



2002 Comprehensive Plan Update

Resident Survey



Final Report

March 2002



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Overview

To complete the next step in the overall process of updating the 1982 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Urbana, students from the University of Illinois conducted surveys of Urbana residents. These surveys served as the second phase of community input, following neighborhood workshops that took place in the fall of 2001. Both the workshops and the surveys attempt to paint a clearer picture of what residents feel are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and needed improvements of their individual neighborhood and of the City as a whole.

The surveys had two primary goals. The first goal was to obtain responses from those residents who would otherwise choose not to be involved or who could not be involved in the public participation process due to time constraints or other conflicts. The second goal was to use this new data to supplement community input from the workshops in order to help the City put together a better analysis of resident input.

Process: The Method and Contents of the Survey

The City of Urbana was divided into six key neighborhoods to help residents better visualize and identify their particular neighborhood area. These six areas that were also used during the workshops, include, North Urbana, King/Crystal Lake Park, Historic East Urbana/Fairlawn Park, East Urbana (Country Squire and Scottswood, Edgewood, Beringer neighborhoods), West Urbana, and South Urbana (Appendix A). Blocks were defined as an area containing about 25 households each, rather than physical city blocks. Each block within the individual neighborhoods was randomly numbered and then six of those block numbers were randomly chosen to provide the fairest sample.

The Urban Planning 247 class, under the instruction of Professor Rob Olshanksy, was divided into six teams to coordinate with the neighborhoods. Every team had four members, two sets of two. Each set took three of the randomly selected blocks, 75 households, in their neighborhood area and surveyed every home on that block, up to three times or until they received a response. The goal was to receive a minimum of 360 surveys, 60 from each of the six teams, by surveying 900 residences in the City. The surveys were conducted over a period of ten days, from Thursday, February 7th to Sunday, February 17th. This process resulted in 363 surveys from approximately 900 residences, a response rate of 40.33%. This was the response rate the City had expected.

The content of the survey consisted of several subsections that asked resident's opinions on their neighborhood, the City as a whole, development in the City of Urbana, and Downtown/Central



Urbana. Many of the answers to these questions were in the form of a hedonic scale (1 = very unsatisfied to 5 = very satisfied), while others were open-ended, which allowed for freedom of expression. A final profile section asked residents about their length of residency and the number and ages of occupants (Appendix B).

The purpose for this kind of random sampling method was to avoid bias in choosing blocks and residences within the six neighborhoods and provide an equal opportunity for each block to be selected. This method was also used to ensure equal representation from each neighborhood. The basic unit of analysis for the survey was individual residences and then the first adult who answered the door at each of these residences.

There are still some biases in conducting a survey this way. Depending on the time of day attempts were made at the residences, some residents could have been at work, eating, out of town, or just not willing to answer the door. Some residents can be intimidated or uncomfortable opening their door to strangers or filling out a survey, even if the surveyors take all the proper precautions and offer credibility.

Positive aspects of conducting the survey in this manner are the “at home” convenience it offers the resident and the ability for the surveyor to answer questions, further explain information, and offer credibility to the survey. The response rate of an in-person survey tends to be higher and more cost efficient than either a phone or mail-in survey. Phone surveys are often associated with telemarketing and mail-in surveys can be more timely and costly for residents and the City than in-person surveys. Surveyors have a better opportunity to observe the neighborhoods and see firsthand what residents are talking about when they respond to the survey questions.

Based on demographic questions, a large majority of survey respondents were homeowners and they varied in age from 18 to over 60 (Table 1.1). These results differ slightly from that of Urbana census data. Survey data showed a slight bias toward responses from young and middle-aged women and a greater representation of homeowners than renters.

Table 1.1 Census 2000 Data vs. Survey Demographics (** “Other” category was available)

	Males	Females	Own	Rent	Ages: 18-40	Ages: 41-60	Ages: over 60	Total Population
Census	53%	47%	37%	63%	50%	11%	12%	36,395
Survey	45%	55%	77%**	22%**	47%	32%	21%	363



The Results

Individual Neighborhoods

Overall, residents are satisfied with their neighborhoods. When asked what they liked best about their neighborhood 44.8% liked that their neighborhoods were clean, quiet, safe, and spacious. 20.4% liked their neighbors and that their neighborhood was “family-oriented.” When asked about their level of satisfaction, residents of the six neighborhoods were predominately “satisfied” with city services, upkeep of property, safety and ease of crossing streets, safety from crime, and ease of getting to other parts of town from within their neighborhood (Table 1.2). They were “very satisfied” in terms of the parks and “walkability” of their neighborhood.

Table 1.2 – Satisfaction

	City Services	Property upkeep	Safety/Ease of crossing streets	Safety from crime	Getting to other parts of town	Parks	Walkability of neighborhood
Satisfied	43%	47	36	49	46	35	37
Very Satisfied	24%	27	32	29	36	40	45
Total	67%	74	68	78	82	75	82

Key Variables Across Neighborhoods

Part of the reason for dividing the city into neighborhoods was because the City knew that opinions and perceptions would vary on certain issues. When residents were asked where they would like to see retail, industrial, and residential development, their responses varied across neighborhoods. Residents of the North Urbana, King/ Crystal Lake Park, and East Urbana neighborhoods thought that the best place for new retail development would be in North Urbana at Interstate 74. Historic East Urbana/Fairlawn Park and West Urbana residents responded that the best place for commercial growth would be in Downtown Urbana. North Urbana and the Downtown tied as the best places for new business according to residents of South Urbana (Table 1.3).



