

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING**

**URBANA PLAN COMMISSION**

**APPROVED**

**DATE:** December 5, 2024

**TIME:** 7:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** Council Chambers, City Hall, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois

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**MEMBERS ATTENDING:** Dustin Allred, Lew Hopkins, Debarah McFarland, Bill Rose, Karen Simms, Chenxi Yu

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Will Andresen, Andrew Fell

**STAFF PRESENT:** Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner; Teri Andel, Administrative Assistant II; Andrea Ruedi, Senior Advisor for Integrated Strategy Development

**OTHERS PRESENT:** There were none.

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**A. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL**

Chair Allred called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Roll call was taken, and there was a quorum of the members present.

**B. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

There were none.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Minutes of the November 7, 2024 Regular Meeting**

The minutes of the November 7, 2024 regular meeting was presented for approval. Mr. Rose moved that the Plan Commission approve the minutes as written. Mr. Hopkins seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

**D. COMMUNICATIONS**

- *Imagine Urbana* Vision & Values – December 5, 2024
- Big Idea 4: Urbana Embraces its Cultural Vibrancy and Character
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) – Urban Street Design Guide (Excerpt)
- Map Indicating the Type of Streets in the City of Urbana

**E. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS**

There were none.

**F. OLD BUSINESS**

There was none.

**G. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS**

There were none.

**H. NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

**I. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

**J. STAFF REPORT**

Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner, reported on the following:

- Plan Case No. 2493-T-24 – Committee of the Whole denied forwarding the text amendment to City Council.

**K. STUDY SESSION**

***Imagine Urbana Comprehensive Plan Draft – Future Land Use Descriptions***

Chair Allred opened this item on the agenda. Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner and Zoning Administrator, and Andrea Ruedi, Senior Advisor for Integrated Strategy Development, presented the agenda for discussion topics on the Comprehensive Plan. They were as follows:

**I. Recap 11/21 Study Session  
Place Types**

Mr. Garcia gave a brief run through of the discussion from the previous meeting. He noted that the Plan Commission had decided to add a “Rural Residential” place type and get rid of the “Institutional” place type and assign the existing properties as one of the other place types.

**II. Street Types**

Mr. Garcia mentioned that he met with the University of Illinois student group working on the street types to propose in the Comprehensive Plan. He asked them to simplify the number of street types as Urbana is pretty small and does not really have many different types of streets. He referred to the handout “National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) – Urbana Street Design Guide. He mentioned that this guide is used by larger cities, and it hosts different types of streets, many of which do not pertain to the City of Urbana. However, staff did find three types to use in the *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan. They are the “downtown thoroughfare” (which he thought they may want to relabel), “neighborhood main street”, and “neighborhood street”. There are some other types in the guide that the City may want to use, but most of Urbana is made up of neighborhoods. He referred to the map handout that indicates the types of streets that Urbana currently has. He mentioned that Urbana has mostly neighborhood streets.

Chair Allred asked why staff was using the NACTO guide. Mr. Garcia replied that he has been using this guide for years because it gives good guidance for how to envision streets as more than

just something to move traffic, to make it better for everybody who uses a street. He showed an example of an illustration that looks similar Urbana's downtown area.

Chair Allred asked if it would be used to update the standards in the Manual of Practice. Would there be a Little Move in *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan that would address this, if there is not already? Mr. Garcia said this would be up for discussion. He mentioned that these are the street types that they would use in the regulatory framework. It makes sense that if we had these street types in the Comprehensive Plan that we would be able to update the City's Land Development Code and Manual of Practice.

Mr. Hopkins stated that he believes they need to think about both the traditional/conventional classification of street types, such as arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and minor collectors and what Mr. Garcia is talking about. When looking at neighborhood streets, some of them are collectors and some are really only access streets. From a street layout point of view, this makes a big difference because it is not just the cross section that should be different in that case, it is the way the streets achieve continuity. Collector streets ought to achieve continuity. Access streets may, by design, not allow or enable connectivity. This is one way of controlling speeds and traffic flow.

