



**CITY OF URBANA  
PLAN COMMISSION RESCHEDULED  
MEETING**

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**DATE:** Thursday, June 26, 2025  
**TIME:** 7:00 PM  
**PLACE:** 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

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**AGENDA**

**A. Call to Order and Roll Call**

**B. Changes to the Agenda**

**C. Approval of Minutes**

[Minutes](#) of the February 20, 2025 Regular Meeting

[Minutes](#) of the February 27, 2025 Special Meeting

**D. Communications**

**E. Continued Public Hearings**

**F. Old Business**

**G. New Business**

**H. New Public Hearings**

[Plan Case No. 2508-SU-25](#) - A request by Halton Bagley for a Special Use Permit to allow a hostel at 1204 South Lincoln Avenue in the R-7 (University Residential) Zoning District

**I. Audience Participation**

**J. Staff Report**

Update on Lincoln Avenue Corridor Study (see <https://ccrpc.gitlab.io/lincoln-ave/implementation/recs/>)

**K. Study Session**

**L. Adjournment**

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

The City of Urbana welcomes Public Input during open meetings of the City Council, the City Council's Committee of the Whole, City Boards and Commissions and other City-sponsored meetings. Our goal is to foster respect for the meeting process, and respect for all people participating as members of the public body, city staff, and general public. The City is required to conduct all business during public meetings. The presiding officer is responsible for conducting those meetings in an orderly and efficient manner.

Public Input will be taken in the following ways:

### **Email Input**

In order to be incorporated into the record, emailed public comments must be received prior to 5:00 pm on the day preceding the meeting and sent to the following email address: [Planning@urbanail.gov](mailto:Planning@urbanail.gov). The subject line of the email must include the words **"PLAN COMMISSION - PUBLIC INPUT"** and the meeting date. Emailed public comments labeled as such will be incorporated into the public meeting record, with personal identifying information redacted.

### **Written Input**

Any member of the public may submit their comments addressed to the members of the public body in writing. If a person wishes their written comments to be included in the record of Public Input for the meeting, the writing should so state. Written comments must be received prior to the closing of the meeting record (at the time of adjournment unless otherwise noted).

### **Public Hearing**

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony may speak during each public hearing at the time they appear on the agenda. This shall not count towards regular Public Input for the meeting. The Public Hearing is an opportunity for comments and questions to be addressed specific to each case. Board or Commission members are permitted to respond and engage during this time and/or the Chairperson may direct the applicant to respond during rebuttal. Comments unrelated to any of the public hearings listed on an agenda should be shared during the Public Input portion of the meeting where Verbal Input guidelines shall apply.

### **Verbal Input**

Protocol for Public Input is one of respect for the process of addressing the business of the City. Obscene or profane language, or other conduct that threatens to impede the orderly progress of the business conducted at the meeting is unacceptable.

Public comment shall be limited to no more than five (5) minutes per person. The Public Input portion of the meeting shall total no more than one (1) hour, unless otherwise shortened or extended by majority vote of the public body members present. The presiding officer or the city clerk or their designee, shall monitor each speaker's use of time and shall notify the speaker when the allotted time has expired. A person may participate and provide Public Input once during a meeting and may not cede time to another person or split their time if Public Input is held at two (2) or more different times during a meeting.

The presiding officer or public body members shall not enter into a dialogue with citizens. Questions from the public body members shall be for clarification purposes only. Public Input shall not be used as a time for problem solving or reacting to comments made but, rather, for hearing citizens for informational purposes only.

In order to maintain the efficient and orderly conduct and progress of the public meeting, the presiding officer of the meeting shall have the authority to raise a point of order and provide a verbal warning to a speaker who engages in the conduct or behavior proscribed under “Verbal Input”. Any member of the public body participating in the meeting may also raise a point of order with the presiding officer and request that they provide a verbal warning to a speaker. If the speaker refuses to cease such conduct or behavior after being warned by the presiding officer, the presiding officer shall have the authority to mute the speaker’s microphone and/or video presence at the meeting. The presiding officer will inform the speaker that they may send the remainder of their remarks via e-mail to the public body for inclusion in the meeting record.

### **Accommodation**

If an accommodation is needed to participate in a City meeting, please contact the City at least 48 hours in advance using one of the following methods:

Phone: **217.384.2440**

Email: **[Planning@urbanail.gov](mailto:Planning@urbanail.gov)**

### **Watching the Meeting via Streaming Services**

All City meetings are broadcast on Urbana Public Television and live-streamed on the web. Details on how to watch are found on the UPTV webpage located at **<https://www.urbanail.gov/executive-department/page/urbana-public-television>**.

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING**

**URBANA PLAN COMMISSION**

**DRAFT**

**DATE:** February 20, 2025

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

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

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**MEMBERS ATTENDING:** Dustin Allred, Will Andresen, Lew Hopkins, Karen Simms, Chenxi Yu

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Debarah McFarland

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Andrew Fell, Bill Rose

**STAFF PRESENT:** Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner; Mayor Diane Marlin

**OTHERS PRESENT:** There were none.

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

Chair Allred called the meeting to order at 7:04 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 21, 2024 Regular Meeting**

**Minutes of the December 5, 2024 Regular Meeting**

**Minutes of the January 16, 2025 Regular Meeting**

The minutes of the November 21, 2024, December 5, 2024, and the January 16, 2025 regular meetings were presented for approval. Mr. Hopkins moved that these impressive minutes be approved by the Plan Commission. Ms. Simms seconded the motion. The minutes of the November 21, 2024, December 5, 2024, and January 16, 2025 regular meetings were approved by voice vote.

**D. COMMUNICATIONS**

- *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan – Development Opportunities Map

**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**

Mr. Garcia reported on the following:

- **Dutch Bros. Coffee Shop Special Use Permit** – Mr. Garcia said that this case was presented to the Committee of the Whole on Monday, February 17, 2025, and they forwarded it to the City Council on February 24, 2025 with a recommendation for approval.

**K. STUDY SESSION**

***Imagine Urbana Comprehensive Plan Draft***

Chair Allred opened this item on the agenda. Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner, presented his agenda for discussion on the *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan, which was as follows:

- I. Timeline to Adoption
- II. Connected City Map
- III. Development Opportunities Map
- IV. Place Types – Text + Map
- V. Draft Plan

He said that his agenda consists of the same components as those listed on the meeting agenda; however, they are in a different order.

**I. TIMELINE TO ADOPTION**

Mr. Garcia talked about the Doodle Poll and thanked the Plan Commission members for responding to it with their availability for every Thursday night through March, 2025. It appears there would be a quorum of Plan Commission members for each Thursday night, should they need to meet to review the draft plan. He reviewed staff's tentative plan for the rest of the process once Plan Commission has finished reviewing and providing input on the draft plan. This includes holding study sessions with the Committee of the Whole on Thursday nights, because staff believes the City Council would benefit from having Plan Commission members' input.

He reviewed staff's goals for tonight's meeting regarding the timeline. They are:

1. Set a date to open the public hearing at Plan Commission. Staff would like to open the public hearing in March, 2025, because it will probably take more than one meeting at Plan Commission, and it will probably take multiple meetings as well when it gets to City Council.

He mentioned that Mayor Marlin would love if the plan was adopted before she left office in May.

2. Discuss the basic structure for the public hearing.

He noted that staff has a postcard ready to mail to every resident in the City of Urbana. Staff just needs to enter the date of the first public hearing once Plan Commission and staff set one. Mr. Hopkins replied that if they have the first public hearing on March 13, 2025, it will leave March 20<sup>th</sup> as a possibility for a second public hearing date, if needed. Special meetings with City Council could be held on March 27<sup>th</sup> and April 3<sup>rd</sup>. He said it was not clear if the special meetings with City Council took the place of the Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss the plan or is the special meeting(s) in addition to the Committee of the Whole meeting. There are not many extra weeks in this schedule to try to make this happen.

Mr. Hopkins stated that he has been through the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan before, and the whole sequence of the process this time has been so completely different from the last time. There has been almost no public participation or media discussion of any issues at any study session held this time. He asked if we are going to have a public hearing and discover that there is tremendous disagreement about the content of the plan. He commented that it is very strange to be in a process like this at this stage.

Mayor Diane Marlin said that there is public interest, and we will hold the public hearing, which gives people the opportunity to show up and speak on the plan. She stated that she is very proud of how much public input and participation has gone into creating the *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan. This is unprecedented compared to past processes. She pointed out that staff started this process in 2020, and the community participated in multiple different ways, so we all can be very proud. She thanked the Plan Commission members for the effort they have put into reviewing the draft plan. Mr. Hopkins stated that his concern is that this is a document with specific content, and there has never been a meeting of the Plan Commission studying and reviewing the plan in which more than three people have shown up to express interest. Mayor Marlin replied that we have to be prepared to be flexible, adapt, and respond. Mr. Hopkins stated that he is trying to imagine how we can get the most deliberative sequence of activity going among the participants.

Chair Allred asked if the special meetings with City Council would be considered study sessions. Mr. Garcia said that he conceived the process to be that the Plan Commission makes a recommendation, and then the City Council holds special meetings just to talk about the plan only. He likes the idea of holding a Plan Commission meeting, then a Council meeting, and then another Plan Commission meeting, if needed. Mayor Marlin reiterated that the focus of the special meetings with the Council is to focus on the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Hopkins stated that it would be a whole lot simpler to have feedback going both ways and to have a recommendation from the Plan Commission be closer to what the City Council wants to do rather than for the City Council to get a recommendation from the Plan Commission and then want to do a whole lot of revisions.

