



# Uptown Normal Master Plan Update





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is with great pleasure that we present this Master Plan Update for Uptown Normal. Since the redevelopment process kicked off over 15 years ago with the adoption of the original plan, Uptown has become the downtown that Normal was missing. It is a source of pride and activity for the town and the region, and a model for revitalization and sustainable urbanism.

This document provides a road map for the continued development of Uptown, with a focus on what can be achieved in the next five to 10 years. Our primary recommendations include:

## **Take advantage of current market opportunities**

The potential for retail and housing is strong. Retail currently has enough pent-up demand to support up to 70,000 square feet (SF) of new retail space, and can support even more if the downtown residential population grows. This is more than enough to fill in all the remaining undeveloped sites in Uptown and leave some for the area south of the tracks.

There is also a strong potential market for non-student residential, especially for young professionals and empty nesters looking a more urban lifestyle. Provided with attractive housing options at a competitive price, as many as 980 residents may choose to relocate to Uptown over the next five years. See Chapter 2 for more information.

## **Improve mobility for all users**

The principal streets bordering Uptown are not attractive or comfortable for pedestrians or cyclists. These streets should be reconfigured to better serve the needs of all modes, for example by adjusting traffic flows, shrinking traffic lanes to allow for bike lanes and/or wider sidewalks, and improving crossings. These improvements should support Uptown's overall bike routes including the connection between north and south. More information on transportation improvements can be found in Chapter 3.

## **Connect Uptown across the tracks**

Rail service improvements require a new south platform for Uptown Station, prompting the need for a new pedestrian connection across the tracks. The original design, which was prepared to go to bid last November, has been put on hold pending further study. We explored three alternative concepts including a bridge, an underpass, and a modified version of current design. More information about

the alternatives is located in Chapter 3.

## **Increase development capacity on remaining Uptown North sites**

Since available development sites in Uptown North are scarce and the potential market is strong, these sites should be built to their maximum potential. The current height limit along Constitution Blvd. should be increased from six stories to seven stories. Parking, which will be the primary limit to new development capacity, will require that the existing supply is optimized and that demand is reduced to avoid building new parking structures. To enhance the diversity and overall draw of Uptown, the remaining sites should be reserved for office and non-student residential above ground floor retail. See Chapter 3 for more information.

## **Redevelop Uptown South**

As the core of Uptown approaches build out, the only large parcel remaining is the 8-acre site around the Old City Hall/Police Station. If this site were built out at 4-6 stories, it could accommodate as much as 500,000 square feet of new development. Proving more places to Uptown to live, work, shop and play.

A prominent site overlooking Uptown Circle is reserved for the relocated Normal Public Library. The one acre site is large enough to accommodate a 70,000 square foot facility with room for expansion. More information can be found in Chapter 3.

## **Intensify Development in the Neighborhoods**

Even with the Uptown North and Uptown South fully developed, there will still be an unmet potential market for urban-style housing. To provide a place for these residents and to bring more people within walking distance to Uptown, the surrounding neighborhoods and primary approach routes should be rezoned to promote higher densities. New zoning should promote market-driven redevelopment shaped by form-based codes to create attractive urban-style housing. This includes standards for smaller development projects that can fit within current lot sizes. See Chapter 5 for more information on zoning and form-based codes.

### Raise the bar for sustainability

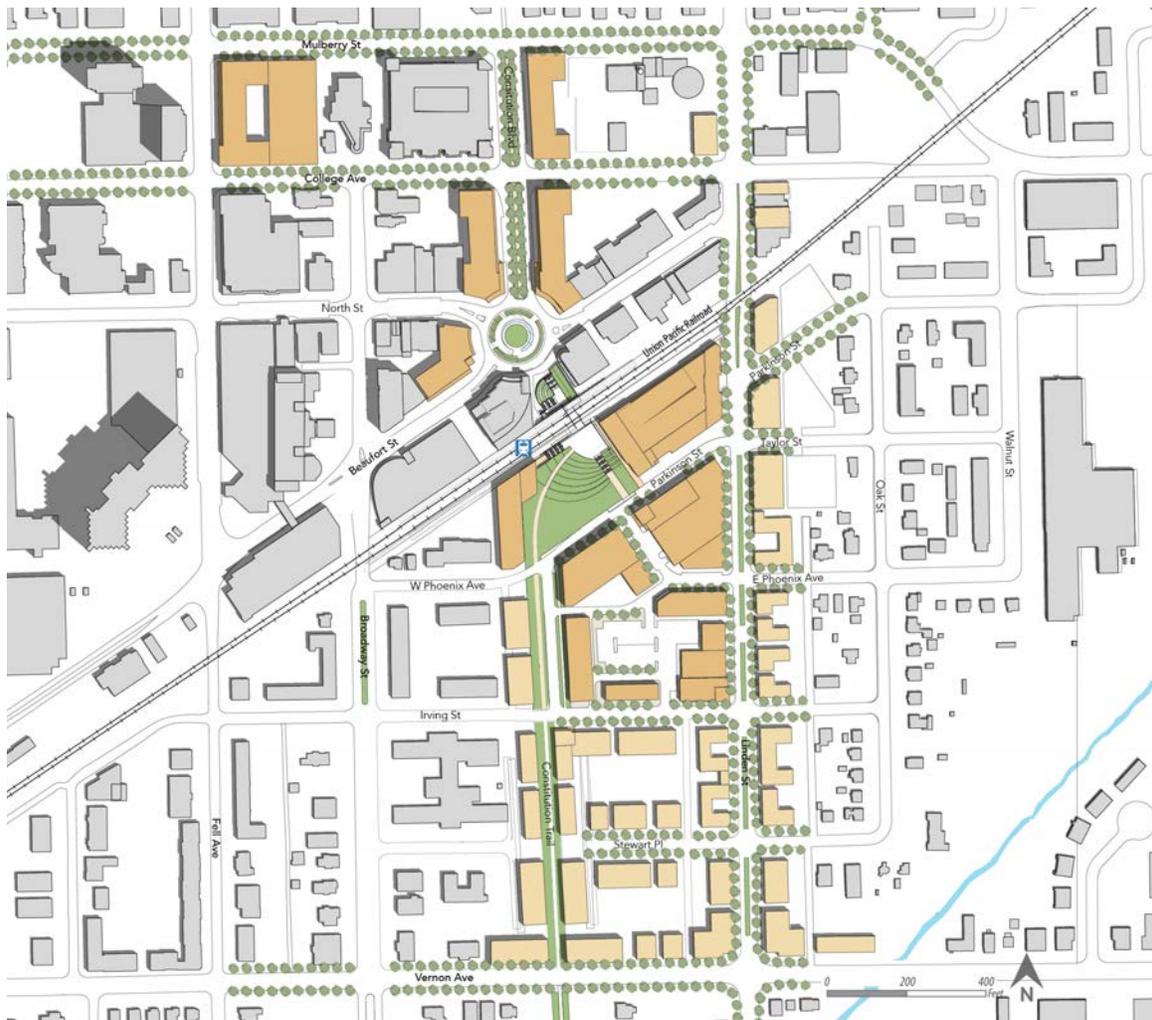
When Uptown Circle was certified under the LEED Neighborhood Development Plans in 2009, it set the standard for what smaller communities could accomplish, as well as brought national recognition to Normal as a leader in sustainability. Today, the International Living Futures Institute sets the highest standards for sustainable communities. Projects that meet their challenge go beyond the goal of simply minimizing harm and aim for self-sufficiency and substantial contributions to the health of the environment.

Uptown should maintain its reputation as a cutting-edge community by aspiring to the highest Living Futures Institute standards. As part of that initiative, the Uptown South redevelopment project should be considered for the Living Community Challenge. See

Chapter 4 for more information.

### Implement the Plan

With funding and market support, most of the projects defined in this Master Plan Update could be accomplished in as early as five to ten years. Due to the complexity of and interrelationships between these projects, Uptown should maintain a comprehensive work plan that includes an overall schedule with assigned timelines, responsibilities, and budgets. See Chapter 6 for more information.



Uptown Normal Illustrative Plan, Master Plan Update 2015

# 1 INTRODUCTION

**In 1999, there was no “there” in the Town of Normal. In 2000, that changed when Normal adopted the Downtown Normal Redevelopment Master Plan. The Master Plan goals and defined projects created a “there” and a “place.” Now, 15 years later, this 2015 Master Plan Update will improve and expand the “there” and “place.”**

Once a humble crossroads, downtown Normal (Uptown) has grown into a thriving town center. It is a source of pride for the community and an important amenity for area residents and businesses.

Uptown is now positioned to take the next step. Currently, Uptown is a collection of destinations, but not quite a destination in and of itself. Typically visitors come for a specific purpose, perhaps to visit a restaurant or shop or museum, and then they leave. There are some exceptions, and the Circle is certainly one of those attractors that encourages people to hang out and stay longer. However, generally Uptown lacks the diversity and critical mass of shopping and entertainment for visitors to come and stay.

But that can change. Currently nearly all the available retail space in Uptown is full, and there is enough demand to nearly double the current supply. This would be enough new retail to hit the tipping point, and transform Uptown from a drive-to destination, to a come-and-stay destination. Such a destination provides enough choices and enough shops that visitors can come for a purpose and stay - or even come for the afternoon without a specific plan, just knowing there will be enough to do.

Uptown also has the potential to become a mixed-use neighborhood. Based on a demographic analysis, there is a huge untapped market that would likely gravitate Uptown if attractive urban-style housing were available. So far, this has been difficult to accomplish; since there are no recent examples on non-student, market-rate housing projects, no financials exist that the lenders can rely on to offer loans. But with new housing development coming on-line, and likely more to follow, there will be an opportunity to add a substantial population, as many as 980 new units, within close walking distance to Uptown Circle.

Finally, Uptown can become more of a destination by attracting new civic and cultural venues. The library has outgrown its current facility and needs a new home. The potential for the library to relocate outside the Uptown district is a concern. But if a new site within Uptown were available, it could be a

great anchor that would provide yet another reason for visitors and residents to come to, and stay in, the district. Additionally, Uptown lacks adequate public park space. The Circle is lovely, but too small to host larger events.

All these opportunities point to the same thing: Uptown needs a plan. One that builds on the original vision and provides direction for some of the following pressing questions:

- + The library has outgrown its site; where should it go?
- + Upgrades to the rail service require a pedestrian crossing to the south platform; what's the best way to accomplish that?
- + How can we make it easier to get around Uptown?
- + Where should we invest?
- + When potential tenants and employers express interest, where should they be directed?

**The 2015 Master Plan Update accomplishes a long-range plan for Uptown over the next 10-15 years and is accompanied by an action plan that lays out the steps to realize the Update. Ultimately, this document offers a path to make Normal as a whole a more competitive, more attractive, and more sustainable community.**

# PURPOSE & GOALS

## PURPOSE OF UPDATE

The purpose of this Update is to develop a plan that will guide Uptown's development over the next 10-15 years with a focus on implementation. Recommendations include:

- + Street and streetscape improvements
- + Alternative design options for the proposed Uptown Station pedestrian bridge
- + Infill of remaining Uptown North sites
- + Preliminary plans for Uptown South redevelopment site including the arrangement of streets, blocks and public open spaces, building massing, and building uses
- + Adjustments to zoning and design standards

## FOCUS AREA

The study area focus extends from Fell Ave. to the west, Mulberry St. to the north, South Walnut St. to

the east, and Vernon St. to the south.

## UPTOWN GROWS

Today, Uptown is typically understood as the commercial area focused around the Circle and the shops on Beaufort St., and extending as far north as College Ave., west to the Illinois State University Campus, east to Linden St., and south to the tracks. Though the 2000 Plan imagined the district extending all the way south to Vernon St., the southern area is not typically associated with Uptown due to the lack of development and the barrier of the railway.