He stated that he believes there is an advantage in terms of linking the street types to the Land Development Code, which explicitly refers to a street classification that relates to the conventional classification. He said that most of the examples in the NACTO guide are not helpful.

Chair Allred and Mr. Hopkins talked with staff about how to proceed with the street types and the map. Mr. Garcia said that the Land Development Code does refer to the streets as conventional types, so we need to have those tie into the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Hopkins stated that we also have the opportunity and ability to add the cross-section notions, the notion that a minor collector can have a variety of cross sections. He suggested using annotations on the map to identify street types. Mr. Garcia pointed out that most of the street types are not going to change; however, the City does have plans to change streets like Illinois Street and Vine Street in the coming years. So, we can use annotations or just say that we have a handful of high priority areas that we want to focus on coming soon. Mr. Hopkins agreed that we should identify these changes as specific projects. Mr. Garcia said that these could be identified on the updated Mobility Map.

Mr. Rose asked how the Moves in *Imagine Urbana* can be reinforced by this discussion on street profiles and definitions. We have Moves that are between broad and specific, and it seems that we could formulate our Moves here about what a street looks like that could directly feed into one of the Moves, such as Walkability or in the neighborhood place type. Mr. Hopkins said that some of the cross-section diagrams could be aspirational, which would be one way to link what Mr. Rose talked about. There is Illinois Street, Vine Street, two studies on Lincoln Avenue, MCORE project, reconfiguration of Main Street, and Florida Avenue from Lincoln Avenue to Vine Street. Chair Allred asked if in addition to having these aspirational sections, would it make sense to articulate a set of policy recommendations somewhere in the plan on what they are trying to achieve when given the opportunity to transform these segments of the network to give more guidance.

Mr. Rose stated that he feels now is the time to also address the killer street, University Avenue. He believed that their definitions of streets and what the street profiles will be should provide guidance for this. The Plan Commission members and staff noted the following intersections where fatal accidents have occurred: University and Broadway Avenues, University Avenue and

Race Street, and Vine and Main Streets. Mr. Garcia said that University Avenue is a State of Illinois-controlled street; however, we can still put things in the Comprehensive Plan about State routes, even knowing that we do not directly control how they get built in the future. Mr. Hopkins replied that one of the roles that we can use the Comprehensive Plan for is to send a message signaling to the State and future funders that this is an aspirational something the City believes needs to be worked on.

Mr. Hopkins pointed out that the map has a connotation of a belt that was explicitly eliminated from the existing Comprehensive Plan documents as an apparent beltway because it was controversial then [in 2005]. He does not know if it is still, but this diagram/map sends some messages that we want to be careful about. Mr. Garcia pointed out that those sorts of roads are on the edge of town and are of higher speed. Mr. Hopkins noted that other than Curtis Road, they are State highways. He said that there are going to be maps with a couple of pages explaining the maps. We can use the text pages to link to the Big Move structure without trying to make the Big Move format cover everything.

Mr. Rose stated that if the State has ultimate say so over these thoroughfares, it seems that the City should at least have considerable say over intersections because those are our streets for safety reasons. Mr. Garcia replied that if the intersections are State intersections, then we do not have a whole lot of say. He said that intersections are the most important parts of streets because they are the least safe parts; yet, they are the most neglected when streets get designed. It is easy to do bike-friendly and pedestrian-friendly design along a segment of street, but when you get to the intersection it seems like people just throw their hands up and do not give it as much thought.

Mr. Hopkins mentioned that there is a good chance that the rail will be abandoned within the next 20 to 50 years, and this will change one of the major intersections on University Avenue. It would also change the potential pedestrian traffic and bike traffic maybe even more crucially for some routes, so we ought to be explicit about that being an intent. It may not be a project that is funded or assigned, but it is something that we ought to be saying we are going to do.

Chair Allred asked if staff had a sense of what they could put together and bring back. Mr. Garcia said he could put together something based on the Plan Commission's comments and bring something back at the next meeting.