Chair Allred stated that lately there has not been many people coming to the Plan Commission meetings to provide comments on cases or on the Comprehensive Plan, and then when the cases go to City Council, there is suddenly a lot of interest in people wanting to comment. He said that there are comments from the public that the Plan Commission would want to respond to regarding

the recommendation that the Plan Commission eventually makes. He asked if there is any requirement that the Plan Commission has to make a recommendation first before City Council can talk about it or does the Plan Commission only have to make a recommendation before City Council makes a decision. Mr. Garcia replied that the Plan Commission only has to make a recommendation before City Council makes a decision. He said that the draft plan has been available for anyone to review, including City Council if they want to.

Mayor Marlin said that she thinks we, as a city, can make a concerted effort to let the community know they really need to attend the Plan Commission meetings and make their opinions known. Chair Allred said that the Plan Commission had talked about this at the previous meeting, and City staff was going to prepare a postcard to mail out to every Urbana resident, post information on social media, reach out to neighborhood list serves, and post flyers to encourage public participation at the Plan Commission level.

Ms. Simms stated that she likes the idea of amending the schedule to get feedback from City Council. It might pique the public interest. Chair Allred asked if staff would also post information in Smile Politely and in other sources where people are getting information. Mr. Hopkins said that if staff feels that we need two public hearings at Plan Commission level and two City Council special meetings before City Council acts on the plan, then we must think that there is at least one thing in the document that two people disagree about. He believes that if we put some specific information that is important out there, then we have a reason for people to react. This is basic planning theory 101. Mayor Marlin stated that staff would get the word out because this is very important to our local community.

Ms. Simms stated that it does not have to be negative. Getting the word out can be done in a positive tone with things in the plan that people can look forward to or become hopeful about, things that can make our community hallmarks and stand out, and also could be good media. This plan is our community's vision of where Urbana is going and is something that many people want. The feedback that she has heard from the community has been positive about how they are looking forward to the City achieving what is in the plan, and they appreciate the attentiveness that the Plan Commission has given during our discussions.

Mayor Marlin stated that the Plan Commission does have a TV audience, and we have a plan in front of us that reflects the community's input from the past few years. We can all be proud of that, and it is a story that we should tell. We will give the people an opportunity to provide input.

Chair Allred agreed with Ms. Simms in that there is a good angle for a story to talk about. There has been a lot of positive activity in Downtown Urbana, which relates to Big Move #4 – Make Downtown an Economic Driver.

Discussion ensued about holding a meeting on March 20, 2025. Mr. Garcia stated the Doodle Poll results show a bare quorum of members being able to attend. He suggested opening the public hearing at a special meeting on March 13, 2025. Mr. Hopkins added that they could have a special meeting of the City Council on March 27, 2025 and re-open the public hearing on April 3, 2025. On April 10, 2025, we could have a second special meeting with City Council, and then we would have a Committee of the Whole meeting on April 7, 2025.

Chair Allred stated that one concern with going directly to the Committee of the Whole is that there is a lot of other things usually on the Committee of the Whole agenda. Mayor Marlin said

that if they know in advance, then they can set the agenda so the Committee of the Whole can focus on the Comprehensive Plan. It will be a very busy time with the budget and with the transition of administration. Mr. Garcia added that they will include these dates on the postcard and send it out.

Mr. Hopkins stated that another way to get people to come to a meeting is if they realize that this is a special meeting with City Council doing a study session on the plan. It will attract people's attention that the plan is really moving along, and they need to come out and either rally support or tweak the questions we have now.

Mr. Garcia talked about how to present the material at the Plan Commission public hearings. He thought at the first public hearing of giving a broad overview of the entire plan, hitting on the high points. At the second public hearing, they could react to any changes and reactions that happened during the special Council study session. Mr. Hopkins stated that a complete draft of the plan needs to be available by March 13, 2025 at the first public hearing. He added that the Plan Commission does not want to spend the public hearing talking to the public, but rather spend it having the public talk to the Plan Commission about the draft plan. Mr. Allred said that the Plan Commission does not want the public coming to the first public hearing and first learning about the draft plan. He reiterated the importance of getting the word out to the public about the Comprehensive Plan draft.

## **II. CONNECTED CITY MAP**

Mr. Garcia noted the changes he made to the Connected City Map, which included adding the Vine Street and Illinois Street projects that the City has planned. He also added the Main Street and Vine Street intersection, because it could use some redesign. The only other changes he would like to make are getting rid of completed projects from the existing 2005 Comprehensive Plan. He said we only need to know what we need to do going forward.

Mr. Hopkins talked about the extension to the west from Route 45. He commented that it has not been completed, so it needs to stay on the map. However, it does not show up in the list on the map. There is no project on the Connected City Map legend that corresponds to the connection of Olympian Drive to Route 45. He suggested meeting with Mr. Garcia to work on correcting some of the issues.

Mr. Hopkins said another issue is in the area north of the tiny homes; it is not anywhere in any list. He said that the difference between planned roadway extensions (which he said they would probably change this label) and connected city map (which should be the label for the whole map) are that the roadway extensions are not yet projects from a Capital Improvement Plan or Long-Range Transportation Plan point of view. It needs significant reorganization.

Mr. Hopkins said that on the map there is an annotation that says, "Beringer Circle EXT". Because of the way we have modified the graphics, it is difficult to understand. Therefore, he said we need to clean up the graphic style. Mr. Garcia explained that the little arrows are more definitive than the big blue triangles because they extend roads that already exist.

Mr. Hopkins stated that there is a confusing classification problem with the legend for road types. The colors for the other two are so close together, it is easy to misread what is going on. He said that getting rid of the green completed projects will give us another color choice to use.

Another quasi-substantive issue is that #7 and #8 on the potential plan projects describe shoulder edition construction shared use path on the north side of Curtis Road; however, #7 and #8 actually label the north-south roads, not Curtis Road. He suggested separating #7, #8 and Curtis Road. He thought the north side of Curtis Road could be part of #9. He felt these should be downplayed and made apparently less significant.

Chair Allred asked what happened to creating a matrix that explains how the classification system is on the map and how it relates to a street typology. Mr. Garcia stated that he has not found time to give this task any thought. When he worked on describing the Place Types, it seemed like a good place to add the street type descriptions for each Place Type. Mr. Hopkins commented that this gets back to the timeline for the Comprehensive Plan and to our staffing problem. The Connected City Map can be claimed to meet the needs of the Manual of Practice and the Land Development Code, which refers to the classification of this type of the roadways. Mr. Garcia replied that we are conceiving of the Comprehensive Plan as a document that is not going to be static. We have made amendments to the existing 2005 Comprehensive Plan over time. If there is a discreet item like the matrix explaining how the classification system is on the map that City staff does not have time to create, we can make it more explicit that we want to flesh out the details of street types going forward and then come back with an amendment within the next year or two. Chair Allred agreed. He said that a lot of the configuration of street rights-of-way relates to many of the Big Moves in the draft plan, from healthy communities to walkability. Mr. Hopkins agreed with this strategy as well.

In response to the plan not being static, Mr. Hopkins stated that we need to remember that legally the Comprehensive Plan is a document that has certain standing from a legal point of view, so it is adopted. It makes sense to think of things that we cannot get done as future amendments, but not in the sense of adopting the plan in May and then adding graphics. He said it is two different attitudes, and it is important to keep them distinct.

Ms. Simms recalled the Plan Commission talking about advocating to slow most streets to 30 miles per hour (mph). She asked how this would work with regards to enforcement. Mr. Garcia replied that speeds are a result of street design, not enforcement. If we say in the Comprehensive Plan that we want low-speed streets throughout the City, then we have the backing to design streets that are lower speed.

Ms. Simms said that there would be a cost involved to slow streets by adding traffic circles or speed bumps. How do we get City Council to consider the additional cost during budget time? Mr. Garcia answered by saying that the easiest way to design a low-speed street is to make it narrower, which results in using less pavement, making it less costly. We could also add more street trees to make it feel more enclosed as one is driving down a street. Chair Allred added that the Comprehensive Plan is a 20-year plan, and it is aspirational. The content of the plan are things that the community wants and will work towards over the long term. So, it does not mean that next year's budget includes fixing all of the streets. This is okay and does not mean the City failed. It is something for the right people to think about when they are putting future budgets together over the long term.

Mr. Garcia pointed out that the City will be redesigning existing streets in the future, because we probably do not need any more new streets. We are trying to be responsible and make sure development pays for itself and also focus on infill development.

### III. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES MAP

Mr. Garcia noted the changes he made to the map after consulting with Brad Bennett from the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District. The substantial changes included the following:

1. Southwestern Area on Map owned by the University of Illinois – Mr. Bennett told him that the University of Illinois does sewer planning for their properties in this area. It was previously listed as being a red hatched area that said it would be costly to extend sewers to this area. So, Mr. Garcia corrected the map. He noted that the map shown online was not updated and still had maps from the 2005 Comprehensive Plan.
2. Legend Text – Mr. Garcia stated that he made changes to the text in the legend so now the red-hatched area says, “Area Requires New Regional Pump Station for Sewer Services”. The yellow-hatched area says, “Area Requires Interceptor Sewer Extensions for Sewer Services”. He noted that some areas south of Windsor Road and east of High Cross Road have been changed to yellow because there is a pump station nearby that has excess capacity. Sewer service could be extended to all of the now yellow areas; it would be at the expense of the developers. He mentioned that he could show where the existing pump stations are located on the map.
3. Activity Center near Walmart and Aldi

Chair Allred suggested talking with developers and ask if it would make sense to have the pump station to say this is where you would be building an interceptor sewer. Mr. Garcia said that he thought of this and also kicked around the idea of adding a note with an arrow pointing down that says it is going to get more costly the further south you want to develop. Mr. Hopkins stated that adding the pump stations to the map should be specific enough to make it clear what the issue is.

