
DATE: Tuesday, May 27, 2025
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council Committee of the Whole of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Tuesday, May 27, 2025, at 7:00p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: DeShawn Williams, Mayor; Darcy Sandefur, City Clerk, CM Maryalice Wu*, CM Christopher Evans, CM Shirese Hursey, CM Jaya Kolisetty, CM Chaundra Bishop*, CM Grace Wilken, CM James Quisenberry

***CM PRESENT REMOTELY**

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Marcus Ricci, Elizabeth Hannan, Andrea Ruedi, Tim Cowan, Dave Smysor, Larry Boone, John Zeman, Seok Hyun Cho

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chair: *Grace Wilken, Ward 6*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Chair Wilken called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 8:47 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

a. 05-12-2025 City Council Meeting Minutes

Clerk Sandefur clarified a vote would be corrected. Motion to approve as corrected by CM Hursey, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

None.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. Public Input

Written Public Input expressing concern of Ordinance No. 2025-04-013 were received from the following individuals and read by Chair Wilken and CM Kolisetty: Eric Sacks, Michael Plewa & Elizabeth Wagner Plewa, C.K. Gunsalus & Michael W. Walker, Sarah McEvoy & Huseyin Sehitoglu. Written Public Input in support of Ordinance No. 2024-

12-042 was received from the following individual and read by CM Kolisetty: Derek Briles. Written Public Input requesting CM Wilken to elaborate on the “no” vote against the appointment of Police Chief Boone was received from the following individual and read by Chair Wilken: Steve Fay. Written Public Input in support of Ordinance No. 2024-12-042, sustainability in Urbana, locally owned properties, and increasing high school graduation rates was received from the following individual and read by CM Kolisetty: Lilah Leopold. Written Public Input expressing concern of Ordinance No. 2025-04-013 was received from the following individual, but was not read: Esther Patt. Written Public Input in support of Ordinance No. 2024-12-042 were received from the following individuals, but were not read: Chris Zelle, Lesley Owens.

4. Staff Report

None.

5. New Business

- a. **Resolution No. 2025-05-034R:** A Resolution Approving the Capital Improvement Plan (Fiscal Years 2026-2030) – PW

Presented by Tim Cowan, Director of Public Works and John Zeman, City Engineer. The Resolution approves the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Fiscal Years 2026-2030, which outlines planned projects for the next five fiscal years for larger-scale, annual, outsourced operations/maintenance needs and capital improvements for City infrastructure assets. Tim Cowan provided an outline of the updates to the CIP since it was last presented to Council. John Zeman shared the updates include miscellaneous electrical repairs, repairs to the bridge on Race Street, clarifications to information regarding projects in the CIP, and updates to estimates of various expenditure amounts. Spoke on updates to the sections in the CIP corresponding to transportation, facilities, and the sewer system. Stated the Sewer Cleaning and Televising project had to be delayed to FY26 due to the data collection efforts currently being undertaken by the Public Works Department that will allow for contracting to be later done using the updated information. Stated no feedback from the public regarding the CIP was received since the presentation to Council. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the regular agenda by CM Kolisetty, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- b. **Resolution No. 2025-05-029R:** A Resolution for Improvement Under the Illinois Highway Code (State Motor Fuel Tax for Florida Avenue, Wright Street to Hillcrest Street) – PW

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2025-05-030R, 2025-05-031R, 2025-05-032R, and 2025-05-033R by Tim Cowan, Director of Public Works and John Zeman, City Engineer. The Resolution approves the appropriation of \$300,000 in State Motor Fuel Tax (State MFT) funds for the Florida Avenue (Wright Street to Hillcrest Street) Rehabilitation project. John Zeman reminded Council of the procedure required by the Illinois Department of Transit (IDOT) in order to appropriate funds from the State MFT pool. Stated these Resolutions will appropriate the amounts needed for the projects in advance of the next fiscal year. Noted the amounts include an additional 10% contingency for the project to prevent further supplemental Resolutions to IDOT being required. Stated the

Vine Street and Illinois Street Improvements project appropriates the \$1,010,000 to commence with the first phase of construction as the previously appropriated \$370,000 was for design. Stated the Shared-Use Path projects appropriate their amounts due to unforeseen costs arising during the process of beginning construction for those projects. Stated the final budget amounts are included as part of the CIP. Tim Cowan additionally noted any amounts that are left unspent are returned to the City's pool of funds in the State MFT. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to combine Resolutions No. 2025-05-029R, 2025-05-030R, 2025-05-031R, 2025-05-032R, and 2025-05-033R into an omnibus by CM Hursey, seconded by CM Evans.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

Motion to approve the omnibus to the regular agenda by CM Hursey, seconded by CM Evans.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- c. **Resolution No. 2025-05-030R:** A Resolution for Improvement Under the Illinois Highway Code (State Motor Fuel Tax for Florida Avenue Shared-Use Path) – PW

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2025-05-029R, 2025-05-031R, 2025-05-032R, and 2025-05-033R by Tim Cowan, Director of Public Works and John Zeman, City Engineer. The Resolution approves the appropriation of \$860,000 in State MFT funds for the Florida Avenue Shared-Use Path project.