Chair Allred asked if the 2005 Comprehensive Plan had a strong relationship between what is in the Plan and what is in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The Plan Commission is talking about things that are not necessarily in the LRTP. They are just City priorities. Mr. Garcia replied that Mr. Hopkins could speak more about the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. He stated that in the updated Mobility Map, that the students put together, dovetails with the LRTP. He stated that the LRTP is a regional plan, and the things that the Plan Commission was talking about would not necessarily rise to the level of "regional significance". Mr. Hopkins commented that the Mobility Map was an explicit contradiction to the ongoing LRTP at the time the existing Comprehensive Plan was created in 2005, which is why we have uncertainty about things like where an interchange might be or if there should be one and whether Olympian Drive should be extended east of Route 45.

He went on to say that in the discussion of the new LRTP by the Plan Commission, he brought up examples like the bike path to Curtis Road and the upgrading of Curtis Road. He argued that it should be made less salient and things they are discussing now should be made more salient. While

Mr. Garcia says that University Avenue is not of regional significance, he argued that it is because it would involve federal funding because they are State routes. The LRTP is specifically required to move the federal funding process forward on projects, so even though it is not in the LRTP, it should be in the Comprehensive Plan. Part of this should be the basis for getting it into the LRTP in the future. The Comprehensive Plan is the City of Urbana's plan. The LRTP is an organization of three cities and a County. We do not have to agree on everything in the LRTP. The City's priorities can be different.

### III. Updated Metrics

Mr. Garcia stated that staff made an effort to coming up with broader or bigger metrics that would tie back to the Big Ideas and the objectives underneath them. He referred to the Vision & Values handout.

Ms. Ruedi talked about the two different types of metrics that they came up with. The first one is a staff check off, almost like a to-do-list, that could be assigned to someone's goals. The second type of metric would determine if we successfully reached our goals, the Big Ideas. She noted that they did not make any changes to the Big Moves and Little Moves. She explained that *Barometers of Success* have been defined for each Big Idea and *Metrics* have been assigned to each Little Move. She talked about the format used and stated that staff is looking for guidance from the Plan Commission before they talk with our management analysts.

#### BIG IDEA 1: *Urbana is a Place for Everyone*

Chair Allred stated that since they just received the handout, he has not had a chance to look through them. However, looking over Big Idea 1 and the Barometers of Success for it, he does not see a clear connection between the goal or the objectives and what is being measured. Mr. Garcia explained that he conceived these to be big picture things that are really easy to grasp right away, like on a dashboard. They are meant to be something that is easily updated and can be reported on every year or every quarter. He said that it is hard to think of something that is easy to measure and can capture the notion that "Urbana is a place for everyone". Ms. Ruedi added that because it is more subjective, it is hard to have some specific metrics. Chair Allred replied that the Comprehensive Plan does not talk about growth in Urbana, so there needs to be more thought into Big Idea 1 about what that might be but not population.

Ms. Ruedi stated that staff had differentiated between community metrics and the plan metrics. So, they went back though some of those to see if they could be extracted for the larger goals. She explained that the community metrics were not supposed to be metrics that the Comprehensive Plan impacts. It was just more trends to watch, so they were not really specific to the goals either. Chair Allred stated that there are clearly things that could be measured for the objectives, but then he said that he also has a hard time understanding the relationship between some of the objectives and the overall goal.

Ms. Simms said that if we are sure that we are going to have equity initiatives that there would be metrics for it because there are areas where people are underrepresented. She mentioned that there is nothing regarding equity initiatives in the resilient business development like strategies that one would anticipate that you would want to change. She pointed out that there are some data points about what an inclusive community looks like. The same goes for what does a resilient community look like. She said that she noticed some missing elements around climate resilience. Ms. Ruedi

said that she liked this approach because so many of the Big Moves relate back to Big Idea 1 because they all have a play or have a part in making Urbana a welcoming community.

