

# *Vision & Guiding Principles*



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The Vision and Guiding Principles are key components to the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the Vision and Guiding Principles is to broadly describe what the community desires to be like in the future. The Vision is a series of statements that describe what Champaign should be like in 20 years, if the Comprehensive Plan is implemented. Each vision statement has three to five associated Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles provide focused goals associated with each vision statement. They will be used as a guide when reviewing development proposals and creating policies related to growth.

There are six vision statements that address topics important to the City's growth. They are, Growing City, Sustainable City, Complete Neighborhoods, Community Identity, Healthy City and Complete Public Facilities. Each Vision chapter includes issues that were considered when creating the Vision statements and Guiding Principles as well as measurables that can be used to track progress and actions that should be completed to implement the vision.

The Future Land Use Map and Action items provide more specific details on how to achieve the Vision and utilize the Guiding Principles.



## *Assembling the Vision and Guiding Principles:*

The Vision and Guiding Principles of the Comprehensive Plan reflect the concerns and wishes of the residents of Champaign. Staff gathered input through the online PLACES survey, direct e-mail, the project website, conversations with citizens and feedback from Plan Commission and City Council. The response rate was considered very good, with over 650 responses to the PLACES survey alone. This information was used to generate the draft Vision and Guiding Principles statements. The draft statements were then reviewed through an online public survey.

## *Vision and Guiding Principles Summary:*

### *Vision 1. Growing City*

“Champaign will grow to accommodate new residents of all ages, visitors and employees while maintaining the community’s quality of life. Economic stability, coupled with fiscally sustainable growth and reinvestment in the City’s center result in a prosperous community.”

#### *Guiding Principles*

- Fiscally Sustainable Growth
- Foster a Knowledge Based Economy focusing on:
  - *Higher education*
  - *Research and technology*
  - *Healthcare*
  - *Creative and applied arts*
- Strong Employment Centers
- Regional Destination for Commerce
- Local Decisions With Regional Benefit

### *Vision 2. Sustainable City*

“Champaign is a sustainable city that limits its impact on natural resources and on the local, regional and global environment.”

#### *Guiding Principles*

- Reduced consumption and impact
- Reuse of materials
- Reduced emissions
- Thoughtful site design
- Low-energy building design
- Renewable energy generation and consumption

### *Vision 3. Complete Neighborhoods*

“Champaign’s neighborhoods are structured to ensure residents can attend school, shop, live and play within a short distance of their homes. The majority of convenience services and recreation can be found within neighborhood boundaries.”

#### *Guiding Principles*

- Well-planned mix of uses
- Well-designed density
- Range of housing types
- Connectivity
- Presence of neighborhood elements



## *Vision and Guiding Principles Summary:*

### *Vision 4. Community Identity*

“Champaign is known for embracing diversity and is attractive with well-planned spaces, streets and buildings.”

#### *Guiding Principles*

- High quality urban design
- Preservation of special places
- Neighborhood pride
- Beautification of urban areas
- “Center City”
- University town
- Community culture

### *Vision 5. Healthy Community*

“Champaign fosters a healthy lifestyle for its residents.”

#### *Guiding Principles*

- Walking community
- Alternative transportation
- Community health facilities
- Healthy youth
- Local food systems

### *Vision 6. Complete Public Facilities*

“As the City continues to grow, public facilities will be “complete” throughout the City to achieve a high quality of life for all residents.”

#### *Guiding Principles*

- Complete infrastructure
- Sufficient services
- Presence of community facilities
- Accessibility to transit service

# Growing City



Champaign has been deemed a ‘micro-urban’ community, offering an urban style City center, diverse employment choices, and a vibrant cultural scene coupled with the quality-of-life so cherished by community residents. The City’s location at the junction of three Interstates with the presence of major rail lines, Amtrak service and a regional airport make Champaign highly accessible. As a regional destination for commerce and employment, Champaign serves a market area with over 350,000 people (Downtown Champaign: Retail Market Positioning Study, Business Districts, Inc., 2005).

Maintaining this position as a regional destination for commerce and employment is essential to the success of the community. Retail trade is an important component of the community’s business environment as well as a generator of tax revenues that fund City services, public safety and school facilities. Champaign is fortunate to have a diverse employment base, with strong businesses of all sizes and types.



***A balanced land use plan ensures a diverse mix of land uses and city policies that promote specific kinds of development in defined areas.***

Champaign has a history of being a destination for higher education, research and technology, healthcare and arts and entertainment. Organizations in these fields, as well as other information based services and supportive businesses make up the knowledge-based sector of the economy. Creating an environment that attracts and supports talent is paramount to the ongoing success of this sector. Offering leading-edge technological infrastructure, high-quality facilities and centers that cultivate synergistic relationships is key to attracting and retaining these businesses and the talent they need to operate.

The physical form of the City affects the bottom line of residents, consumers, businesses and government. From an economic standpoint, a dispersed population means longer commutes, the need to construct and maintain more road miles and costly service extensions. Fiscally responsible growth is vital now and in the future for the most efficient, responsible use of resources.

