious area on a property and is intended to help pay for storm water improvement projects and maintenance that has often gotten short shrift in the past.

Governments, churches and not-for-profits will not be exempt from the fee. Only city streets and right of way will be exempt. The city will have to pay the fee for city parking lots and buildings, Bennett said.

Because the fee is based on impervious area, it is estimated that single-family homes will generate only 23 percent of the expected \$1.7 million in anticipated annual fee income. It is expected that homeowners will have to pay between \$4.90 to \$5.15 per month in fees, with a flat fee for all single-family homes being levied.

A draft feasibility study by AMEC should be completed by this July that will include recommendations for a billing system, a rate model, incentive programs and a program budget. The city council can then approve the study and move forward with adoption of a storm water utility and a fee structure, or the council could simply accept the report and not move forward. The earliest that fees could be sent out is likely in the summer of 2012, Bennett said.

No progress has been made toward implementing a city ambulance service or city purchase of the local water system. It is hoped that with a new mayor in Champaign, the city council might be more willing to consider eventual purchase of the water system.

Progress continues on the UC2B (Urbana-Champaign Big Broadband) project. Bids for installing the seven fiber rings throughout Champaign-Urbana are expected to go out in the next week or so. Each entity, the UI, Champaign and Urbana, will solicit bids for construction within its boundaries.

**Strategy B:** Initial negotiations have begun with AFSCME Council 31 and the International Association of Firefighters Local 1137. Both unions accepted a one-year salary freeze for fiscal 2011, which ends June 30.

The Urbana Lodge #70 of the Fraternal Order of Police, who never settled with the city, have filed for arbitration and the first hearing is scheduled for June 8 before a federal arbitrator. However, the city hopes to reach a settlement before the hearing is held and is attempting to schedule new negotiations with the FOP.

**Strategy C:** The Economic Development Division continues to prepare detailed fiscal impact analysis as requested by the mayor and the city council. These are prepared for all development agreements and for major development projects. In addition, economic impact analyses are provided to the city upon request by the Regional Planning Commission. Recent analyses include those for the Olympian Drive/Lincoln Avenue area, Creative Thermal Solutions research park, Soccer Planet indoor soccer facility and the reopening of the Urbana Landmark Hotel (former Historic Lincoln Hotel).

**Strategy D:** The city has been unable to increase its rainy day fund due to the economic slowdown. The fund is estimated to be at \$117,000 as of June 30, and is predicted to decline to \$95,000 by the end of the fiscal year. The fund stood at \$842,000 on June 30, 2009, and an ideal balance would be \$3 million or roughly 10 percent of our general fund.

Last year, the city enacted a vehicle impoundment fee, a towing fee, a natural gas use tax, increased the city's fine structure and implemented a 2-cent local motor fuel tax. Of those, the natural gas use tax on large purchasers of natural gas is generating \$270,000 annually, and the motor fuel tax is projected to generate \$418,000 this coming fiscal year.

To get through this fiscal year, currently 11 city positions have been left vacant, and most of them will not be filled during the upcoming fiscal year.

### **3. Economic Development**

**Strategy A:** A business climate survey of Urbana businesses has been conducted and analysis of the results completed. Results are available at the Website:  
<http://www.urbanaininois.us/Businessses-4>.

Additional surveys have been completed in association with the Downtown Plan update:  
<http://urbanaininois.us/downtownsurvey>

The market study for downtown can be found at <http://urbanaininois.us/node/1701>

The Regional Housing Needs Analysis is currently being finalized.

**Strategy B:** Implementation of the Cunningham Avenue corridor beautification plan has been occurring at development sites as funds and development opportunities allow. Recent activities include continued development and occupancy of Gateway Shoppes and Five Points Commerce Centre, remodeling of the McDonalds restaurant. Also, reoccupancy and improvements to the Arrow Glass property, the former Geo's restaurant, Montana Mike's restaurant and car dealerships at Crystal Lake Drive. The Hanford Inn has been closed and is expected to be redeveloped with an auto-oriented use. The city council has asked staff to pursue preliminary design and cost estimates for streetscape improvements along Cunningham Avenue as suggested in the beautification plan, with funding to be provided through TIF 4 and other appropriate sources. This process will be initiated in coming weeks. Sidewalk improvements along Cunningham Avenue have also been budgeted.

**Strategy C:** The Economic Development Division has prepared an inventory of vacant and underutilized properties. Property owners and potential tenants have been contacted and, where appropriate, properties have been required to register as vacant properties and submit marketing and redevelopment plans.

The ability to offer TIF and Philo Road incentives is important to reoccupying vacant properties. The Economic Development Division continues to market to desired uses through coordination with local Realtors, provision of an available sites inventory on our Website, and participation in commercial real estate shows. Additional reoccupancy is expected to occur as the local economy recovers from the recession.

**Strategy D:** Public works has been successful in obtaining an additional \$5.9 million in Illinois Jobs Now money, for a total of \$8.4 million (including previous state grant awards), to help fund the High Cross Road (Illinois 130) improvements between University Avenue and Florida Avenue. The money is a reallocation of IDOT funds from the I-74 interchange study. The new funding is causing Menards to reconsider a start-up of their proposed supercenter, although a definite decision has not yet been made.

