

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

The Planning Department Annual Report is an accounting of the most significant planning issues of 2015. Additional details on growth and zoning matters are provided in separate reports pertaining to the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Uptown Design Review Commission, and Historic Preservation Commission.

PHYSICAL GROWTH & ANNEXATION

In 2015 the Town did not annex any land into the corporate limits, nor did it enter into any new pre-annexation agreements. The table on the following page provides a list of all unannexed property currently subject to a pre-annexation agreement with the Town. The total number of acres subject to pre-annexation agreement in 2015 was 513.

The Town Planner is responsible for the coordination of orderly growth and development in Normal through the enforcement of the zoning and subdivision codes. In order to accomplish these goals, the Town Planner acts as the staff liaison to the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Uptown Design Review Commission, and the McLean County Regional Planning Commission.

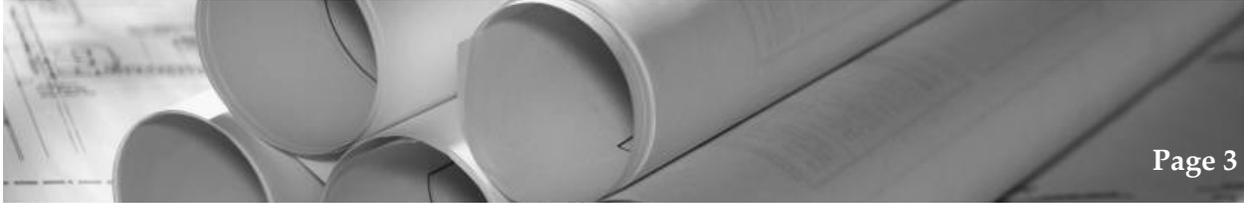
In order to best coordinate development, a staff development committee meets once a week to discuss development issues. The committee is composed of representatives from all of the departments involved with development. This staff-level review is intended to help developers better understand the requirements a project would have to meet if formally submitted as a Planned Unit Development (PUD), variance or special use request, redevelopment agreement, or other construction project. Development committee review provides the information necessary to prepare a complete application with all the appropriate Town staff at one time. The committee also reviews formal submissions and makes recommendations to the assigned hearing bodies on Town staff's positions regarding projects under review.

LAND SUBJECT TO A PRE-ANNEXATION AGREEMENT

Property Owner	Location	Acres	Agreement Expiration	Planned Use
Bates, Paul	Southeast corner of Towanda Avenue and County Rd 2000 North	84	2025	Residential/Agriculture
Bates, Paul	South of 2000 North Road, east of I-39, west of 1425 East Road (old Route 51), and north of Ziebarth Road	20	2028	Nussbaum Trucking
Carden	North of Raab, South of I-55, West of Towanda	64*	2020	Nursing Home, Commercial, Residential
Corn Belt	E. Raab Road	3		Utility
Country Acres	North of Ft. Jesse, South of Shepard Road, West of Airport	100	2020	Residential, Commercial
Kelley	Kelley Glen (NE corner)	28	2022	Residential, Commercial
Koe	Northwest corner of Ft. Jesse and Towanda Barnes	160	2021	Residential, Commercial
Miller	Between I-39 and N. Main and between Kerrick and Ziebarth	49	2022	Commercial
Taylor	3307 E. Raab	5	2024	Residential

Total acres subject to pre-annexation agreement: 513

* The Carden agreement pertains to the entire 64 acres; however, 23 acres of the Carden property were annexed in June 2006 (1.32 acres directly north of Carden Park 15.13 acres NE of Prairieland Elementary, 5 acres for MCAL directly east of Prairieland Elementary) and 4.74 acres were annexed in Sept. 2009 at the NE corner of Raab and Towanda.



BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Progress continues with the implementation of various aspects of the master plan. Major categories in bicycle planning include the 5 E's: Engineering, Evaluation, Enforcement, Encouragement, and Education. In 2015 the Town continued popular activities that hit on Encouragement and Education, including the bike rodeo, bike to school day (Metcalf Elementary), Light the Night bike light giveaway, and the winter bike movie.

Also in 2015, the Town added bike lanes to Blair between College and Ft Jesse as part of a resurfacing project and completed a Constitution Trail extension north to Ziebarth and east from the main trail to the North Bridge Subdivision. These trail extensions connected hundreds of homes to the trail system, with a resulting total trail mileage of almost 15 miles in Normal. These extensions were also included in an updated and reprinted Constitution Trail map, which was funded in large part by the Friends of the Constitution Trail. The Friends also funded the design and implementation of a comprehensive trail way-finding system. All of the wayfinding signs were installed throughout Normal and Bloomington in 2015 with the exception of the Collegiate Branch, which will be installed in 2016.

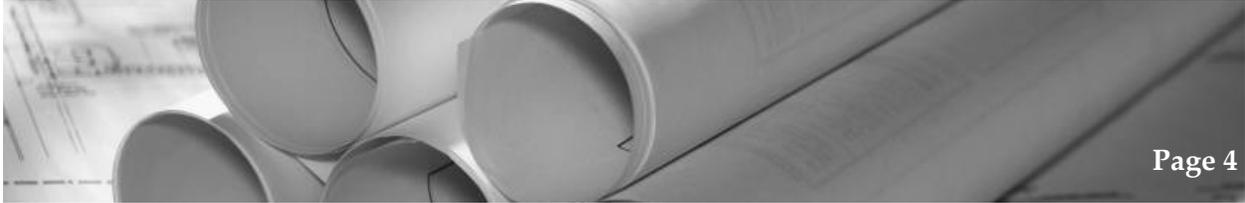
Heading into 2016, a committee has formed to update the Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan. Members include representatives from Public Works, Engineering, Police, the Friends of the Constitution Trail, the McLean County Wheelers, and Bike BloNo. Ed Barsotti, executive director of Ride Illinois, is providing technical support for the update.

UPTOWN 2.0: AN UPDATE TO THE UPTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Under the direction of Farr Associates, the Town updated the Uptown Redevelopment plan (adopted in 2000) with a new plan called "Uptown 2.0." The process included extensive public involvement through presentations and design workshops, and culminated in a plan that both re-examines the Uptown properties north of the railroad tracks and proposes a detailed new plan for the Town-owned property south of the tracks. Highlights of the Uptown 2.0 plan include the following:

1. Construction of an underpass to connect the north and south side of the railroad tracks rather than the previously planned overpass designed to serve only Amtrak customers
2. Relocation of the Normal Public Library to the area southwest of Linden and Parkinson
3. Comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle improvements along Linden, Vernon, and College
4. Conversion of College and Mulberry from one-way traffic to two-way traffic
5. Greatly enhanced sustainable design through the Living Communities Challenge
6. Renewed call for a grocery store in Uptown, preferably on the north side of the railroad tracks





COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The current Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan was last comprehensively updated in 2005, with minor changes adopted in 2008 and 2013. In late 2015 the McLean County Regional Planning Commission began the process of creating a new Comprehensive Plan for Normal, called “PlanIt Normal.” Initial steps included key stakeholder interviews and extensive outreach through presentations and surveys. By the end of 2015 the commission was also wrapping up the existing conditions analysis, which includes community demographics and population projections. Initial findings will be presented publicly starting in early 2016.