Chair Allred stated that they may not want to take the dashboard approach. The way to go is to think of it more in terms of areas where the city has a particular deficit or a particular challenge that we really want to have a good sense of movement on or pay more attention to. He said that maybe tracking entrepreneurial activity related to different groups is the most important thing related to know if Urbana is a place for everyone. Ms. Ruedi stated that they do address entrepreneurial partly in one of the other Big Ideas. She suggested they look at the other Big Ideas and then come back to Big Idea 1.

#### BIG IDEA 2: *Urbana is both Financially and Environmentally Resilient*

Chair Allred asked for clarification on “*City population vs. size of road network*” in Big Idea 2 Barometers of Success. Mr. Garcia explained that staff threw this one in there because they had reported that in Examine Urbana and it relates our infrastructure burden to our population. He put this here for discussion purposes; however, he said that he would love if they could have a metric that somehow relates to our infrastructure burden on a per capita basis. He stated that cities get into fiscal trouble by overextending their infrastructure without the tax base to match.

Ms. Ruedi stated that in a previous meeting staff went over Big Move 4 with the Plan Commission and shared some trends. Staff can see having those trends and diagrams helping alongside the Plan. Chair Allred suggested something like ratio of Revenues to infrastructure cost.

Mr. Hopkins felt this is getting closer to the issue because it is total revenues that matter. He stated that if we do per capita, then we are not taking account of industrial land or employment entities or non-taxable land. He suggested it say Total Revenue vs. Total Infrastructure Cost. He said that if there were an accounting asset framework in Public Works, it would be one half of the measures of having total revenue versus assets. An Asset Management Plan ought to be taking into account value of capital and future liability.

Chair Allred asked for clarification on the second Barometer of Success, “*Property tax dollars per acre*”. Ms. Ruedi said that one of the diagrams staff shared for Big Move 4 at a previous meeting showed the buildings in 3D. Chair Allred said that providing this diagram for the entire City would be one way. Mr. Hopkins stated that he believes revenue over asset is a much better measure. Mr. Garcia agreed. If we do this, then they can strike “*Property tax dollars per acre*”. Mr. Hopkins pointed out that they could not use “property tax dollars per acre” anyways because it does not take into account any of the other revenue sources or the anomalies of this community. Mr. Garcia noted that he always wants to be part of the conversation that the reality is that over 30% of our land is not taxed.

Chair Allred said that we need to stay focused on knowing how revenues compare to costs. We are not just trying to increase revenues for the sake of increasing revenues. We also want to reduce costs. If costs increase, then we want to increase revenue. Ms. Ruedi stated that it is about resilience in the long term.

Mr. Rose said that he appreciates this discussion. He considers metrics to have a core importance in the *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan, and he thinks it is critically important to step from the checklist of the small items to finding the larger items. This is very difficult to do especially if we have not been doing it in the past. This discussion points to the possibility, the feasibility, and the

importance of financial resilience. He likes that there is a lot of effort being put into getting the right metric for this Big Move because it is much more quantifiable than the other Big Moves.

He went on to say that it is much more difficult to quantify the effort that needs to be made with regard to the other Big Moves, and he does not feel they may be completed in the timetable that we have for *Imagine Urbana*. He said that if we are going to sell Urbana to newcomers and to investors, the more we are able to say here's the metric, "Urbana is a place for everyone" is going to be more convincing than it appearing as a bullet point in a document.

Mr. Rose talked about metrics that he believes may be difficult to achieve. He feels the financial metrics should really be achieved for the updated Comprehensive Plan, as well as assigning other metrics to other Big Moves.

Mr. Hopkins said there is a flipside to what Mr. Rose is saying, and that is because we know how to do financial stuff and with a little luck, we can get a pretty good measure. We will study to the test, and if we do not have a test for equity that is equal to our test for financial, we will not achieve any equity. He feels that they need to work now, not later. He is positive about the potential of getting revenue over assets with a footnote that within that we can get at all kinds of things and look at why it happens. We need something at least as good for equity.