**Strategy E:** The city continues to work with the new leadership at the University to build an improved relationship of cooperation with the community. The city has been in communication with the new owners of the Pell Farm and will work with the family to pursue annexation and subdivision at the desired time. Marketing for potential retail use at the corner of Philo and Windsor roads is underway by the family. The Krannert Center District is an important promoter of business vitality in the East Campus area.

**Strategy F:** The University Avenue Corridor Plan has been adopted and was recognized with an award by the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The next step is phased implementation commensurate with development and/or infrastructure projects.

**Strategy G:** After an extensive public engagement process and negotiations with county decision-makers, which resulted in improvements to the project, the city of Urbana and Champaign County have entered into agreements for the construction of an extension of Olympian Drive eastward to Lincoln Avenue and a realignment of Lincoln Avenue from Saline Court northward to Olympian Drive. The \$16.5 million Olympian Drive project will be paid for completely with state and federal funds. The project also includes an extension of Olympian Drive in Champaign, from Champion Avenue to Duncan Road, Plans are also underway to begin preliminary design of the \$3.6 million Lincoln Avenue project, which will be funded by a federal grant and \$1.1 million each in county and city funding.

Completion of the road network in north Urbana, including Airport Road, will assist in the creation of additional industrial development in the area. Ongoing and proposed industrial developments in north Urbana include the Creative Thermal Solutions research park, potential expansion of Frasca Simulators and the Mervis Recycling project.

**Strategy H:** The Economic Development Division will continue to market locations along Cunningham Avenue for redevelopment or new development. A recycling center at the old

drive-in site by Mervis Industries will start construction this year and the research park at Creative Thermal Solutions is under construction. The Soccer Planet indoor soccer facility on Willow Road recently broke ground. The closure of the Hanford Inn presents a new opportunity for redevelopment, potentially for additional auto-oriented or other highway-oriented commercial use.

**Strategy I:** The city's Redevelopment Incentive Programs and Enterprise Zone continue to be critical for promoting significant new investment throughout the commercial areas. Rent incentives have been key to promoting new local and arts-oriented entrepreneurs in the downtown.

**Strategy J:** Successful and dynamic marketing in association with the Urbana Business Association continues. Recent examples include the popular Top 10 newsletter, member newsletter and a new Buy Local campaign. All departments continue to work with Urbana's neighborhood organizations. The mayor's Neighborhood Safety Task Force continues to meet regularly to address a number of concerns.

**Strategy K:** Urbana continues to promote logical annexations of urban and developing areas adjacent to the city limits. Recent examples are the Somerset subdivision and a wholly surrounded portion of Scottswood subdivision. Additional contiguous properties are required to annex by agreement and will be brought into the city in coming months.

#### **4.) A vibrant, innovative downtown**

**Strategy A:** The downtown plan update is nearing completion with the assistance of a steering committee and other stakeholders. Hitchcock Design Group of Naperville is assisting on the graphic elements of the plan. Please check the Webpage at <http://www.urbanaininois.us/downtown> for a complete update on this effort, which will be concluded this summer.

**Strategy B:** A market share study of downtown business sectors to determine marketing strategies and what types of businesses will succeed downtown has been completed by Business Districts Inc. of Evanston. The final report will be posted at <http://urbanaininois.us/node/1701>

**Strategy C:** A podcast walking tour of downtown is being completed by the city working along with a committee of Champaign County. The potential for downtown kiosks and way-finding stations were studied in the Downtown Way-Finding Study conducted by Selbert Perkins Associates. The Historic Preservation Commission and Public Arts Commission have worked on a number of markers and plaques, including those for local landmarks, signs along the West Main Street Historic District, the Chinese Goose memorial plaque at Crystal Lake Park and a second "Looking for Lincoln" sign in downtown Urbana. The city's Gallery District has been very successful in drawing new businesses and arts-related events to downtown.

**Strategy D:** Selbert Perkins Associates of Chicago has completed a comprehensive signage and way-finding study for downtown Urbana and is working on design drawings for the first phase of these improvements. A **\$191,000 contract** was negotiated and approved by the council. A draft

plan and implementation schedule has been received and is under review. If things go according to schedule, Phase 1 work (parking and parking deck signage) will be complete by the end of the 2011 construction season.

**Strategy E:** Implementation work on the Boneyard Creek Master Plan by the team of Wenk & Foth continues with design of Segment 3, which the city council signed off on May 9 with suggestions. A request for proposals for a public art component of this project has been issued in association with the city's Public Arts Commission.

Work has not yet begun on planning, acquisition and site engineering for Boneyard beautification west of Main Street to Lincoln Avenue due to the need to identify a funding source. The storm water utility being studied is a potential funding source for this study.

**Strategy F:** Through the efforts and assistance of the city, the former Historic Lincoln Hotel has been purchased by a hotel developer and work is underway to upgrade and reopen this local historic landmark. The owner is hoping to have a partial opening of the facility in late 2011.

Due to safety concerns, the city has ordered a demolition of the Denny's building. The \$198,000 project will be funded by the city's downtown TIF districts and will be placed as a lien on the property. Work should be completed by July 1. The site will be stabilized with turf, surface parking areas and a plaza. Future redevelopment will require major assistance from the state of Illinois or another source to eliminate all surface contamination. Acquisition of Allman's property was not possible due to environmental concerns that could not be readily resolved.