## Snapshot:

- The City of Champaign covers 14,289 acres or 22 square miles in total land area. Since 1950, the City has physically grown by about 10,000 acres, an average of 6% growth annually.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the majority of residents work primarily in the 'Education, Health and Social Services' industrial sector. The University of Illinois is the largest single employer in the County with approximately 10,900 employees. The next largest employers are Carle Clinic Association with 2,900 employees, Carle Foundation Hospital with 2,700 employees and Champaign Unit #4 Schools and Kraft Foods, each with 1,300 employees.
- In 1960, out-of-county commuters counted for only 5% of the total workforce. In 2000, out-of-county commuters counted for 14% of the workforce, or 9,300 people. Most out-of-county workers come from Vermillion, Piatt and Douglas Counties.
- Enrollment at both the University of Illinois and Parkland College has grown. Between Fall 2000 and Fall 2010, total enrollment at the University of Illinois grew by 13.5%, from 36,936 to 41,949 students. Enrollment at Parkland College grew by 22% over the same period, from 14,640 to 17,909 students.
- Of the largest 10 employers in Champaign County, four are publicly funded, including the University of Illinois, Champaign Unit #4 Schools, Parkland College and Champaign County government.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that there were 103,369 employees in Champaign County in 2006. The largest 25 employers employ 15% of the County labor force, while the remaining 85% work in small and medium sized businesses.
- The number of new single-family residential and commercial/multi-family construction permits increased rapidly between 2004 and 2006. New single-family permits jumped from an average rate of 125 - 150 permits per year to a high of 507 in 2005. That number declined sharply falling to 61 single-family permits in 2008. In 2009, 119 single-family permits were issued, showing that pre-2004 demand may be returning.
- The University of Illinois Research Park has over 85 companies, including 9 Fortune 500 companies, that employ 1,500 people. Since 2000, the park has grown to over 600,000 square feet of building space, including a daycare center and hotel/conference center.



## Issues Considered:

- Currently the City has over 1,300 acres of land approved for residential development that does not yet have construction activity. It is uncertain what the new economy holds for these projects.
- The City has a variety of incentive programs that have resulted in significant private investment in the community. Most incentives are focused on redevelopment and job creation. Some of the existing programs have expiration dates. How will adequate infrastructure be provided where project costs can be higher?
- Champaign residents enjoy a relatively short commute compared to other cities. Maintaining low commute times is an asset that should be protected as the community grows.
- Champaign County attracts workers that commute from outside counties. What can be done to attract these workers to relocate to Champaign?
- What are the implications of expanding the City's boundaries coupled with declining population density? With increasing fuel costs and infrastructure costs, a more efficient development pattern is essential to a fiscally sustainable future.
- Statistics show that there are job opportunities in the area, though underemployment is a concern. Having job opportunities that are appropriate to the skill set of spouses and partners of relocating workers or the 'trailing spouse' phenomenon is essential to attract the best applicants.
- Champaign County has good, stable employment. The majority of employees in Champaign County work in medium and small sized businesses. Maintaining an economic environment that allows these businesses to grow is essential to our economy.
- Today's talented, mobile workforce is choosing their employer based upon the characteristics of the surrounding community. Building an urban environment that is attractive to that workforce will help Champaign remain competitive.
- Lifelong learning programs offered by the University of Illinois and Parkland College are desirable to retirees. In an October 2010 Money Magazine article, college towns were the top 25 places to retire because of their lifelong learning programs and activities for senior citizens.



# Vision

Champaign will grow to accommodate new residents of all ages, visitors and employees while maintaining the community's quality of life. Economic stability, coupled with fiscally sustainable growth and reinvestment in the City's center result in a prosperous community.

# Guiding Principles

***Fiscally Sustainable Growth***- Direct growth to locations that take advantage of existing service capacity and infrastructure. Promote infill development to strengthen established neighborhoods and centers.

***Foster a Knowledge Based Economy*** – The community fosters a knowledge-based economy by offering leading-edge technology, infrastructure and facilities within centers that cultivate synergistic relationships. Vibrant urban environments attract a creative, talented workforce with a focus on higher education, research and technology, healthcare, creative and applied arts and other supportive businesses.

***Strong Employment Centers*** – Champaign prospers by growing existing and recruiting new employers.

***Regional Destination for Commerce*** – Reinvestment in established commercial centers retains the City's competitive edge.

***Local Decisions With Regional Benefit*** – Collaboration between local organizations and municipalities brings positive results to the region. Working together to ensure Willard Airport remains a full-service airport and welcoming high-speed rail contributes to a strong business environment.



## *Measuring Success:*

- New development occurs within the existing service area of the City.
- There is a reduction in overall vehicle miles travelled (VMT) as compact residential neighborhoods are developed around employment centers and development of live-work-shop mixed used activity areas are established.
- An increasing number of infill projects will be completed annually.
- Vacancies in established commercial and employment centers will decrease over the life of the Plan.
- Enrollment at the University of Illinois and Parkland College will continue to grow.
- Maintain the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) annual entitlement grant by ensuring greater than the minimum 10,000 enplanements occur at Willard Airport each year.
- The number of employees and square footage available at the University of Illinois research park will increase over the life of the Plan.