Mr. Hopkins noticed that the language requiring interceptor sewers no longer distinguishes from serviceable by gravity. Mr. Garcia responded that the language was changed because all interceptor sewers are fed to the pump station by gravity.

Mr. Hopkins suggested adding where the major interceptor ends, so developers will know where they would have to extend future interceptor extensions from. He said that this map in a way shows the City’s growth boundary, so he feels it is worth being really specific.

Mr. Hopkins suggested adding annotations for the major development opportunities. The annotations would serve as identifiers when discussing the area, and it would a label for the Place Types Map.

Mr. Hopkins asked why the Menards site is not labelled as a development opportunity on the map. Mr. Garcia replied that he envisions using the Development Opportunities Map where to focus City staff’s time on trying to make development happen. He does not want to spread City staff’s time too thin, and he wants to focus on infilling big sites more in town. Mr. Hopkins stated that he was okay with this.

Chair Allred noticed that the Pines Shopping Center at the southeast corner of Philo Road and Windsor Road is labelled as being a Neighborhood Center Place Type. While it is smaller, it is also something that fits with many of the goals of the draft plan as being a development opportunity,

and he wondered why it was not listed as such on the Development Opportunities Map. Mr. Hopkins agreed that it should be blue on the map.

Mr. Hopkins asked about the property located between the end of Mumford Drive and Stone Creek Boulevard. He said it looks like it could be a development opportunity but is not marked on the Development Opportunities Map. Mr. Garcia said that it is not marked because it is owned by Sola Gratia, and they are fully invested in farming the land forever.

Mr. Hopkins asked if this means that the extension of Mumford Drive to the east is not being considered any more. Mr. Garcia said that was correct. He thought he had removed it from the map. Mr. Hopkins mentioned that the curb cut is on Stone Creek Boulevard, and the alignment of the street is on the Official Map of the City, so he suggested that they do not take the alignment out of the Official Map in the sense of protecting the alignment from construction of buildings and infrastructure. Some day in the future, the extension of Mumford Drive should be completed. Mr. Garcia explained that the owners had recently been required to do a minor development, and the City reserved space for a potential extension in the future. Mr. Hopkins stated that it should be included on the map, because this is the official map that protects rights-of-way for future street connectivity. So, it should stay the way it is marked currently on the map. We could annotate it to explain why it is not a development opportunity. Mr. Garcia said that we want to put information out for people to react to, and this is one of the few things that one person reacted to at one of the neighborhood meetings that was held by City staff earlier in the Comprehensive Plan process. Mr. Hopkins stated that we should leave it on the map (maybe label it differently) with an annotation because we have to protect what is in the minor plat; but we also need to make clear that at the moment, there is a different commitment made but presumably they are not allowed to build a building in the right-of-way. Mr. Garcia said that is correct.

#### **IV. Place Types – Text + Map**

Mr. Garcia reviewed the changes he made to the text for Place Types. The changes were as follows:

1. Renamed the labels of several of the Place Types
  - A. Residential Neighborhood and Mixed Residential Neighborhood is changed to Neighborhood 1 and Neighborhood 2
  - B. Mixed Use Core that was separated into two subgroups is changed to Neighborhood Center (for lower intensity uses) and City Center (for higher intensity uses)
  - C. Institutional is changed to Campus
  - D. Industrial is changed to Manufacturing and Logistics
  - E. Rural Residential is added
  - F. Agricultural is added
2. Updated the descriptions
  - A. Land Uses
  - B. Building Form
  - C. Streets and Connectivity
  - D. Open Space
3. Photos/Images of each Place Type still need to be added but he is looking for feedback from the Plan Commission
4. Place Types Matrix still needs to be completed.

Chair Allred stated that he likes the matrix table. He is not enamored with the label City Center partially because of the name but also how it maps onto actual places. He stated that he feels it lends itself more to a node corridor breakdown. City staff used the same color for the Mixed-Use Center in Downtown Urbana as they did for Lincoln Avenue. Chair Allred stated that Lincoln Avenue is really more of a Mixed-Use Corridor. The uses are different than what could happen in Downtown Urbana. He stated that Neighborhood Center connotes that it is in the middle of the neighborhood when actually they are mostly on the periphery of the neighborhood.

Mr. Hopkins agreed that the matrix looks good. He mentioned again that his concern about the staff level and the ability to complete it, because it could be one of the more useful aspects of updating the Zoning Ordinance without going beyond what should be in a plan as opposed to what should be in a Zoning Ordinance. He said that the difference in definition between Neighborhood 1 and Neighborhood 2 is nicely subtle. Mr. Hopkins said that one of the objectives for a draft plan is that it be a good deliberation discussion document. He stated that he feels that the descriptions of the Place Types are now getting to be pretty good discussion documents.

Mr. Hopkins stated that staff still has work to do on the matrix table. Mr. Garcia asked for direction on what building types would fill out the matrix. He has some ideas for corner stores, bigger commercial buildings, and some industrial buildings. Mr. Hopkins commented that if Mr. Garcia uses the text descriptions that he created to fill out the matrix, then he has a pretty good frame. He said to make sure Mr. Garcia includes enough in the Neighborhood 1 and Neighborhood 2 to let people manipulate his notion of what these are, so that we gain wider acceptance of what we think we are communicating.

Ms. Simms wondered if there was a way we can put a short descriptor in parentheses for Neighborhood 1 and Neighborhood 2 so that it captures. She mentioned that she had to read the descriptions multiple times to catch the nuance. Mr. Garcia stated that he was trying to stay clear of notions of density and intensity, because density comes with a lot of baggage that creates fear that is unfounded. Chair Allred agreed that he would avoid the density description as well. Mr. Hopkins stated that Ms. Simms hit the exact issue that he was trying to get at himself. In order for someone to have any clue what the Comprehensive Plan is about, there has to be a way to make it more concrete. We do not want to use the words because we do not want to admit that is the distinction we are making, but it basically is. Mr. Garcia replied that Neighborhood 2 would come with more density, but it is more subtle though. Neighborhood 1 says that it primarily consists of detached housing, so you know it will be mostly that. Neighborhood 2 contains a mix of housing. Mr. Hopkins said that the text does not say this though. Chair Allred suggested the wording to say something like, "low to moderate intensity neighborhood". He said that we either need to summarize it one way or to just explain it fully.

Mr. Hopkins stated that if they are going to use labels, the "full stop" versions are pretty close. The primarily single family and mixed do not contradict the elaborations which is useful because it says single family is dominant among those uses. Mr. Garcia said that he calls it detached housing. Ms. Simms replied that detached housing will not make sense to a regular person. Mr. Garcia said that he wants to get away from using "single family" because it comes with a lot of reaction. Mr. Hopkins stated that this goes back to what he previously said about the Comprehensive Plan being a discussion document or a draft to get these issues in discussion. Maybe leaving it as Neighborhood 1 and Neighborhood 2 at the moment is the best we can do. Mr. Garcia said that it is certainly generating discussion by the Plan Commission. He suggested saying "single houses" instead of "single family".

Ms. Simms said that she agreed with Chair Allred about “neighborhood centers”. Mr. Garcia said that this gets to the push and pull between what is existing now and how we want things to be in the future. Most of the neighborhood centers are at corners or at the edges of neighborhoods or along corridors. They are not usually in the center of neighborhoods. Chair Allred said the description is fine, but people might think of it as the center of connected neighborhoods, which is a different sort of place. Mr. Garcia stated that they are trying to write a plan that is accessible to anyone. Chair Allred said that the key is in the descriptions, and he feels the descriptions are good.

Chair Allred talked about providing graphics or images that communicate more of the neighborhood scale and urban design aspects of each Place Type. Mr. Garcia said that the students had provided a few images. Chair Allred mentioned the possibility of using drone images. Mr. Garcia stated that while isometric images would point out some of the things that would be nice to have, he did not know if it is necessary to do a plan amendment in a year or so or should they just add them now. Chair Allred replied that it comes back to the accessibility aspect. So, it is one thing to read a paragraph and try to visualize in your mind what is this place like, and then it is another thing to have an image to show what is meant. Images make it easier for people to understand.

Mr. Garcia asked what the Plan Commission wants him to prepare for next week’s meeting. Chair Allred stated that the Plan Commission should spend the bulk of next week’s study session providing comments on the maps. Mr. Garcia said that he would work on filling out the Place Types Matrix. Chair Allred suggested that Mr. Garcia research how the real estate websites describe these things. He did not think that they should dumb things down too much. Ms. Simms said that if you want to make things accessible, then you make it accessible by writing it on a third to fifth grade level. Thinking about diverse languages and diverse things are going to change accessibility, and it is easier to make it sound accessible than it is to make it sound smart. People trust a document if they understand it. The more the words sound fancy, the more people feel like you are trying to pull a bait and switch and that you are hiding things. Trustworthiness and transparency matter. More people would be willing to read it as well.