The first phase of the shopping center at Gateway Shoppes has been completed and is almost fully leased out. Plans for a second phase of the shopping center are under preparation. The Jimmie John's and Pancharo's restaurants at the Gateway outlots has just opened and the remaining outlots are in the process of being sold for future redevelopment or expansion.

City acquisition of all properties on the north block of the city building is completed and residential buildings have been demolished. Pre-marketing efforts have been completed and an RFP for developers is being issued on May 13. Environmental Phase I & II assessments have been completed for the Goodyear building.

Redevelopment and re-tenanting at Lincoln Square Village continues. Recent tenants include the Art Coop and Wind, Water and Light and the planned expansion of Common Ground Food Co-op.

Staff continues to work with the owner of County Plaza to attract office tenants to this location.

**Strategy G:** The city has pursued redevelopment opportunities through strategic property acquisitions. Grant and rent-incentive programs have been a major driver of vitality in the downtown area, including the Royer District and the city's arts district.

**Strategy H:** Conceptual streetscape plans for Race Street and Broadway Avenue have been completed by Foth & Wenk in conjunction with the Boneyard Creek Segment 3 implementation project. The city council has given the go-ahead for completion of this project.

**Strategy I:** Implementation of the Way-Finding and Signage plan will make the parking garage more visible to the public. The Main Street road diet, which will make the road three lanes through downtown and add bicycle lanes, has been approved by the city council and will be constructed in 2012.

## **5.) Environmental Sustainability**

**Strategy A:** City staff are working with the Sustainability Advisory Commission (SAC) to develop recommendations and guidance on various sustainability matters. City staff also meet monthly with the Champaign County Sustainability Practitioners group to exchange ideas on green issues and develop possible collaborations.

**Strategy B:** The Environmental Sustainability Advisory Commission has been working with SAC on development of a climate action plan. An all-day work session was held by SAC in December to discuss development of greenhouse gas reduction strategies. A draft of the climate action plan will be reviewed by SAC at their June meeting.

**Strategy C:** The city's environmental sustainability manager, Bart Hagston, has been in contact with the Environmental Fellows Program at the University of Illinois, which includes an internship option for their students. It is hoped that unpaid student volunteers can assist with various sustainability programming and outreach. The environmental sustainability manager has also developed general ideas as to how an interdepartmental "green team" might function and will soon be bringing those ideas to the mayor and department heads for discussion.

**Strategy D:** Staff from Public Works and Community Development recently attended a training session titled "Designing and Building Sustainable Zero-Energy Homes." Staff will incorporate information gained from this training into future plans and programs as appropriate. The city is also a member of the U.S. Green Building Council, which provides education to members on green construction issues.

**Strategy E:** Various models to fund energy efficiency and renewable energy projects and programs are being explored. PACE (Property Assess Clean Energy) was being investigated until actions by the Federal Housing Finance Authority halted these programs nationally.

Some \$172,000 in federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant funds are being used to fund energy efficiency projects at city facilities and at private residences in Urbana. Between September 2010 and March, this funding source was used to pay for 341 home energy audits and provided financial incentives for 31 home shell improvement projects such as air sealing and added insulation.

**Strategy F:** Staff from Public Works and Community Development attend monthly meetings of the Champaign County Sustainability Practitioners group. This group provides a forum for units

of local government to learn from each other on sustainability projects and programs and develop possible collaborations.

**Strategy G:** An energy audit has been completed on the City Building and the report reviewed by city staff. The lighting efficiency recommendations in the report will be implemented this summer. In addition, the lighting in the Public Works garage will be updated. A reflective roof with improved insulation was installed on part of the city building in the fall of 2010. These efforts are being funded through the city's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant.

Public Works is also developing an RFP to select a lighting design firm to help determine which city parking facility lights can be upgraded to LED or other energy-efficient technologies. This process will begin in late summer or early fall. Development of a formal energy policy for city operations is a task likely to be taken up by a city inter-departmental green team when it is established.

**Strategy H:** Water conservation is an issue currently being discussed by the SAC. In addition, possible cooperation on water conservation outreach has been discussed with the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission and other local entities, as this issue is in need of a local "champion." This discussion will continue. Development of a formal water conservation policy is a task likely to be taken up by a city inter-departmental green team when it is established.

**Strategy I:** Development of a commercial recycling ordinance is ongoing. In January 2010, the city council asked the environmental sustainability manager to develop an ordinance that would require all haulers to offer recycling of multiple materials to all non-residential customers. The draft ordinance has been submitted to haulers for comment.

Hagston attended a construction and demolition debris recycling seminar and learned about developments in construction and demolition recycling in Illinois. Shingle recycling is gaining traction in the state and staff will look at opportunities for the city to support such recycling.

The city continues to sponsor quarterly collection events for electronics this year, along with other units of government. Remaining events this year are on May 21, Aug. 6 and Oct. 29. A local not-for-profit organization may soon begin accepting electronics from the public six days a week. If this venue becomes available, the local governments' collaborative effort may be dropped after this year, so long as the not-for-profit and other for-profit establishments collecting electronics are servicing the community.