Table 1.3 – Best Location for New Business Development

	North Urbana at I-74	South Urbana	High Cross/Windsor	Downtown Urbana	Other	Not Needed	Don't Know	<i>Total</i>
North Urbana	34%	8%	14%	28%	6%	0%	10%	100%
King/Crystal Lake Park	47	8	11	17	0	0	11	100
East Urbana	30	12	27	9	9	0	13	100
Historic East Urbana	19	14	19	37	3	0	8	100
West Urbana	18	3	6	56	5	2	14	100
South Urbana	27	12	18	27	4	3	8	100
Total	29%	9	16	29	5	1	11	100

The most common answer as to where the best place for industrial development should go was north of I-74 (Table 1.4). In each individual neighborhood, areas north of the interstate were determined the best for industrial growth, even from residents of North Urbana. Overall, 49% of the residents selected “north of I-74.” The second most frequent response was “don’t know” or “no response.”

Respondents also agreed on the best location for new residential development in the City. Five of the six neighborhoods thought that southeast Urbana was the best place for residential growth (Table 1.5). 33% of North Urbana residents selected north of interstate as the best place for residential growth, followed by southeast Urbana at 27%.



	North of I-74	East Urbana	High Cross/Windsor	East University Avenue	Other	Not Needed	Don't Know	<i>Total</i>
North Urbana	34%	16%	16%	2%	6%	0%	22%	100%
King/Crystal Lake Park	41	9	3	16	0	13	11	100
East Urbana	51	10	10	1	7	1	18	100
Historic East Urbana	58	3	12	7	3	7	12	100
West Urbana	52	8	5	11	3	8	18	100
South Urbana	55	5	3	8	0	10	18	100
Total	49%	9	8	8	3	7	16	100
	North of I-74	South East Urbana	East Urbana	Downtown Urbana	Other	Not Needed	Don't Know	<i>Total</i>
North Urbana	33%	27%	18%	8%	0%	4%	10%	100%
King/Crystal Lake Park	25	41	8	8	0	8	8	100
East Urbana	9	33	18	4	7	4	25	100
Historic East Urbana	7	38	16	5	5	7	23	100
West Urbana	1	42	10	15	1	7	22	100
South Urbana	14	46	17	7	2	9	7	100
Total	14%	38%	15%	8%	2%	6%	17%	100

Table 1.4 – Best Location for New Industrial Development

Table 1.5 - Best Location for New Residential Development

While residents from all six neighborhoods said they shopped in the North Prospect/Marketplace Mall area for most items, other than groceries, their second choices varied. Downtown Urbana was the second most frequent choice of North and West Urbana residents. King/Crystal Lake Park residents shop in Downtown Champaign when they are not shopping in the North Prospect area. Sunnycrest Mall was the second most common response from East



and South Urbana residents. Downtown Urbana and Sunnycrest tied as second choices for residents of Historic East Urbana/Fairlawn Park.

All of Urbana

The vast majority of respondents perceived the City of Urbana as a safe, quiet place to live in close proximity to the University, jobs, and services. Residents maintain that Urbana offers a “small town atmosphere” in the midst of a larger city.

Overall, at least 50% of residents surveyed expressed satisfaction with each of the

	Schools	Parks	Library	Streets	Police	Fire	Transit
Satisfied	37%	37	34	34	38	35	29
Very Satisfied	17%	40	42	42	36	42	39
Total Satisfied	54%	77	76	76	74	77	68

following categories: the Urbana Free Library, parks, streets, fire and police protection, schools, and transit systems (Table 1.6).

Table 1.6 – Satisfaction Levels

Over half of the respondents disliked Urbana’s taxes, lack of businesses, and lack of entertainment (Table 1.7). When asked whether they felt if the level of local services received justified the local taxes paid, resident’s responses were mixed. While 43.3% said “yes,” they felt the local services received justified the local taxes paid, 40.5% said “no” and 16.2% did not know or had no response. These percentages may be explained by arguing that those residents who answered “yes” feel they receive a sufficient amount of services, but still feel taxes are high

Table 1.7 – Satisfaction	Downtown, loss of businesses	No recreation entertainment, or restaurants	Taxes, regulation	Total (%)
(%)	18	22	13	53

compared to other cities. This helps explain why so many residents overall were unhappy about the high City taxes.