Ms. Yu agreed that it should be written on a third to seventh grade level, and she suggested using an AI literacy checker. We can always adjust the level up or down based on the audience’s response. This always verifies output. Ms. Simms agreed. Mr. Garcia said that it is his goal to write the plan, as with any document, in as plain of English as possible to make it understandable.

Mr. Garcia pointed out the main changes he made to the Place Types Map. He added some points of interest, changed some labelling, and made a lot of the University of Illinois’ land that is agricultural and labelled it as such. He suggested at some point the Plan Commission and City staff should look at the annotations on the map. Mr. Hopkins stated that he scanned the annotations, and most of them look okay.

Mr. Garcia noted one annotation at the bottom of the map that says “Area within UCSD service area can now be served by gravity” that he would like to discuss with the Plan Commission. Mr. Hopkins stated that this annotation needs to be carefully consistent with the better data we now have on the maps.

February 20, 2025

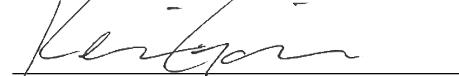
Chair Allred noticed that Neighborhood Center ends up next to commercial in quite a few places on the map. They look similar in color. He asked staff to make them contrast more with each other.

Mr. Garcia pointed out that the most recent draft of the plan includes all of the comments staff had received so far. Mr. Hopkins stated that he has some editorial comments that he will submit to staff.

**L. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Garcia", is written over a horizontal line.

Kevin Garcia, Secretary  
Urbana Plan Commission

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING**

**URBANA PLAN COMMISSION**

**DRAFT**

**DATE:** February 27, 2025

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

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

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**MEMBERS ATTENDING:** Dustin Allred, Will Andresen, Bill Rose, Karen Simms, Chenxi Yu

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Debarah McFarland

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Andrew Fell, Lew Hopkins

**STAFF PRESENT:** Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner; Andrea Ruedi, Senior Advisor for Integrated Strategy Development

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Geoff Bant, Joanne Budde, Makenzie Pamperin, Austin Wang

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

Chair Allred called the meeting to order at 7:04 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 December 19, 2024 Regular Meeting**

The minutes of the December 19, 2024 regular meeting was presented for approval. Mr. Rose moved that the minutes be approved by the Plan Commission as written. Mr. Andresen seconded the motion. The minutes of the December 19, 2024 regular meeting were approved by voice vote.

**D. COMMUNICATIONS**

- *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan – Place/Building Type Matrix

**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**

Mr. Garcia reported on the following:

- **Dutch Bros. Coffee Shop Special Use Permit** – Mr. Garcia said that City Council approved the Special Use Permit with an additional condition that the developer would work with Planning staff and with Engineering staff to come up with some treatments at the driveway to help make it safer for people walking and biking past the driveway.

**K. STUDY SESSION**

***Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan Draft**

Chair Allred re-opened this item on the agenda. Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner, and Andrea Ruedi, Senior Advisor for Integrated Strategy Development, presented the agenda for discussion on the *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan, which was as follows:

- I. *Imagine Urbana* Changes Since 2/20/25 Plan Commission Meeting
- II. *Imagine Urbana* Draft Review & Comments
- III. *Imagine Urbana* Review and Recommendation Timeline
- IV. 3/06/2025 Plan Commission Topics

**I. *Imagine Urbana* Changes Since February 20, 2025 Plan Commission Meeting**

Mr. Garcia and Ms. Ruedi reviewed the following changes that staff made to the plan since the last meeting:

- Define Street Types and Illustrate on the Connected City Map (Little Move 6.10)
- Renumbered associated metrics for Big Move 6
- Added language in Background & Trends to automatically incorporate updated versions of the 2016 Bicycle Master Plan, the 2020 Pedestrian Master Plan, and the 2008 Boneyard Creek Master Plan as elements of the *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan

Chair Allred asked if the 2012 Downtown Plan was intentionally left off this list. He said it was listed in the amendments to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Garcia said that they can add it to the list if the Plan Commission wants to.

Chair Allred mentioned that there are several Champaign County plans, such as the Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Greenways and Trails Plan. Mr. Garcia said that he is not sure how these two plans fit in with the Comprehensive Plan. During his time with the City, he has never referred to or pointed to them as reasoning for any decision making. He would need to give it some more thought before agreeing to adding them to the *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Garcia continued to mention other changes that were made. They were as follows:

- Updated the Place/Building Type Matrix (handout) by adding photos
- Updated the Development Opportunities Map – updated to a higher resolution, can now zoom in on specific areas, added UCSD pump station, and added the undeveloped area south of The Pines as a development opportunity
- Updated Connected City Map – separated planned projects into priority projects, changed the color of the Mumford Drive extension and listed it as a low-priority project, made the blue arrows showing extended streets larger, and removed the completed projects from the map.

Chair Allred said that the numbering for the projects is weird. Also, there are two projects that have something other than a circle as the symbol, and there is no explanation why they are different. Mr. Garcia said that the numbering is weird because he grabbed them from below the map and swapped some of the projects out. He said that he did not have time to fix the numbering, however, he will fix it before the next Plan Commission meeting. With regards to the triangular symbols, he said that they are in places where there is uncertainty about the alignment of future extensions. He said that he could use a circle with a line instead of using a triangle. He noted a few other changes he wants to make to the map to make it easier to understand.

Mr. Garcia reviewed the changes he made to the Place/Building Type Matrix in more detail. He explained that the right side of the Matrix has the different place types that were defined for the plan. Green indicates what type of development would be acceptable in each place type. Yellow indicates the type of development that might be okay to have a limited number, or the City may want to place some sort of restrictions on that type of development. He said that the Matrix is a guide that will help with updating the Zoning Ordinance in the future. He pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan is a policy document, not a regulatory document.

Chair Allred said that there are many potential users (such as developers) of the Comprehensive Plan. So, he does not feel that some of the terminology makes sense. He used the commercial plus residential development type. The message they are trying to send is that these are building types where there is a mix of uses in a single building as opposed to saying the developer could have commercial or they can have residential. He recommended just calling it “mixed use” to make it clear for all users to understand. Mr. Garcia added that they could also add a definition of “mixed use” in the plan.

Ms. Simms asked if tiny homes would fit in the category of “accessory uses”. Mr. Garcia noted that he should define “accessory use” in the plan. Mr. Garcia explained that a tiny house would qualify as a single house, and it would be appropriate to have in either of the neighborhood areas, rural residential, or agriculture. If someone wanted to construct a tiny home on a lot that already has a regular-sized home on it, then it would qualify as an accessory dwelling. He stated that when we do a rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance, then we will need to get into these details. “Accessory dwelling” could include tiny homes, garage apartments, basement, or attic apartments. He stated that when we do a rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance, then we will need to get into these details.

Chair Allred asked if the photos were of Urbana properties. Mr. Garcia replied that some of the photos he used from a presentation that was given at a planning conference in Denver. He added that many of the existing accessory dwellings in Urbana predate the existing Zoning Ordinance and would not be allowed these days without zoning approval. However, there are examples of

accessory dwellings in the City of Urbana that staff could use for photos instead of the out-of-city ones. He noted that he did not believe there is an example in Urbana of a triplex. He said the photo of the quadplex appears to be smaller than the triplex. He stated that quite often people do not care how many units are in a dwelling. They care about how big the building is or how it looks.

Chair Allred wondered if it would help to include a range of the number of units that would be allowed in both the small apartment and the mid-size apartment categories. Mr. Garcia said yes. Ms. Simms wondered if they should include occupancy of a dwelling as well. Ms. Ruedi asked if it would be better to have a range of bedrooms versus the number of units.

Mr. Rose mentioned whether or not they would want to include a rooming house. Mr. Garcia said that brings up the concern of whether they are talking about development types or uses. Mr. Rose said that he is comfortable with what is mentioned in the proposed plan.

Mr. Rose stated that he can see this as reimagining how we might move into a zoning ordinance with significant changes. He asked if we risk confusing readers because of the similarity in overlap between our place types in the proposed Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Garcia said that he did not know. Mr. Rose suggested that they explain what the City is doing in the Comprehensive Plan preface, it might bypass some confusion. Mr. Garcia said that he wrote an introduction to the proposed Comprehensive Plan, but he has not received any feedback on it yet. He is willing to consider making changes, maybe even tie the updating of the Zoning Ordinance to Big Move #2.

Ms. Simms said that she noticed we do not have any place types for stores, strip malls, or open malls in the proposed plan. Driving through Urbana, there are many different store types, and she said that it would be nice to include them in the plan. Mr. Garcia said he appreciated the feedback.

Chair Allred mentioned the Charlotte Comprehensive Plan having one page that describes what “place types” are. Mr. Garcia said that he might have that plan printed out on his desk. Ms. Ruedi said that City staff called them building types originally and changed them to development types. She asked what Charlotte calls them. Chair Allred said that he believes Charlotte calls them place types; however, they are a mix with some describing buildings and some describing neighborhoods, and they are not coherent.

Ms. Simms referred to the government building on Page 5 of the proposed plan. She mentioned that it says “industrial”. Mr. Garcia explained that “industrial” refers to the place type on the next page. The page break occurred in a weird place. He had tried to split the table, and it created a weird format, so he plans to re-combine them.