However, perceptions are changing. When participants at the February 2015 workshop were asked to reconsider the boundaries of Uptown given the eventual build-out of Uptown North, the redevelopment of Uptown South, and the potential for denser housing in the neighborhoods, the majority felt the perceived limits of Uptown would be much larger. This boundary they defined generally matches the limits of our study area.



Uptown Normal, Study Area

## GOALS

The overarching goal for the 2000 Plan was to redevelop Uptown. Now that much of that work has been accomplished, specifically in the north area, the goal moving forward is to maintain and improve Uptown, and continue the redevelopment of the unfinished areas, particularly south of the tracks. To contribute to this goal, individual development projects and other improvements should be measured by the following criteria:

- + Attract more visitors, employers, and residents
- + Improve mobility for all users
- + Offer greater retail and housing choices
- + Contribute to the appearance and quality of buildings and public spaces
- + Demonstrate excellence in sustainability

**“The Town of Normal has an opportunity to redevelop its downtown in a manner which can improve the town’s image, offer greater retail choices, increase housing and work options, strengthen its role as a transit node and make it a vital destination.”**

**-Excerpt from the Executive Summary of the 2000 Uptown Master Plan**

# HISTORY

In the spring of 1999, the Town Council commissioned Farr Associates to develop the Downtown Renewal Plan, which was adopted in June 2000. The goal was to redevelop the downtown to improve the town's image, create greater retail choices, increase housing and work options, strengthen its role as a transit node, and make it a vital destination.

The Plan set the framework for new streets and infrastructure and identified potential public and private development projects, as well as a comprehensive retail strategy.

This resulted in more than a decade of public and private development activity, which included:

- + A complete overhaul of the streetscape and public utilities
- + Construction of Uptown Circle and Constitution Boulevard
- + Construction of several new buildings, such as Children's Discovery Museum and Marriott Hotel and Conference Center
- + Construction of Uptown Station/City Hall
- + Renovations to numerous retail and commercial buildings
- + Recent opening of Hyatt Place

In 2006, the town officially changed the name of Downtown Normal to Uptown Normal. (For ease of reference, the Downtown Renewal Plan is called the '2000 Plan' or 'Original Plan' in this document.)



*Uptown Station/City Hall*

## 2000 PLAN CONCEPTS

- 1 Prior street configuration is confusing and lacks sense of place
- 2 Uptown Circle rationalizes the street network and creates an iconic center
- 3 The planned extension of Constitution Blvd. was thwarted when the rail crossing was closed in 2001

**2000 PLAN**



*Uptown Normal, 2003*



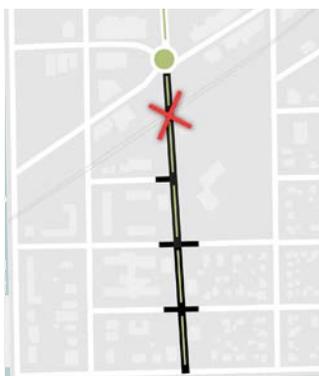
*Uptown Normal, 2015*



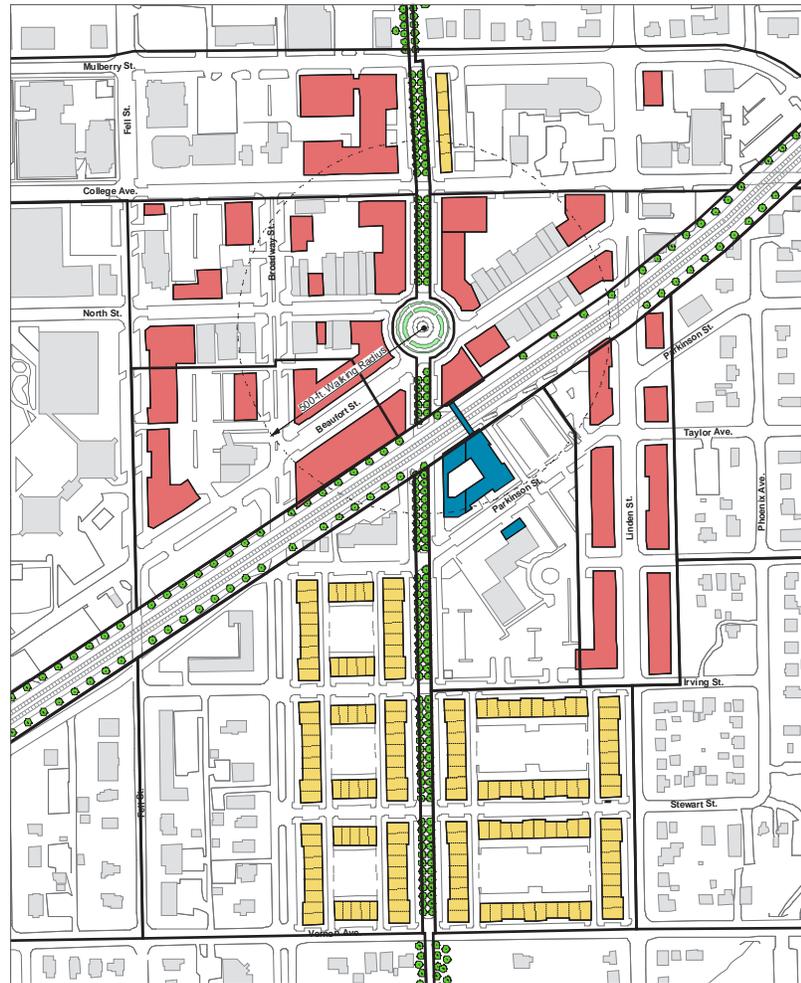
1 Prior Street Configuration



2 Uptown Circle



3 Constitution Blvd South



Uptown Normal 2000 Plan

- New Mix-Use Buildings
- New Residential Buildings

# PROCESS

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Over the course of this nearly 12-month study, the Farr Associates team (the Farr team) conducted an intensive public engagement process, which included three multi-day visits and an open house. Each visit included stakeholder interviews, community meetings and workshops, and summary reports to Council. The community outreach was also augmented through radio interviews and local news coverage.

## NOVEMBER 2014, STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND COMMUNITY MEETING

During this visit, the Farr team conducted multiple stakeholder interviews including business owners, community leaders, Illinois State University (ISU), major area employers, municipal agency representatives, property owners, developers, and other individuals with a stake in Uptown.

The Farr team also hosted a community meeting to kick off the project, which included an overview of the project; a presentation on current trends in downtown housing, retail, and transportation; and an image preference survey where users were asked to evaluate the attractiveness of various places in Uptown. Of the 60 that participated, the vast majority voted that the newer urban development (like the CVS on Fell Ave.) were appropriate for the future of Uptown, and that that low-quality development and overly wide streets (like Linden St.) were out of character with Uptown.

## FEBRUARY 2015, COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

During the February visit, the Farr team facilitated a three-day workshop with community leaders, staff, stakeholders, and the community to develop concepts for the redevelopment of Uptown. This included a community meeting that presented findings of the retail, housing, and office market studies (see the Market Opportunities Chapter); presented three options for the pedestrian rail crossing (see Master Plan, Rail Crossing section); and offered three conceptual alternatives for the long-term redevelopment of Uptown (described on the next page).

As part of the workshop, the Farr team conducted a second visual preference survey on the topic of appropriate building heights and appropriate building types for Uptown, specifically focusing on what would be appropriate north versus south of the tracks. Of the 50 community members that participated, the vast majority of respondents believed six stories north of the tracks, and five stories south of the tracks, would be appropriate; these heights are significantly higher than the three-to-four stories currently permitted in most of the Uptown district. When asked if seven stories were acceptable in the north area, the respondents were split, and the majority agreed that eight stories or taller was not appropriate. The results for the south were similar, but for one story less, with six stories receiving a split vote, and the majority agreeing that seven stories or taller was not appropriate.

### **MARCH 2015, COMMUNITY WORKSHOP**

During the March visit, the Farr team conducted a staff workshop with community members for the International Living Futures Institute to see if the potential redevelopment around the Old City Hall site could be designed to meet the Institute's Living Community Challenge - the premier standard for sustainable urbanism (see the Sustainability Chapter for more details).

The visit also included a community meeting where the Farr team reviewed the Living Community Challenge workshop program and findings, along with three refined alternatives for the long term Uptown redevelopment (see next page for additional information).

### **JUNE 2015, OPEN HOUSE**

In June, the Farr team presented the refined plans and recommendations to the community in an open house format. This included a brief presentation of findings as well as several boards on display. Attendees talked one-on-one with Farr team representatives and Town staff to share reactions and suggest adjustments. These comments informed a subsequent round of plan refinements (see the Master Plan Chapter for the final recommendations).



*Image Preference Survey*



*Image Preference Survey*



*Meeting with Business Owners*



*Breakout Group Discussions:  
Reviewed 3 Design Schemes*



*Dot Exercise: Live/Work/Play*



*Community Workshop:  
Reviewed Revised Design Schemes*

# DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

The Farr team prepared a number of plan alternatives before arriving at a preferred scheme, presenting refined versions at each of the public workshops. Variations in design include: locations of anchors (grocery store, office, and library); locations and sizes of open spaces; building sizes and uses; and street configurations. The Town and public provided feedback that informed the next round of refinements, which were presented at the following meeting.



## FEBRUARY 03 - DESIGN SCHEMES

### SCHEME A

This scheme places the grocery store to the north of the tracks with a mix of uses framing Constitution Blvd. The library is located south of the tracks, overlooking the new platform and overpass, with a park behind. The scheme also creates mixed uses along Linden Ave. with residential behind.



### SCHEME B

This scheme places the library and the grocery to the north of the tracks. A parking structure is proposed for south of the tracks with retail lining the ground floor. Retail uses are situated around the new platform and park, with residential uses adjacent to the existing neighborhood. This scheme was noted as less desirable primarily because of the library's position north of the tracks.



### PREFERRED SCHEME

This was the most popular scheme because it placed two strong anchors in each of the north and south areas, and a park connected the new development with existing neighborhoods. The library is in the center of the south development and the grocery is north of the tracks with mixed-use buildings along Constitution Blvd. The scheme also tested a roundabout between College Ave. and Mulberry St., which was not preferred.

## MARCH 18 - DESIGN SCHEMES

### SCHEME A

The library is placed at the corner of the new south development as a bridge between the new and existing neighborhoods. An office building with a parking deck across the street is situated near the new platform and crossing. The mixed-use buildings along Constitution Blvd. and the removal of the College Ave. rail crossing stay constant through the schemes.



### SCHEME B

This scheme again tests the idea of a park at the corner of the new south development. The library is along Linden Ave. and the office is behind it. Both uses can easily access the parking deck along the train tracks. Residential units are sprinkled throughout the south development.



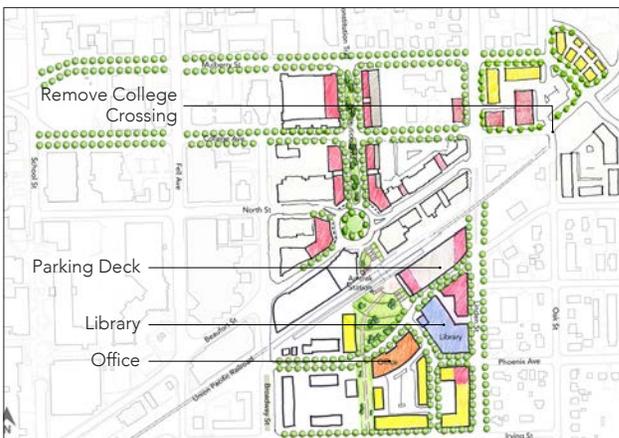
### SCHEME C

This scheme tests another variation on the idea of a park at the corner of the new south development. The park is pushed to the center of Linden St., splitting it into two streets, creating a more explicit connection between old and new neighborhoods. This scheme was not preferred due to its encroachment on existing neighborhoods and the splitting of Linden St.