Household hazardous waste (HHW) disposal continues to be a troublesome issue, as programs to collect and manage these materials are expensive and the state has discontinued funding such operations. Hagston has begun considering various funding options for HHW management, but deployment of such a program should be considered a multi-year process. Certain HHW items, such as motor oil and anti-freeze, are collected at retail locations. Public Works provides the "Where Do I Take It?" guide on its Website to help residents find locations accepting such items.

The city's recycling program for alkaline batteries continues to be successful, but expensive. Recently, manufacturers of these batteries held a national summit to begin discussion on

development of a national alkaline battery recycling program. Staff will monitor progress on this effort and provide comment if appropriate.

**Strategy J:** Development of a strategic plan for Market at the Square is nearing completion, with the assistance of a steering committee. Public input, stakeholder interviews, and a survey have been completed. The plan will be posted at <http://urbanaininois.us/market> and will include recommendations regarding an advisory board and future fundraising for the market, as well as issues related to market size and location. Electronic Benefits Transfer and debit card options were successfully launched at the beginning of the last market season. See <http://urbanaininois.us/market> for the latest annual report and other information. The city is working with the Flatlander Fund to identify possible community kitchen locations.

**Strategy K:** Public Works coordinated a truckload sale of rain barrels and compost bins to the general public on April 9. The event was successful with 500 rain barrels and 300 compost bins being purchased by area residents. These products will help residents reduce use of potable water for landscaping and gardening and reduce use of commercial fertilizers. In addition, the city continues to offer a \$25 rebate to Urbana residents that purchase a rain barrel at one of two retail location in the community.

The rain garden installed north of the Public Works facility at 704 S. Glover Ave. is filling in and and looking very nice this spring. Urbana's landscape supervisor acquired a \$500 grant to help install this rain garden a year ago.

The Landscape Section of the Arbor Division has installed a smaller, more linear rain garden north of the City Building along Green Street. This installation started last fall and will be planted in June. Limited in space, this rain garden will still help capture a percentage of runoff from the nearby city parking lot. The linear design will take the rain garden from one side of the sidewalk to the other to protect existing trees and to replace a small area where grass was difficult to mow. It will illustrate how rain garden innovation can be used in smaller linear spaces.

The city has been using its "State Street Tree Trail" guide for a number of years to illustrate unusual trees in our community. City Arborist Mike Brunk is working on an idea to make this tree trail into a podcast that could be done in a variety of languages, to open the door to visitors from around the world. He has talked to several people about narrating such a podcast. This idea is still in its beginning stage.

The Arbor Division has not yet begun recording and marking trees of significant height and growth. The division has been successful in finding a sawmill to take Ash logs generated from the 2010 removal season, which was featured in a May 8 article in The News-Gazette. The Ash wood will be used for cabinets, furniture and general use lumber.

**Strategy L:** Public Works staff has applied to IDOT for a \$200,000 Safer Routes to School grant to install bike lanes, routes and racks at Urbana schools. If awarded, the city would add eight miles of on-street bike lanes and routes all within 1.5 miles of Urbana Middle and High School. The city should learn this fall if it has been awarded a grant.

Work is underway on widening South Philo Road north of Florida Avenue to Washington Street to add bike lanes, a \$67,000 project. Once complete within a few weeks, there will be bicycle lane connectivity from South Philo Road starting at Colorado Avenue in southeast Urbana to Washington. Last year, bike lanes were added to Washington Street from the South Philo Road intersection west to Vine Street and along Race Street from Windsor Road north to Pennsylvania Avenue.

Bike lanes will also be added in 2012 to Main Street in the downtown area from Vine Street west to Cedar, and along Main from Grove Street east to Scottswood Drive.

Public Works staff are also hopeful that construction work can begin this fall on the \$933,000 (including easement purchase and design costs) bicycle path along the west side of High Cross Road, from Windsor Road north to Po'or Boy's Restaurant and Sports Complex. Work should be finished in the spring of 2012.

As part of the Windsor Road project last year, a bicycle path was added along the north side of Windsor Road between High Cross Road and Stone Creek Boulevard.

In 2010, the city of Urbana teamed up with the city of Champaign to produce "C-U Sharing the Road," an educational video to introduce the public to bicycle infrastructure being installed in both cities and to teach motorists and bicyclists how to interact with each other on the road. The video premiered on Oct. 5, 2010, and can be found on both cities' Websites, on You Tube, and is regularly broadcast on both cities' television channels. In May 2011, C-U Sharing the Road received an Exceptional Performance Award in Journalism from the Illinois Chapter of the American Public Works Association.

A modern roundabout feasibility study is underway at the intersections of Race Street and Windsor Road, and Philo Road and Florida Avenue. The study should become available for review and discussion this summer.

## **6.) Quality of Life**

**Strategy A:** Work has not yet begun on establishing historic corridors or the Elm Street Historic District, although Buena Vista Court and three other Elm Street locations have local landmark designations. The city has received a grant to develop an inventory of top structures and locations with historic potential. Additional work is needed on encouraging conversion of boarding houses to single-family use and encouragement of owner occupancy. Reinvestment in the current housing stock is encouraged through appropriate single-family zoning and our whole house rehabilitation and repair programs, which are available to lower- income families.