Mr. Garcia talked about the types of Commercial/Business that are shown in the Place Types Matrix. Chair Allred stated that covering every version of commercial/business could start to look like a use table. He suggested combining and changing the place type label for to neighborhood commercial or commercial corridor or strip commercial. Mr. Rose added that they could provide an explanation in the preface saying that these are suggestions of development types.

Chair Allred noticed that office was not mentioned in any of the place types. It is currently allowed in the Light Industrial Zoning District; however, they are trying to move away from using the Light Industrial label because of the connotation with it. He said that they are trying to describe development types and show photos of what those might look like with regards to setbacks,

number of stories/levels, etc. Ms. Yu suggested using different photos for the Industrial place type. Chair Allred said the Charlotte Comprehensive Plan has something called “Suburban Office Commercial, which is where he would imagine many Light Industrial developments being. He said that he does not like using the word “suburban” because it does not really describe the form; however, he feels that they need to modify the Light Industrial label, maybe to something like “Commercial Corridor”. After the Plan Commission members discussing possible changes, Mr. Garcia stated that he received good feedback on the matrix.

Mr. Garcia talked about the Open Space place type. Ms. Simms said that it seems there is always a mixed use in most parks, for example a playground and a basketball court. She suggested that staff drive around the parks in Urbana and talk with developers to see what they envision for the open space they create. Ms. Ruedi said that they could have “Outdoor Recreational” and “Indoor Recreational” types.

## II. *Imagine Urbana* Draft Review and Comments

Mr. Garcia and Ms. Ruedi presented an updated draft of *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan. They noted that the draft incorporates discussion that the Plan Commission has had during study sessions over the previous three months. Ms. Ruedi pointed out that there are still some areas where verbiage is needed for clarity. No one has made any comments [recently] on the online version. Staff will accept any form of comments, whether it be online or a scratched-up copy redline.

Chair Allred stated that there are some broad, not specific, edits that he would like to see made to the plan. The basis for a comprehensive plan should be an analysis of the existing conditions. We should look at demographics, changes in demographics and land use, infrastructure conditions, etc. as one part of the plan, and the other part is public input. As the proposed plan is currently written, it does a good job of emphasizing the public input, but not so much the role that the analysis of the existing conditions played. He used Big Move #1 as an example, which says that people say Urbana needs more housing. He believes that we should also say that there is data showing the percentage of people that are rent burdened, or whatever. Ms. Ruedi replied that this information is available in *Examine Urbana*, which is in the appendix of *Imagine Urbana*. Staff thoughts are to keep the plan brief and to reference some of the appendix documents. Chair Allred said that he believes it needs to be woven throughout the plan to justify why some of the big moves and big ideas are in the plan. This makes the plan more powerful and legitimate because it comes not just from the public input, but also comes from the analysis of the data of the existing conditions in Urbana.

Chair Allred talked about the link to *Examine Urbana* in the draft plan. He believes that section with the link should also highlight a few key takeaways of *Examine Urbana* relating to the Big Ideas and Big Moves. This would also make a stronger argument for the content in the plan. Ms. Ruedi said that they can tie the highlights into the different sections of the plan. Chair Allred said that they need to determine what the key takeaways are and think about what we are highlighting in terms of Big Ideas and Big Moves, then we will know where to put them in the sections of the plan. Ms. Simms mentioned a strategy she uses when writing grants. She has to provide both data and needs analysis based on consumer input.

Mr. Garcia asked if the piece that says, “events that have shaped Urbana since 2005” is useful. Should it be put in the plan? Staff asked themselves this question about six months ago. They would appreciate feedback on this. Chair Allred said that he did not think that it needed to be a

timeline, but instead a paragraph that asks, “why does this matter?” and “what has been the impact?”

Chair Allred stated that some of his original comments include whether trends affecting local government in general is relevant to Urbana. If they are relevant, we need to explain how. Some of the trends include aging population and retirements reducing the size of the labor pool. While this is a broad problem of challenges we are facing in the country, is this a problem of Urbana? Ms. Ruedi commented that we may not know the answers to some specific trends. For example, one of the Big Moves and Little Moves is to do a housing study because we do not know that information.

Chair Allred suggested saying in the plan that these are some trends that we are aware of, and we want to know if these are things that we should be worried about in the City. Ms. Ruedi added that this would help people understand the progress that has been made in the last 20 years. Mr. Rose commented that he finds it useful that it would illustrate what scale of events were significant in Urbana. Some things were not such big deals, and it is in a way comforting that the big accomplishments are of a very human scale. Ms. Yu stated that she likes this suggestion.

Ms. Yu likes adding some of the data from the appendix to the plan to boost up some of the Big Moves and make the plan about Urbana. Otherwise, the plan does not feel like it is about Urbana. Mr. Rose concurred with Ms. Simms and feels that it would be worthwhile to take the *Examine Urbana* document and cull it for any data that can be used to support the claims that are made in *Imagine Urbana*.

Chair Allred stated that he believes the Barometers of Success needs more work. There needs to be more of an attempt to tie them to the particular Big Idea. If we are seeing progress in the Barometer of Success, then we are progressing in the Big Idea. Urbana becoming more of a place for everyone, specifically, is not really described in the plan, so what would we use to measure success. Ms. Ruedi said that this particular Idea was a difficult one to find Barometers of Success because it means different things to different people, so any input would be appreciated.

Chair Allred commented that he was unaware of whether these are placeholders or if they are the finished product, but they are written in a way that is sometimes hard to understand exactly what is being measured. It is also sometimes hard to understand what progress would be.

### **III. *Imagine Urbana* Review and Recommendation Timeline**

Mr. Garcia reviewed staff's timeline for bringing *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan to Plan Commission as a plan case at a public hearing and to City Council after the Plan Commission makes a recommendation. He mentioned that staff has created a flyer to be mailed out to every residence in Urbana notifying people of the date (March 13<sup>th</sup>) for the first public hearing. Ms. Ruedi added that neighborhood groups will be receiving a notification as well. Staff will put some of the flyers at the library, the wellness center, and other places that the public go. They plan to reach out to social media and as many venues as they can.

Ms. Ruedi noted that as staff receives public input, they will be incorporating it into the plan. Staff will keep the Plan Commission abreast of any changes.

Chair Allred asked what happened with the timeline that staff and the Plan Commission decided upon before where the Plan Commission would hold a public hearing, then Council would hold a

study session, and then Plan Commission holding their second public hearing. Ms. Ruedi said that staff discussed this and decided that the Plan Commission should make a recommendation before it goes to Committee of the Whole. Rather than having it as part of the normal meeting process, the Committee of the Whole will have special study sessions just for *Imagine Urbana* once the Plan Commission forwards a recommendation.

The Plan Commission and staff discussed what day of the week that the Committee of the Whole would hold their special study sessions. Mr. Garcia said that they are thinking of holding them on Thursdays and to invite the Plan Commission.

#### **IV. 3/06/2025 Plan Commission Topics**

Mr. Garcia stated that there will be a text amendment for the Plan Commission to review in addition to another study session on *Imagine Urbana* at the March 6, 2025 meeting.

Ms. Ruedi asked that the Plan Commission take the time to review the draft plan and provide feedback so staff can incorporate changes based on their feedback in the plan before the next meeting.

Mr. Garcia reiterated that the opening of the first public hearing for *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan will be held on March 13, 2025 at 7:00 pm in the City Council Chambers, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801.

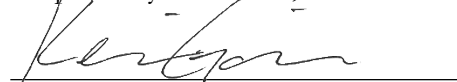
Chair Allred asked if staff planned to interview with WCIA or with the News-Gazette. Mr. Garcia replied that they would be willing to do so. He pointed out that Bridget Broihahn, who is the City's public relations professional, will help with outreach and getting a press release out.

Chair Allred asked if any members of the audience wanted to speak on *Imagine Urbana* Comprehensive Plan. There were none. Mr. Garcia talked about the ways that people could comment on the plan.

#### **L. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin Garcia, Secretary  
Urbana Plan Commission



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

*Planning Division*

**m e m o r a n d u m**

**TO:** The Urbana Plan Commission  
**FROM:** Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner  
**DATE:** June 20, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** **Plan Case 2508-SU-25:** A request by Halton Bagley for a Special Use Permit to allow a hostel at 1204 South Lincoln Avenue in the R-7 (University Residential) Zoning District.

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**Introduction**

Halton Bagley requests a special use permit to allow a hostel at 1204 South Lincoln Avenue. Hostels are similar to hotels, but are typically more budget-friendly, cater to a younger clientele, and have shared sleeping and bathroom facilities (see Proposed Use/Activities below for more details). Table V-1, Table of Uses, in the Zoning Ordinance allows hotels in the R-7 zoning district in existing buildings if a special use permit is granted.

The building at 1204 South Lincoln Avenue is the former Kappa Delta sorority house. Kappa Delta sold the building in 2017, and it has been vacant since 2021. It was purchased by Jim Webster in June, 2024, and Mr. Webster has given the applicant, Mr. Bagley, his consent to apply for a special use permit. If the special use permit is granted, Mr. Bagley intends to purchase the property and live in it as the owner-operator of the proposed hostel.

The Plan Commission must review the special use permit application, hold a public hearing, and make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council must then approve, approve with certain conditions, or deny the request.