### PREFERRED SCHEME

This scheme was voted as most preferred. It places the library along Linden St. and allows it to be built without tearing down the existing Police Station. This scheme also expands the park south of the new platform making it a greater larger public amenity visible from the Circle and the tracks. Here, the development also connects to existing neighborhoods through residential developments.



## 2 MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Since the 2000 Plan, the Town has seen significant development. Further development requires an understanding of local and regional changes in demographics, housing and retail trends, and development economics since the last Plan.

Three market studies were conducted as part of the Master Plan Update. Each analyzes the market at the local and regional level, and projects future demand or market potential. The studies include:

- + Retail by Gibbs Planning Group
- + Housing by Zimmerman/Volk Associates
- + Office by HR&A Advisors

# RETAIL

Following the forward-thinking 2000 Plan, Normal has stabilized the Uptown area and improved the urban fabric and surrounding infrastructure with marked success:

- + More than 26,000 students attending the three nearby higher education institutions
- + 22,000 daytime workers
- + 54,400 year-round residents

Normal has a dynamic collection of consumers that create a favorable environment for retail expansion. The purpose of the Retail Study is to understand the market for attracting retailers to Uptown and cultivating an appropriate tenant mix for residents, workers, and students in the trade area.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS IN NORMAL

Local retailers cater to the nearby supply of residents, students, and workers with unique storefronts, wares, and diverse dining options. However, there are gaps in the types of retail offerings that limit Uptown from serving in a traditional downtown commercial role where consumers can do the majority of their household shopping in town. Instead, several conventional shopping centers and large-format retailers located along the region's business route are the dominant retail destinations capturing consumer expenditure.

Nevertheless, many of these characteristically suburban shopping centers are showing signs of age and limited appeal - creating a favorable opportunity to expand Uptown and the critical mass of retailers and restaurants.



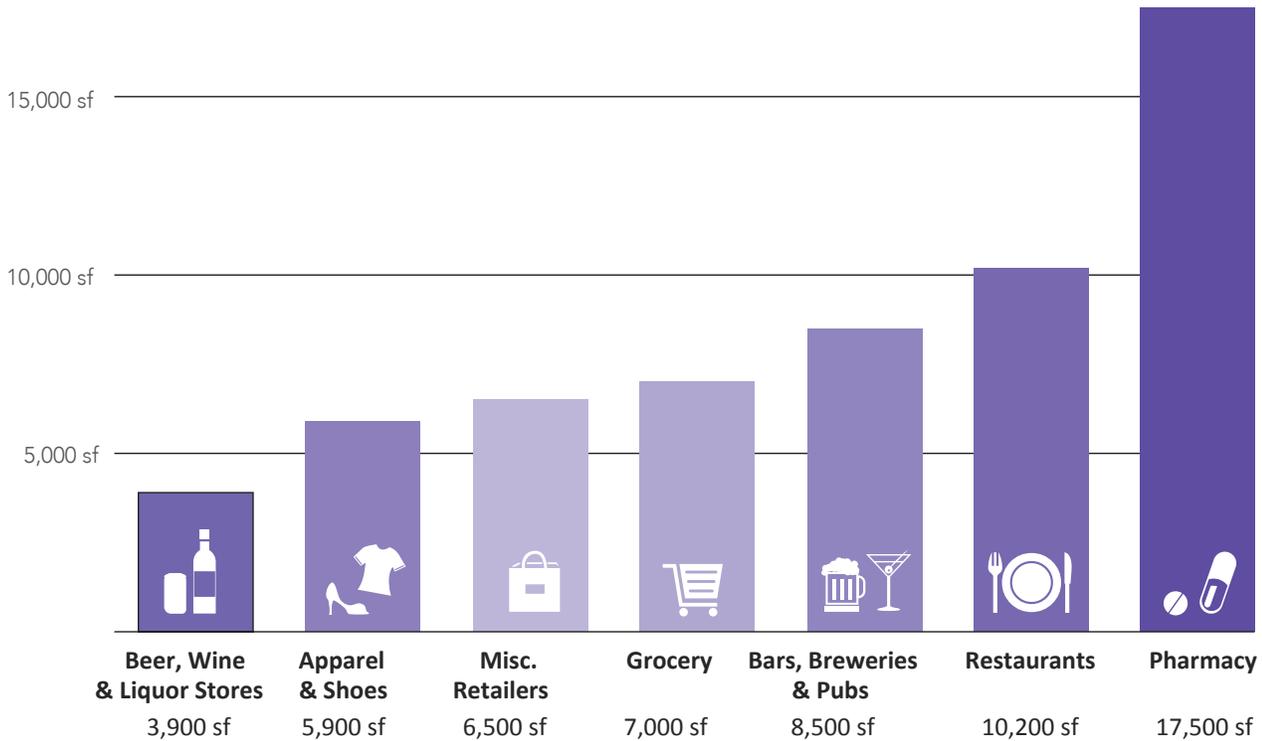
The majority of downtown businesses are located along Beaufort and North Streets

The Retail Study finds that Uptown Normal can presently support an additional 71,100 SF of retail and restaurant development, which would generate over \$21.5 million annually in new sales. By 2020, growing retail demand will be able to support 79,800 SF of new commercial growth, generating up to \$25.3 million in sales each year. The demand could be fully absorbed by a combination of existing and new businesses.

Additional development in Uptown can provide needed goods and services for the existing surrounding consumer base of nearby residents, employees, and students. Adding to the critical

mass of retailers and restaurants Uptown can further reinforce the district's existing walkable characteristics. This walkability is not found in more conventionally suburban locations in the region, and could contribute to increased expenditure within Uptown. The leading categories of supportable retail growth are pharmacy, restaurants, department store merchandise, miscellaneous retail, and apparel.

**By 2020, growing retail demand will be able to support 79,800 SF of new commercial growth, generating up to \$25.3 million annually in sales.**



Supportable Retail by 2020

# HOUSING

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Housing Study is to determine the annual market potential and the optimum market position for new urban housing units (excluding housing for undergraduate students) that could be developed over the next several years within the Uptown Study Area in the Town of Normal. This includes new housing units created both through adaptive re-use of existing non-residential buildings, as well as through new construction.

## METHODOLOGY – POTENTIAL MARKET VS. MARKET DEMAND

The potential market was determined using a target market analysis. In contrast to conventional supply/demand analysis—which is derived from housing supply data and baseline demographic projections—target market analysis is not dependent upon “comparable” analysis. Instead, target market analysis establishes housing market potential based on the housing preferences and socio-economic characteristics of households in the relevant draw areas.

The target market methodology is particularly effective for markets like Uptown Normal, where very few examples of non-student multifamily housing exist. The methodology encompasses not only basic demographic characteristics, such as income qualification and age, but also less-frequently analyzed attributes such as mobility rates, life-stage, lifestyle patterns, and household compatibility issues.

Given current economic conditions, and the expectation of continued improvement for new for-sale housing over the near-term, approximately eight percent of the potential market for each for-sale housing type is achievable in the Uptown Study Area over the next two to three years, and up to 10 percent over the next three to five years.

Based on a 15 to 20 percent capture of the potential market for new rental housing, and an eight to 10 percent capture of the potential market for new for-sale housing units, the Uptown Study Area should be able to absorb an annual average of between 121 and 159 new market-rate multifamily and single-family attached housing units per year over the next five years.

**56% YOUNG COUPLES**  
(excluding Undergraduate Students)



**34% EMPTY NESTERS**



**10% TRADITIONAL + NON-TRADITIONAL FAMILIES**

ANNUAL POTENTIAL MARKET FOR NON-STUDENT RESIDENTIAL IN UPTOWN

HOUSING TYPE	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	PROPORTION OF NEW UNITS PER YEAR
Multi-family for rent	610	62%
Multi-family for sale	180	18%
Single-family attached for sale	190	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>100%</b>

980 households represent the annual potential market, for the next five years, for higher-density housing types (aka multi-family and single-family attached) most appropriate for the Uptown Study Area.



Multi-Family For Rent (Soft Loft)



Multi-Family For Sale Condominium



Single-Family Attached For Sale (Townhouses)

# OFFICE

## INTRODUCTION

This report, prepared by HR&A Advisors (HR&A), analyzes the office market in Normal and provides an assessment of the viability of new office development in Uptown. This analysis is intended to inform an update to the Master Plan for Uptown, which over the past decade has experienced significant development guided by the 2000 Plan. The majority of this development has consisted of residential and retail space with only a modicum of new office space. The new plan will identify development opportunities for (1) currently vacant sites in Uptown; and (2) the extension of Uptown south of the railroad tracks where the Town owns an eight-acre site. Office uses in Uptown would increase the area's daytime population, supporting retailers and restaurants, and would also advance economic development efforts to create jobs.

As an area transformed since the approval of the 2000 Plan, Uptown has an appealing set of amenities:

- + It is a walkable place in an un-walkable region, with restaurants, entertainment, shopping, residential units, Constitution Trail, and the transit hub in close proximity.
- + The daytime population of ISU students, faculty, and staff generates vibrancy
- + The central location of the Amtrak station provides a one-seat ride to Chicago and St. Louis, with future high-speed rail service planned.

## UPTOWN'S CHALLENGES

However, the lack of prior office development in Uptown can be attributed to drawbacks of the area from the perspective of office end users that have exhibited a preference for the convenience of a Veterans Parkway location and the proximity of services and other businesses there. While Uptown is an attractive place for local residents to shop, dine, and enjoy entertainment, it is currently unproven as an office district. To compete with the convenience of suburban office facilities, urban-format office development in Uptown would require provision of conveniently located parking either through agreements for use of existing structures or construction of new structured parking.

## DEMAND FOR OFFICE SPACE

Strong market demand does not currently exist for new office space in the small Normal office market. Based on HR&A's analysis, new office space in Uptown could absorb between 5,000 and 8,000 SF per year. This low level of demand does not justify construction of a significant new amount of speculative office space. Moreover, prevailing average market rents of only \$12/SF limit feasibility from the supply-side and suggest that speculative new office development will need to be incentivized in order to be feasible.

## PROJECTED OFFICE SPACE DEMAND

2014-2025 Projected Office-Using Employment Growth in McLean County	4,970 SF
Square Feet Per Employee	225 SF
2014-2025 Net New Supportable Supply in McLean County	1,118,000 SF
2014-2025 Net New Supportable Supply in Uptown Normal	50,000 SF
<b>Annual Absorption of Space in Uptown Normal</b>	<b>4,500 SF</b>

## STRATEGIES FOR ENCOURAGING OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

Despite the challenges outlined above, new office development in Uptown Normal would represent a new phase of the district's evolution as a vibrant, mixed-use place. If development of office space is determined to be an important aspect of achieving the goals of this plan, several strategies for encouraging office development could be explored. Most of these strategies involve a quid pro quo, whereby in order to attract desired office development, the public sector provides incentives to entice the private sector to participate in a deal it otherwise would not pursue.

## STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATING OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

### Tenant Attraction

- + Attract anchor tenants through sustained marketing efforts and fiscal commitments
- + Fill office spaces with non-anchor tenants such as small businesses and household services tenants (i.e. medical offices, law offices, real estate offices) and regional branch offices of professional service firms headquartered in Chicago or St. Louis

### Mixed-Use Zoning

- + Include a limited amount of office space within a mixed-use building or site
- + Within a single building, integrate one to two floors of office space with retail and/or residential uses
- + Allow active office uses to function as a suitable ground-floor tenant in place of retail. Alternatively, include a small free-standing office building in a site design where uses are mixed horizontally
- + Change zoning to require delivery of office space as part of a primarily residential or retail project

### Financial Incentives

- + Offer tax increment financing (TIF) funds for infrastructure and site amenities that would subsidize private development, increasing potential for financial feasibility

### Designation of Public Sites

- + Reserve key publicly owned sites for sale to an office developer and offer at a discounted price, increasing potential for financial feasibility
- + Work in conjunction with the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council to identify appropriate end users seeking build-to-suit opportunities for the sites

### Parking Allocation and/or Subsidy

- + Construct parking decks and lease spaces near office properties at a low cost, or subsidize the cost of parking in a new development

# 3 MASTER PLAN

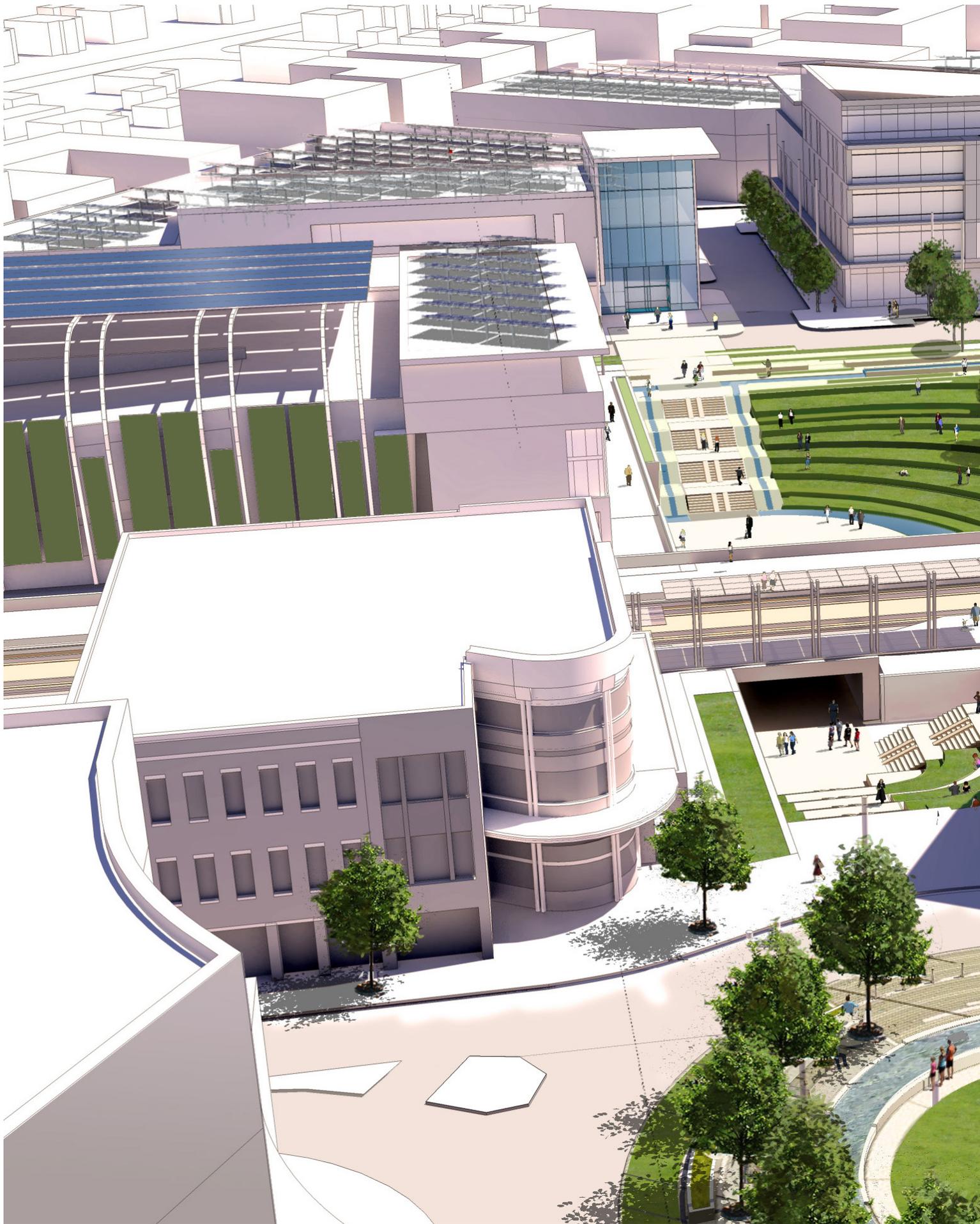
**The purpose of the Master Plan is to provide a framework for development that will guide individual projects and infrastructure improvements over the next 10-15 years.**

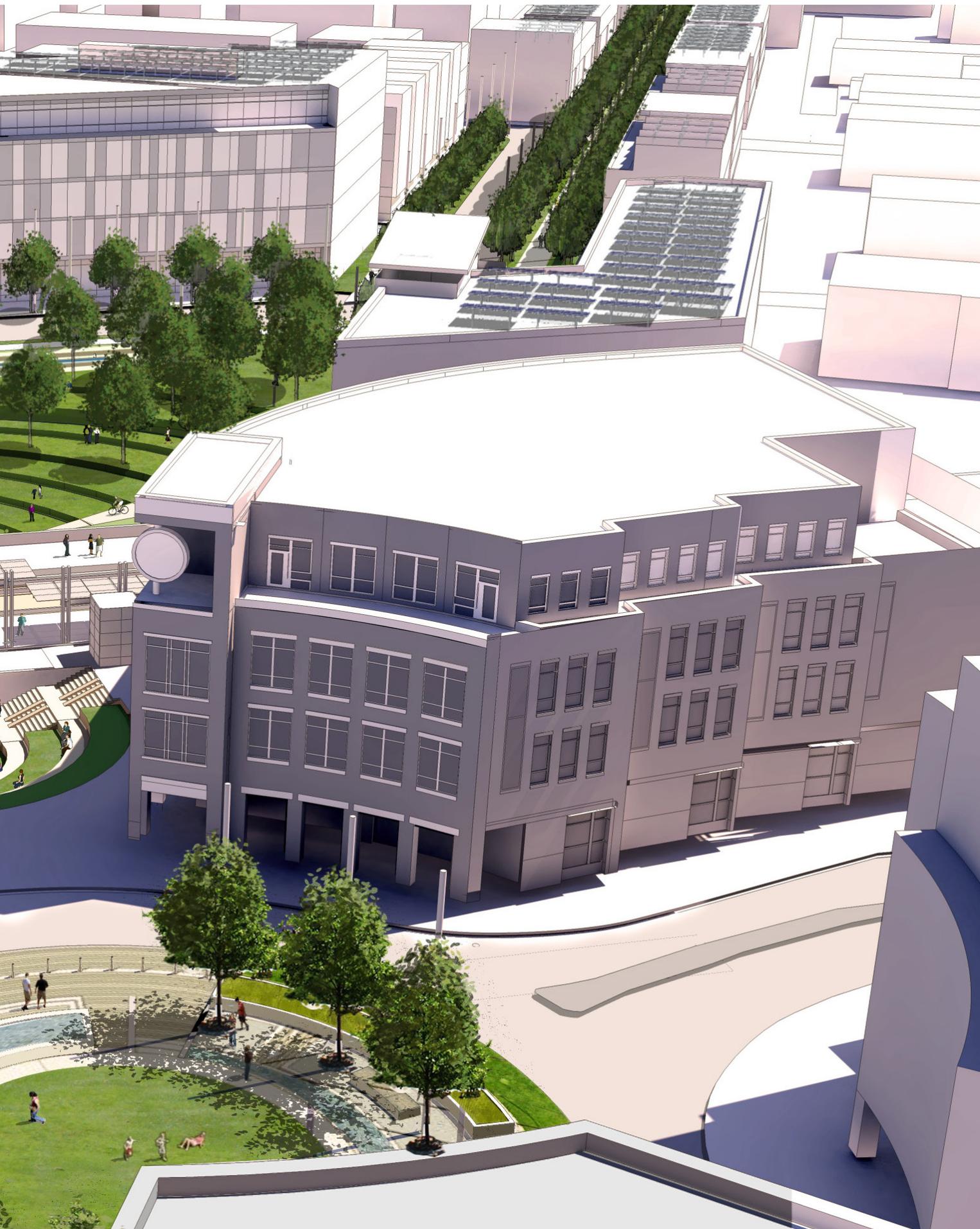
The Master Plan is based on the development program provided in the earlier chapters for retail, housing, office, as well as other elements identified through the planning process such as a new public open space, a potential site for the Normal Library, and an improved rail crossing.

These Master Plan recommendations are divided into the following areas:

- + Mobility, which addresses transportation improvements for pedestrians, bike, traffic and parking
- + Uptown North, which addresses the area north of the tracks, including the undeveloped sites along Constitution Blvd. and the potential redevelopment of the library site
- + The Crossing, which covers the area around the proposed pedestrian crossing at Uptown Station Plaza
- + Uptown South, which addresses the eight acres of public land around the Old City Hall and the surrounding neighborhoods







- 1 UPTOWN CIRCLE
- 2 UPTOWN STATION
- 3 CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
- 4 PARK
- 5 ONE UPTOWN (MIXED USE)
- 6 MIXED USE
- 7 OFFICE/MIXED USE
- 8 NORMAL PUBLIC LIBRARY
- 9 MULTIFAMILY
- 10 TOWNHOUSES
- 11 GROCERY
- (P) PARKING

-  Existing Buildings
-  Uptown Redevelopment
-  Neighborhood Redevelopment (Market-Driven)





Cherry St

Constitution Trail

Linden St

Oak St

Walnut St

Mulberry St

Constitution Blvd

6

College Ave

1

Union Pacific Railroad

North St

2

Parkinson St

Beaufort St

9

7

8

Taylor St

Walnut St

W Phoenix Ave

Broadway St

9

10

11

E Phoenix Ave

Irving St

Constitution Trail

Linden St

Stewart Pl

Vernon Ave



# MOBILITY

## MOBILITY STANDARDS

Sam Schwartz Engineering (SSE) contributed transportation recommendations to the Uptown Normal Master Plan. The purpose of the transportation study is to detail the technical analysis, recommendations, and next steps related to traffic circulation, bike connectivity, pedestrian mobility, and parking.

## COMPLETE STREETS

The recommendations for street improvements are based off the idea of Complete Streets, which enable safe access for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. The street improvements are based off of several alternatives that were reviewed and vetted with the public and specific stakeholders throughout the planning process. The circulation options consider mobility along specific streets and intersections, but also circulation throughout Uptown as a whole.

Recommendations include:

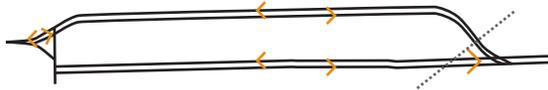
### RECOMMENDATION 1

Convert Mulberry St. & College Ave. to two-way streets with improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities

Existing

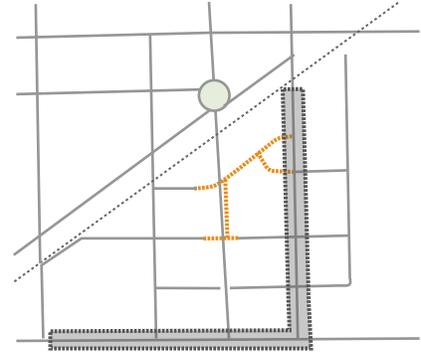


Proposed



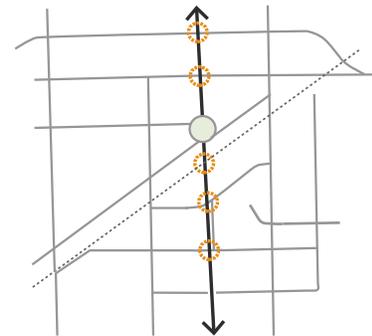
### RECOMMENDATION 2

Add new streets south of the tracks and implement road diets on Linden St. and Vernon Ave.