Item was approved to the City Council regular agenda through the omnibus.

- d. **Resolution No. 2025-05-031R:** A Resolution for Improvement Under the Illinois Highway Code (State Motor Fuel Tax for Bakers Lane Shared-Use Path) – PW

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2025-05-029R, 2025-05-030R, 2025-05-032R, and 2025-05-033R by Tim Cowan, Director of Public Works and John Zeman, City Engineer. The Resolution approves the appropriation of \$1,380,000 in State MFT funds for the Bakers Lane Shared-Use Path project.

Item was approved to the City Council regular agenda through the omnibus.

- e. **Resolution No. 2025-05-032R:** A Resolution for Improvement Under the Illinois Highway Code (State Motor Fuel Tax for Colorado Avenue Resurfacing) – PW

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2025-05-029R, 2025-05-030R, 2025-05-031R, and 2025-05-033R by Tim Cowan, Director of Public Works and John Zeman, City Engineer. The Resolution approves the appropriation of \$440,000 in State MFT funds for the Colorado Avenue Resurfacing project.

Item was approved to the City Council regular agenda through the omnibus.

- f. **Resolution No. 2025-05-033R:** A Resolution for Improvement Under the Illinois Highway Code (State Motor Fuel Tax for Vine Street and Illinois Street Improvements) – PW

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2025-05-029R, 2025-05-030R, 2025-05-031R, and 2025-05-032R by Tim Cowan, Director of Public Works and John Zeman, City Engineer. The Resolution approves the appropriation of \$1,010,000 in State MFT funds for the Vine Street and Illinois Street Improvements project.

Item was approved to the City Council regular agenda through the omnibus.

- g. **Ordinance No. 2025-05-016:** An Ordinance Amending Schedule J of Section 23-183 of the Urbana Local Traffic Code Prohibiting Parking at All Times on Certain Streets (Harding Drive at Steer Place, 1202 East Harding Drive) – PW

Presented by Tim Cowan, Director of Public Works and John Zeman, City Engineer. The Ordinance prohibits on-street parking on the north side of the street for Harding Drive at Steer Place, 1202 East Harding Drive. John Zeman stated the issue of on-street parking on this street was brought to the Public Works Department's attention by Fire Chief Demond Dade as fire department vehicles could be prevented from accessing enough space to function due to on-street parking. Shared street-view images of the location and described the potential difficulties fire department vehicles could face. Stated a temporary no-parking order has been in effect for that street and it can be made permanent through this Ordinance. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Hursey, seconded by CM Kolisetty.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- h. **Resolution No. 2025-05-028R:** A Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement for Participation in the Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network (IPWMAN) – PW

Presented by Tim Cowan, Director of Public Works. The Resolution authorizes an intergovernmental agreement for participation in the IPWMAN. Tim Cowan stated the City of Urbana has participated in IPWMAN since 2008. Stated the mutual aid is typically utilized during emergency situations such as storm events. Spoke on the updates made to IPWMAN to clarify ambiguous agreement terms and the entirely voluntary aid request process for emergencies and non-emergencies. Stated costs are typically waived for requests under five days, however if it extends past the five days a participant can seek repayment. Noted if the State of Illinois were to request aid, they normally reimburse costs. Stated the administration of IPWMAN has requested participants to renew their membership to affirm their understanding of the clarified processes. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Hursey.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- i. **Resolution No. 2025-05-035R:** A Resolution Authorizing an Interfund Loan from the General Operating Fund to the Central Tax Increment Financing District Fund – HRF

Presented by Elizabeth Hannan, Interim City Administrator / Human Resources & Finance Director / CFO. The Resolution approves an interfund loan of \$5,200,000 from the City's General Operating Fund to the Central TIF Fund to allow for payment of the redevelopment incentive for Hotel Royer. The loan will be repaid when bonds are issued for the incentive in early 2026. Elizabeth Hannan stated the obligation to Hotel Royer upon opening as per the development agreement is \$5,200,000 rather than \$5,500,000 due to the two reductions in \$150,000 increments. Recommended the payment be made through an interfund loan from the City's General Operating Fund that will be repaid through the issuance of debt after the first day of 2026. Expressed confidence of there being sufficient funds in the General Operating Fund to maintain the current levels of service through when the debt is issued. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the regular agenda by CM Bishop, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- j. **Ordinance No. 2025-05-017:** An Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance (Budget Amendment #9 – Presence Settlement, Hotel Royer Initiative) – HRF