**Background**

**Description of the Site and Surrounding Properties**

The site is approximately 19,000 square feet (0.44 acres); it is located at the southeast corner of Lincoln Avenue and Indiana Avenue. It is directly across the street from the McKinley Health Center on the University of Illinois campus. Nearby uses include the University of Illinois campus (west), the Twin City Bible Church (south), and housing (north, east, further south). The table below shows the zoning, current land use, and future land use designations from the 2005 Comprehensive Plan of the site and surrounding land (see Exhibits A, B, and C for associated maps).

**Table 1. Zoning, Existing Land Use, Future Land Use Designation**

	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Existing Land Use</b>	<b>Future Land Use</b>
<b>Site</b>	R-7, University Residential	Vacant (former Greek house)	University Residential
<b>North</b>	R-5, Medium High Density Multiple-Family Housing	Apartments	University Residential
<b>East</b>	R-7, University Residential	Religious (Twin City Bible Church)	University Residential
<b>South</b>	R-7, University Residential	Religious (Twin City Bible Church)	University Residential
<b>West</b>	CRE, Conservation, Recreation, and Education	University (McKinley Health Center)	Institutional

The building at 1204 South Lincoln Avenue was built between 1924 and 1927. It was home to the Kappa Delta sorority for decades, until Kappa Delta sold the property in 2017. While the building is not a local or national historic landmark, it easily meets the criteria required for either designation.

### **Proposed Use/Activities**

The proposed use is a hostel, which is similar to a hotel, but with some key differences. An article on the website [nerdwallet.com](http://nerdwallet.com) summarizes the differences as follows:

“Hotels tend to offer more privacy, security and amenities, and can range in style from budget to deluxe. Hostels, meanwhile, cater to travelers who are interested in more communal experiences, typically offering residence hall-like rooms, group activities and shared bathrooms and kitchens. Both hotels and hostels range in cost, but hostels are generally more affordable.”<sup>1</sup>

The proposed hostel would have a maximum capacity of around 60 guests, which is less than the current maximum occupancy.<sup>2</sup> The layout of the building would remain essentially unchanged, and there will be no changes made to the exterior. The hostel would have 10 private rooms, 10-11 shared rooms, 6 full (i.e. private) bathrooms, and 2 community bathrooms (each with 4 showers, 7 sinks, and 3 toilets). Planned changes to the interior are minimal: refinishing the floors in some rooms and adding furniture.

The applicant plans to live in and operate the hostel, and will have policies that should make the hostel less of a potential nuisance for neighbors, specifically: quiet hours beginning at 10pm nightly, and no alcohol on site. They will also have a minimum age of 18 to check in, and they will require ID to verify age.

There are 11 on-site parking spaces, and the applicant has been in contact with the City’s Finance Department about purchasing single-day guest parking passes to have on hand if needed. He has also been in contact with the U of I about reserving parking spaces in Lot F11, again, if needed. Lot 11 is roughly a two minute walk from the site.

The building was under the University’s private certified housing program and had regular inspections, so it is already sprinklered. Since a hostel would be a new use, the City will require a full code analysis and new inspections of the building prior to occupancy.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/travel/difference-between-hostel-hotel>

<sup>2</sup> The existing maximum capacity for the use as a Greek house is 67.

## Discussion

### Comprehensive Plan

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan designates this property's future land use as "University Residential". The plan does not define "University Residential", however, so in this instance, the Zoning Ordinance may provide the best guidance. It defines the University Residential (R-7) district as:

"... intended to provide areas in proximity to the University of Illinois for dormitories and rooming houses, which are occupied primarily by students, to insure the longevity of the architectural character and use of these existing buildings, and to protect nearby low-density residential districts from incompatible developments. The R-7 district also allows some business uses within existing structures. The district is intended to encourage the adaptive re-use of existing older structures."

The proposal aligns very well with the intent of the district. It would adaptively reuse an existing, architecturally-significant building that has been vacant for several years and would not alter its exterior, which would insure the longevity of the architecture of the building. It would also be generally compatible with the nearby residential districts and the University.

The proposal also aligns with several Goals and Objectives of the plan, including:

Goal 1.0 – Preserve and enhance the character of Urbana's established residential neighborhoods.

Obj. 1.2 – Encourage investment in older properties to help maintain their appearance and long-term potential.

Goal 2.0 – Promote a balanced and compatible mix of land uses that will help create long-term, viable neighborhoods.

Goal 12.0 – Preserve the characteristics that make Urbana unique.

### Requirements for a Special Use Permit

According to Section VII-4.A. of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, an application for a special use permit shall demonstrate the following:

*1. That the proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at that location.*

The proposed use is conducive to the public convenience. The location, directly across from the University, along Lincoln Avenue, is easily accessible by people walking, biking, ridesharing, scootering, driving, or taking the bus. The application states that there is a clear demand for short-term lodging options in close proximity to the University campus, and while staff have not conducted any studies to determine such demand, the only hotels in proximity are at the Gather (at University and Lincoln), which has only around 30 hotel rooms, and the Hotel Royer (Downtown), which has around 125. Neither option is likely to be very affordable to the student demographic that the applicant is targeting for the proposed hostel, and neither are as conveniently-located with respect to the University.

Staff find this criteria met.

*2. That the proposed use is designed, located, and proposed to be operated so that it will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious to the public welfare.*

The proposed use is likely to be less of a nuisance than if the building continued to be used as a Greek house. The applicant plans to institute two policies that set it apart from most Greek houses: quiet hours starting at 10pm every night, and no alcohol on site.

Furthermore, one of the most often-cited concerns about nearly any change of use is on-street parking. In this case, that should not be an issue, for several reasons. The most significant reason is that the City of Urbana requires permits to park on the surrounding streets. The City issues permits to residents (for a fee), and it does not limit the number of residential permits issued for a single building. It is therefore not uncommon for Greek houses to have 10, 20, or even more parking permits issued to their residents, which can contribute to the lack of on-street parking available for other residents. The proposed hostel would not have residential permits, but would have guest permits available on an as-needed basis. The applicant has already been discussing such permits with the Finance Department. In addition, they have been discussing the use of spaces in the University's Lot 11, which is a two-minute walk from the site. If the 11 on-site parking spaces are ever not enough the applicant has options available that should not create parking problems. It's also expected that most people staying at the hostel will not have a private automobile, and will take the train, bus, rideshare, scooters, bike, or walk to the site when they arrive in town.

Staff find this criteria met.

*3. That the proposed use conforms to the applicable regulations and standards of, and preserves the essential character of, the district in which it shall be located, except where such regulations and standards are modified by Section VII-7.*

The proposed use is precisely the type of adaptive reuse that was envisioned for the R-7 district when the Zoning Ordinance was amended to encourage the reuse and preservation of Greek houses in 2022.<sup>3</sup> As such, it conforms exceedingly well to the regulations of, and preserves the essential character of, the R-7 district.

Changing the use from a Greek house to a hostel will require a full Building Code analysis by a licensed professional, and any required changes to make the building compliant with the code must be made before a certificate of occupancy will be issued.

Staff find these criteria met.

In response to the requirements in Section VII-4.A. of the Zoning Ordinance, the Plan Commission shall make a recommendation to the City Council for or against the proposed special use, and may also recommend such additional conditions and requirements on the operation of the proposed use as are appropriate or necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare, and to carry out the purposes of this Ordinance, including but not limited to conditions that:

1. Regulate the location, extent, and intensity of such use;
2. Require adherence to an approved site plan;
3. Require landscaping and the screening of such use by means of fences, walls, or vegetation;
4. Stipulate a required minimum lot size or yards, and maximum height of buildings and structures;

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<sup>3</sup> Ord. No. 2022-05-015, 5-23-22 / Plan Case No. 2438-T-22

5. Regulate vehicular access and volume, and the design and location of parking and loading areas and structures;
6. Require conformance to health, safety, and sanitation requirements as necessary;
7. Regulate signs and outdoor lighting; and
8. Any other conditions deemed necessary to affect the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance.

In addition, Section VIII-5.M states that:

1. No additional parking is required for new uses in existing buildings. However, parking for commercial uses may be required as a condition of a special use permit.

For the reasons stated under the discussion for Criteria 2, staff do not recommend that the Plan Commission recommend any additional parking conditions.

### **Summary of Findings**

1. The proposed use would be conducive to the public convenience, as the location, directly across from the University, along Lincoln Avenue, is easily accessible by people walking, biking, ridesharing, scootering, driving, or taking the bus; it would also provide a low-cost lodging option close to the University.
2. The proposed project would not be injurious or detrimental to the R-7 zoning district, or injurious to the general public, as it will reuse a historically-significant Greek house that has been vacant for years, its operations and policies will make it less of a potential nuisance than its historical use.
3. The proposed project would conform to the regulations and standards of, and preserve the essential character of, the R-7 zoning district by reusing a vacant Greek house without altering the exterior.
4. The proposed project is generally consistent with the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and the future land use designation of University Residential.