## *Actions:*

- Create an Economic Development Strategic Plan that defines a suite of economic development tools.
- Package and expand existing policies and programs that promote infill development.
- Promote development of urban neighborhoods through zoning standards, development regulations and other tools.
- Create self-funded business organizations to maintain the health and attractiveness of established commercial centers. Targeted commercial centers include the North Prospect Regional Center and Round Barn Center initially. (From 'Community Identity' chapter)
- Continue to support the completion of partially constructed and approved development projects.
- Foster tourism promotion through the City's collaboration with the Champaign County Convention and Visitor's Bureau and 40 North/88 West arts organization.
- Through the City's membership in the Economic Development Corporation, support the University of Illinois and local efforts to ensure the retention of Willard Airport and efforts for high speed rail.
- Support the Center City marketing partnership to build a strong urban core, including downtown, campustown and midtown.



# Sustainable City

“Think globally, act locally.” Traditionally many of the complex issues involving our environment have been discussed only at national and international levels. But as we have seen historically, the impacts of pollution and natural resource depletion are most strongly felt at the local level. These impacts can be seen in impacts to agriculture, air and water quality, aquifer depletion and more. International policies alone will fail to accomplish the goals of sustainability until each community and person does their part in reducing their ecological footprint.

While much attention is given to technological advances that can improve environmental quality, the reality is that guiding land use patterns through the Comprehensive Plan offers the greatest tool in achieving sustainability. Studies have shown that approximately 70% of greenhouse gas emissions are generated by the built environment and transportation. That means that how we grow and move around directly impacts our sustainability. Becoming a sustainable city raises the issue of intergenerational equity. Do we owe future generations the same quality of life that we enjoy?

A sustainable city is a place where prosperity and social well being is achieved while minimizing impacts on the environment. Reducing impacts on the environment can be achieved in a number of ways. Reduction of green house gas emissions which result from the use of fossil fuels that power homes and cars is an important step. Constructing and retrofitting buildings to be energy efficient, promoting development patterns that reduce auto dependency and using renewable resources will ease reliance on fossil fuels. Developing the City in a compact way using low-impact development techniques also minimizes impact on the environment by protecting farmland, water quality and the Mahomet aquifer.



**The Comprehensive Plan is the most important tool to growing in a sustainable way. The Plan guides the way the City grows and develops by designating a pattern of appropriate land uses linked to an active transportation system.**

## *Snapshot:*

- Champaign-Urbana's per capita water consumption has increased tremendously in recent years. While the population of the urban area has doubled in the past 50 years, the overall water consumption in the area has quadrupled. Water comes from the Mahomet Aquifer, which also serves other communities in East Central Illinois. It is being studied by the Mahomet Aquifer Consortium. The capacity of the aquifer is unknown, but it is finite. It takes an estimated 3,000 years for surface water from rain and snow to infiltrate and replenish the aquifer.
- Champaign has maintained a good Air Quality Index for more than 80% of days in a year for the past 6-7 years. It also performs slightly better in air quality as compared to similar urban areas – Peoria, Decatur and Normal.
- Champaign sits in the middle of a region of prime farmland, some of the most productive in the world.
- Champaign currently has four LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings.

## *Issues Considered:*

- Given the availability of prime farmland surrounding the City, how do we grow in a manner that preserves this resource but at the same time does not inhibit the growth of the city (in terms of population and supporting services and amenities)?
- Data indicates that air quality is currently good. Automobiles release a large portion of air pollutants. As the population of the City increases, so will the number of automobiles. How can future development be guided so as to maintain air quality?
- The City's only source of water is the Mahomet aquifer that spreads over much of East Central Illinois and is shared by other communities as well. What implications does this have for decisions on the use of water in the community? What decisions can be made through the comprehensive plan that promote sustainable use of this limited resource?
- What measures should be taken to ensure the community's built environment is environmentally sustainable?





## *Vision*

Champaign is a sustainable city that limits its impact on natural resources and on the local, regional and global environment.

## *Guiding Principles*

***Reduce Consumption and Impact*** – Reduce the consumption of air, water, energy, land and other resources.

***Conserve and Reuse Resources*** – Materials such as rehabilitated buildings, stormwater runoff and other resources, will be reused through best management practices.

***Emissions*** – Reduce local greenhouse gas emissions through the reduction of vehicle miles traveled and the use of renewable energy and active transportation.

***Development Patterns*** – New development will be located and designed to have a limited impact on the natural environment, be compact and contiguous to existing development, expand the urban forest, and encourage walking, cycling and transit use.

***Building Design*** – New buildings will incorporate industry standards for low-energy use.

***Renewable Energy*** - The generation and use of renewable energy will be encouraged through City codes and programs.

## Measuring Success:

- Consider the percentage of new development occurred through infill or redevelopment versus greenfield development. The average density of new development compared to previous years should also be considered. The percentage of infill development should increase as compared to greenfield development.
- More of Champaign's energy needs are being met through renewable energy sources. An increasing number of properties will generate and use renewable energy.
- The number of acres of per capita park space should not decrease as the City grows.
- Consider the amount of solid waste generated by residents annually. Residents will recycle an increasing portion of their solid waste.
- Commute times in the City will not increase with growth. An increasing number of commuters will use transit and active transportation choices as the City's bicycle and trail network is implemented.