Presented by Elizabeth Hannan, Interim City Administrator / Human Resources & Finance Director / CFO. The Ordinance amends the FY2025 Annual Budget to authorize a \$1,498,382 increase for a settlement payment to Presence related to a 2015 property tax case, and a \$5,200,000 reimbursement to Hotel Royer for a redevelopment incentive. Elizabeth Hannan stated the budget amendment contains two items being the incentive payment to Hotel Royer and the other being an increase of \$1,498,382 to pay the settlement regarding one of the remaining property tax disputes with Presence from 2015.

Motion to approve to the regular agenda by CM Kolisetty, seconded by CM Hursey.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

6. Old Business

- a. **Ordinance No. 2024-12-042:** An Ordinance Establishing Approval, Policy, and Reporting Requirements for Policing Surveillance Technology and Databases – CM's Wilken and Kolisetty

Presented by Chair Wilken. The Ordinance requires and clarifies the process for procurement and use of policing technology and databases that can be used to monitor, track, and identify specific individuals or groups. The Ordinance codifies the public approval process for specific surveillance technologies or databases; it does not dictate the use of any given technology (that would be voted on by Council). Chair Wilken requested, given the current time of the evening and remaining discussion item, Council move to keep this item alongside the upcoming item regarding the Comprehensive Plan in Committee of the Whole.

Motion to keep in Committee of the Whole by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Wu.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- b. Ordinance No. 2025-04-013:** An Ordinance Approving a Comprehensive Plan (Imagine Urbana / Plan Case No. 2502-CP-25) – CD

Presented by Andrea Ruedi, Senior Advisor for Integrated Strategy Development. The Ordinance approves the Imagine Urbana Comprehensive Plan.

Motion to keep in Committee of the Whole by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Kolisetty.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

7. Discussion

- a. Council Rules and Meeting Procedures – CM Wilken**

Clerk Sandefur introduced the discussion, noting these topics were brought to her attention by Councilmembers over the previous years. Stated Council previously amended their rules and procedures in 2021 through Resolution No. 2021-01-003R. Read a compilation of discussion topics stemming from suggestions and inquiries received from Council regarding considering implementing a rotating voting order, clarifying language used to address members of Council, clarifying the ability for the Chair to participate in meetings, and clarifying how items are added to the agenda. Expressed the intent to gather feedback and consensus on proposed amendments to the rules and procedures before presenting a Resolution to Council for consideration.

Council discussed the implementation of a rotating voting order based on who is the Chair that will start the voting with the next Councilmember and end with the Chair voting last (Example voting order with CM Wilken as the Chair: 7, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), and the order will extend to the following City Council meeting where the Chair reports on forwarded business items.

Council discussed the clarification of language on declaring conflicts of interest during votes and the consideration of clarifying the process of how Councilmembers could opt-out of voting.

Council considered the need to clarify the process of how Councilmembers can add items to the agenda as well as if the process differs with various types of agenda items such as a budget amendment or an ordinance. Further discussed the potential of increasing requirements for Councilmembers to place business items onto an agenda and also how to implement an increased requirement without violating the Open Meetings Act.

Council spoke on the proposal of adopting gender-neutral language when referring to Councilmembers and clarifying the openness of referring to one another by first names.

Council discussed raising the time limit for Council Input to five minutes from three minutes, to match the time allocated for residents during Public Input. Further considered giving the Mayor unlimited time for input to have sufficient time to convey information to the public. Clerk Sandefur noted the Mayor already has the capacity to provide a report without a time limit during the Staff Report and Reports of Officers sections.

Motion to extend the meeting to 10:45p.m. by CM Kolisetty.
Motion failed without a second.

Clerk Sandefur stated a supplemental memo will be written, compiling the points made during this discussion for Council to then further deliberate on and take strawpolls to gauge consensus during the next City Council meeting (June 2nd), as per Council direction.