### **Options**

The Plan Commission has the following options in Plan Case 2508-SU-25:

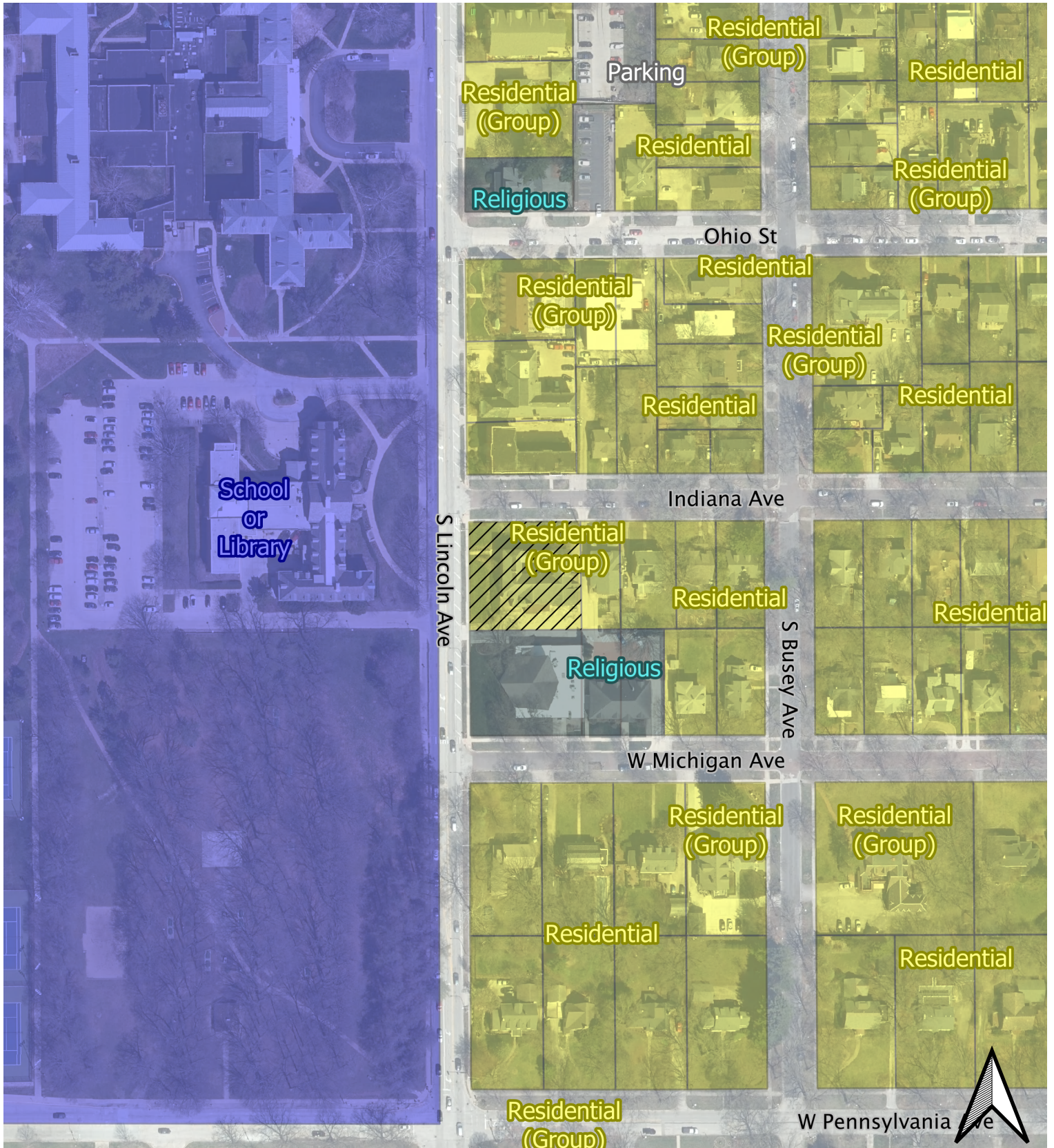
1. Recommend approval of the special use permit without any conditions.
2. Recommend approval of the special use permit with any conditions deemed appropriate or necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare, and to carry out the purposes of the City's municipal code.
3. Recommend denial of the special use permit. If the Plan Commission elects to do so, it must articulate the findings supporting its denial.

## **Recommendation**

Based on the evidence presented in the discussion above, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that may be presented at the public hearing, staff recommends that the Plan Commission recommend **APPROVAL** of the proposed special use permit in Plan Case No. 2508-SU-25 with no conditions.

Attachments:           Exhibit A: Location Map  
                              Exhibit B: Zoning Map  
                              Exhibit C: Future Land Use Map  
                              Exhibit D: Application for Special Use Permit  
                              Exhibit E: Site Photos

# Exhibit A - Location & Land Use



Case: 2508-SU-25  
 Subject: Special Use Permit - Hostel  
 Location: 1204 S Lincoln Ave  
 Applicant: Halton Bagley

//// Subject Property

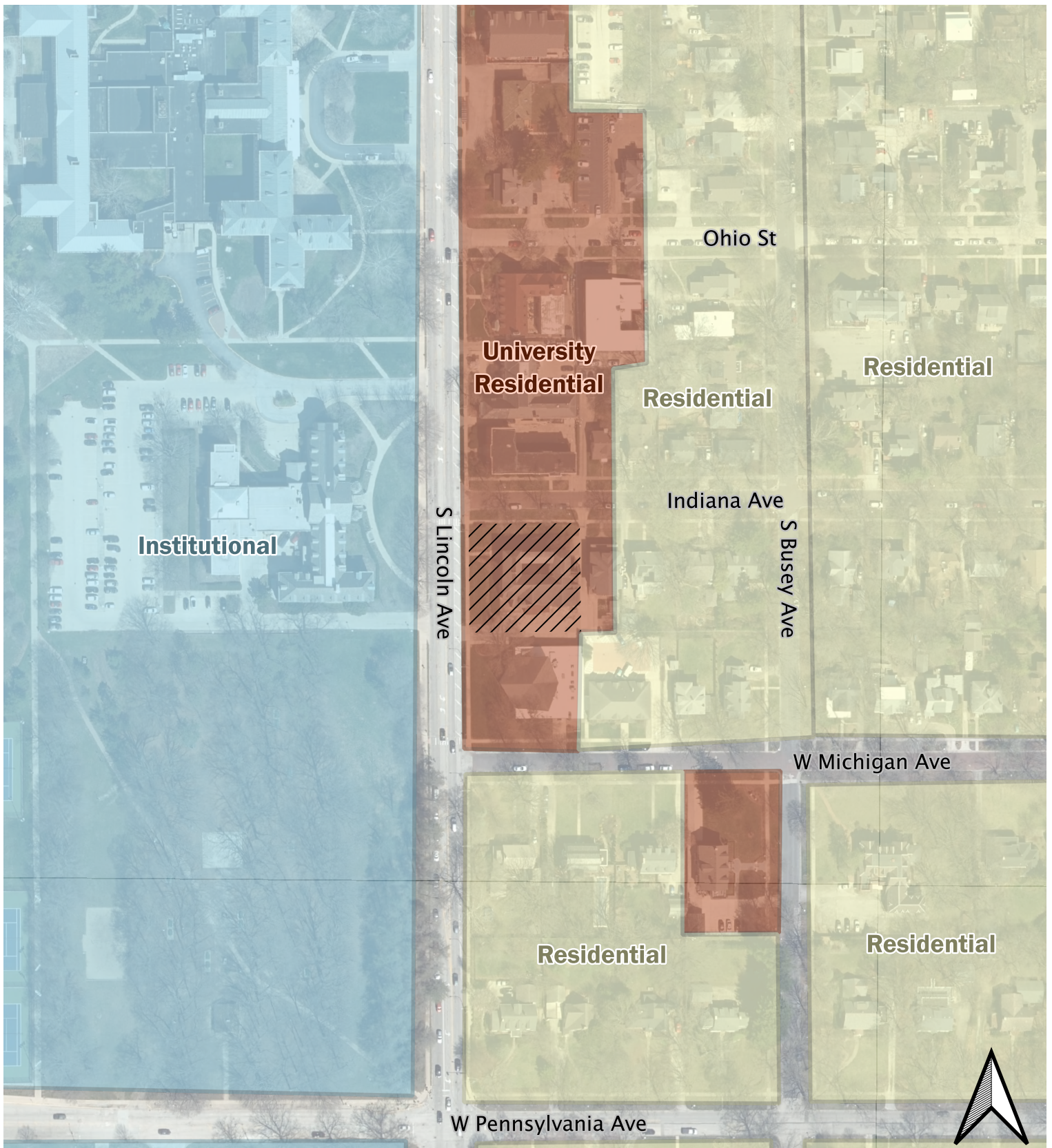
# Exhibit B - Zoning



Case: 2508-SU-25  
 Subject: Special Use Permit - Hostel  
 Location: 1204 S Lincoln Ave  
 Applicant: Halton Bagley

 Subject Property  
 CRE  
 R-1  
 R-2  
 R-3  
 R-5  
 R-7

# Exhibit C - Future Land Use



Case: 2508-SU-25  
Subject: Special Use Permit - Hostel  
Location: 1204 S Lincoln Ave  
Applicant: Halton Bagley


- Subject Property
- Institutional
- Residential
- University Residential





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## VIEW PERMIT

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 Make a payment

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**Permit #:** SUP25-000002

**Project #:** 25-001241

**Status:** Online Application Received

**Balance Due:** \$0.00

**Address:** 1204 South Lincoln Avenue 

**Description:** Group Hostel (Hotel/Motel)



Permit	Reviews	Documents	Inspections
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## Exhibit D - Application

**Permit #:****SUP25-000002**

Permit Type:

Special Use Permit

Sub Type:

Special Use

Issue Date:

Expiration Date:

The application fee must be paid when submitting the application. For the current fee amount, please refer to the most recent version of the City's 'Schedule of Fees - Excluding Liquor License Fees', which can be found at <https://www.urbanaininois.us/fees> (<https://www.urbanaininois.us/fees>).