Mr. Hopkins talked about Objective 1.3 – *Broaden the economic base and housing options in ways that reflect the City's diversity*. He stated that if we know what the wealth slash income capacities of the mix of people in this community are, what is the match of that to the mix of available housing. We can mix capital and rental, so we can talk about those as both being options. We can mix wealth and income in ways we know to be options. He said the irony of this may be that it is also a financial measure, but it is also a financial measure of equity. Ms. Simms added it is also a financial measure of health. She did not feel that there is enough in the Plan around Urbana being a healthy community. If you have 20% or 23% of your residents having housing insecurity consistently, then the City is paying for it. It is costing in social services, law enforcement, and education. If the community is healthier, not just aesthetically pleasing, it will be more economically viable, and people will want to be here.

Ms. Simms went on to say that even the cultural section misses why we want culture. Art and music help you be healthier, it is not just this stand-alone abstract idea. It helps people be better and mentally well and less stressed in a community. There is a why, not just a what.

Ms. Ruedi said that one of the community metrics had been on rent burden and how it is a percentage of a person's monthly income. The same is in the Plan about homeowners' costs being a percentage of their income as well. Chair Allred recommended making this a key metric for Big Idea 1. We need to define what we mean by equity and what we are trying to achieve, but this sounds like a decent metric for "Urbana is a place for everyone". Ms. Ruedi stated that is what she meant earlier by saying that if they went through these community metrics, we could pull out some that are relevant to address these goals. Mr. Hopkins stated that the average rent burden of the community does not get at equity, but rather it is the distribution of rent burden by income wealth category. Ms. Ruedi added that it needs to be parsed out. Ms. Simms noted that equity is where people have been historically under-represented and served however that is. We need to reduce the access and availability barriers so that everyone can meaningfully be at the table. We might do this by gender or by immigration status. There are going to be different equity variables; however, right now we have an over representation of women and children who are experiencing

homelessness. In 10 years, if children had consistent homes, one would anticipate that they would not have so much adversity, and it would save us a lot of money as a community and makes us a welcoming community.

Mr. Hopkins stated that he is hearing a service question. While he does not know what that might be, we need a measure of that which is different that will be measurable and visible and on the first page of the dashboard, not in a footnote on the appendix.

Ms. Ruedi stated that this is good input. Staff can go back and really redirect our efforts and try to pin down some of these more specific metrics. Knowing this particular goal has to do with environmental resiliency too, staff added the tree canopy. Going forward in the community metrics there are things like landfill waste generation, recycling rates, median air quality index, and greenhouse gas emissions. These are all metrics that relate to the environment, but does it relate to resiliency. Chair Allred said that there is a whole literature about this, but he does not know it off the top of his head. He did not feel that tree canopy added to resiliency. Mr. Hopkins suggested asking Scott Tess, Sustainability and Resilience Officer. He stated that one form of resiliency is the ability to bounce back, and the disaster recovery literature identifies the paradox that ideally you do not want to bounce back to where you were before. A measure of resilience is the availability of nursery trees after the storm, not how many trees we have. It is also about the geographic distribution of the trees because some neighborhoods have more tree canopy than others. Ms. Simms mentioned the nature of green space coverage and sustainability infrastructure like flood protection systems and green roofs.

Ms. Simms stated that when looking at neighborhood resilience, we look at how connected neighbors are to each other as a resilience measure. One of the things that people are doing organizational work on is when a crisis happens, neighborhoods that are connected are more likely to bounce back than when neighbors do not know each other. Communities that are disconnected when climate change happens, seniors die, people do not talk to each other, and you cannot get to what you need to do. Chair Allred asked if we know what our environmental risks are. Mr. Hopkins pointed out that we have a Climate Action Plan, which we need to review to decide whether or not to include it in the Plan.