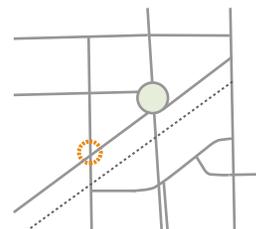
### RECOMMENDATION 3

Intersection improvements on Constitution Blvd. at Mulberry St. and College Ave.



### RECOMMENDATION 4

Intersection improvement at Beaufort St. and Broadway Ave.



# STREET AND RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN



**COLLEGE AVENUE/MULBERRY STREET  
TWO-WAY CONVERSION**

The existing one-way streets, College Ave. and Mulberry St., through Uptown are uninviting to pedestrians and intimidating to cross, which creates a barrier for pedestrian travel in accessing Uptown. They also create an unwelcoming environment for businesses, as one-way streets tend to encourage drivers to pass through quickly, rather than stop to frequent shops and restaurants. Converting both to two-way streets will maintain east-west vehicular circulation while improving pedestrian circulation and providing an opportunity for bike lanes on one of the streets. This will, in turn, create a more conducive environment for expansion of the business district north of College Ave.

As only one of these streets will continue seamlessly across the railroad tracks to the east, one will become a through street, carrying traffic intending to travel longer distances. As this will put more traffic on one street over the other, it will in essence create a new northern boundary for Uptown. Given its location, Mulberry St. should be the two-way through street that provides the main at-grade railroad crossing and

College Ave. should become a two-way local street. With an estimated 14,000-16,000 vehicles per day on Mulberry St. once it is converted to two-way, the cross section should provide one travel lane in each direction and right and left-turn lanes as needed at Linden Ave., Constitution Blvd., Fell Ave., and School St. Mulberry St. will also become the major east-west bike connector through Uptown and should be outfitted with a one-way protected bike lane on each side of the street. As Mulberry St. becomes a two-way through traffic and bike route, College Ave. should become a two-way local street with on-street parking on as much of the length as possible.

Because future traffic projections on Mulberry St. exceed 15,000 average daily traffic (ADT), which is the general threshold used to determine if further study is required, the next step in the process is a traffic circulation study that looks at peak hour intersection operations and capacity required to accommodate those traffic volumes.

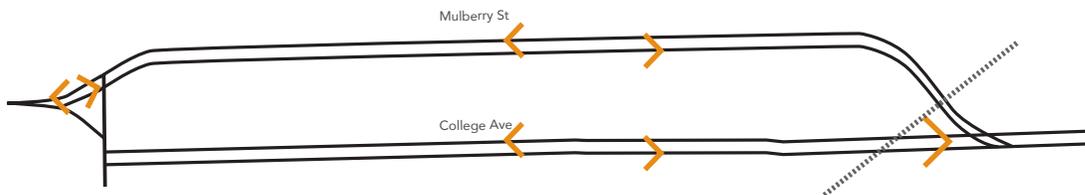
**RECOMMENDATION 1**

Convert Mulberry St. & College Ave. to two-way streets with improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities

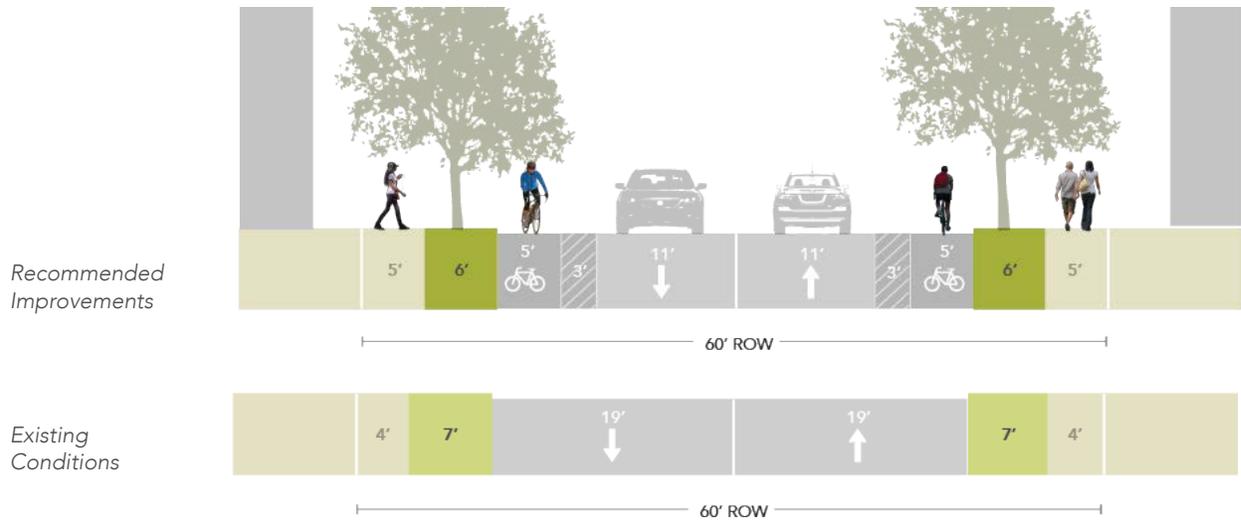
*Existing*



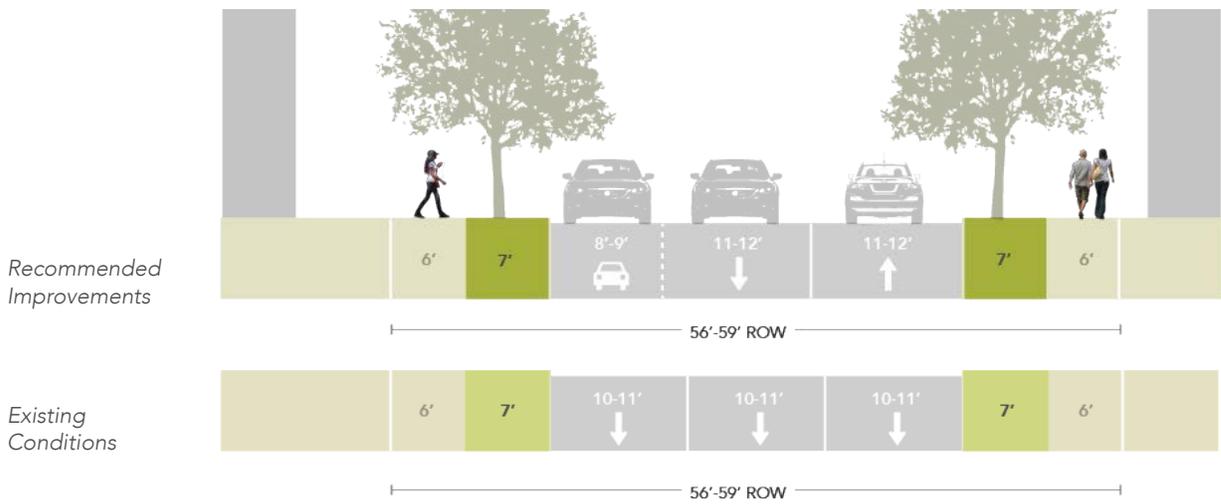
*Recommended*



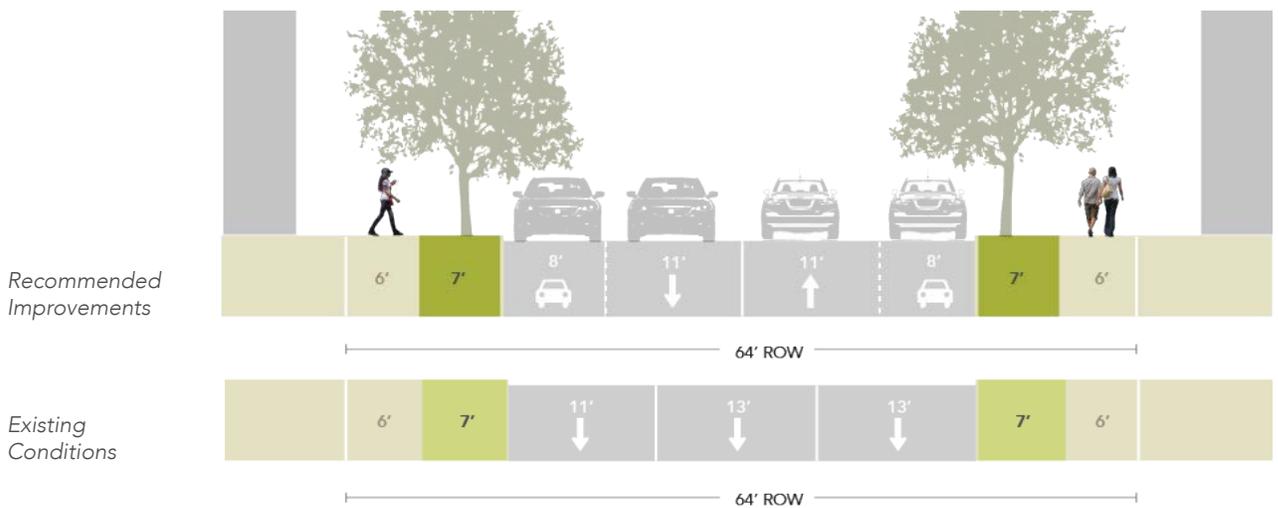
## MULBERRY STREET IMPROVEMENTS



## COLLEGE AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS: CONSTITUTION BLVD TO SCHOOL



## COLLEGE AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS: LINDEN AVENUE TO CONSTITUTION BLVD

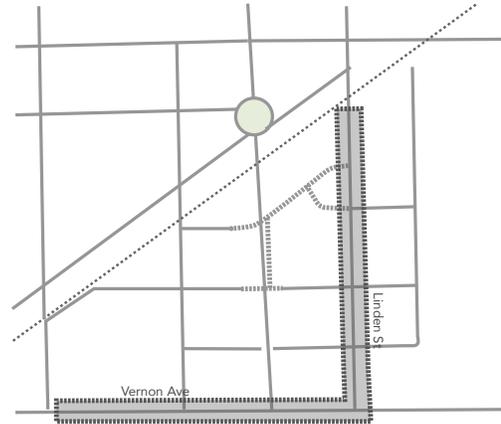


**LINDEN STREET (SOUTH OF TRACKS)**

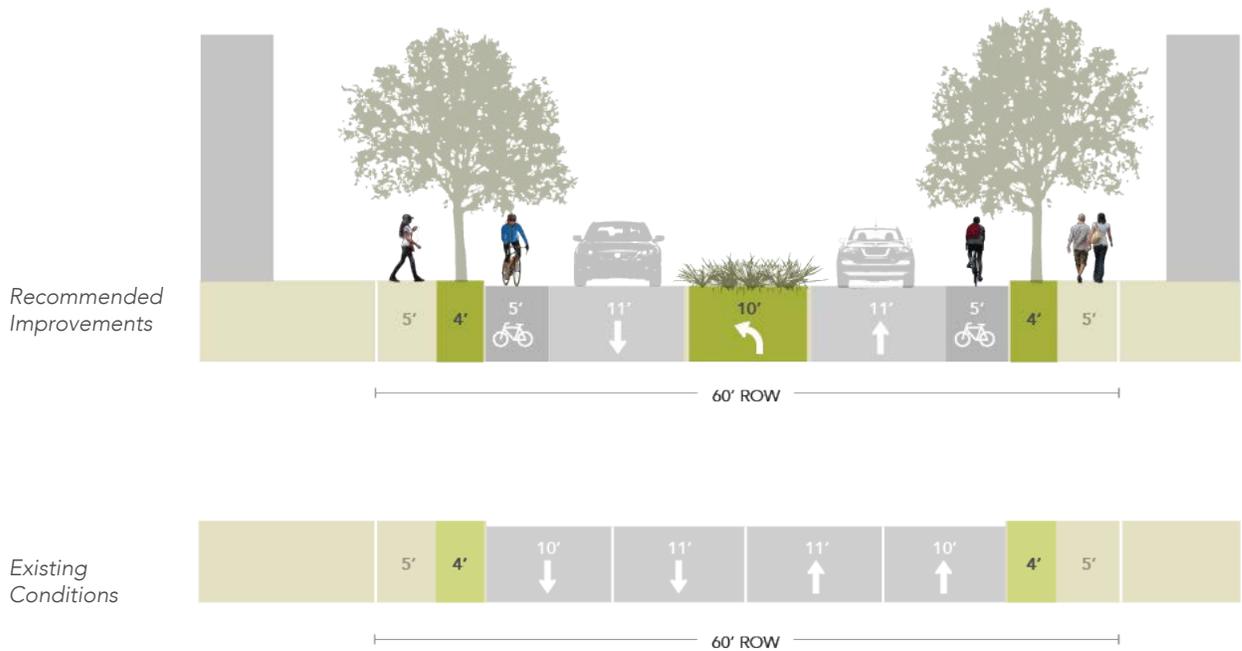
Linden St. carries approximately 11,500 vehicles per day between Mulberry St. and Vernon Ave. and less on the segments to the north and south of those streets. It currently provides four travel lanes, two in each direction. Similar to Vernon Ave., it has substantial excess capacity and is also an excellent candidate for a conversion from four lanes to three: one travel lane in each direction with a center turn lane or median, as well as a bike lane in each direction. Linden St. would become a north-south on-street bike route paralleling Constitution Trail, serving as an alternate for bicyclists who would prefer to bypass Uptown and the core Uptown area. The three-lane roadway configuration will also provide the opportunity to install pedestrian refuge islands at key locations, making it easier for pedestrians to access the Uptown area on foot.