The applicant is also responsible for paying the cost of the legal ad publication fees. The News-Gazette will bill the applicant directly. Legal ad publication fees vary from \$75.00 and up.

If you need assistance completing this form, please contact the Planning Department at [Planning@urbanaininois.us](mailto:Planning@urbanaininois.us) (<mailto:planning@urbanaininois.us>) or (217) 384-2440.

**PROPOSED USE**

Describe the proposed use and its activities. In other words, what do you plan to do? Are there existing buildings you will use, change, or demolish? Will you build new buildings? What activities will take place on site, and where? If you are planning a business, what will your hours of operation be?

Current Zoning District:

R-7 - University Residential

Current Land Use:

Fraternity House

Proposed Use:

Seeking a Special Use Permit to convert the existing fraternity house located at 1204 S Lincoln Ave. Urbana, IL into a European-style boutique hostel, operating under the name Chapter. The hostel will cater to young travelers, university visitors, and international students seeking affordable, short-term accommodations near the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. This use is consistent with the property's current function as a group residence (currently housing approximately 50 fraternity members) in both occupancy and daily foot traffic. However, unlike a fraternity, this project will offer 24/7 on-site staffing, enhanced operational oversight, and a quieter, more professionally managed environment. The building will remain largely unchanged in layout, and its continued use for lodging aligns with the neighborhood's character and existing patterns. The hostel will include shared dormitory-style rooms, private rooms, a communal kitchen, study/co-working areas, and public transit accessibility. The project will preserve the structure's residential character while enhancing safety, cleanliness, and community engagement.

**PROPERTY LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

A legal description is the geographical description of a real estate property for the purpose of identifying the property for legal transactions such as deeds, mortgages and other legal documents. A legal description will refer to the name of the subdivision and the lot number.

## Exhibit D - Application

If your legal description is long, please type "See Attached Legal Description," in the Legal Description Provided by Applicant field and upload a separate document with legal description.

Legal Description Provided by Applicant:

That part of Lot 2 in Lincoln Place, an Addition to the City of Urbana, as per Plat recorded May 28, 1907, as Document Number 59369, Plat Book "C", Page 50, situated in the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois, described as follows: Beginning at the Northeast corner of the said Lot 2; thence South 19.5 feet; thence West 25 feet; thence South 15.5 feet; thence West 115 feet, more or less to the West line of said Lot 2; thence North 25 feet on the West line of said Lot 2; thence East 115 feet, more or less to a point 25 feet West of the East line of said Lot 2; thence North 10 feet; thence East 25 feet to the place of beginning; AND, Lot 3 in Lincoln Place, an Addition to the City of Urbana, as per Plat recorded May 28, 1907 as Document Number S9369, Plat Book "C", Page 50, and the North 10 feet of the West l 15 feet of Lot 2 of said Lincoln Place, situated in the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois; AND, Lot 4 in Lincoln Place, an Addition to the City of Urbana, as per Plat recorded May 28, 1907 as Document Number 59369, Plat Book "C", Page 50, situated in the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois. Permanent Index Number(s): 93-21-17-304-001 Common Address: 1204 S. Lincoln Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801

Legal Description attachment:

### PERMIT INFORMATION

Purpose for Request:

Urbana City Planning has determined that a Hostel would fall under the "Hotel/Motel" designation. This use is allowed in R-7 zoned properties with a Special Use Permit.

Number of Applicants:

1

Applicant Name:

Halton Bagley

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### OWNER INFORMATION

If the applicant is not the sole owner, please attach documentation for contact information including **name, email and phone numbers** of every owner.:

SUP 1204 S Lincoln.pdf

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### CONSULTANT INFORMATION

If you are working with an architect, engineer, surveyor, site planner, or attorney, please fill in their information below.

Architect Name, Email and Phone:

Engineer Name, Email and Phone:

Surveyor Name, Email and Phone:

Site Planner Name, Email and Phone:

Attorney Name, Email and Phone:

## Exhibit D - Application

Andrew G. Harrington Phone: 217-352-4167 Email: andrew@harringtonlawllc.com

### REASONS FOR SPECIAL USE PERMIT

Below are the criteria that the Plan Commission will base their decision on. Your answers should be as detailed as possible.

**Explain how the proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at the location of the property.** In other words, why is this a good location for what you are proposing, for the overall good of the community and for people coming to the property? Is it easy to get to? Does it fill a need that is missing in the neighborhood? Are there other similar or complementary uses nearby?:

The proposed use of the property as a hostel serving the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign area is highly conducive to public convenience. There is a clear demand for affordable, short-term lodging options in close proximity to campus, particularly for prospective students, visiting faculty, guest lecturers, conference attendees, researchers, and alumni.

Currently, hotel options in the area are limited and often priced beyond the reach of many student visitors. This hostel will provide a well-located, budget-friendly alternative that directly supports the university's academic and community mission by:

- Offering flexible accommodations for campus-related events such as orientations, symposiums, homecoming, and graduation;
- Serving as a resource for university departments that host international guests or short-term researchers;
- Helping prospective students and families visit campus more affordably;
- Enhancing Champaign/Urbana's attractiveness as a university town that welcomes visitors with diverse lodging options.

With walkability to campus and two public bus stops within two blocks, the hostel will allow guests to engage with the university and broader Urbana community without requiring a vehicle. The location is already suited to group residential use and will maintain comparable occupancy levels as the current fraternity house, ensuring a smooth and compatible transition.

**Explain how the proposed use is designed, located and proposed to be operated, so that it will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious or detrimental to the public welfare.** In other words, how will the building and site design, and the operation of the proposed use be done so they do not cause a nuisance to the neighborhood and the community in general? Will it operate at hours similar to surrounding uses? Will it generate excessive noise, light, odor, waste, or traffic, and if so, how do you plan to deal with it?:

The proposed hostel will operate more quietly and with greater oversight than the current use as a fraternity house, which presently houses approximately 50 long-term student residents. The hostel will be managed with 24/7 on-site staff, professional guest check-in systems, guest policies, quiet hours, and routine cleaning schedules. With respect to transportation and vehicle use, the property is well situated to minimize traffic and parking impact:

- The property currently has 11 off-street parking spots.
- The majority of guests will arrive by bus, train, plane, or carpool, and will not require personal vehicles during their stay.
- Two major public transit stops (at South Lincoln Ave & West Pennsylvania Ave and South Lincoln Ave & West Ohio Street) are both within 2 blocks.
- We are actively working with the City of Urbana's Parking and Finance Departments to secure paid guest street parking permits for short-term use.
- We are actively working with the UIUC Parking Department to secure paid guest parking permits for daily use in the F11 University lot across the street from 1204 S Lincoln Ave.
- Covered bike racks will be installed, and bicycle use will be strongly encouraged.
- Unlike fraternity residents who keep cars parked long-term, hostel guests typically leave within a few days, further reducing congestion.

Importantly, the hostel's main selling point is its unmatched proximity to the University of Illinois campus—located directly across the street. The property is ideal for guests without a car, which is a key focus of our target market. Guests choose this location precisely because they can walk to campus, use transit, and avoid the need for a personal vehicle altogether. These

## Exhibit D - Application

systems and infrastructure ensure the property will be more orderly, quiet, and professionally run than its current use, thereby improving the overall character and safety of the neighborhood.

**Explain how the proposed use conforms to the applicable regulations and standards of, and preserves the essential character of, the district in which it shall be located.** In other words, how well will the proposed use fit into the neighborhood? Will buildings be similar in size and scale to others in the area? Does the site layout (e.g. location of buildings and parking areas) fit in with surrounding properties?:

The hostel's use case conforms to the district's zoning and is in alignment with its current function as a group residential building. The building exterior will remain unchanged, and interior renovations, if any, will comply with all building, fire, and occupancy codes. The number of guests will not exceed the currently certified occupancy limit, and the nature of the use — shared living quarters, communal amenities, and group lodging — mirrors the existing character of the building. Importantly, the hostel will operate under a more structured and regulated model than the fraternity: - Guest stays are short-term, with no long-term leaseholders. - A professional team will be on-site 24/7 to monitor activity and maintain property standards. - Policies such as quiet hours, no alcohol, and ID-based check-ins reduce disruption. By replacing a student fraternity with a well-run, short-term lodging operation, this proposed use maintains the essential character of the area while enhancing livability, safety, and compliance.

### ATTACHMENTS

Please include any attachments relevant to your special use permit request: supporting documents, site plans, photos, etc.:

### CERTIFICATION

I am:

2. Authorized to make this application on behalf of the owner.

Please attach letter of authorization from owner.:

SUP 1204 S Lincoln.pdf

I certify all the information contained in this application form or any attachment(s), document(s) or plan(s) submitted herewith are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Agree:

Yes

I acknowledge that my electronic or digital signature on this application has the full legal effect as that of my written signature.

Agree:

Yes

I grant permission for City staff to post a temporary yard sign on the subject property announcing the public hearing to be held for my request.

Agree:

Yes

Applicant Signature Upload:

signature.png

Signer Name:

Halton Bagley

Exhibit E - Site Photos



Exhibit E - Site Photos