**Strategy B:** The Urbana Zoning Ordinance has been amended to adjust the number of parking spaces downward for certain commercial uses and to enact improved controls for loading operations near residential uses. An internal draft of a major amendment to Urbana's Subdivision and Land Development Code, incorporating more modern standards has been completed and will be brought to the Plan Commission and City Council later in 2011. Further investigation and promotion of low-impact development features will be facilitated by the proposed Storm Water

Utility. Possible dedication of park and school sites can be considered as a part of the Subdivision Ordinance, and can currently be required through the annexation agreement process.

Amendments to the city's noise ordinance have not yet been prepared, but the city is working with an acoustical consultant to address two locations with industrial or commercial noise problems.

The city has enacted a local motor fuel tax option, which is anticipated to generate \$418,000 this coming fiscal year, but has not yet considered impact fees.

While the city does not have form-based zoning, per se, it does have three distinct design review districts which encourage specified patterns of form. The most recent design review district was adopted in Historic East Urbana. Police and planning staff continue to enforce the city's requirements regarding off-street parking surfaces in residential areas.

Cross-department coordination of code enforcement efforts continue through a variety of teams, including the city's problem property team (Executive, Community Development, Fire and Police) and BOCA team (Legal, Building Safety and Fire), which tracks pending and actual court cases. Community Development and Fire are now sharing electronic tracking systems for open fire safety/property maintenance cases and are conducting joint inspections of hotel/motel properties.

**Strategy C:** The Human Relations Commission has worked diligently over the past year to ensure meaningful enforcement of the Equal Employment Opportunity Contract Compliance Program. Specifically, the commission has increased its level of scrutiny through the initiation of EEOCCP enforcement actions, such as: suspending or holding approval on problem contractors and requiring a higher threshold showing for good-faith efforts. The Commission is currently reviewing a provision that would allow deficient contractors to hire local female and minority subcontractors as a showing of good-faith efforts.

The Human Relations Office/Human Relations Commission have partnered with the University of Illinois to co-sponsor state Minority And Female Business Enterprise program certification training seminars and business-capacity-building workshops. The HRO and HRC have also worked with the city of Champaign and the UI to co-sponsor and participate in job-training workshops and community-outreach events.

The Human Resources Division and HRO have worked with various departments to ensure a recruitment process that promotes diversity in key positions such as police officer, firefighters, administrative assistants, etc.

The Human Resources Division and Human Relations Office partner together to improve the climate for inclusion across the city. Initiatives that will be undertaken in the next year include harassment (sexual, cultural, racial, ethnic) training, and a challenge to all management staff to take the Implicit Association Test to detect latent bias.

A Human Resources Division report showing the current demographic breakdown of the city's workforce is included as an attachment.

**Strategy D:** The city has cooperated with the Urbana School District and Urbana Park District in making plans for the King School/King Park neighborhood through implementation of the TIF 3 plan. This cooperation has resulted in a major grant to the school district to building a community room and outdoor learning space at King School and coordination with the park district to provide improved sidewalk/bike-path connections in King Park and a planned sculpture plaza area. These improvements are currently being designed and will start construction this season. In east Urbana, the school district is proposing a multi-purpose room additional that will be available to the community and will connect Prairie School with the new Early Education Center.

The city's Website has been redesigned and staff have been trained to help with maintaining it.

U.S. Census data is now available and can be used to redraw ward maps as desired.

The city works on joint economic development efforts with the county, Champaign, Savoy and other communities through its work at the Economic Development Corp., CUUATS and other organizations. Recently, joint economic development efforts succeeded in promoting the planned extension of Olympian Drive and the realignment of Lincoln Avenue.

The city continues to support the school district's vocational education efforts through regular payments from the TIF fund.

Strategy E: Dennis Roberts will provide a verbal update.

**Strategy F:** Urbana's public art program has resulted in numerous public art activities and installations throughout the city. See <http://www.urbanainillinois.us/arts> for more information. Christina McClelland is the new public arts coordinator and is working diligently along with the Public Arts Commission to promote the many programs and activities related to public art in Urbana. Christina will be receiving a master's degree from the Chicago Art Institute in May.

Famous artist John David Mooney's "Art in the Park" tree sculpture is scheduled to be installed this July. The Arbor Division obtained free granite slabs from the Federal Building Plaza in downtown Chicago that can be used to make several benches and a table for the park. This cost the city only \$100 for fuel costs for transport, while purchasing this amount of granite normally would cost several thousand dollars.

**Strategy G:** The city is working actively with the Housing Authority to promote redevelopment of Dunbar Court and supported a grant application to HUD to begin redevelopment activities. In recent months, Eco-Lab teamed up with Newhouse Development to seek low-income Housing Tax Credits to pursue the project with a concept of lease-purchase credits. Unfortunately, these credits were not received and the project has been stalled. As a result, the city will be issuing a new RFP to seek a new development team for Kerr Avenue.

The Regional Housing Needs Study is undergoing final revisions in response to public comments and should be released in final form soon.

Staff continues to work with the tenant relocation task force on an as-needed basis to ease the transition of individuals affected by forced relocations. The work of the council, assisted by city council allocated funds, were instrumental in addressing the evacuation of the Hanford Inn and in relocating tenants from Urbana Townhomes. The early-warning system helped to identify the utility payment problems at Country Club Apartments and prevent tenant relocations. Because the relocation fund has been drawn down to zero, staff are requesting a replenishment of funds as part of the consolidated social service funding process.