**RECOMMENDATION 2**

Add new streets south of the tracks and implement road diets on Linden St. and Vernon Ave.



**LINDEN STREET IMPROVEMENTS**



**VERNON AVENUE**

At the southern boundary of the study area, Vernon Ave. currently carries 10,000-12,000 vehicles per day between Linden St. and Beaufort St. with two travel lanes in each direction. The roadway has substantial excess capacity and is an excellent candidate for a conversion from four lanes to three: one travel lane in each direction with a center turn lane, as well as a bike lane in each direction. Vernon Ave. would then serve as an east-west on-street bike route connecting People's Park (ISU) on the west end to Linden Ave. on the east end and provide a connection for residents to the Constitution Trail.

The volume of traffic is well under the aforementioned 15,000 ADT threshold, so further study is not necessary as a stand-alone project. However, this project, in conjunction with the proposed changes on College Ave./Mulberry St., combines two major east-west traffic capacity reductions through town. SSE recommends the proposed configuration of Vernon Ave. be included in the traffic study mentioned above.

**VERNON AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS**

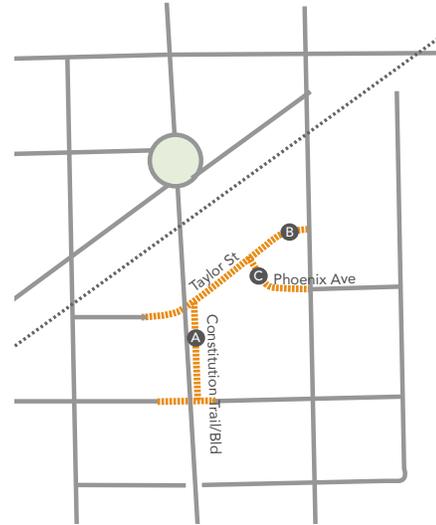


**NEW STREETS SOUTH OF TRACKS**

New streets within the district align with existing streets and the Constitution Trail view corridor. Blocks are large enough to accommodate a range of building types and sizes, but small enough that they facilitate pedestrian circulation. The streets feature generous sidewalks and relatively narrow pavement to slow traffic and promote walking.

**RECOMMENDATION 2**

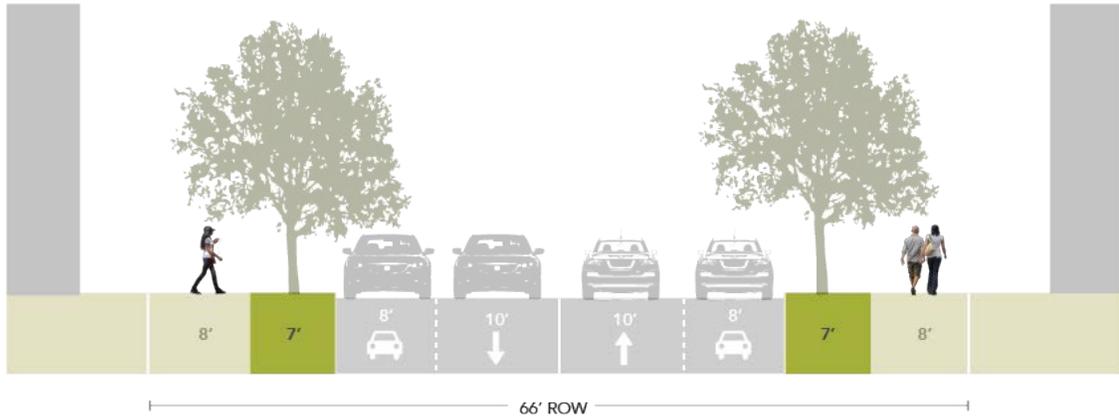
Add new streets south of the tracks and implement road diets on Linden St. and Vernon Ave.



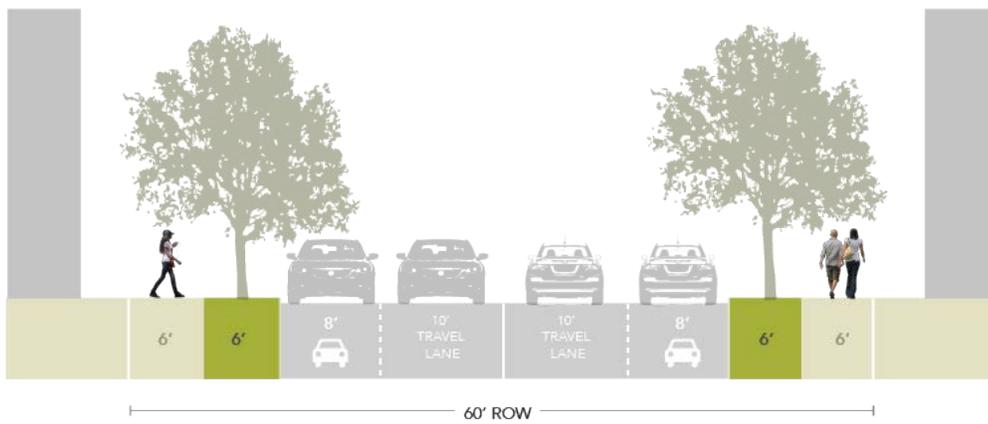
**A CONSTITUTION TRAIL/BLVD**



**B** TAYLOR STREET



**C** PHOENIX AVENUE



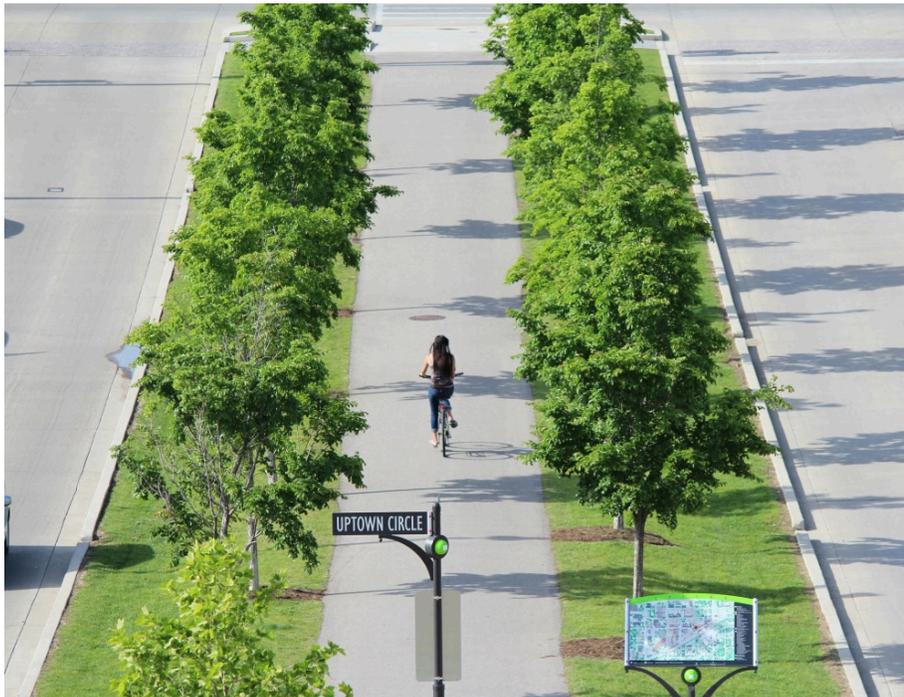
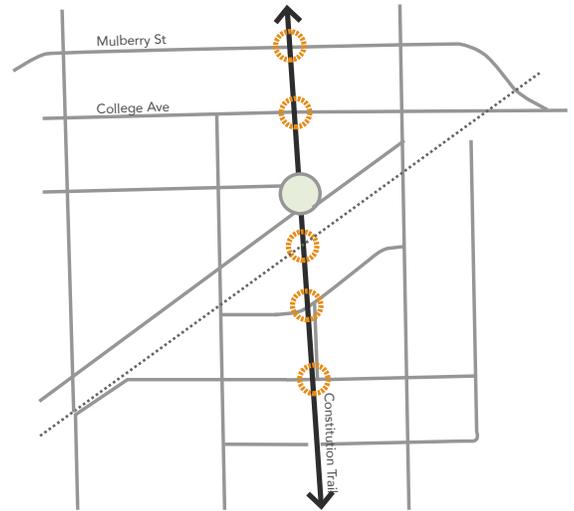
### CONSTITUTION TRAIL CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS

The two-way conversion of both Mulberry St. and College Ave. provides an opportunity to extend the landscaped median several feet at Constitution Trail since left turns will no longer occur from the left-most lane.

Vernon Ave. was cited as a difficult crossing for those traveling on the Constitution Trail. This roadway conversion would provide an opportunity to introduce pedestrian refuge medians to simplify this crossing, making it significantly safer.

### RECOMMENDATION 3

Intersection improvements on Constitution Blvd. at Mulberry St. and College Ave.



Constitution Trail

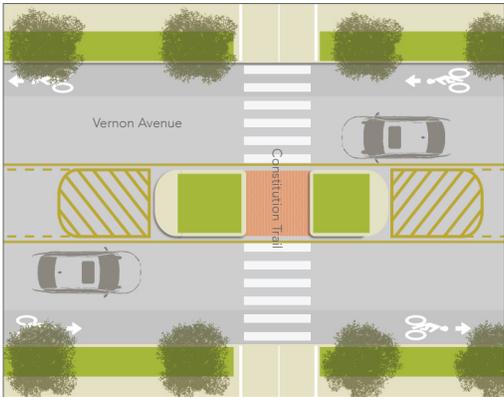
MULBERRY STREET MEDIAN EXTENSION



COLLEGE AVENUE MEDIAN EXTENSION



VERNON AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS



## BEAUFORT + BROADWAY INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

The intersection of Broadway Ave. and Beaufort St. is a large intersection with wide crossing distances and inconvenient pedestrian travel paths due to the skewed geometry of the intersection. According to the Town of Normal and other stakeholders, there is not a history of crashes to indicate a safety issue. However, based on observations, pedestrians tend to cross diagonally instead of using the crosswalks. Several bus routes pass through this intersection, but buses do not make turns using the north leg of the intersection, which opens up an opportunity to significantly reduce those corner radii.