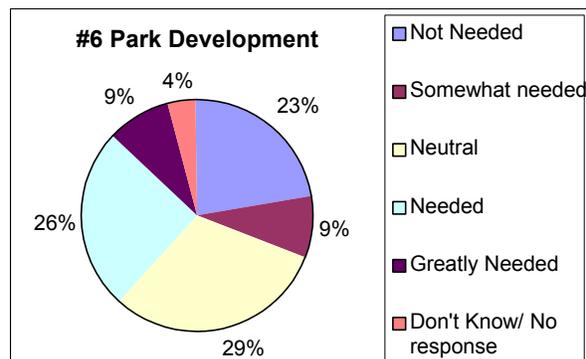
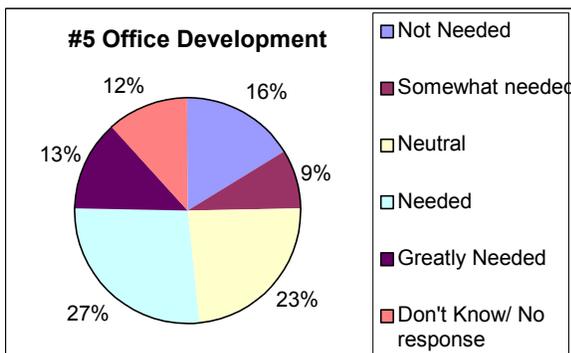
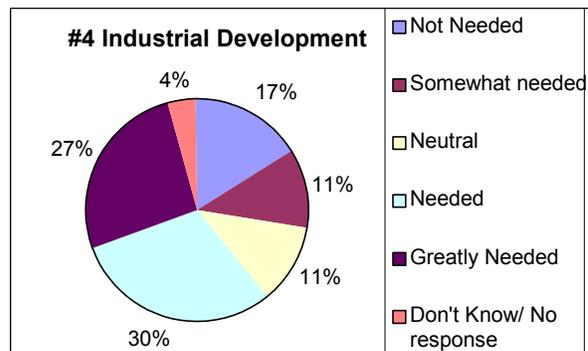
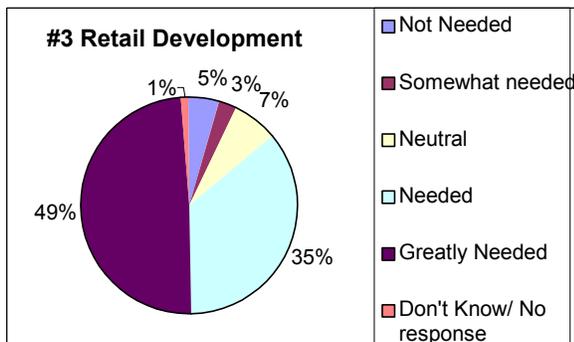
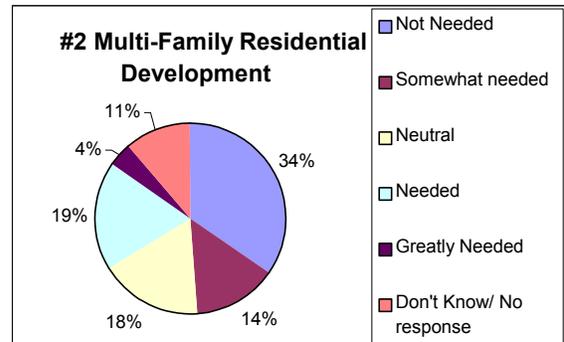
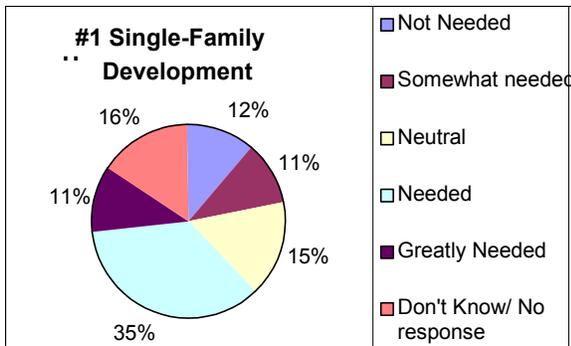
The lack of businesses in

Urbana is another problem identified by residents. In fact, when asked what they disliked about Urbana, the lack of businesses, particularly in the Downtown, and the lack of entertainment, restaurants, and recreation facilities were the two most frequent responses, followed by high city taxes. Resident dissatisfaction with Urbana’s tax base and commercial sector expressed through the surveys closely associate with the tabulated results from the workshops conducted in the fall of 2001 (Appendix C).



Future Development

Resident opinion varied on the future development potential of Urbana. While most respondents generally agreed that development is needed in the City, they did not agree as to what type was most needed, or where it was needed. Generally, respondents felt that single-family housing and industry were needed. Retail is perceived as being greatly needed and more multi-family dwelling units as not needed. Responses were mixed for both more office and park development (Charts 1-6).





Some residents are not pleased with what they feel have been the Downtown redevelopment and development efforts of the City. Many verbally expressed anxiety about the closing of Bergner’s and the threat of K-mart closing in the Sunnycrest area.

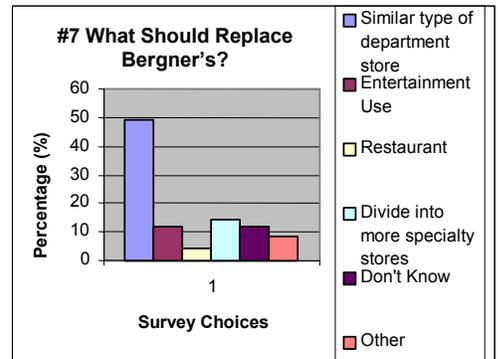
Frequency of visits to the Downtown	
Less than once a month	21.8%
1-4 times a month	24.0%
1-2 a week	25.6%
More than twice a week	20.4%

Table 1.8 – Downtown Visitation

However, even though 57% said they shopped in the Downtown, the frequency at which they visit the Downtown varies from less than once a month to more than twice a week, failing to provide consistency for many businesses (Table 1.8).

Respondents suggested a variety of uses that they would like to

see replace Bergner’s in Lincoln Square Mall (Chart 7). Among those uses most mentioned were, a comparable department store, multiple specialty stores, and entertainment uses. Some interesting suggestions made by respondents included: a movie theatre, fitness/health facility, an annex of the Library, apartments, and a furthering education facility.



Respondents urge that the city devote a considerable amount of careful strategic thought and planning into finding a new use for not only Bergner’s, but also for Lincoln Square Mall and the entire Downtown area, consistent with workshop responses. During the workshops, many residents expressed a great desire to redevelop these areas before the City pursues expanding or developing at its edges.

Conclusion

Overall, the results of the surveys are consistent with the responses received from the neighborhood workshops. Most residents are satisfied to very satisfied with their neighborhood and have continued to express their pleasure with the City of Urbana. Most feel safe, comfortable, and secure in their neighborhood areas. The community character is appealing for most residents, offering a “small-town feel” in an urban/university setting. Close proximity to jobs, parks, shops, and quality services and facilities, such as the City’s Free Library add to the attractiveness of Urbana.