**Strategy H:** No progress has been made on this long-term goal.



## MEMORANDUM

**To: Council members and Mayor Prussing**

**From: Mike Monson, chief of staff; Elizabeth Tyler, director of Community Development; William Gray, Public Works director**

**Date: March 12, 2012**

**Re: Council goals update**

This is the beginning of third update of the council goals that were adopted by the city council in February 2010. Below is a list of progress made toward achieving the goals since the May 2011 update. Some goals will need further updating in coming weeks..

### **1.) Public Safety**

**Strategy A:** Two police officer positions that were left vacant during the recession were filled during this budget year and the police department is fully staffed at 55 officers. However, five officers are currently out due to duty-related injuries and two others are on leave. A firefighting position that was left vacant last year is also in the process of being filled, which would bring the department to full strength at 58 firefighters, according to Fire Chief Mike Dilley.

Both Dilley and Police Chief Pat Connolly report that space for their departments at the City Building is becoming insufficient and that the city needs to begin thinking about long-term expansion plans.

**Strategy B:** City departments meet on a weekly basis to discuss current problem properties, particularly those with police or life safety concerns. On a bi-monthly basis, we meet on a more formal basis to discuss major problem properties and variety of initiatives. Discussion continues to focus on Urbana Townhomes, Country Club Apartments, Aspen Court, Hanford Inn, and the BZ Management holdings in southeast Urbana. Legal action against Urbana Townhomes, 1610 Ivanhoe, and Hanford Inn is underway to encourage demolition or rehabilitation. Aspen Court is continuing to be rehabilitated and reoccupied. Country Club Apartments has new management

and partial ownership by Green Street Realty. BZ Management has been in compliance with aggravated nuisance provisions and police calls have been dramatically reduced at its locations.

**Strategy C:** Initiatives being undertaken by the Problem Property Team include research into improved procedures for securing vacant properties and seeking demolition orders, Target Area sweeps for dilapidated homes and garages, creation of an early warning system using shared data among departments, use of citation tickets for building code violations, and established procedures for dealing with unsafe properties. The Zoning Ordinance was recently amended to ensure improved safety of extended stay hotel/motel units.

**Strategy D:** The installation of security doors for the executive offices in the City Building and for the offices in the Public Works facility is complete. Access to the small elevator in the City Building has been restricted to city personnel only.

## **2.) Financial Sustainability**

**Strategy A:** A draft feasibility study for creating a storm-water utility fee has been completed by AMEC Earth & Environment of Indianapolis that includes recommendations for a billing system, rate model, incentive programs and program budget. Enacting ordinances have been drafted to implement the recommendations and are scheduled for presentation to City Council.

Because the fee is based on impervious area, it is estimated that single-family homes will generate only 23 percent of the expected \$1.7 million in anticipated annual fee income. It is expected that homeowners will have to pay between \$4.90 to \$5.15 per month in fees, with a flat fee for all single-family homes being levied.

**Strategy B:** AFSCME Council 31 and the City of Urbana have reached an agreement with a two-year contract. The city also reached agreements, running through fiscal 2013, with the International Association of Firefighters Local 1137 and the Urbana Lodge #70 of the Fraternal Order of Police.

Public Works is in the process of filling union positions that had previously been frozen to return staffing levels to the same as those in FY 2008/2009.

## **3.) Economic Development**

**Strategy B:** Redevelopment Specialist Brandon Boys is working on implementation of the Cunningham Avenue Beautification Plan. Areas of implementation to be included in the CIP include continued curb cut closures and landscaping efforts along the corridor. Efforts for placement of public art at key locations will also be explored. New development and businesses along and near this corridor include The Studio, Great Clips, Magic Nails, City Girl Yogurt, Po'Boys, and Rainbow Garden at Gateway Shoppes; Country Financial and CU Theatre Company at the former Arrow Glass building; and the Creative Thermal Solution research park, Soccer Planet, and Michelle's Bridal expansion along Willow Road.

**Strategy C:** Infill activity along Philo Road include Sprint (former Payless), US Cellular (at former Baskin Robbins location), Baier Brothers Carwash, and Rick's Bakery and Café (at the former Amano's), and the soon to be opened Kokonik's Greek Restaurant. New businesses at the Pines at Stone Creek Commons include Kinex Fitness, Maia Roman Spa, and Café Zojo. Staff are also actively working with the owners of the former Jerry's IGA to seek property reuse.

Redevelopment Specialist Brandon Boys and intern Kate Ferrar are working on adapting the completed Market Study into a promotional piece to use in recruiting desired uses to the community.

**Strategy G:** Phase I of the energy audit has been completed on the City Building, Public Works facility and 704 South Glover Avenue. Completion of remaining projects is dependent upon funding.

**Strategy H:** City staff is working with Mervis Industries' consulting engineer to facilitate the bidding and construction of the public improvements needed to create a recycling center at the site of the old drive-in on Cunningham Avenue.

Improvement plans for Willow Road near Creative Thermal Solutions have been sent to IDOT for their review. The project will go to bid in April 2012 and be constructed in the summer of 2012.

