

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

The Planning Department Annual Report is an accounting of the most significant planning issues of 2016. 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 2016 the Town annexed 2.582 +/- acres of land surrounded by Heartland Community College. The Town did not 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 2016 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, Historic Preservation Commission, and the McLean County Regional Planning Commission.

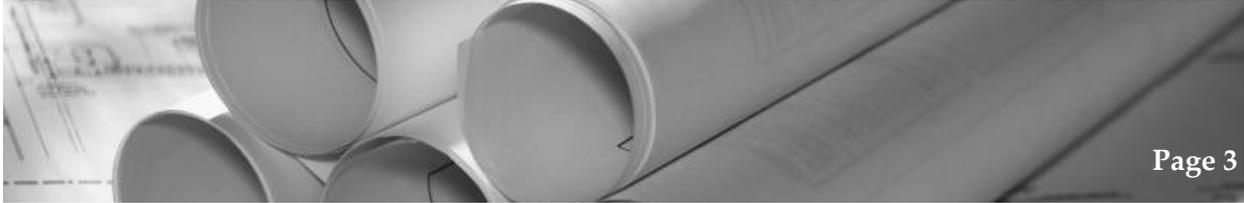
In order to best coordinate development, a staff development committee meets once a week to discuss development issues. The committee is composed of representatives from all of the departments involved with development. This staff-level review is intended to help developers better understand the requirements 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

In 2016 the Town Council identified continued implementation of the Bike-Ped Master Plan as a high priority. Several activities were undertaken to further this goal. In 2016 the Town continued popular activities such as the bike rodeo, bike to school day (Metcalf Elementary), Light the Night bike light giveaway, and the winter bike movie. The Town also hosted the 5th annual Illinois Bike Summit and a NACTO training for engineers. With the leadership of the McLean County Regional Planning Commission, the Town helped relaunch the Good to Go commuter challenge utilizing new software.

Several infrastructure projects were undertaken in 2016. Wayfinding for the Collegiate Branch of the Constitution Trail through the ISU campus was completed under the leadership of the Friends of the Constitution Trail. The county completed a new section of the Route 66 trail, which terminates at Normal's corporate boundary at Shelbourne and Towanda. The portion of the trail between Mulberry and Sycamore was resurfaced. The Illinois Department of Transportation rebuilt the bridge on Main Street in front of Advocate BroMenn and added a bike lane to the bridge and immediately adjacent roadway.

Although a committee was formed to update the Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan in late 2015, the group only met one time due to Town staff constraints. The initiative may be revived in 2017.

The Town Council authorized Town staff to enter into an agreement with Zagster to start a public bike share system, which will launch in March 2017. The Town Council also approved a Complete Streets Policy in August 2016.

UPTOWN 2.0: AN UPDATE TO THE UPTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

In 2016 the Town engaged the services of WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff to lead the Phase One Engineering Services for the Uptown Normal Rail Grade Separation Project. This is the first step in analyzing the alternatives for rail crossings in Uptown Normal, including a "do nothing" alternative, an overpass, and an underpass. Also in 2016, the Normal Public Library hired architectural firm OPN to begin preliminary designs on a new library proposed for the Uptown 2.0 area.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In March 2016 the executive director of the McLean County Regional Planning Commission presented to the Town Council the "Community Snapshot and Outreach Report," which serves as the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan. Included within the document were two key findings. First, population projections were significantly lower than previously projected in part due to recent changes at State Farm's employment base. Second, the report for the first time pulled together statistics on the significant number of residential units approved under existing, unexpired annexation agreements.



SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT IN 2016

Several large-scale student residential developments were approved in 2016. An 8-building, 128-unit complex called the Lofts Northend will be built southeast of the intersection of Parkside and Raab near Heartland Community College. This leaves approximately 3 acres of B-1 commercial zoning at the corner. Across from Hancock Stadium, the Town rezoned a long-vacant B-1 property to R-3A and approved a height variance for a student apartment building.