## Actions:

- Create a density bonus or other incentive programs to encourage sustainable site design in the city using best practice standards.
- Integrate Low-Impact Site Design best practices into City's development standards.
- Create new mixed-use zoning districts to facilitate more compact and sustainable patterns of development. These categories should reflect the Future Land Use chapter.
- Develop criteria that clearly states expectations and exceptions in applying "complete street" standards for both construction of new streets as well as maintenance and reconstruction of existing streets.
- Develop and implement a Sustainability Plan for the City that is based on the findings and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Develop standards for mixed-use activity centers and incorporate into the Zoning Ordinance.
- Establish maximum parking requirements that recognize: the availability and capacity of transit service, availability of active commute modes, access to off-site and on-street parking facilities, and the availability of joint-use parking in mixed-use areas.
- Expand or create new standards and programs to become a more sustainable community. These standards and programs could address: energy conservation and renewable energy generation, gray water and stormwater reuse, potential for a regional stormwater and detention system, recycling and salvage and community gardens and urban agriculture.

# Complete Neighborhoods



Communities are personified by their residents and the neighborhoods they live in. Champaign is fortunate to have a cohesive neighborhood structure that gives the City its character. From older neighborhoods like Clark Park to postwar neighborhoods like Garden Hills and newer neighborhoods like Cherry Hills, Champaign has a variety of neighborhood types to suit all interests. The goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to not only strengthen existing neighborhoods but to provide a framework for creating new neighborhoods that are “complete”.

Complete neighborhoods are ones that provide a variety of housing types and densities, a mixture of different land uses, the essential civic elements, proximity to schools, parks, transit and shopping and an urban design that ensures long term viability. The PLACES survey performed for the Comprehensive Plan indicated a strong preference for the character of older neighborhoods. One of the reasons for the popularity of older neighborhoods is that they offer housing variety that many new homogenous subdivisions often lack. The goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to recapture these qualities when building new.

***The goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to not only strengthen existing neighborhoods, but to provide a framework for creating new neighborhoods that are “complete.”***

## Issues Considered:

- Newer residential subdivisions developed in Champaign have a limited range of housing types and prices. Each subdivision targets a specific segment of the market but few attempt to attract a range of market interests. The lack of diversity in housing choices within developments often contributes to a lack of diversity in that development's residents.
- Complete neighborhoods must be designed to promote connectivity. This includes streets that connect to adjacent neighborhoods and can safely accommodate cars, transit, bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Neighborhood parks are an essential part of a complete neighborhood. However, the amount of new park acreage being provided is less than desirable according to national standards. Without a mechanism to ensure developers donate land for parks in new development, more new neighborhoods are being established without adequate access to parks.
- The recent shift in the economy and dramatic changes in the housing market call to question the future of housing demand and preference. There are reasons to believe that market demand for big homes on large lots far from city centers will weaken in favor of more affordable options closer to the core of communities.
- Older neighborhoods have many great amenities such as close proximity to parks, schools and a design that is very walkable. However, many lack the close proximity to daily shopping needs. Similar to the issue with new neighborhoods, promoting new neighborhood commercial uses will require careful urban design.
- The term “density” often raises concern for many people. However, higher densities create a more successful climate for business, can reduce per capita infrastructure and service costs, better support transit and promote sustainable growth by limiting sprawl. Careful planning and proper design can successfully blend residential densities.
- A goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to have residential uses in close proximity to neighborhood commercial so residents can enjoy short trips to accommodate their everyday needs. However, traditional development patterns separate these uses to a great extent to avoid possible incompatibilities. While this may be partially due to decisions in the market, the City's zoning ordinance also encourages this separation by not incorporating the latest best practices in land use patterns and site design.



## Vision:

Champaign's neighborhoods are structured to ensure residents can attend school, shop, live and play within a short distance of their homes. The majority of "everyday needs," like convenience services and recreation can be found within neighborhood boundaries or in close proximity.

## Guiding Principles:

**Well-Planned Mix of Uses** – Land uses are mixed in a way that provides for the needs of the neighborhood, with access to shops, services and employment within a short distance. Activity is concentrated at key centers, known as 'Activity Centers.'

**Well-Designed Density** – Residential density supports neighborhood commercial uses and fosters a more vibrant community.

**Range of Housing Types** – Neighborhoods offer a range of housing types, styles and price points to accommodate residents through many stages of life.

**Connectivity** – Neighborhood elements are integrated with other destinations through transit, trails, sidewalks, as well as through a grid street system.

**Presence of Neighborhood Elements** – Public parks, schools, convenience commercial areas and other elements are integrated into neighborhoods and can be accessed safely by walking or biking.

## Measuring Success:

- Residents live within a mile of neighborhood commercial uses where they can satisfy most everyday needs.
- For residential development proposed on large tracts in the City's growth areas, analysis is provided demonstrating the proposed mix of housing types (single-family detached, townhomes, condominiums, apartments, etc.) and the overall density of the development.
- New residential subdivision developments achieve a gross density close to 4.0 dwelling units per acre or higher.
- New developments meet expectations for street connectivity and design. Waivers are granted only in extreme cases.
- Residential development is within a five to ten minute walk of a park and is safely accessible.