However, residents have expressed some concerns and suggestions for improvement in their neighborhood, in the city as a whole, and in development and redevelopment plans. Residents desire a broader tax base, which includes better planning, zoning, recruitment, and enforcement efforts that would retain and redevelop existing businesses and promote the development of others within the city. Respondents from both the workshops and the surveys expressed the need for more entertainment, recreation, and leisure uses, as well as retail business.

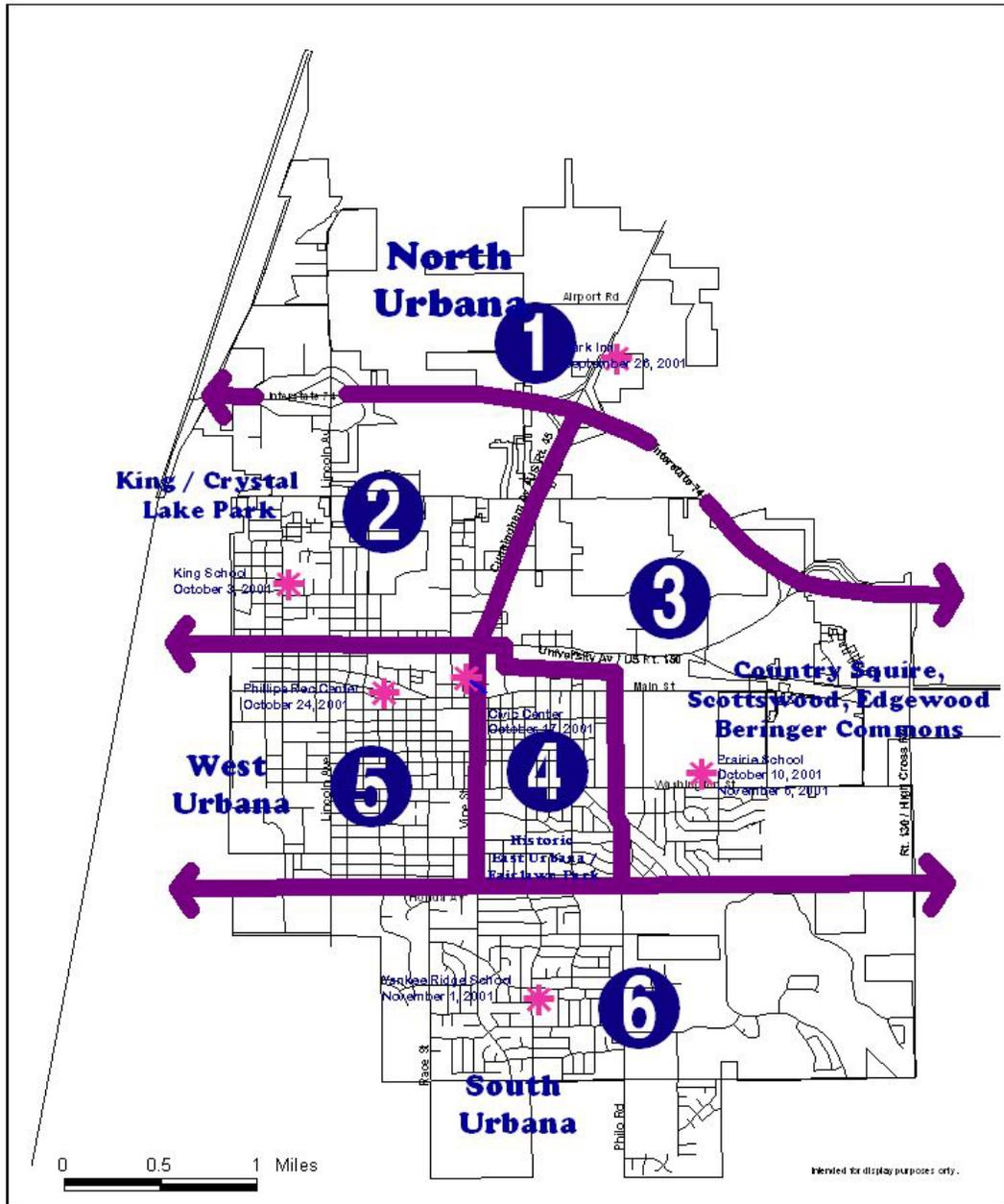
Others residents, particularly in West and South Urbana, fear continued student housing encroachment, in the form of apartment buildings and converted single-family homes, and commuter parking problems in their neighborhoods. More green space and bicycle and pedestrian-friendly pathways and intersections have been suggested to increase “walkability,” accessibility, and safety.

These issues will receive special attention and consideration when updating the Comprehensive Plan. Decisions that are made in regard to development and redevelopment of housing, industry, and retail will have significant impacts not only on the physical blueprint of Urbana, but also on the tax base and other economic and social components.

Careful evaluation of resident input will assist the City in addressing its weaknesses within the entire city and within individual neighborhoods. The Comprehensive Plan must not overlook the little details in an attempt to produce a grander future vision. Results from both the workshops and surveys have clearly outlined resident’s opinions on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of their individual neighborhoods and the City as a whole. Continued community involvement must be a part of the Comprehensive Plan updating process in order for the City to effectively address future planning actions.



Appendix A



**Visioning Workshop Boundaries And Meeting Locations
Urbana Comprehensive Plan 2002**

Prepared by Community Development Services 09/12/01





Appendix B



Your Neighborhood

I would like to start by asking you a few questions about the neighborhood you live in.