To address the pedestrian comfort level and calm traffic, SSE recommends exploring special pavement treatments and/or raised crosswalks, particularly in the northeast and southwest quadrants of the intersection where the turning radius is largest.

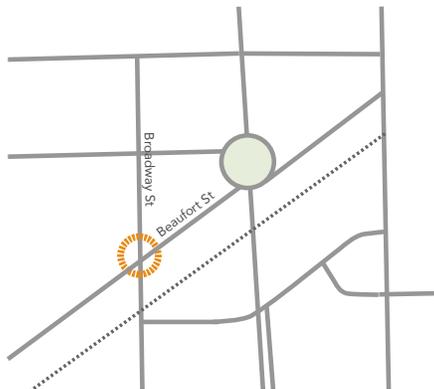
Raised crosswalks could be implemented across a channelized turn lane so as to allow buses and larger vehicles to mount the crosswalk when necessary to turn right but give visibility and priority to the pedestrian.

Additionally, the northwest corner radius is very large for use by what appears to be a small number of large vehicles and no buses. We recommend evaluating the turning movements to determine how much the radius can be reduced.

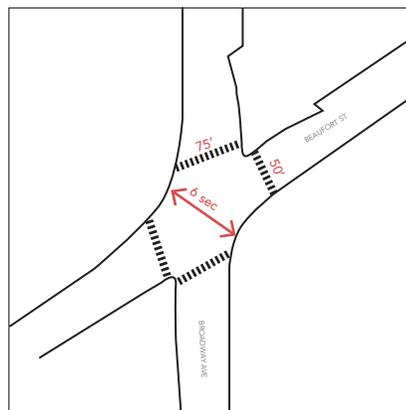
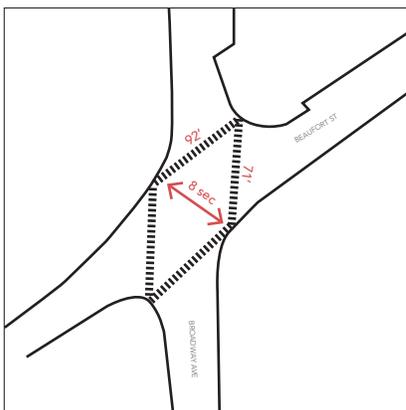
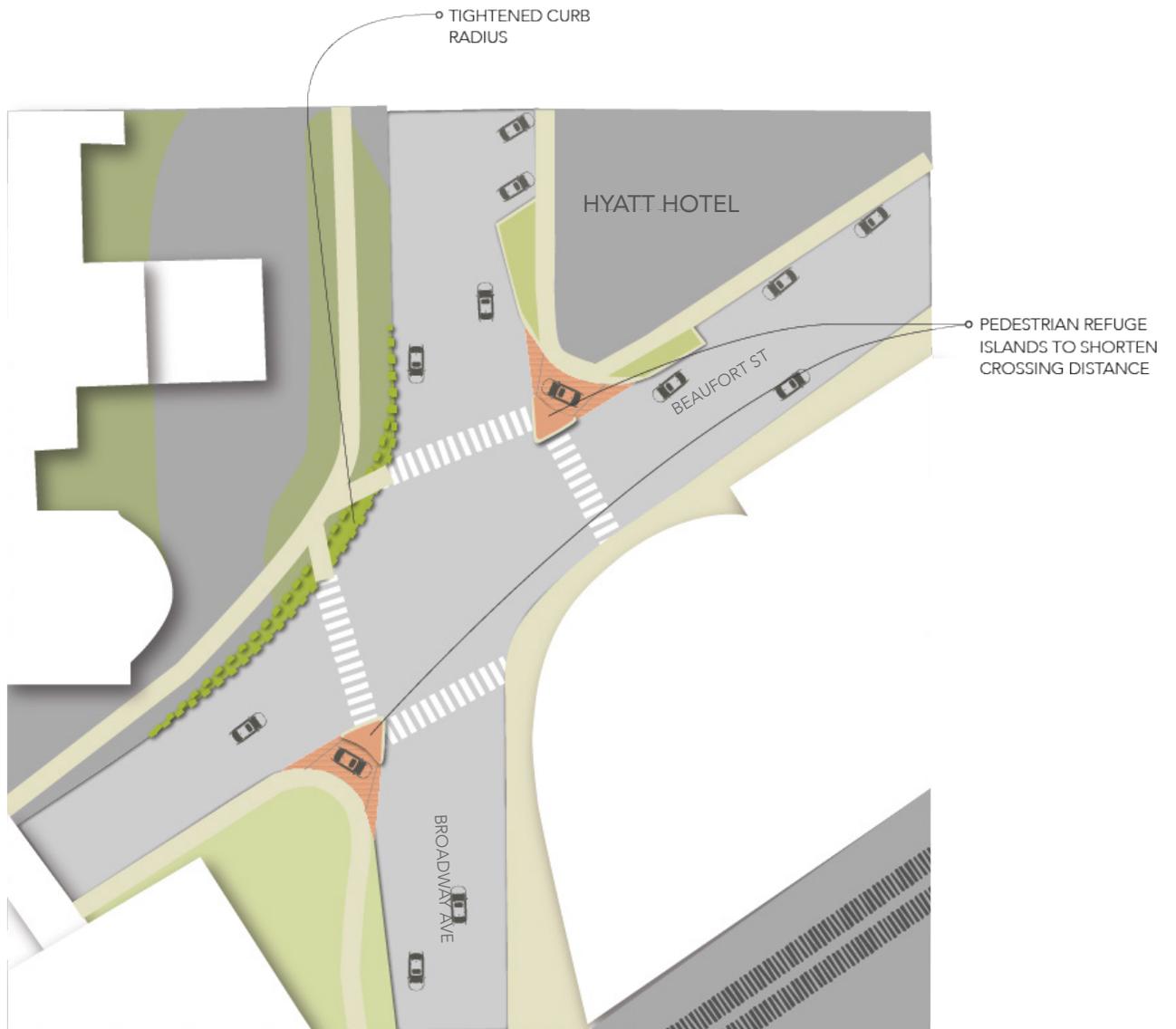
### RECOMMENDATION 4

Intersection improvement at Beaufort St. and Broadway Ave.

- + Explore the use of special pavement treatments and raised crosswalks to improve pedestrian comfort
- + Evaluate southbound to westbound turning movements to determine how much the northwest corner radius can be reduced



# BEAUFORT/BROADWAY INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT





## BIKE SHARE

Bike share is a point-to-point transit system that provides a mobility option that is flexible, fun, and affordable. In larger cities, such as New York and Chicago, bike share has changed how people get around the city and expanded the amount of destinations they can get to in a short amount of time. Bike share essentially allows people to cover a larger area in a shorter amount of time than they could on foot. In Bloomington-Normal, Illinois State and Illinois Wesleyan each have a campus bike share system, which consists of students checking out school bikes according to Normal staff.

The challenge that most cities have faced is building a bike share system and structure that is attractive to demographics of people that do not normally bike during the day. A successful bike share system requires building a membership that encompasses all demographics that are willing to use it to make short point-to-point trips. Achieving this goal requires a dense system of bike share stations as well as a membership/cost structure that does not create any barriers to entry.

A bike share system in Normal should initially cover an area that includes the Uptown and ISU campus area, and expansion should occur from there. The University should be considered a partner in the planning process. It is recommended that the town complete a 12-month bike share feasibility study as the next step in implementation. If the study were completed in 2016, an initial bike share system could be installed in 2017.

The bike share system should be as dense as possible, while covering as much of the Uptown area as possible. Installation would cost \$500,000 or more, depending on the number of stations and the type of technology used. The operating structure should be designed to cover annual operating costs after year two. Sponsorship should be considered for a revenue stream, but it is unlikely that it will cover the initial capital expenses.



Current bike facilities in Normal



Divvy bike sharing facilities in Chicago

### BIKE SHARE NETWORK

Long-term the bike share network could link many of the area destinations including Uptown, ISU, the Advocate BroMenn Medical Center, Illinois Wesleyan University, and Downtown Bloomington.

### CAR SHARE NETWORK

Car sharing is a model of car rental where people rent cars for short periods of time, often by the hour. They are attractive to customers who make only occasional use of a vehicle, as well as others who would like occasional access to a vehicle of a different type than they use day-to-day. The two primary providers in Illinois are Enterprise Car Share, and Zipcar.

Currently there are no car sharing networks in Bloomington-Normal. (ISU does offer a ride share program called Zimride, but it is only available to ISU affiliated members). A new ride share program would reduce or eliminate the need to own a car and reduce parking demand. In order to maximize use, car share parking should be distributed throughout Uptown.

### TAXI AND UBER

Several Taxi companies serve Normal-Bloomington. Uber, a taxi service where drivers use their own cars, recently expanded service to the Bloomington-Normal area. Convenient taxi and Uber service provide yet another alternative to reduce driving and parking demand in Uptown.

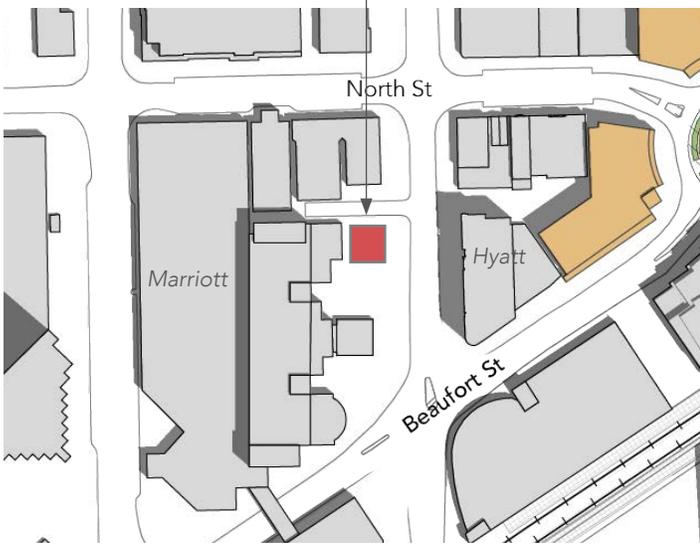


Bike Share Network



Conceptual Locations for Car Share Parking

*Bike Share Storage/  
Distribution Center*



*A shared bike storage/distribution center located in front of the Marriott would reduce the overly wide setback and bring additional activity along the sidewalk.*

**PARKING**

Uptown has many parking options for use by visitors, Amtrak travelers, customers, and employees, including on-street parking and several public parking facilities. SSE conducted a review of the on- and off-street parking facilities in the study area to establish a base parking overview. Hourly parking occupancy counts over a two-week period were reviewed in each of the three parking structures. Sample parking occupancy surveys and parking duration/turnover surveys were also collected for on-street parking spaces in the study area. The results of the parking surveys yielded parking demand ratios that were used to project future parking needs.

**OFF-STREET DECKS**

Three parking structures are located in Uptown: Beaufort St., College Ave. and Uptown Station. Parking in the College Ave. and Uptown Station decks is free for the first hour and on Sundays. Parking is never free in the Beaufort St. deck. SSE obtained parking count information from the town for a two-week period in October 2014.

The data in Table 1 indicate that at least 760 spaces are available at any given time in the three parking garages together. Even taking into account a factor for lost spaces (15%) due to snow pile, double parking, circulation convenience, or any other reason that reduces the effective supply, at least 500 spaces are available at any given time.

**ON-STREET TURNOVER**

Several blocks in Uptown were identified to have issues with low parking turnover. To quantify parking durations and turnover rates, SSE conducted a survey of on-street parking for key blocks in Uptown from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM in January 2015. Most of the spaces surveyed had one-hour time limits with the exception of North St., which has some 15-minute parking between Broadway Ave. and Fell Ave.

