

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Curtis Road Study Area Plan

The Curtis Road interchange represents a unique opportunity which comes rarely in a mature, highly developed municipality such as Champaign. In addition to representing 640 acres of land (515 acres developable), the interchange adds a transportation asset which encourages retail, commercial and industrial opportunities. Development in this area will contribute to community strength and identity of the emerging residential area in the southwest quadrant of the City while also adding important property tax base, retail sales tax and potential new jobs to the greater Champaign community. Given the size of the area, it is acknowledged that full development of the Study Area may take 15-20 years, and therefore both strategy and patience will be an important priority.

## Market Analysis

Key findings of the market analysis that support and accompany this study include:

- Champaign is emerging as a Two-Store Market
- The market would support additional large format retail uses
- The longer term market would support a lifestyle center and clusters of specialty stores
- There may be a growing market supporting employment uses (offices, research, technology)
- There may be market support for a hotel
- There is no foreseeable opportunity for additional theater facilities
- Although there is likely to be considerable growth of residential uses in Southwest Champaign, non-residential uses will derive greater benefit from the new interchange

## Conceptual Development Pattern

The Curtis Road Study Area must be planned so as to establish a unity which is greater than the sum of its parts. A development pattern of three district types is envisioned:

### **Neighborhood District**

Buildings, sites, facilities and activities within the areas designated as a neighborhood district are compatible in scale, function and intensity with the existing adjacent and surrounding residential neighborhoods in Champaign.

### **Active Mixed-Use District**

The active mixed-use area within Curtis Road Study Area is envisioned as a memorable, special place; an active, walkable, convenient, mixed use district; as a center of community activities, entertainment and commerce, where the scale and character of buildings (though not uniform) lends to the district's charm and attractiveness as a place to live, shop, work and interact as a community.

### **Corporate District**

Buildings of iconic height or bulk can be accommodated within the Curtis Road Study Area only within the Corporate District; but even here, open space, views, and site and building interaction must be planned to assure a high quality character. This is the architecture of corporate and technology parks, where building "synergy" (the interaction and communication between colleagues) is a driving force in urban form and the architecture of buildings.

### **Development “Givens”**

#### **Development of the Curtis Road Interchange Area must include or support each of the following:**

- ❖ Meaningful public involvement in the development review process, including requirements for developers to present proposals to neighbors for feedback in advance of public hearings for large-scale proposals.
- ❖ A well landscaped buffer and bike trail along Duncan Road.
- ❖ Land use transitions to the off-site residential uses to the north and south.
- ❖ If uses other than single-family detached homes are developed along the north or south perimeter of the study site, more significant buffers to adjacent residential neighborhoods will be required.
- ❖ Additional travel lanes on Duncan and Staley Road, and intersection improvements at Curtis Road intersections.
- ❖ Streetscape design for Duncan Road, Curtis Road, Staley Road and all internal public streets.
- ❖ Civic Space/Open Space requirements within each development quadrant, including minimum contiguous acreage, interconnections and improvements.
- ❖ Bike and Pedestrian system throughout the development.
- ❖ Transit Hub along a designated bus and trail system routes.
- ❖ Entryway signage for the City of Champaign and the UI.
- ❖ Limitations on business operations in the Neighborhood District, such as prohibitions on 24 hour operations, which protect nearby residences.
- ❖ Agreements for development shall include provisions for annexing into the Champaign – Urbana Mass Transit District where possible.

### **Implementing the Study Area Plan**

To be successful in maximizing the unique opportunity which the Curtis Road Study Area represents, the City must develop a process which is at once able to manage the development

process and at the same time is flexible over the 15-20 years to a changing marketplace. Accordingly, the key elements of the proposed implementation process are as follows:

- Approval of specific development plans should only occur where they are shown to be supportive and consistent with the development and use of adjacent and surrounding properties; approval of integrated plans for multiple larger properties take precedent over approval of individual smaller properties (piecemeal development.)
- Annexation and development agreements are key elements of the approval process. As part of the annexation agreement, the City will have maximum flexibility in securing its development objectives.
- Each development approved must assure consistency with an integrated open space, trail and connectivity plan, and design guidelines.
- Design elements, including buffers and a bike trail along Duncan and Staley Roads, land use transitions abutting existing development, road improvements, streetscape design, civic space/open space improvements, bike and pedestrian access throughout the area, a transit hub within the area, and certain other design elements are fundamental to the plan and must be accommodated in any viable petition for development approval
- Development intensity must be consistent with the capacity of roads, intersections and the infrastructure which is provided to support the development; and, revenue and public improvements contributed by the development in the form of fees, dedications, and compensation for services must assure that development fully pays for all costs of providing adequate public facilities and services.
- Given the size of the developable land, the City can be patient in approving developments to achieve the best development possible and to allow the marketplace to continue to mature over time in combination with the asset which the new Curtis Road and Interstate-57 interchange represents.

## Development Plan "Givens"

- A greenway buffer and trail along Duncan Road.
- Land use transitions along the north and south edge of the area.
- Additional travel lanes on Duncan and Staley; Curtis Road intersection improvements
- Civic and open space requirements.
- Pedestrian and bike trail connections.
- A transit hub and entry node.
- Entryway signage for the City and UI
- Development impact management
- Active public participation



## Active Mixed-Use District

- Buffered from existing neighborhoods, can support more intense mixed-use development.
- While high quality walkable environments are desired, large format stores may be allowed within the right mix of uses, in a very well designed development.
- Typical uses include a mix of commercial, entertainment, office and multi-family uses.



## Neighborhood District

- These sites are located adjacent to existing neighborhoods.
- Buildings are compatible in scale, function and intensity with adjacent development.
- Typical uses include a mix of residential uses, small offices and retail services in a residential setting.



## Corporate District

- Buildings are immediately visible from I-57 and frame views into the site, but not directly accessible from a major arterial roadway.
- Buildings are tall, highly visible and attractive.
- Typical uses include a mix of employment, commercial and institutional uses.