1. What do you like best about your neighborhood?
You can identify up to two things that you like.

2. Now I am going to read you a list of 7 community characteristics. For each one, please tell me how satisfied you are with your neighborhood, on a 5-point scale, where 1 = “very unsatisfied” and 5 = “very satisfied.”

		Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't know, no answer
	Upkeep of property in the area	1	2	3	4	5	9
B	Safety / ease of crossing streets	1	2	3	4	5	9
C	Ease of walking through the neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5	9
D	Ease in getting to other parts of town	1	2	3	4	5	9
E	Parks	1	2	3	4	5	9
F	Safety from crime	1	2	3	4	5	9
G	Municipal Services <i>(maintenance of streets, sidewalks, trees, etc.)</i>	1	2	3	4	5	9

Comments _____



3. Where do you work (or go to school)? *(looking for their primary activity outside the home)*

- Urbana 1
- Champaign 2
- Other 3
- Specify _____
- Not Applicable *(retired, homemaker, unemployed, work at home)* 8
- No answer..... 9

Comments: _____

4. How do you typically get to work?

- Walk 1
- Car 2
- Bicycle 3
- Bus 4
- Other 5
- Specify _____
- Not Applicable *(retired, homemaker, unemployed, work at home)* 8
- No answer..... 9

Comments: _____

All of Urbana

Next I would like to ask you a few questions about your perceptions of Urbana as a whole.

5. How satisfied are you with living in Urbana (using the same 5-point scale as before)?

- Very Unsatisfied 1
- Unsatisfied 2
- Neutral 3
- Satisfied 4
- Very Satisfied 5
- No answer..... 9

Comments: _____

6. What do you like best about Urbana? You may identify up to two things that you like.



Comments: _____



7. What do you like least about Urbana? You may identify up to two things you don't like.

Comments: _____

8. Now I am going to read you a list of 7 public services or facilities in Urbana. For each one, please tell me how satisfied you are, on a 5-point scale, where 1 = "very unsatisfied" and 5 = "very satisfied."

		Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't know
A	Schools	1	2	3	4	5	9
B	Parks	1	2	3	4	5	9
C	Library	1	2	3	4	5	9
D	Street System	1	2	3	4	5	9
E	Fire Protection	1	2	3	4	5	9
F	Police Protection	1	2	3	4	5	9
G	Mass Transit	1	2	3	4	5	9

Comments: _____

9. Do you feel the level of local services received justifies the local taxes paid?

- Yes 1
- No 2
- Don't Know, no response..... 9

Comments: _____



Development in Urbana

Next I would like to get your thoughts on how Urbana should expand and develop.

10. I am going to read you a list of six types of development. For each use, please tell me if you think it is needed in Urbana, on a 5-point scale, where 1= “not needed,” and 5 = “greatly needed.”

		Not Needed	Somewhat Needed	Neutral	Needed	Greatly Needed	Don't know
A	More Single Family Homes	1	2	3	4	5	9
B	More Multi-Family Apartments	1	2	3	4	5	9
C	More Retail Businesses	1	2	3	4	5	9
D	More Industry	1	2	3	4	5	9
E	More Offices	1	2	3	4	5	9
F	More Parks	1	2	3	4	5	9

Comments:

11. Where do you do most of your shopping for items other than groceries? You can identify up to two places (looking for frequency of shopping, not dollars spent. Circle one or two that apply)

- Downtown Urbana 1
- Downtown Champaign 2
- Campustown 3
- Sunnycrest Area 4
- North Prospect / Marketplace Mall 5
- Other 6
- Specify _____
- No answer, don't know..... 9

Comments: _____



12. Where is the best place for new business (retail and office) development?

North Urbana at Interstate 74.....	1
South Urbana	2
High Cross / Windsor Rd. area.....	3
Downtown Urbana	4
Other	5
Specify _____	
Not applicable (don't think new business is needed).....	8
Don't know, no answer.....	9

Comments: _____

13. Where is the best place for new residential development?

North of Interstate	1
Southeast Urbana	2
East Urbana	3
Downtown	4
Other	5
Specify _____	
Not applicable (don't think new residential is needed).....	8
Don't know, no answer.....	9

Comments: _____

14. Where is the best place for new industrial development?

North of Interstate	1
East Urbana	2
High Cross / Windsor Rd.	3
East University Avenue	4
Other	5
Specify _____	
Not applicable (don't think new industrial is needed).....	8
Don't know, no answer.....	9



Comments: _____



Downtown/Central Urbana

Next I would like to ask you about your thoughts on Downtown Urbana. By “downtown” I mean the central part of Urbana, roughly south of University Ave and north of Illinois Street, east of McCullough and generally west of Vine but including Schnucks and the businesses on the east side of Vine.

15. How often do you visit downtown Urbana?

- Never 1
- Infrequently (less than once per month)..... 2
- Somewhat Frequently (1-4 times per month)..... 3
- Frequently (1-2 times per week)..... 4
- Very frequently (more than 2 times per week)..... 5
- Don't know, no answer..... 9

If “Never” skip to Question #19

Comments: _____

16. What is your most frequent activity when you visit downtown? You may choose up to 2 responses.

- Work 1
- Personal Business (bank, lawyer, insurance agent, cleaner)..... 2
- Government Office 3
- Shopping 4
- Restaurant / Bar 5
- Library 6
- Other 7
- Specify _____
- Not applicable (never go)..... 8
- Don't know, no answer.....9

Comments: _____

17. Do you shop in downtown Urbana?

- Yes 1
- No 2
- Not applicable (never go)..... 8
- No answer..... 9

Comments: _____



18. If YES: Why: You may choose up to two responses.

- It is close to home 1
- It is convenient (e.g. can combine multiple trips)2
- It is a pleasant atmosphere 3
- It is easy to walk around in downtown. 4
- Specialty Stores not found at mall 5
- Want to support Urbana businesses 6
- Other 7
- Specify _____