8. Council Input and Communications

CM Kolisetty called upon Council to not limit its authority as the current governmental structure already favors the Mayor. *CM Evans* agreed that limiting the ability for a Councilmember to place items onto the agenda is counterproductive

9. Adjournment

With no further business before the committee of the whole Chair Wilken adjourned the meeting at 10:28 p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded and is viewable [on-demand HERE](#). **Minutes approved: 6/16/25**



Comprehensive Plan - Public Input May 19, 2025

From Esther Patt <[REDACTED]>
Date Wed 5/7/2025 10:37 AM
To City Council <CityCouncil@UrbanalL.gov>

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Mayor Williams and Urbana City Council Members:

Before you consider any changes to residential zoning proposed in the Comprehensive Plan, you need information about the current residential housing and zoning in Urbana.

You do not need to spend tens of thousands of dollars on a consultant, nor do you have to wait 5 years to approve the Comprehensive Plan.

But you DO need to delay consideration of the Plan for a few months, not weeks, until you have collected the information you need to inform good decision making.

I urge you to look at each proposed change in "Imagine Urbana" and ask "why?" The answer shouldn't be something fuzzy like "people said they'd like this" or something unsubstantiated like "there's a growing demand for duplex housing." What data inform you of that demand? Is it a consumer demand or a developer demand? The answer should be based on identifiable and quantifiable facts about residential housing in Urbana.

The only housing data available so far is the revised Census data: 35% of housing units are owner occupied; median value of single-family homes is \$186,300; 65% of housing units are rental; 58% of housing units are in multi-family structures; the rental housing vacancy rate is 13%.

I suggest you survey the current housing stock and opportunities for housing development. At the very least, city council members should be provided the answers to these questions:

1. How many properties in Urbana are currently zoned to allow multi-family housing?
2. How many properties that are currently zoned to allow multi-family housing do not have a multi-family structure on them or have housing that will soon be demolished?
3. How many properties are currently zoned to allow duplex by right (R-3)?
4. How many properties in Urbana are currently duplexes?
5. How many duplexes are located on land zoned R-3 and how many on land zoned R-2?
6. At how many of the duplexes is one of the units owner-occupied?*
7. How many properties in Urbana currently have an accessory dwelling unit (ADU)?
8. At how many of the properties with an ADU is one of the units owner-occupied?*
9. How many requests for conditional use permits for duplexes on land zoned R-2 have been submitted to the city in the last 10 years? How many were denied?

10. How many requests for an accessory dwelling unit have been submitted to the city in the last 10 years? How many were denied?
 11. How many condominiums are in Urbana and how many of those are owner-occupied?*
 12. How many townhouse units are in Urbana? Are any owner-occupied?*
- Home Ownership: Please note that property tax records alone do not always indicate actual home ownership. The owners of hundreds of rental houses and some condominiums take the owner-occupied exemption even though the occupants are tenants. Since 2004, state law has allowed landlords to take the owner-occupied exemption as long as the tenant signs an agreement stating s/he is responsible for the property tax and fulfills that responsibility by paying rent. That agreement has to be filed with the County Supervisor of Assessments in order for the owner to get the exemption. Therefore, the Supervisor of Assessments might be able to report to you the exact number of properties in Urbana that are actually rental properties but whose owners receive the owner-occupied exemption. That would allow you to get a more accurate assessment of how many duplexes, ADU's etc. are rentals.

Affordable Housing

If the Comprehensive Plan makes any reference to creation of “affordable housing” the city council members should be given accurate data about rental housing rents. One possible free source of information is the Housing Authority of Champaign County.

For what I believe was a 10-year period from 2013-2023, the Housing Authority of Champaign County received funding from H.U.D. that it paid to the University of Illinois to annually evaluate the “Moving to Work” program. The U of I's evaluation included an analysis of rental rates throughout Champaign County and divided the cities into different areas, indicating different rental rates in each area. The study looked only at properties with 20 or more units and the most recent data might be 3 years old, but if you can get that data from the Housing Authority, you would have a great deal more information than you have right now.

You might also want to consider doing some other analysis of rental housing rates: at least trying to identify rental housing rates that are affordable to households with incomes at or below 50% of Area Median Family Income.

I offer these suggestions to be helpful to you. Thank you for your service and for sitting through long meetings and for reading all of the public input. I truly do appreciate your dedication and service.

Esther Patt

██████████, Urbana



PUBLIC INPUT-May 19, 2025- re: the Proposed Comprehensive Plan

From Erik Sacks <[REDACTED]>
Date Sat 5/17/2025 3:26 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>
Cc Lois Steinberg <[REDACTED]>; Gunsalus C. K. <[REDACTED]>; Paul Debevec <[REDACTED]>; Leslie Sherman <[REDACTED]>; MaryPat McGuire <[REDACTED]>; Esther Patt <[REDACTED]>; Carolyn Baxley <[REDACTED]>

1 attachment (17 KB)

PUBLIC INPUT-Sacks-19 May 2025 final.docx;

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Councilmembers,

Below and attached, please find my letter for public input at the next Council meeting on May 19, 2025. Kindly, read this letter during the meeting on my behalf. Thanks very much.