### *BIG IDEA 3: Urbana is a City of Connected Neighborhoods*

Ms. Ruedi presented this idea. Chair Allred cited Mr. Garcia saying that most of our streets are unlikely to change. With this in mind, why would we expect big increases in the change in the walk score? Mr. Garcia clarified that the right-of-way that the street occupies is probably not going to change very much. We might have reason to change some streets over time. He said that walk score looks at the proximity to things you need to get to on a daily basis. Mr. Hopkins stated that when he looked at it before, it did not look to him like a very good score for keeping track of what is going on. Because it is a weighted index of a bunch of things, even if we expected some of the things to change, they would be so small of a portion of the walkability score as computed by the standard mechanism, that they barely show up. So, it goes back to what are we trying to accomplish. He said one measure would be pedestrian traffic, fatalities, injuries, crashes, etc. This is something to measure but it is not likely to really tell us whether we are doing things. Instead, we should say what we think we might actually do to accomplish that. This might be where specific projects of a particular kind, such as street cross section redesigns and sidewalks in areas where there are not sidewalks are mentioned in the plan. Ms. Ruedi said that this ties in with equity.

Ms. Ruedi stated that in 2022, our walkability score was 52. There was a member of the community that brought in some research he had done and showed walkability in neighborhoods. It is more drastic to see a really high walkability score in some of the neighborhoods in Urbana, and then other neighborhoods, it is extremely low. She thinks we need to look at walkability in subgroups rather than at the community at large.

Ms. Ruedi reviewed other community metrics including walkability, length of bicycle network, number of residents within a 10-minute walk to a park, and residential parcels within ¼ mile of a transit stop. Mr. Hopkins stated that one thing could be for the City to create our own walking and biking score where it would include the equity question somehow by distribution. It would have miles of improved cross sections by neighborhood or by percent of complete streets. Mr. Garcia felt this might be encompassed in the Plan. He talked about the level of traffic stress. He mentioned that Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) has measured traffic stress for the region, so City staff would be able to get access to the data. Mr. Hopkins said that they could do this by area and provide the results on a map. Mr. Garcia pointed out that traffic stress maps are typically influenced by the traditional hierarchy of street types where you will have a very low stress rating in your residential streets and higher levels when you come to an arterial road with fast moving traffic. Mr. Hopkins said that we could create a map that can show by our own mechanism assessment whether we lowered stress, which he added would include stress for pedestrians, bicyclists, auto drivers, transit riders, freight, and delivery people. Mr. Garcia stated that studies have shown that when cities take measures to make it better for pedestrians and cyclists, it also makes it safer for automobile drivers and lowers their stress level as well.

Ms. Simms talked about neighborhood connectivity. She mentioned that there is research that shows people usually do not venture out far and stay within five or six blocks of their home. To her, in a healthy community, people go beyond their six blocks. So, is their reasoning because of how roads are designed or how boundaries are created? She said that she imagined if Urbana was a series of connected neighborhoods, more people would move here. She would love to think about the variables that would increase access.

#### BIG IDEA 4: *Urbana Embraces its Cultural Vibrancy and Character*

Ms. Ruedi and Mr. Garcia stated that they spoke with the City's Arts and Culture Coordinator to get some ideas for this section.

Mr. Rose commented that someone who loves music told him that Urbana has captured the music scene from the City of Champaign. He believes it is in large part due to the bars in Urbana. Ms. Ruedi said that this came about during Covid when the Rose Bowl wanted to have outdoor entertainment because people could not be inside. The City allowed one of our parking lots next to the Rose Bowl to be leased, and the Rose Bowl took it to a whole different level.

Mr. Rose stated that businesses did the art scene in Urbana, and he does not see a role for businesses in the Barometers of Success for Big Idea 4. Ms. Ruedi said that this is a good point.

Mr. Hopkins said that there has to be a better overall way to measure this idea. However, it is not clear to him how to measure it. It could maybe be an equity element in the Plan. Ms. Ruedi replied that staff heard from the community that there is a vibe that Urbana has, and it is something that everyone is proud of and wants to retain.

Ms. Ruedi talked about equity issues and mentioned that the lack of ADA accessibility for people with mobility issues, which has prevented them from attending venues in the past, has helped the City to become aware and focus on making improvements to increase accessibility by making sidewalks more accessible, by planning efforts to increase connectivity with the neighborhoods, and by selecting a diversity of artists, not just in those that are funded.