- Not applicable (don't shop downtown)..... 8
- Don't Know, no answer..... 9

Comments: _____

19. If NO: Would you shop in downtown Urbana if: You may choose up to two responses.

- There were more appealing shopping opportunities 1
- There was more parking available 2
- There were more entertainment and dining options 3
- Downtown were safer 4
- Other 5
- Specify _____
- Does Not Apply (answered YES)..... 8
- Don't Know, no answer.....9

Comments: _____

20. What type of business do you think should replace Bergner's at Lincoln Square Mall? Pick one.

- Similar type of department store 1
- Entertainment uses 2
- Restaurants 3
- Divide into more specialty stores 4
- Don't Know 5
- Other 9
- Specify _____

Comments: _____



Profile questions

Finally I would like to ask you a few questions about yourself.

21. How long have you lived in Urbana?

- Less than one year 1
- 1-5 years 2
- 5-10 years 3
- More than 10 years 4
- No answer..... 9

22. How long have you lived at this residence? _____

- Less than one year 1
- 1-5 years 2
- 5-10 years 3
- More than 10 years 4
- No answer..... 9

23. Do you:

- Rent 1
- Own 2
- Other 3
- Specify _____
- No answer..... 9

24. How many persons are in this household?

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5+ |
|---|---|---|---|----|
- No answer..... 9

25. How many persons in the household are under 18 years old?

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5+ |
|---|---|---|---|----|
- No answer..... 9

26. Any other comments you would like to make?



Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in this survey. Here is some information that explains the Urbana Comprehensive Plan update process and how you can stay informed on its progress. Thank you once again.

For the Interviewer (Observation Survey)

Address _____

1. Interviewee

Gender

- Male 1
- Female 2
- Estimated Age**
- 18-40 1
- 40-60 2
- over 60 3
- Don't Know 4

2. Condition of Residence

- New 1
- Good 2
- Fair 3
- Poor 4

3. Type of Residence

- Single-Family 1
- Multi-Family 2

If multi-family, approx. how many units in building _____



Appendix C



Area #1 North Urbana

The neighborhood workshop for the North Urbana area was held on September 26, 2001 at the Park Inn. Over 100 people attended the workshop. Most of the participants lived outside the city limits and to the area east of Cunningham Avenue.

The Area

For purposes of the workshop, the area north of Interstate 74 is described as “North Urbana”. This area contains a mix of land uses and unique natural features. Cunningham Avenue (Route 45) contains both old and new commercial development. The new Farm & Fleet and University AutoPark development at the interchange represents part of the future of commercial growth for Urbana. North Lincoln Avenue contains a significant amount of industrial development. Frasca Airfield continues to be a defining feature of the area as well. New residential developments is evident with Landis Farm and Somerset subdivisions. North Urbana also contains significant natural features along the Saline Branch. Residents of the secluded developments of Holcomb Woods and Raintree Woods off of Perkins Road enjoy natural resources not found in most of Champaign County.

Major Themes

The major themes of the workshop are as follows:

Preserve the Rural Setting

Participants wanted to see the rural atmosphere maintained. They wanted to see better recognition and protection of the unique natural features in the area such as the Saline Branch and the densely wooded areas.

Grow Urbana *in* Urbana

Many comments focused on the need for Urbana to grow and develop within the current city limits and to limit annexation and development north of the interstate. It was felt the downtown should continue to be redeveloped but that North Cunningham Avenue represents new commercial opportunities.

Small Town with Amenities

Participants frequently commented that a strength of Urbana is the “small town feel” with great amenities such as the U of I, the schools, and parks.



Written Exercises

The most common responses to the exercises are shown below.

<i>North Urbana Area</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Rural character	Lack of political representation	Preserve and promote conservation areas, farmland and open space	Improve and preserve natural areas
Contains conservation and wildlife features unique to the area	Lack of planning for growth and expansion	Develop along Route 45	Allow access to Urbana library and park programs
Residential areas are quiet	Lack of parks	Encourage large-lot, rural residential development	Focus on Route 45 for improvements and development
Streets are well maintained	Threat of development		

<i>All of Urbana</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Small town atmosphere	Lack of downtown development	Promote commercial devt on Rt. 45 and Lincoln Avenue	Improve downtown
Proximity to the U of I	Lack of business and industry	Build-up downtown	Improve business and shopping opportunities
Quality schools	Weak economic base	Retain wildlife areas	Improve Lincoln Square Mall
Good system of parks	High taxes		



Area #2 King / Crystal Lake Park Area

The neighborhood workshop for the King / Crystal Lake Park area was held on October 3, 2001 at King School. Approximately 12 people participated in the workshop.

The Area

The workshop for the “King / Crystal Lake Park” area focused on the areas south of the interstate, west of Cunningham Avenue and north of University Avenue. This area encompasses primarily King and Crystal Lake Park neighborhoods but also the North Broadway and Country Club neighborhoods. It has a diverse population of people with a mix of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing. Residents of the area enjoy the close proximity of Crystal Lake Park, one of Urbana’s largest parks with many amenities. King Park and School are also focal points of the King Park Neighborhood as is Carle Hospital. Cunningham, University and north Lincoln Avenue represent the majority of the commercial uses in the area. This area also contains the Urbana Country Club and surrounding residential development.

Major Themes

The major themes of the workshop are as follows:

Preserve the Park Setting

Participants enjoyed the close proximity to Crystal Lake Park and want to see it remain a key focal point of the area. Crystal Lake Park offers unique amenities not found in most parks such as water features, the boat house and wooded areas.