Sincerely,

Erik Sacks

Dear Councilmembers,

I wish to highlight that more than 200 people, a large number, recently signed a [Petition for Protecting Historic Urbana from the Proposed 2025 Comprehensive Plan](#).

We want the new comprehensive plan to maintain the current R1-R3 zoning and the protections that they afford all residents of the City of Urbana. Importantly, these protections include meaningful public input and a vote by City Council on individual requests for exceptions to the zoning. We do not want Accessory Development Units, duplexes, triplexes, quadraplexes and small apartments by right, where they are not currently allowed without an exception that is publicly considered and voted on by Council. Staff may consider these types of developments ‘innocuous’ anywhere but we don’t—and we are the people who live here in Urbana’s historic neighborhoods and we know them best. We want our local democratic processes maintained and strengthened, not diminished.

For more than 40 years, West Urbana residents have spoken clearly and consistently that we want the character of our historic neighborhood preserved. In response to rapid and unregulated development of large student apartments in West Urbana during the 1980’s, West Urbana residents fought for and won protections by the City’s adoption of the 1990 Downtown to Campus Plan, which is a neighborhood preservation plan. The Downtown to Campus Plan was incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan at

that time and its tenets were subsequently incorporated into Urbana's current Comprehensive Plan from 2005. We want these protections and the preservation-forward philosophy of the 1990 Downtown to Campus Plan to also be incorporated into the next Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan is deeply flawed because 1) it is unnecessarily and disadvantageously vague and 2) it is not grounded in objective data. If we compare the 2005 Comprehensive Plan with the proposed plan that would replace it, the quality of the former is much greater than the latter. For example, the 2005 plan has highly detailed maps for each neighborhood that directly correspond to the subsequent zoning maps, whereas the proposed replacement plan has only one undetailed map of the entire city with vague broad categories and no specific maps for each neighborhood. Consider the Lincoln-Busey corridor: when staff were asked what was proposed there, they first stated that just the properties facing Lincoln would allow for large mixed-use apartments, but when pressed further, they said that the new map drew a broad line that included many interior houses (something the neighborhood strongly opposes) because there were exceptions made for some past developments that pushed into the low-density residential interior. Such a strategy is a game of dominoes because every exception that takes out another further interior house, would then logically allow for a whole additional column of interior houses to be knocked down for apartments. In contrast, if we look at the 2005 map, each parcel was marked, indicating both the past exceptions and the intent to maintain the remaining low density residential interior of the block (which is what the neighborhood wants). Moreover, a vague plan would allow developers to claim that almost any scale of development is supported by the plan most anywhere in the city—that's not good planning. The fact that staff proposed that the current plan be adopted before a housing study is conducted demonstrates that the proposed plan is not based on objective data but rather it is based on a personal philosophy that Urbana needs more of all types of housing everywhere—the latter is not an effective way to plan or to run a city. In Esther Patt's recent letter to Council, she modeled for all of us what critical thinking and evidence-based decision making looks like for making important decisions that affect our city—we should expect no less for the new Comprehensive Plan.

Respectfully,

Erik Sacks

C. K. Gunsalus & Michael W. Walker

Urbana, Illinois 61801

for Public Input, Meeting, May 19, 2025: please read into the public record

May 17, 2025

To the Members of the City Council:

We ask you to delay action on the Imagine Urbana comprehensive plan revision until the Council has received and reviewed more useful maps, as requested by Liz Cardman, and until there has been a housing inventory, as detailed by Esther Patt and anticipated in the plan. We endorse the comments submitted by Erik Sacks.

Imagine Urbana contains some useful points, especially in the ideas section, and it is also much too vague, especially the maps, to address the current conditions and pressures that we face and to protect the quality of life in our city. In a university community facing significant uncertainty, whatever changes are made should be based on solid information that is relevant to present conditions. Without the housing study, we do not have the information to make appropriate, tailored plans. Without detailed maps, citizens cannot give informed input.

One of us (Gunsalus) was on the Plan Commission during the last comprehensive plan update, and we note that process involved very detailed maps—block by block and parcel by parcel. The current maps are so over-general, with such generic descriptions, that they are open to multiple, often conflicting interpretations. Before you act, this must be remedied.

Please remember that over 200 residents have petitioned you about postponing action on the Imagine Urbana draft plan, and containing specific suggestions for changes and improvements that should be made before approval. Please heed our requests.