On the north side of campus, the Town rezoned 7 properties from R-2 to R-3A to permit the development of the proposed “Lodge 2” at the northwest corner of Fell and Willow. If built, the new structure will mirror the existing “Lodge on Willow” at the northeast corner of School and Willow. South of campus, the Town approved a Big House development at 501 Broadway, which will include 16 units and 56 beds.

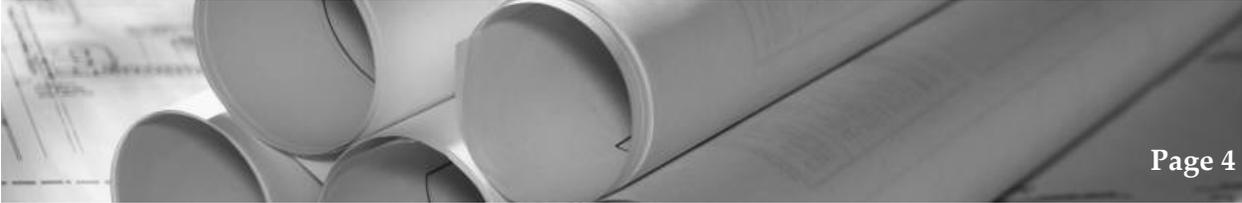
The Town also expanded the boundaries of the Parking Impact Zone to encompass a student-oriented development adjacent to Underwood Park. Following the PIZ expansion, the developer obtained approval to expand the apartment complex with 8 more units (26 beds).

Significant commercial developments also got underway in 2016. The Town began construction of a new Fire Headquarters on the 600 block of South Main Street. The Town also approved an amended annexation agreement for the North-Land Subdivision in order to support the extension of Greenbriar Drive and improvement of Hershey Drive. Both road improvements will support the new Destihl facility.

Grossinger also succeeded in amending their site plan to expand the building, incorporate all new outdoor lighting, and enhanced landscaping.

One Uptown Circle (right) began construction, filling a hole that had existed in Uptown since 2008. Inspections and Engineering Department offices will move into the second floor in late 2017.





2040 VISION PLAN

Since 1990 it has been Town tradition for the mayor to assemble a group of 20-25 community members every five years to create a vision of Normal 25 years into the future. In 2016 the 2040 Vision Plan was created and presented the following vision statement to the Town Council: “We have a place for *you* in our vibrant, prosperous, and connected community.” The committee very deliberately chose and emphasized the word “you” to emphasize the personal connection. They also generated the following 8 Core Values to support the motto.

Engagement. Ours is a resourceful and collaborative community that fuels civic engagement and inspires meaningful and generous contributions from residents of all walks of life.

Economy. Ours is an innovative and diverse economy in 2040 that has grown from what it was in 2016.

Spaces. Ours is an inter-related community visible through safe and accessible spaces that people love.

Social equity. Ours is a compassionate community that strives for social consciousness, responsiveness, and justice.

Multiculturalism. Ours is an inclusive and welcoming community that celebrates our unique and diverse backgrounds, identities, cultures, and talents.

Lifelong learning. Ours is an engaged and inquisitive community that encourages growth and supports lifelong learning.

Creativity. Ours is a creative community that promotes art and artists as an essential infrastructure and values art as a powerful process for bringing people—and ideas—together.

Well-being. Ours is an equitable health and wellness system that makes the healthy choice the easy choice as the top priority.

AND MORE ...

The Town is participating in a Regional Housing Study, an initiative being led by the Regional Planning Commission and in partnership with multiple other agencies including the county, the City of Bloomington, the Bloomington Housing Authority, and several affinity groups. Also under the leadership of Regional Planning, the Greenways Advisory Committee refocused its efforts in 2016 on the following: the Sugar Creek Watershed Plan, County Bike Plan, and education and advocacy.

Also in 2016, Associate Planner Taylor Long was hired.