New and pending businesses in this area include Mervis/Advantage Recycling, Michelle's bridal expansion, Soccer Planet, and the Creative Thermal Solutions research park. Economic Development staff will continue to promote marketing efforts for the Pickrell Farm, Farm and Fleet outlots, and Frasca properties. Redevelopment of the Hanford Inn property is also a priority.

**Strategy J:** City Council recently tasked City staff and UBA with additional duties related to visitor promotion for the community.

#### **4.) A vibrant, innovative downtown**

**Strategy A:** A Draft of the Downtown Plan is complete and available for review at [www.urbanaininois.us/downtown/draft](http://www.urbanaininois.us/downtown/draft)

**Strategy B:** The Market Study is completed and staff are working on preparing a marketing piece to help attract desired uses. Staff will continue to reach out to retailers and prospective businesses through the International Council of Shopping Centers and other events.

**Strategy C:** A podcast and brochure on Lincoln sites in the downtown has been completed in conjunction with Champaign County. Additional podcasts on historic resources in the community have been funded by a grant for the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. A number of historic plaques and markers have been placed or are being proposed in appropriate locations in the downtown. Among these is a proposal to commemorate the location of an historic elm tree that was associated with President Lincoln.

**Strategy D:** The first phase of implementation of the Wayfinding study is underway to provide improved signage for downtown parking lots should be completed by the end of March 2012.

**Strategy E:** Design is completed for the first phase of the Boneyard Creek Master Plan, Segment 3, and it is scheduled to be bid this spring. Construction will last through calendar year 2013. Acquisition of necessary easements and properties is underway. The Public Arts Commission has commissioned and worked with a public artist for this component of the project.

**Strategy F:** Renovation of the Urbana Landmark Hotel continues with reroofing complete and a porte-cochere/entryway project nearing completion. A partial opening is expected later in 2012 when room improvements are complete. The Denny's building has been successfully demolished, the site stabilized, improved and turned over to the owner. Gateway Shoppes is now fully occupied and nearly complete in construction. Businesses include the University of Illinois Employee's Credit Union, Jimmy John's, Pancho's, the Studio, Great Clips, Magic Nails, City Girl Yogurt, Po'Boys, and Rainbow Garden. The developer is working with the city and the park district to explore possible expansion of the parking area to the north to accommodate increased visitor demand at the center.

The City has completed its acquisition of the block north of City Hall and is working with developer Gary Olsen on a major, mixed use development of the site. Additional work will be needed to craft a development agreement, find a relocation site for Goodyear (if desired), relocate utilities, and work with the neighborhood to address urban design issues.

New tenants at Lincoln Square Village include Urbana Acupuncture, Piato Too (former Uncommon Grounds), and the Common Ground Food Co-op expansion.

Staff are investigating possible redevelopment opportunities along Broadway Avenue in cooperation with property and business owners. This will be enhanced by the road improvements that are being proposed as part of the Boneyard Project.

Additional work is needed to encourage redevelopment of the south side of University Avenue between Race and Vine Streets.

**Strategy G:** Staff continues to promote the reuse of vacant buildings through the use of incentive programs, frequent property owner contacts, and marketing of sites. Active code enforcement is also important to maintaining the viability of reuse.

**Strategy H:** Streetscape improvements along Broadway are in design and will be completed in conjunction with the Boneyard Creek Improvement project.

**Strategy I:** The first phase of the wayfinding study will improve parking in the downtown.

## **5.) Environmental Sustainability**

**Strategy B:** A draft of Phase I of a Climate Action Plan has been completed by the Sustainability Advisory Commission and is being reviewed by staff and by other boards and commissions.

**Strategy C:** The Urbana Public Works Department has created the “Adopt Urbana” program which encourages organizations to help clean litter from Urbana’s roadways. Each group is encouraged to make a commitment to clean a section of the City’s rights-of-way 3 to 4 times a year to improve the appearance of our community. Currently, nine organizations are participating in the program.

**Strategy E:** To date (February 2012), 754 residential audits were performed and 151 home shell measure projects have been completed as of February 20, 2012. All grant monies have been expended at this time.

**Strategy G:** Phase I of the energy audit has been completed on the City Building, Public Works facility and 704 South Glover Avenue. Completion of remaining objectives is dependent upon funding.

**Strategy I:** The commercial recycling ordinance took effect on January 1, 2012. U-Cycle staff will send haulers a letter in early March 2012 requesting samples of advertising materials that haulers are providing to their Urbana commercial customers informing the customers of recycling services offered. Information about the commercial recycling ordinance has been placed on the City of Urbana’s website under the “Business” tab, and on UPTV.

The City will sponsor three (one tentative) countywide electronics collection events in 2012. Dates are May 5, August 4 (tentative) and October 13. On January 1, 2012, the electronics ban took effect statewide, banning 17 electronic devices from Illinois landfills. A list of seven registered electronics collectors and recyclers in Champaign-Urbana will collect items from the residential sector for free (as per requirements of the electronics legislation). A complete listing of electronics drop-off locations can be found on the City of Urbana’s website under U-Cycle. The listing includes not-for-profit and for-profit businesses and organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity Restore, Marco Steel, Mack’s Twin City Recycling and others. In 2011, countywide residents dropped off 207 tons of electronics at the countywide recycling events, up 5% from 2010 collection totals at 197 tons.