Thank you for your service and for accepting public input.

C. K. Gunsalus and Michael W. Walker



Public Input for 05/19/25

From Derek Briles <[REDACTED]>
Date Mon 5/19/2025 9:02 AM
To City Council <CityCouncil@UrbanalL.gov>

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comments aloud.

Hello. My name is Derek Briles and I am a resident of Urbana ward 4. I'm writing in support of the ordinance that would establish approval procedures and transparency for the purchase of surveillance technology by the Urbana Police Department.

Despite frequent claims by Chief Boone and recommendations from BerryDunn, the UPD seems no more transparent or committed to community input they did before any of this began. I have had the pleasure of hearing and reading UPB budget requests and have found them entirely absent of any of the data that Chief Boone claims he uses in decision making. This lack of openness is troubling.

UPD does not seem to be a good steward of the resources they already have. Very little data is made public, which makes it difficult to be informed on the successes and failures of UPD. Given the apparent secrecy under which they operate, I do not trust UPB with the purchase of surveillance technologies such as ALPRs without thorough review and approval.

In addition to an Urbana resident, I am also a proud member of the Party for Socialism and Liberation. While Boone was making emotional pleas for additional officers with no clear plan for what they would do, my comrades and I went into the East Urbana neighborhoods that are so often maligned for being hubs of violent crime and we spoke with the residents there. The majority of people we spoke with did not feel additional policing was the solution. Rather most people felt safe and they called for basic things like street lights, not more cops on the streets. People actually seemed very distrustful of the police. In fact, the police are specifically what makes some residents feel unsafe. You can read more here:
https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fplcweb.org%2f2024%2f11%2f22%2feast-urbana-resident-speak%2f&c=E,1,pBPXdu-WMVgJjMgRwJkKqak2JvOd5Xk61xXKip4xviADxef8UTxTmq4k8RkWB5Hwh5GXliBmQZIfij2wg9VHTA4A0Sc-LICJQOaoxrYhY_42HaQq6GA8cNMj0GPL&ty:po=1

While this is a small sample size of residents, it appears to be more than UPD or the city government has done to meet people where they are and hear their concerns. This proposed ordinance is a big step in the right direction toward transparency and collaboration. I urge all alderpersons to consider this very carefully and make the decision that builds bridges into the community, not walls patrolled by cops who don't even live in this community.

From: [Lilah Leopold](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT 5/19/2025
Date: Monday, May 19, 2025 2:46:57 PM

***** Email From An External Source *****
Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Mayor Williams and Council Members Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry,

Please read the below aloud at public comment if time permits. Thank you, all! I will be out of town this evening, so greatly appreciate the opportunity to submit public comment by e-mail.

My name is Lilah Leopold and I'm a resident of Ward 4 in Urbana. I'm writing in continued support of the Police Surveillance Technology Oversight Ordinance (Ordinance No. 2024-12-042). I thank all members of council for your continued discussion and serious consideration of this Ordinance and hope it remains up for discussion at subsequent meetings.

I hope council members and our local police leaders can see this Ordinance as an urgently needed safety component for working with tools that we neither design nor fully control. And that rather as a supposed hindrance to police work, it can be seen as an integral component of keeping our community safe that is not a criticism of police work, but a necessary component of working with technology infrastructures today.

This Ordinance can also play a crucial role in maintaining open and honest communication in our community. We cannot say with certainty where data from tools used locally will go, or how this may inadvertently and irreparably harm the safety of any member of our community despite its intended use. Therefore it seems especially necessary that police and the community as a whole remain in conversation about the latest tools and their uses so we can all remain best informed about how to keep each other safe and how to continue operating as a Sanctuary City that protects the full constitutional rights of its constituents.

Thank you very much for continuing your discussion of this Ordinance, which seems a necessary and forward-thinking component of twenty-first century governance!

Also, in reference to Ordinance No. 2025-04-013, I've sent some feedback to the team at Imagine Urbana, but for public comment today, I wanted to emphasize how great it could be if in all of the forward-thinking plans that are being made about housing, that

we could consider increasing the number of single-owner and locally-owned properties, and would be curious for your thoughts on this.

It would also be great to hear more about plans for sustainability in terms of the environment and public health, especially as concerning pesticide drift and particulate matter in our air--how might we be able to get a green belt around our city? Green belts around our fields (to both help farmer's not lose their soil to erosion, among other benefits, in addition to those for public health)? We are going to be up against a lot as our physical environment continues to change, and a focus on tree belts could be one way to offer an equitable boost to community health in every Ward.