## *Actions:*

- Develop “Complete Streets” criteria that clearly states expectations and exceptions in applying “complete street” standards for both construction of new streets as well as maintenance and reconstruction of existing streets.
- Collaborate with the Champaign Park District to develop a mechanism for securing public park space with new growth. Assist the Park District in clearly identifying the future needs (types of parks, their size and location by zone) and how park construction would be funded and scheduled.
- Revise the Champaign Zoning Ordinance to better address the issues of design compatibility with locating commercial uses near residential uses that focuses more on “form” than “use.”
- Create a ‘complete neighborhood’ checklist that can be used by staff and decision makers when considering new development proposals. This list would ensure that all new development is within 5 to 10 minutes walking distance of parks and neighborhood commercial centers, includes a mix of housing types to cater to different groups of population and more.
- Define neighborhood boundaries for the purpose of tracking densities, walking distance to activity centers, parks and other amenities.
- Explore the feasibility of requiring a mix of housing types and densities for new residential subdivisions.

# Community Identity



*Well designed and maintained spaces convey a sense of prosperity, safety and desirability.*

Champaign is a diverse and culturally rich community. Considered to be a “micro-urban” city, Champaign offers an atmosphere not typically found in communities its size. The influence of the University of Illinois and Parkland College permeates the City. These institutions are not only places of higher learning, they are also economic engines, major employers, cultural centers and entertainment destinations. Most importantly, they bring people here from all over the world to teach, learn, research and live in the community. The cultural diversity generated from these institutions is invaluable and contributes to the area’s high quality of life. Champaign is also known as a micro-urban community because of its vibrant center city, the variety of globally inspired restaurants, shops for every taste and residents with a breadth of backgrounds.

The appearance of a place affects the impressions it makes on residents and visitors. As a regional destination, those impressions are imperative to Champaign’s future. Well designed and maintained spaces convey a sense of prosperity, safety and desirability. While many consider the community to be “beautifully flat”, others are quick to cite the lack of natural features in Champaign. As stated in the City’s 1926 Comprehensive Plan, “Nature moreover has given the site few advantages. Lack of hills and ravines, lakes and water courses must be offset by other features created by the people who live in Champaign.” This is typical of many Midwest communities with a rich farming history. As recognized by the community since 1926, with few natural attractions, a high-quality built environment becomes even more important.

## Snapshot:

- Champaign takes pride in its history. There are 22 local Historic Landmarks, 3 Historic Districts and 24 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Celebrations in 2010 marked the City's 150th birthday.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) programs fund redevelopment grants, public streetscape maintenance and beautification. The City has three TIF districts in areas of the City that suffered decline, the Downtown TIF, Eastside TIF and North Campustown TIF. The East Side TIF has resulted in a six to one return on investment, with \$416,000 of investment yielding \$2.3 million in private investment.
- In the PLACES Survey, over 80% of participants did not find the aesthetics or building design found in auto-oriented shopping centers to be attractive.
- According to a 2003 study conducted by the Illinois Arts Alliance Foundation, non-profit arts in Champaign County contribute \$33.7 million annually to the local economy.
- Currently, there are 43 active neighborhood groups registered with the City's Neighborhood Services Department. The Small Grants Program offers financial support to these groups and help sponsor various activities and projects. Frequent activities include block parties and clean ups. Common projects are tree plantings, and beautification.
- University of Illinois enrollment increased by 10% between the 2000/01 and 2007/08 school years resulting in nearly 42,000 students. Over the same time period, Parkland College enrollment increased by 17% for a total of approximately 9,400 students
- Since 1990, the City's population has continued to become more diverse. The 2010 population is 81,055 people. The population reporting as Black or African American grew by two percent in 2000 and remained steady in 2010 at 15.4%. The population reporting as Asian grew in both 2000 and 2010 to 10.5%. The Hispanic or Latino population, which is an ethnicity not a race, also grew to 6.5%



*The sculpture, "Double Dutch - A Jump for Joy," part of a program run by the Public Art League, welcomes visitors to West Side Park*

## Issues Considered:

- Higher level streetscape standards require an additional level of maintenance, needing greater resource allocation. Resources include upkeep of street furniture, planting and watering flowerbeds and more. While these elements have greater maintenance costs, experience shows that beautification also results in greater economic interest in the area.
- The City's TIF funds have been used successfully to encourage private investment in areas suffering decline. Though much improvement has been made, these areas continue to need City investment to support the redevelopment process.
- Although Champaign enjoys a diversity of residents, trends in residential development suggest our neighborhoods may be becoming less diverse. What can be done to build "complete neighborhoods" that attract a diverse population?
- As neighborhoods and centers age, they often need improvements or upgrades to prevent decline. This is especially true in areas that were built with a focus on auto traffic or have urban design features that are no longer desirable. Creating funding sources as well as neighborhood or business groups for these areas is a proactive way to keep established parts of the City desirable.
- A higher quality of urban design is commonly desired by residents but can result in a greater expense for developers. How can these two interests be balanced?
- While historic preservation is an important aspect of the community, there are few economic incentives available for residents to consider protecting their homes and businesses that may greatly contribute to the historical culture of the city.



# Vision

Champaign is known for being a diverse city that is attractive with well-planned spaces, streets and buildings.

## Guiding Principles

**High quality urban design** – Sites are designed in a way that acknowledges the long-term legacy of development. The built environment becomes the scenery of the community.

**Preservation of special places** – Structures and neighborhoods of historical importance and architectural integrity are preserved for future generations.

**Neighborhood Pride** – Residents take pride in their neighborhood and engage in civic activity. Residents invest time and money in their property.