Access to Services

Emphasis was placed on the need to establish businesses and services in walking distance to residents. Currently there are limited opportunities for residents to get basic services without having to drive or take the bus.

Quality of Life

Participants stressed the need to continue enhancing the quality of life . Discussion focused on the need for a community center, more garden opportunities, and the need for more regular maintenance and police presence.



Written Exercises

The most common responses to the exercises are shown below.

<i>King / Crystal Lake Park Area</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Crystal Lake Park	Lack of maintenance and trash pick-up	Neighborhood Community Center	Improve area by building a Community Ctr
Parks and services are in walking distance	Presence of crime and slumlords	Opportunities for more gardens, permaculture and produce swaps	Police presence
Diverse quality of life	Lack of long range plan for Carle	More business meeting the needs of residents	Access across University Avenue
Carle Hospital			More trees, gardens, murals

<i>All of Urbana</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Plenty of trees and vegetation	Need to improve downtown	Post Office could be a museum	More regular infrastructure maintenance
Great library	Too many parking lots	More mixed-use neighborhoods	Ability to walk to services
Small town feel	Need more businesses and job opportunities	More services in walking distance	More cohesive neighborhoods
Ease, convenient access around town	High taxes	Add new businesses for neighborhoods	



Area #3 East Urbana

Since this area was rather large. Two separate workshops were conducted. The first workshop was held on October 10, 2001 and involved residents of the Country Squire area. The second workshop was conducted on November 6, 2001 and focused on the areas of Scottswood, Edgewood and Beringer Commons. In total, over 40 individuals participated in both workshops.

The Area

The “East Urbana” workshop covered a large area from the Interstate south to Florida Avenue and the areas east of Cunningham Avenue and Philo Road. This area contains a number of different residential neighborhoods including Country Squire, Scottswood, Edgewood, and Beringer Commons. Scottswood and Edgewood are subdivisions located outside the city limits but require city type of services and maintenance that currently have to be provided for by the Township. The area also contains a variety of commercial uses along Cunningham Avenue and industrial uses along East University Avenue. The southern portion of this area represents one of the current growth areas in Urbana. The extension of Florida Avenue east is a result of the newly developing subdivisions of Fairway Estates, Lincolnwood, and Savannah Green. The County Complex at the Brooken’s Administration Center is a key focal point and anchor for the area.

Major Themes

The major themes of the workshop are as follows:

Sense of Community

A number of participants remarked that they enjoy the sense of community offered in their neighborhood and Urbana as a whole. They felt that their neighborhoods are quiet and a nice place to live.

Maintenance and Services

Many participants in the Scottswood, Edgewood areas felt that there needs to be better services for their area. Issues of road maintenance, speed limits and enforcement, and drainage were all discussed.

City Limits

Some participants from areas outside the city limits expressed the desire to remain outside the city limits and not be annexed. They felt that in many respects, services are adequate in the Township and that they do not wish to be annexed into the city and pay more in taxes.



Written Exercises

The most common responses to the exercises are shown below.

<i>East Urbana Area</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Quiet neighborhood	Poor infrastructure Drainage / Streetlights	Encourage homeownership	Drainage
Good police and fire protection	Adult entertainment in area	More recreation areas near Scottswood	Infrastructure (roads and streets)
Single-family homes / home ownership	Police patrol and traffic safety	Better public transportation	Improve commercial development in the area

<i>All of Urbana</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Sense of Community	Poor public image	More businesses in Lincoln Square	More businesses downtown
Medical facilities / Carle	High Taxes	Better traffic patterns	Preserve neighborhoods
University of Illinois	Need more business & shopping	Better traffic patterns	More sport facilities
Parks and Library	Need better interstate access	Better intergovernmental cooperation	New interchange on I-74



Area #4 “Historic East Urbana” and Fairlawn Park Area

The neighborhood workshop for the “Historic East Urbana” and Fairlawn Park area was held on October 17, 2001 at the Urbana Civic Center. Approximately 23 people participated in the workshop.

The Area

The “Historic East Urbana” & Fairlawn Park workshop covered an area from Main Street south to Florida Avenue and Vine Street east to Lierman Avenue. This area contains primarily two neighborhoods. North of Washington Street is an area being referred to by residents as the “Historic East Urbana Neighborhood.” It encompasses a mix of older single-family homes and low density multi-family centered between Victory Park and downtown. This older neighborhood has an urban pattern of development with a connected grid network of streets, sidewalks and some alleys. Residents enjoy close proximity to downtown and unique characteristics to the neighborhood such as some brick streets and sidewalks. South of Washington Street is the Fairlawn Park neighborhood. This area was developed in the 1950s and contains primarily single-family homes with more of a suburban pattern of development. Residents of this neighborhood have Wiley School nearby and enjoy close proximity to Blair Park on Vine Street.

Major Themes

The major themes of the workshop are as follows:

Neighborhood Preservation

A number of participants commented that the strength of their neighborhood is affordable housing. It was also noted that some housing in the neighborhood is in need of repair and that there should be a better effort to preserve and rehabilitate housing rather than continue to tear down homes and develop small scale apartment buildings. It was stressed that the history of the area, the affordable housing, and the people are the main reasons residents like living in the neighborhood and that those qualities should be preserved.

Parks and Trees

Neighbors commented that a strength of the neighborhood and Urbana as a whole is the mature tree canopy as well as the parks. Residents stressed the importance of keeping Urbana “green” and exploring opportunities for additional open space, trees and gardens



Written Exercises

The most common responses to the exercises are shown below.