I also noticed the high school graduation rates and am wondering if the following could be one way to help boost these that worked really well in my childhood public school system in New Jersey: are there any options here for students who need to support their families financially or otherwise to attend high school part-time and work part-time? Or to attend high school part-time and trade school or other training part-time? Initiatives like these were able to get my childhood high school's graduation rates up to 97%. (I would be happy to gather more details about these if there's interest.)

Thanks for reading and for all that you do for our community!

Sincerely,

Lilah Leopold

From: [Plewa, Michael Jacob](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: FW: Imagine Urbana Please read aloud at 5/19 meeting Public Input
Date: Monday, May 19, 2025 2:43:39 PM

***** Email From An External Source *****
Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

From: Plewa, Michael Jacob
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2025 2:41 PM
To: :CityCouncil@urbanillinois.us
Cc: Wuna Main [REDACTED]
Subject: Imagine Urbana Please read aloud at 5/19 meeting Public Input

Regarding: Imagine Urbana: Public Input: To be read into the record.

To be read into the record.

We are discouraged about the zoning changes in the West Urbana neighborhoods that are proposed in the Imagine Urbana Comprehensive Plan. It appears that the Plan Commission and the Urbana City staff planners wish to increase the density within the historic West Urbana neighborhood for the primary benefit of predatory developers. We have lived in Urbana since the mid-1970s as renters and as homeowners. We bought a distressed property on West Iowa Street in 1978 and over the decades improved our residence into a comfortable and energy efficient home. When we began our careers we chose our neighborhood for its proximity to the University of Illinois and because it has R-2 residential zoning. When purchasing a home there is at least an implicit contract that through the zoning ordinance the city will protect the investment of owner-occupied residents. The proposed zoning changes, which allow for more multi-family homes and higher-density housing in West Urbana, would undermine the character of Urbana's historic neighborhoods.

Please reflect that we the people, through our work and investment in our city, have made our neighborhood unique. The West-Urbana neighborhood was awarded by the American Planning Association as one of 10 Great Neighborhoods in America. The citation, in part, reads the following.

“Located between two dynamic areas — the University of Illinois and downtown Urbana — West Urbana has maintained its unique neighborhood identity for more than a century, refusing to succumb to the pressures of high-density development or issues surrounding absentee landlords. Many historic properties remain today, the result of an active citizenry and sustained planning efforts. The American Planning Association has selected West Urbana as one of 10 Great Neighborhoods in America for 2007 in recognition of the neighborhood's sustainable design; commuters who walk, bike, or ride transit at higher-than-average rates; inviting neighborhood spaces; and community focus on enhancing quality of life. ... Making a great neighborhood isn't magic but, as West Urbana shows, it takes a community where residents are involved with their neighborhood and plan for its future.”

Throughout these many years our city staff and planners seem to have a determined effort to

diminish the quality of our neighborhood that was so well described by the American Planning Association. Over the years, and after attending countless meetings, our view is that the principal focus of our city planners is to encourage predatory developers and absentee landlords. Perhaps our current planning staff and the Plan Commission should carefully consider the citation by the American Planning Association. Planners do not make a neighborhood great; the residents and homeowners do.

The Imagine Urbana Comprehensive Plan, including rezoning our historic neighborhoods like West Urbana, ignores the culture and the resources of Urbana. Do no harm; this plan is bad for the city.

Michael Plewa
Elizabeth Wagner Plewa

[REDACTED]

Urbana, IL 61801

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Sarah McEvoy](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Imagine Urbana Please read aloud at 5/19 meeting Public Input
Date: Monday, May 19, 2025 2:17:49 PM

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear City Council of Urbana and Mayor Williams,

We are in support of Mayor Williams' stance in supporting economic development on Philo Road and directing resources to that Urbana community in need of a boost. A hand out to greedy developers is not the way to affordable housing in Urbana. Urbana has open and vacant lots that need development. We need a policy that promotes more availability of owner-occupied starter homes in Urbana, not more rentals. As Mayor Williams said, "We are experts of our neighborhoods."

Living across the street from TCBC has given us years of experience and challenges to neighborhood preservation. Living next to the Church of Urbana for many years, (which tried to convert 811 W. Michigan Ave. to a fellowship house without a special use permit, including wanting to create a parking lot in the back yard with an added parking entrance off of Lincoln Ave.), we are no strangers to the benefit of the City of Urbana requiring special use permits to proposed zoning changes/uses. Special use permits may take up city staff's time, but it is a necessary requirement for hoped for zoning changes. It slows the process down, involves neighbors/taxpayers/stakeholders to have a voice in the outcome, as we should.