**Beautification of urban areas**– Special care is taken to enhance the appearance of urban areas.

**Center City** – The City’s core, comprised of Downtown, Campustown, and Midtown remains the economic and entertainment heart of the community. It flourishes with investment in infrastructure, infill development and coordinated leadership.

**University Town** – As home to the University of Illinois, Champaign is a center for innovation and a regional, national and global destination.

**Community Culture** – Residents have access to cultural pursuits, like museums, arts and theaters.

## Measuring Success:

- Incentive programs continue to leverage public resources for a greater investment of private resources.
- The number of property nuisance violations decreases, contributing to a more aesthetically pleasing community.
- The number of local historic landmarks, districts and national register listing increases.
- The university and city partner in endeavors that extend the presence of the university off campus and into the community.
- Census data show that Champaign neighborhoods are becoming more diverse.
- The number of active neighborhood association increases.
- Existing commercial areas experience reinvestment and improvement rather than stagnating when new commercial areas are built.

## Actions:

- Support the existing Redevelopment Incentive Policy and develop similar tools that can achieve like results in areas where the Redevelopment Incentive Policy is not available.
- Develop incentive programs for historic preservation and designation as a Local Landmark or Historic District. These incentives may include: property tax freeze, façade improvement grant program, no or low interest loan programs, cooperative program with the Neighborhood Services Department using existing grant programs to improve historic properties and more.
- Advance resident involvement. Actions may include a tool kit that offers residents information on how to work with City government, a web-based tool for neighborhood group information and more.
- Support a “Center City” concept where organizational and funding efforts for Downtown, Campustown and Midtown are coordinated together.
- Research the potential for unique urban design elements that enhance the Center City, including neighborhood signage, banners, historic plaques, etc. This offers the opportunity to brand the area and promote the efforts of redevelopment partnerships in the area.
- Create a program that encourages established neighborhoods to develop urban design elements that reflect their unique character.
- Support efforts to advance public art in the community.
- Consider creating business organizations and funding sources for public improvements, possibly a Special Service Area, in established commercial centers. Targeted commercial centers include the North Prospect Regional Center, Round Barn Center and Champaign Village/Country Fair initially.
- Continue to implement neighborhood plans and develop plans for areas in need of improvement. Areas in need of study include East Park Street, the Neil Street Corridor and the South State/South Randolph Street area.
- Identify opportunities to implement the Overpass Enhancement Master Plan when bridges are replaced.
- Identify opportunities to continue the implementation of the Boneyard Creek Master Plan to create an urban greenway linking established neighborhoods.
- Create a pattern book for the new Urban Neighborhoods future land use category.



*Champaign has a tradition of community events that continues today. This picture shows the 1959 Fourth of July Parade at the corner of Sixth and Green Streets.*

# Healthy Community



The physical design of a city plays an important role in promoting the health of its residents. Although personal health involves individual lifestyle decisions, communities can help enable responsible decisions in part through urban design and land use. Studies show that individuals are healthier when they live in communities that are walkable, provide alternative modes of transportation such as transit and bicycling, provide ample park and recreational opportunities and build mixed-use, higher density neighborhoods. Similar to infrastructure for utilities that make a city work, there is basic infrastructure system that can promote a healthier population.



Champaign is well positioned to be a leader in providing “healthy infrastructure”. First, Champaign has outstanding health care services since the Champaign-Urbana area is a regional healthcare destination. More importantly, the City is built generally on a grid system of streets, is already quite walkable and is provided with a first rate public transportation system. Most older neighborhoods were designed with these physical attributes, but many newer developments have a design that encourages driving over walking. The Comprehensive Plan can play an important role in shaping the physical design of a community that can ultimately lead to more healthy residents.

*Similar to infrastructure for utilities that make a city work, there is a basic infrastructure system that can promote a healthier population.*

## Issues Considered:

- Although the City's Subdivision Regulations require sidewalks to be built on both sides of streets in new residential developments, they must connect destinations for residents to use them.
- Residents are more likely to walk to a neighborhood shopping area to meet some of their daily needs. However, if it is too far or if one has to cross significant barriers (such as a busy arterial street) it is more likely they will drive to achieve these tasks.
- Recently, local health care providers have built satellite clinics on the edge of the community. These clinics help serve a regional customer base but can often make it difficult for local residents with a limited means of transportation to access them. It is important to keep health care facilities available in the core of the community where they can be easily accessed by multiple modes of transportation.
- Bicycling is a great way to improve ones health. Promoting a 'bicycle culture' in the community requires careful urban design of development and streets. It is important for Champaign to provide infrastructure that promotes commuting by bike as well as bicycling for recreation.
- A local food system plays an important role in the health of a community. Creating opportunities for local farmers markets, food co-ops and community gardens contributes to providing a better range of food options to residents. The Comprehensive Plan can play a role in promoting these activities.
- Neighborhood parks that are integrated into new residential developments afford residents the opportunity to easily walk to them. Community and regional parks have many benefits but usually result in the need to drive to them.
- Instilling positive fitness habits in children is critical to combating the epidemic of childhood obesity. The ability for kids to walk or bike to their school is an important way to establish positive fitness habits. Neighborhoods must be designed and built in a way that promotes a safe walking environment for children.
- Trails are very popular with residents. Champaign has opportunities to establish a network of trails throughout the community.