It would be helpful to fund an annual household hazardous waste collection (HHW) event. These collection events are very expensive (hundreds of thousands of dollars). Funding for HHW events could come from a U-Cycle tax rate increase; partnerships with other government entities to combine funds for countywide events; grant opportunities; or working with not-for-profit organizations to raise funds for such an event. Some hazardous items such as mercury thermostats and motor oil can be properly managed locally. A listing of some HHW items can be found on the City of Urbana’s U-Cycle page in the link titled, “Where Do I Recycle It?” The battery recycling drop-off program is overwhelmingly successful, with more than 40,000 pounds of batteries recycled per year from five City drop-off locations. U-Cycle staff is keeping abreast of any new information pertaining to a national single-use battery recycling program that would likely reflect a nationally extended producer responsibility initiative, where battery manufacturers would have to offer battery recycling options to consumers national-wide.

**Strategy J:** A Strategic Plan for the Market at the Square has been completed. A proposal to establish an Advisory Group is forthcoming for the 2012 season. Use of EBT at the Market has been very successful and has been assisted by grants from the State and a private foundation.

**Strategy K:** The rain garden north of the city building was completed in early June 2011. This garden consists of native grasses, Fox Sedge and Liatris. The garden has shown great drainage capacity during its first year of use. Staff is looking for other areas to implement larger rain gardens elsewhere at city facilities.

The Arbor Division has been successful in finding a sawmill to take ash logs generated from the 2010 removal season. The ash wood will be used for cabinets, furniture and general use lumber. The sawmill has also used these ash logs to build sideboards for City dump trucks.

Arborist Mike Brunk and Planning Division staff are working on a draft of a heritage tree program.

**Strategy L:** Public Works and Planning Division staff are working together with the BPAC on a number of educational and intergovernmental efforts to improve bicycle use and safety in the community. Work has begun on upgrading the city's Bicycle Friendly Community status.

A Complete Streets Policy was adopted as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

## 6.) Quality of Life

**Strategy A:** The City has created a list of the 100 most significant historic buildings to help educate the public about historic preservation and to proactively encourage the preservation of these structures and others like them. Additional work is needed to establish an historic district along Elm Street and additional historic corridors. Additional work is also needed to encourage conversion of boarding houses back to single-family homes.

**Strategy B:** An internal draft of a major revision to the Subdivision Ordinance, including stormwater provisions, has been prepared and will be brought forward for public, Plan Commission, and Council review in 2012.

Recent zoning ordinance amendments include establishment of an urban design review district in East Urbana, regulations to address storage PODs in neighborhoods, and reductions in residential parking requirements in the Campus Commercial District.

Additional work is needed on revisions to our Noise Ordinance to address industrial noise. Due to recent neighborhood concerns, this has become a high priority for staff.

Preparation of form-based zoning and/or design guidelines in the downtown is expected to follow from the Downtown Plan Update.

Enforcement efforts on improper parking areas in residential areas continue, pursuant to recent clarifications and amendments to zoning code requirements.

Code enforcement coordination among staff has increased significantly with weekly problem property meetings and a number of other ongoing team efforts.

**Strategy E:** Exploration of additional sister city initiatives will be a responsibility of the City's expanded visitor promotion staffing.

**Strategy F:** The Urbana Public Art Program has been active through a variety of art programs and initiatives including the Urbana Arts Grants Program, Art at the Market workshops, Artist of the Corridor exhibitions in the City building lobby, the *Art Now!* UPTV program, and the four sculptures on display on Philo Road and in downtown Urbana through the Urbana Sculpture Project. The Commission also used a Request for Qualifications Process to identify Seattle artist Jack Mackie to work with the design team on public art for the Boneyard Creek Improvements Project. This same process is currently being used to identify an artist to create a sculpture for King Park that will honor the legacy and ideas of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The following Commission subcommittees are in the process of creating new programs and initiatives: Downtown Arts Planning, Joseph Royer Arts and Architecture District, and Arts in the Schools. Finally, the Urbana Public Arts program has made marketing and promotion efforts a high priority through an increased social media presence, improved e-mail newsletter, updated marketing materials, and pursuing partnerships with area community and arts organizations.

**Strategy G:** A developer has been chosen for the Dunbar Court site and a redevelopment plan has been prepared. Dunbar Court residents have been relocated and demolition will occur soon. The project is awaiting State funding in the form of tax credits and is expected to be completed sometime in 2013.

The City has reissued a Request for Proposals for the development of the Kerr Avenue site. A committee has recently reviewed the development proposals for the Kerr Street site and will be working with a qualified developer to complete the project.

The Regional Housing Needs study has been completed and the results will be reflected in the Fiscal Year 2012-13 Annual Action Plans for CDBG and HOME funds. The City is participating as a member of the Council of Service Providers to the Homeless (CSPH) to conduct an evaluation of shelter needs in the community. As part of the CSPH, the United Way/Emerging Community Leaders and the Salvation Army are working on a business plan and proposal for a family shelter in the community. Coordinated work on tenant relocation needs continues on an as-needed basis, using the tools and procedures prepared by the task force.