My husband and I were two of the 213 signers of the petition to the City Council urging changes to the language of Imagine Urbana in order to preserve our historic neighborhood and give neighbors and City Council appropriate input to zoning definitions and applications.

We don't imagine Urbana the way city staff imagine Urbana. The changes envisioned by the proposed comprehensive plan would be detrimental to the reality of the neighborhood. The elimination of the R1-R3 zoning and its replacement with Neighborhood designations would fundamentally allow West Urbana to turn into an R-4 Medium Density Multi-Family zone. Developers would by right be allowed to demolish homes and replace them with three story apartment buildings.

Residents' public input and oversight by City Council is essential.

We oppose designating the Lincoln-Busey Corridor to allow Accessory Development Units, duplexes, triplexes, quadrplexes and small apartments by right.

We encourage use of Urbana's central business district as the most appropriate area for high-density mixed use (business and residential) development.

We urge you to maintain the R1, R2 and R3 zoning between Lincoln,

Vine, Maine and Florida to protect Urbana's oldest and more architecturally significant neighborhood. We want to keep the neighborhood preservation plan that was first adopted in the 1990 Downtown to Campus Plan.

We urge you to adhere to existing design review guidelines for the Lincoln-Busey Corridor Overlay District and the Green St. MOR Zoning District.

Thank you,
Sarah McEvoy and Huseyin Schitoglu



From: [Steve Fay](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: 5/19/26 Public Input - Please read aloud
Date: Monday, May 19, 2025 12:26:50 PM

***** Email From An External Source *****
Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Mayor Williams and City Council Members,

Thank you for your service to the Urbana community.

Council member Evans recently shared his reasoning for voting “no” on the appointment of Police Chief Boone, which was helpful in understanding his perspective.

I am writing to respectfully ask Council member Wilken to likewise share her reasons for voting “no,” as many community members have expressed interest in understanding the rationale behind her decision.

To help keep the public informed, I would also like to invite all council members to consider offering a brief comment when voting “present” or against an appointment.

I appreciate those of you who have spoken with the media to share your thoughts and explain your votes.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing your responses.

Once again, Thank you,
Steve Fay
Urbana Resident Ward 7

From: [Chris Z](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Public comment and police surveillance
Date: Monday, May 19, 2025 11:04:43 AM

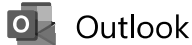
***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

C Zelle Urbana-Champaign

In a perfect world with the most honest of people this would still be the right, honest, transparent process that encourages unity through honest accountability rather than associations formed through biases of association or other issues such as disinterest or apathy. We certainly don't live in that world. The world we live in has a police chief that introduced himself to this community with a blatant act of dishonesty with data purposefully misrepresented to confuse people with regular levels of math education. He continued this level of consideration through his other public presentations up to and including a budget proposal so lacking in data as to eschew having to provide misrepresentive data by providing none at all. This is also a world where the surveillance technology this dishonest actor would be using are ran by, partially owned by, aligned with, and/or, originally invested in by terrible state actor(s) accused international of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and/or apartheid. These are actual foreign spy companies that a dishonest local cop wants to use to disproportionately target any community member with darker skin. These technologies are hugely flawed internally, dramatically swindled as less flawed than they truly are, provided by murderous foreign spies, and peddled by our local dishonest police chief too cowardly and lazy to change his ways.

Full support for any ordinance reigning in this uncontrollable city employee and making their job more secure against this behavior in the future.



Public Comment on Public Surveillance Ordinance

From Lesley Owens <[REDACTED]>

Date Mon 5/19/2025 10:11 AM

To City Council <CityCouncil@UrbanaIL.gov>

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello Urbana City Council members,

My name is Lesley Owens, and I am a resident of Urbana Ward 4. I am writing in support of the ordinance that would establish approval procedures and transparency for the purchase of surveillance technology by the Urbana Police Department.

Generally, public surveillance equipment is ripe for misuse. Its implementation often leads to additional risk and retaliation for communities of color, immigrant communities, and political activists. Moreover, it is absolutely unnecessary in a community like Urbana, which experiences very little crime; implementation of these technologies without public input will lead to wasted resources that are desperately needed by our poorest community members.

UPD does not seem to be a good steward of the resources they already have. Very little data is made public, which makes it difficult to be informed on the successes and failures of UPD. Given the apparent secrecy under which they operate, I do not trust UPD with the purchase of surveillance technologies such as ALPRs without thorough review and approval.

This proposed ordinance is a big step in the right direction toward transparency and collaboration. I urge all alderpersons to approve this ordinance for the safety of our communities and the sustainability of the Urbana city budget.

Sincerely,
Dr. Lesley Owens
Urbana, Ward 4
[REDACTED]

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.