# Vision

The physical design of Champaign enables residents to enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

## Guiding Principles

**Walking Community** – Development is designed to promote street life and encourage walking with interconnected sidewalks, trails and streets. Buildings are built to a human scale, with features that accommodate people as the primary user, rather than vehicles.

**Alternative Transportation** – Transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities are integrated into the transportation system throughout the community for both commuting and recreational purposes.

**Community Health Facilities** – Champaign continues to be a regional healthcare destination, with ready access by the local and regional community.

**Healthy Youth** – Urban design promotes healthy lifestyle options for the youth of the community including schools and parks within walking distance and interconnected neighborhoods that allow for walking and bicycling.

**Local Food Systems** - Healthy food options are available to the public in a variety of ways.

## Measuring Success:

- Census data shows an increase in the number of individuals that access work by either walking, bicycling or taking transit.
- The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program continues to grow and the number of children walking to school increases. In a 2009 Safe Routes to School survey conducted in Unit #4 schools, 12.5% of students walked or biked to school and 35.4% took a school bus or transit to get to school.
- The number of “community rides” (non-student) trips on the CUMTD increases.
- The number of acres of park space per capita increases in the community.
- More mileage of trails are constructed in the community.
- Champaign continues to provide a farmers market and the number of vendors providing healthy produce options increases.
- There continue to be health care options in the Center City.
- Sidewalks are built on both sides of streets in new development.



*Local youth grow vegetables in the Prosperity Garden on North First Street. The garden resulted from a partnership between the City of Champaign, the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club, University of Illinois Extension and many others.*

## ***Actions:***

- Support the efforts of the Safe Routes to School initiative that promotes schools in the community being walkable.
- Develop “complete streets” criteria that clearly states expectations and exceptions in applying “complete street” standards for both construction of new streets as well as maintenance and reconstruction of existing streets.
- Continue to implement the Bicycle Vision of *Champaign Moving Forward* and fund bicycle infrastructure in the capital improvement plan to continue momentum.
- Promote farmers markets and urban agriculture as a way to access affordable, local foods.
- Complete a Trails Master Plan and establish an effort with the Champaign Park District to regularly secure funding to construct trail extensions.
- Work to ensure health care services continue to be provided in the Center City, centrally located to multi-modal transportation services at the population center of the community.

# *Complete Public Facilities*



Having complete public facilities ensures a community's ability to grow and prosper in a responsible manner. Public facilities are the utilities we rely on, the streets we travel on, the transit we ride on, the fire service we depend on and more. Inadequate public facilities compromise our quality of life (and perhaps our safety) and prevent the community from moving forward. As Champaign has grown the city has consistently maintained a base level expectation of public facilities to be provided. For example, the city maintains certain expectations for fire service response time within the community. The City also works closely with other entities to ensure that the utilities are properly extended to accommodate development and that there are provisions in place to maintain an expected level of service.



However, resources are not unlimited and it is not always possible to extend the same level of service everywhere on the fringe of the city. The Comprehensive Plan presents the opportunity to establish areas where growth can occur and be adequately provided with public facilities. The Plan also seeks to strike an appropriate balance between building new facilities and maintaining existing facilities. Finally, the Plan presents the opportunity to establish policy for how public facilities are to be financed and built.

***As Champaign has grown, the City has consistently maintained a base level of public facilities provided to all residents.***

## Snapshot:

- The City of Champaign maintains 6 fire stations with 120 staff members in five divisions. The Champaign Fire Department has an Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of 2.0 (a lower ISO rating, yields better insurance rates are in the community). The Department has an established policy to provide service to 90% of the calls within 4.0 minutes.
- Champaign has a well-defined network of arterial streets evenly spaced in grid-like fashion. However, improvements to many of the arterial streets have not kept pace with development, creating a backlog of needed projects. The City's Capital Improvement Plan lacks the funding to be able to schedule improvements in a reasonable timeframe thus creating the need for additional funding sources.
- The Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (CUMTD) accommodates over 10,000,000 trips per year which is considered extremely high for a community the size of Champaign-Urbana. While a large portion of these rides are generated by the University population, a growing percentage is "community" rides. The establishment of the Southwest Mass Transit District (SWMTD) in 2006 prevents the CUMTD from providing service in a defined area of the community and compromises the City's goals of promoting growth that can be served by all modes of transportation.
- Sanitary sewers run through at 3-tiered network of lines. The Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District is responsible for sewage treatment and major interceptors while the City of Champaign maintains lateral lines that connect development to the interceptors. Private property owners are responsible for service lines that connect lateral lines to structures.
- While Comprehensive Plans commonly look at issues of expanding infrastructure systems, it is important for the plan to consider how existing systems will be maintained and improved over time. These existing systems include sanitary and storm sewers, streets, public buildings and more. For example, in 2010 the City committed significant funding to resolve long-standing stormwater flooding issues in the Washington and John Street watersheds.
- The Champaign Unit 4 School District provides an early childhood center, eleven elementary schools, three middle schools and two high schools in the community. The district boundary encompasses areas outside the City of Champaign including unincorporated areas and the Village of Savoy. In 2009 Champaign County voters approved an increase in the local sales tax rate with the funding to be distributed to school districts in the County for capital facility improvements.
- The Champaign Park District maintains over 500 acres of parks in the community and offers a full menu of activity and programming options for residents. The Park District acquires new park land through purchase, grant funding and/or by donation.