Mr. Hopkins thought that Big Idea 4 seems to be mostly about the public sector actions with the way it is worded. He said that Urbana's "weirdness" is mostly privately generated, and the City is enabling it. Mr. Garcia pointed out that our Arts and Culture program does a lot to help that along, and the whole section in *Examine Urbana* covers this really well. He said that the whole idea behind Big Idea 4 is to retain and enhance the vibe that Urbana has going on. Without this Big Idea, we could do whatever else we are talking about in the Plan, and it would be a great plan, and Urbana could be pretty awesome going forward. However, Urbana has a uniqueness here that we are trying to embrace.

Ms. Ruedi stated that one Little Move is to streamline the permitting process. A private sector group or community group can get caught up in bureaucracy and give up because there is too much red tape to go through. This is one thing that the City can control. Mr. Hopkins stated that the Barometer of Success should be measuring the outcome of having improved the permit process. He stated that we now need to come up with an outcome measurement.

Ms. Simms reminded staff that art and music are only one tool for culture. If staff really wants to be inclusive, this section needs to be a broad cultural lens. They could expand this by having more opportunities for both the public and private sector, not only what comes through grants but through the Urbana Park District and Urbana businesses. It could also include public donations from the philanthropic community.

Ms. Simms stated that shopping in Urbana is unique because we have smaller stores that provide a diversity you do not see everywhere else, such as the new African restaurant and the Mexican ice cream shop. She noticed that this is not mentioned in the Plan. Other similar types of niche boutique fields might be attracted to Urbana. There is no variable that we have talked about here that does not help create the kind of culture that we want for Urbana. Art is just one manifestation of it, but the connection, the financial, the resilience, and the climate are all what feeds into the narrative.

Ms. Ruedi gave an example of a business that wants to revitalize a former bar. She said that the City of Urbana has tools and incentives to help investors revitalize vacant buildings or buildings that have been under-utilized.

Mr. Hopkins stated that he agrees with Ms. Simms that art and music is only part of culture. The Farmer's Market and the unusual stores are part of Downtown Urbana's culture. Ms. Simms added that this diversity goes beyond Downtown Urbana.

Ms. Ruedi read Big Move 5, which explains more about what they are talking about with the arts and culture program. Mr. Hopkins stated that this talks about art and music. He recommended leaving Big Idea 4 worded as it is and adding to the objectives to acknowledge that culture is more than arts and music. Mr. Garcia replied that they can add more sentences under Big Idea 4 and provide some objectives that tie into the larger cultural vibe.

Ms. Ruedi stated that this is the guidance staff was looking for. Her understanding is that they need to fine tune the Barometers of Success and focus more on the outcomes.

#### IV. Next Steps

Mr. Garcia said that staff will work on making changes based on the input they have received from the Plan Commission so far.

Ms. Yu recalled in a previous meeting we stated that we do not want to focus on Downtown Urbana as the economic growth engine for Urbana. However, the discussion tonight at this meeting makes it clear that Downtown Urbana is an engine, maybe not directly generating tax revenue, but generating the sense of identity. She suggested expanding Big Move 4 because it will be easy for people to buy into building a vibrant downtown in the Plan, and if Downtown Urbana can be an economic driver, then that is even better.

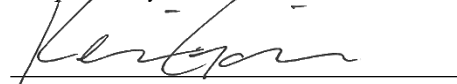
Chair Allred stated that for those in City Administration, it would be great if they could find Planning more staff to help work on this Plan. It is clear there is a lot of potential to do really great things, but it is going to take labor to do it. The Plan Commission understands that the Planning Division is understaffed and would advocate for that to be remedied in the short term. He noted that this is not a pitch to hire students as interns. Mr. Hopkins added that it is important to understand that there has been a student workshop generating a lot of the background material for the Plan and that is now over, so the ability to continue generating progress needs staffing.

Ms. Ruedi thanked the students who have worked on creating the materials. They have been amazing.

#### L. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin Garcia, Secretary  
Urbana Plan Commission