<i>“Historic East Urbana” & Fairlawn Park Area</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Strong neighborhood	Dilapidated housing	Preserve existing housing stock	Improve streets, curbs, sidewalks
Affordable housing	Need for street and sidewalk repairs	Preserve & promote conservation	Provide more neighborhood businesses
Historic attributes of area	Transformation to multi-family	More small businesses	Improve single-family housing stock
Trees and Parks	Need more small scale businesses	More accessible downtown	Trash, yards

<i>All of Urbana</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Sense of community	Lack of tax base	More parks	Attract more jobs, businesses
Trees & Parks	Lack of businesses	Improve downtown	Improve bicycle access
Good schools	Improve downtown	Build within and grow without sprawl	Provide more parks and open space
Library	Zoning inconsistencies	Keep small town feel and sense of community	



Area #5 West Urbana Area

The neighborhood workshop for the West Urbana area was held on October 24, 2001 at the Phillips Center. Over 60 people participated in the workshop.

The Area

The “West Urbana” workshop covered an area south of University Avenue, north of Florida Avenue and west of Vine Street. This area included downtown Urbana and the surrounding neighborhoods. The area contains an older housing stock and a diverse mix of single-family homes, duplexes, rooming houses and apartment buildings. Small scale commercial uses stem from downtown a short distance along Springfield Avenue and Green Street. The area has always been attractive to students, faculty and employees of the University of Illinois because of its close proximity to campus. Residents of the West Urbana area enjoy the character of the older neighborhood with an extensive tree coverage and amenities such as Carle Park and Leal School. With the exception of downtown, the area contains few neighborhood businesses within walking distance of residents.

Major Themes

The major themes of the workshop are as follows:

Central Location

The majority of participants noted that one of the greatest assets of the area is its location. Residents can easily walk to campus, downtown, parks and schools.

Older Housing Stock

Many comments focused on the value of the older homes. Participants felt that the housing stock is diverse and has great character that helps define the neighborhood. An emphasis was placed on preserving historic homes.

Single-Family / Multi-Family

Because the area is in close proximity to campus, there are numerous apartment buildings and rental homes in the neighborhood. Many participants stressed that a major weakness of the area is the conflict between these uses when properties are not maintained and rental homes fall into disrepair. Issues of noise, trash and parking were also listed as major problems.



Written Exercises

The most common responses to the exercises are shown below.

<i>West Urbana Area</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Central location	Rental homes in disrepair	Preserve single-family housing	Better code enforcement
Abundant trees	Parking congestion	Historic preservation	Fix parking problem
Great architecture and historic housing stock	Nuisance problems (noise, trash)	More businesses downtown	Clean-ups, regular maintenance
Diversity	Lack of small businesses	Use Leal School to attract families	Bury power lines

<i>All of Urbana</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
High quality of life / small size	Weak tax base	Redevelop downtown and Lincoln Square	Improve tax base
Trees	Downtown Urbana	More bikeways	Build-up Lincoln Square Mall
Library	Need more business and job opportunities	Beautify Boneyard Creek	Become more bicycle friendly community
Farmer's Market	Need more commercial development	More commercial development	Improve aesthetics at entryways
University of Illinois			



Area #6 South Urbana Area

The neighborhood workshop for the South Urbana area was held on November 1, 2001 at Yankee Ridge School. Over 50 people participated in the workshop.

The Area

The “South Urbana” workshop covered all areas south of Florida Avenue. A large portion of this area is developed with single-family residential housing. The area around Yankee Ridge School experienced a boom in the 1960s and 1970s with many new ranch style single-family housing developments. South Urbana also contains newer single-family residential developments such as Stone Creek, Southridge, Myra Ridge and Deerfield Trails. The area contains some multi-family developments and duplexes as well. Shopping needs are met within the Sunnycrest shopping center which contains some of Urbana’s largest retailers. Windsor Road provides convenient access across town and contains large, undeveloped tracts of land and property owned by the University of Illinois and Meijer Superstore at Philo Road. Meadowbrook Park is a large, regional park with many amenities. Smaller neighborhood parks such as Crestview and Southridge are also located within residential developments.

Major Themes

The major themes of the workshop are as follows:

Stable Neighborhood

Many individuals felt that South Urbana represents a stable neighborhood of quality housing in close proximity to good schools and parks. Shopping at Sunnycrest is also convenient.

Sunnycrest Improvements

While most residents use Sunnycrest for their shopping needs, there was a general feeling that the area could use some beautification improvements. Many stores have large, empty parking lots and there could be more retail and restaurant opportunities.

Meijer Tract

Some participants expressed concern over the land owned by Meijer Superstore at the intersection of Windsor Road and Philo Road. Although Meijer has not begun construction of a store, some residents are concerned about the impacts of such a development if Meijer builds. There was also the concern that the store would have a negative impact on Sunnycrest stores.



Written Exercises

The most common responses to the exercises are shown below.

<i>South Urbana Area</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Meadowbrook Park	Residential & business vacancies	More housing development	Infrastructure improvements and streetlights
Quiet neighborhood	Lack of streetlights	Preserve and expand parks and trees	Connect parks and bicycle paths with neighborhoods
Good schools	Lack of connected bikeways	Encourage new commercial development	Improve Sunnycrest
Stone Creek Golf Course	Lack of land use planning		

<i>All of Urbana</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Improvements
Services, events and programs	Lack of commercial in downtown, Lincoln Square and Sunnycrest	More commercial development downtown and at the interstate	Control growth and redevelop existing commercial areas
Quality "Green" spaces	Need for better land use planning	Locate jobs closer to homes	Support for bicycle paths and parks
Strong sense of community	High taxes	More bikeways	Encourage social/racially integrated housing
Responsive government	Intergovernmental cooperation		