## Issues Considered:

- The sales tax referendum provides new funding for Champaign Unit 4 Schools to improve existing schools and build new facilities as appropriate. The Comprehensive Plan is an important tool in this process. First, it allows the District to better understand where growth is projected. Secondly, it provides a framework for establishing the design of neighborhoods to include schools as a key ingredient.
- The improvement of the arterial street system is an important consideration of the Comprehensive Plan. The plan offers policy direction on funding improvement but also presents a Future Land Use Map that identifies those growth areas that have fewer arterial street improvement needs.
- There are limited resources to fund expansion of the infrastructure system and it is important not to fund expansion at the expense of maintaining existing systems. Promoting infill development allows for new growth opportunities while still supporting the existing infrastructure system.
- The CUMTD operates on a “hub and spoke” system with campus and the downtowns as hubs, the CUMTD functions best when growth is compact, contiguous and designed to support transit.
- The recommendations for growth in the Comprehensive Plan are closely tied to the existing capacity of the sewer system and plans for expansion. It is anticipated that the Southwest Sanitary Sewer Project will be completed during the initial years of this plan. Additional interceptor projects are not needed in the foreseeable future to accommodate growth.
- Stormwater management is an important infrastructure consideration in both existing and new city neighborhoods. Some older neighborhoods have experienced significant flooding during heavy rain events due to obsolete stormwater sewer drainage facilities. The design of stormwater detention basins plays a functional and aesthetic role in new neighborhoods. Champaign’s relatively flat terrain slows conveyance of stormwater, contributing to flooding.
- The recommendations on future growth in the Comprehensive Plan have an impact on established goals for fire and emergency service delivery. The plan anticipates the relocation of Fire Station #3 to the north Market Street area which would provide better service delivery times to developments in north and northwest Champaign.



# Vision

Public facilities will be complete throughout the City to achieve a high quality of life for all residents.

# Guiding Principles

**Stewards of the Public Infrastructure** – The public infrastructure system is well maintained to ensure longevity and existing deficiencies are improved to appropriate standards.

**Complete Infrastructure** – Infrastructure, such as streets, sewers and other utilities, is constructed in conjunction with population growth.

**Sufficient Services** – Public service levels shall be maintained as the community grows.

**Incorporating Advancing Technology** – As the city grows and infrastructure is extended, the utility network shall incorporate advancements in technology that will keep the community competitive in the future.

**Presence of Community Facilities** – Community facilities, including parks and schools, will be constructed or improved as population grows, to maintain appropriate service levels.

**Accessibility to Transit service** – Transit service shall be extended as the community grows to ensure equal access to the transit system within walking distance of residences and commercial areas.



## *Measuring Success:*

- The backlog of arterial street improvements is reduced over time.
- New development contributes to the improvement of the arterial street system commensurate with the impact it creates.
- As the community grows, the response rate for fire and emergency services remains within a four minute response time to 90% or more of the calls for service.
- Residential development is within a five to ten minute walk of a public park that is safely accessible.
- The existing ratio of park acres per capita (currently at 8) is not reduced as the community grows and increases where possible.
- The Champaign Unit 4 School District can adequately provide educational facilities for a growing population.
- New development occurs in locations that can utilize the existing sanitary sewer interceptor system before extending the existing system or building new systems.
- The Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District annexes land into the District shortly after being annexed into the City.
- There is improved management of stormwater runoff in existing neighborhoods thus reducing the incidents of flooding.



## Actions:

- Find new revenue sources to improve existing arterial streets.
- Develop a “Complete Public Facilities” checklist that can be used by staff and decision makers when considering new development proposals. This list would ensure that provisions for public facilities are provided ahead of development.
- Collaborate with the Champaign Park District to develop a mechanism for securing public park space with new growth. Assist the Park District in clearly identifying the future needs (types of parks, their size and location by zone) and how park construction would be funded and scheduled.
- Develop and maintain a map that clearly identifies the arterial street and sidewalk improvement needs. The map should be structured to show; 1) the backlog of improvements; 2) the scheduled improvements identified in either the current Capital Improvement Plan or in individual agreements; and 3) the unscheduled improvements that would have to be planned in conjunction with new growth.
- Update codes and standards to require multi-modal transportation assessments for all new proposed developments which address connections, access, and mobility for autos, transit, bicycles and pedestrians (*Champaign Moving Forward* Action RA-3).
- Develop “Complete Streets” criteria that clearly states expectations and exceptions in applying “complete street” standards for both construction of new streets as well as maintenance and reconstruction of existing streets.
- Consistent with the recommendations of the 2010 Fiscal Impact Analysis and the 2008 Transportation Master Plan *Champaign Moving Forward*, develop an impact fee system for the improvement of arterial streets.
- Continue to work with the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District on the implementation of the southwest sanitary sewer project.
- Study the feasibility of a stormwater utility fee that would fund infrastructure improvements for managing stormwater runoff.
- Identify opportunities to implement drainage master plans to improve drainage in the community.
- Adjust the development review process to include an analysis of the impact to the public school system, both enrollment and transportation.
- Annually assess updates that may be necessary to the Manual of Practice to include provisions for utility needs that accommodate advancing technology, such as broadband.