- + Approximately 16 percent of parkers overall were in violation of the one-hour time limit
- + Highest turnover of spaces occurs on the block of Broadway Ave. between College Ave. and North St. where over 80 percent of parkers are there for less than 30 minutes
- + Turnover should be improved on the blocks of Beaufort St. between Linden St. and Constitution Blvd. and Fell Ave. between College Ave. and North St.; both blocks serve active commercial storefronts and may benefit from stricter enforcement, shorter time limits, or metered parking
- + Both blocks of North St. have good levels of turnover, parking 66 vehicles throughout the day
- + Very low turnover over the course of the day on Constitution Blvd. as buses are parked there much of the day
- + Several on-street parking areas were inefficiently used as individually marked spaces left additional storage for one to two more vehicles; restriping parking as one continuous lane may create more efficient use of space

As the results of both the existing parking demand and turnover conditions show, Uptown does not generally have a lack of parking supply that makes it difficult for people to park their vehicles. However, it does experience issues with a lack of turnover of on-street parking spaces on the most popular blocks, similar to many downtown business districts across the country. As is often the case, the issues with parking supply, demand, and turnover are overshadowed by the public's perception that parking is difficult. As parking becomes a larger public issue, a comprehensive Uptown parking study may be beneficial to develop a comprehensive parking management strategy to support the long-term

TABLE 1: PARKING DECK UTILIZATION

	Capacity	Peak Hour Max Demand	Peak Hour Max Utilization	Individual Max Utilization
Beaufort Street	473	284	60%	68%
College Avenue	683	371	54%	54%
Uptown Station	381	120	18%	30%
<b>Total</b>	1537	775	50%	--
<b>Effective Supply (85%)</b>	1306	659	60%	--

economic vitality of Uptown. Recommendations may include adjustments to the pricing structure to rebalance the fees of parking in the parking decks with free on-street parking. A study of this nature should not only address parking policy such as costs, time limits, and fines, but also financing, technology, enforcement, town responsibilities, coordination and shared opportunities with ISU, and car share.

### ZONING

Most of Uptown North falls within the B-2 zoning district, which has a very aggressive parking standard, requiring no parking for commercial, and only .75 spaces per residential unit. This takes advantage of the current excess parking supply in the decks and encourages projects to manage parking demand through shared parking, walking, biking, transit and ride sharing.

On the other hand, South Uptown and the surrounding neighborhoods fall outside the B-2 zone and have more conventional parking requirements. These areas should be considered for more aggressive standards as part of the Uptown zoning revisions (see Chapter 5). Adopting maximum parking limits, as opposed to minimum requirements should also be considered for future zoning revisions.

### FUTURE PARKING

As development occurs in Uptown, parking will continue to be provided to accommodate customers, employees and travelers and should be provided at a rate that is sized appropriately without costly excess supply that is never used. SSE conducted a review of parking rates for use in determining future parking supply strategies. The following table summarizes that review and suggests, for planning purposes within the business district, a blended overall parking supply rate of 2.75 spaces per 1,000 SF.

TABLE 2: PARKING DURATION & TURNOVER

Street	No. Parked Cars	<30 min	31 min – 1 hr	+1 – 2 hrs	>2 hrs
Beaufort (Linden-Constitution)	20	53%	12%	23%	12%
Beaufort (Constitution – Broadway)	<i>Under Construction</i>				
North (Constitution – Broadway)	37	66%	17%	14%	3%
North (Broadway – Fell)	29	61%	14%	21%	4%
Constitution (College – North)	10	67%	22%	11%	0%
Broadway (College – North)	38	83%	11%	6%	0%
Fell (College – North)	7	43%	29%	14%	14%

TABLE 3: PARKING DEMAND RATE

Type	Unit	Typical	Aggressive	Suggested	Blended
Ground Floor Retail	Per 1,000 SF	3.333	0	1	2.75
Standard Retail	Per 1,000 SF	3.333	1.5	2.5	
Office	Per 1,000 SF	3.5	2	3	
Library	Per 1,000 SF	5	2.5	3.5	

# RAIL CROSSING

## HISTORY

At the time of the 2000 Plan, Constitution Trail crossed the railroad, and in so doing, provided a direct route for trail users and for people walking between downtown Normal to the north and the former city hall to the south. The trail was the inspiration for Constitution Blvd., one of the primary features of the 2000 Plan. The boulevard was originally intended to extend north and south from the Circle, linking the two sides together. But the connection was severed when the crossing was closed in 2001 due to safety and rail operation concerns. Ever since, the town has been working to either reopen the crossing or find alternative ways to cross.

After numerous feasibility studies, the town settled on a pedestrian bridge. The design features two stair/elevator towers clad in brick to complement the Uptown Station architecture, connected by a glass-enclosed steel truss bridge. It was primarily designed to connect passengers from the station to a new platform on the south side of the tracks. The project was designed and ready to go to bid in November of 2014, but in light of the Master Plan Update which was just beginning, the Council put the project on hold pending further study. The Master Plan Update team was then asked to prepare alternatives to the original proposal.

## CHALLENGES WITH THE ORIGINAL CROSSING PROPOSAL

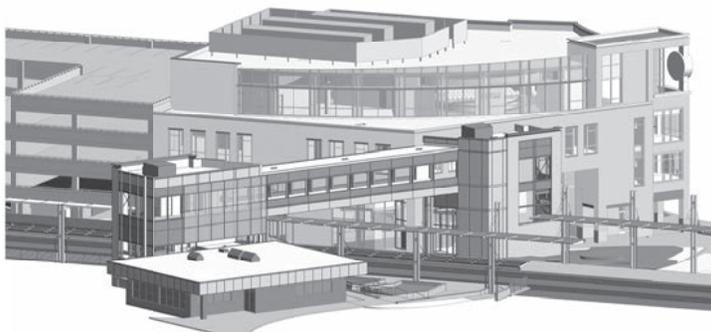
The original design, though well designed to serve passengers, is not designed to attract and convey general users and trail users across the tracks; as a result, it limits the development potential of South Uptown.



## USING RAIL CROSSING STRATEGIES TO CREATE VALUE

As part of the evaluation strategy for rail crossing options, HR&A prepared case studies of other communities in the United States that have invested in new infrastructure to enhance connectivity and activate underutilized sites. Lessons that emerged are:

- + A signature public space south of the tracks would complement the Circle and serve as a valuable anchor for new development while drawing pedestrians and bicyclists across the tracks
- + Additional investment in an iconic crossing design would benefit Uptown, increasing real estate values on surrounding parcels
- + Strengthening the bike and pedestrian culture can help position the Town as a place with a high quality of life



Current Overpass Proposal by Ratio Architects

## CASE STUDY: OVERPASS CONNECTIONS



Credit: Susan Smith

### **RIVERFRONT PARK NEIGHBORHOOD: DENVER, CO**

Signature pedestrian and bicycle bridges create strong connections between downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, while central open spaces catalyze new real estate development.

As a result, the most recent parcel sales have reached values of over \$200 per square foot - equivalent to the most expensive residential land in Denver. The redevelopment has also created a 31% condo sale premium and 9% multifamily rent premium.

## CASE STUDY: UNDERPASS CONNECTIONS



Credit: Beyond DC

### **BIKE/PED NETWORK: BOULDER, CO**

A cohesive bike and pedestrian network throughout Boulder along with a mix of amenities draw employees and companies. As a result, the City offers strong employment opportunities and a thriving technology start-up culture.

The amenities found in Boulder have contributed to a number of accolades won by the City including: “#1 Midsize City of Jobs”; “America’s Best Town for Startups”; and the “Best US Metro Area for Wellbeing”.

## CROSSING ALTERNATIVES

Three alternative solutions were evaluated:

1. Two schemes of a free-standing, open-air bridge
2. An underpass
3. A bridge addition to the current design proposal

Note the bridge addition design was prepared after the initial schemes were presented. Not depicted, but also considered, is to restore the at-grade crossing; to date this option has been unacceptable to the railroad, but it is still a possibility.

## OVERPASS

There are two schemes for the overpass. Apart from differences in the stair and bridge alignment, both schemes feature monumental stairs and a wide open-air bridge deck. The deck would serve as an elevated plaza, providing overlooks to the street and train activity below and making the bridge an icon and an attraction in its own right. Both schemes include glass-enclosed elevators on both sides of the bridge.

Benefits:

- + Bridge becomes an icon and destination for Uptown

Concerns:

- + Crossing the tracks is a challenge due to the 26-foot grade difference, so cyclists would be diverted to another route or would take the elevator
- + Some participants felt that the bridge would be too imposing and out of scale with the context
- + These schemes require more time for design and permits than the original option, which has already completed those steps



Overpass Scheme 1: Overpass with Overlook



Overpass Scheme 2: Bridge with Elevated Plaza



## UNDERPASS

The underpass option features a wide pedestrian tunnel, 14 feet below grade, connecting to a sloping public park on the south side and a reconfigured Gateway Plaza on the north side. The design includes an additional set of stairs, which provide direct access to the station platforms and glass-enclosed elevator towers on each side.

Overall, the community preferred this option to the original proposal.

### Benefits:

- + Provides connectivity for general users, trail users, and passengers
- + Integrates with sloping park/plaza on both sides

### Concerns:

- + More costly than the original bridge or the overpass option
- + Requires more time for design and permits than the original option, which has already completed those steps

## ORIGINAL DESIGN WITH BRIDGE ADDITION

A third alternative, explored later in the process, is a hybrid of the original design and the wide open-air bridge deck.

### Benefits:

- + Bridge becomes an icon and destination for Uptown
- + Can proceed with the original design and corresponding timeline
- + Offers good crossing experience for passengers

### Concerns:

- + More costly than the original bridge or the overpass option
- + Crossing the tracks is a challenge for trail users and other pedestrians due to the 26-foot grade difference

As of this writing, the town is continuing to explore the feasibility of the underpass option. The final direction should be established by Fall 2015.



Preferred Option: Underpass



	Ease of Crossing for			Image/ Attraction	Cost*	Ease of Permit
	Passengers	General Users	Trail Users			
Original bridge	A	D	D	C	7.7 M	A
Original with addition	A	C	D	A	Not Estimated	A
Overpass	D	C	D	A	8.6 M	B
Underpass	B	B	B	A	12.7 M	C
At-grade Crossing	B	A	A	-	Not Estimated	D

\* Based on Rail Overpass/Underpass Study, March 1, 2015

# UPTOWN NORTH

## DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Uptown North is a new designation for the traditional Uptown core. This 32-acre district is bounded by Mulberry St. to the north, the railroad tracks to the south, Fell Ave. to the west, and east to where Mulberry St. and College Ave. meet the railway. Having been the focus of development over the last 15 years, the district is nearly complete and the few remaining development sites are under public control.

## DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

A highly developed Uptown North has the potential to become a “complete” downtown — a vibrant 18-hour district that offers a critical mass of retail, urban-style housing, and office space. Since land is scarce, the few remaining sites must maximize the development potential, while fitting in with the scale and character of the surroundings.

What is considered “appropriate” for the district scale has changed since the 2000 Plan. The 2000 Plan (and the subsequent regulations) maintained heights that were consistent with the one- to two-story buildings on Beaufort St., with the sites on Constitution Blvd. and the Circle limited to six stories. Today, the tallest buildings in the district are nine stories and many of the newer buildings are four stories. As the “ceiling” on development has increased, tolerance for height has increased. This tolerance was demonstrated during a poll in the February 2015 workshop, when the majority of respondents believed that buildings up to six stories high are appropriate in Uptown North (see the Process Chapter for more on this survey).

Which raises the question, if the general tolerance for height is greater and there is a strong potential housing market, should the height limits on Constitution Blvd.—which were originally designated as the tallest in Uptown—be increased to eight stories?



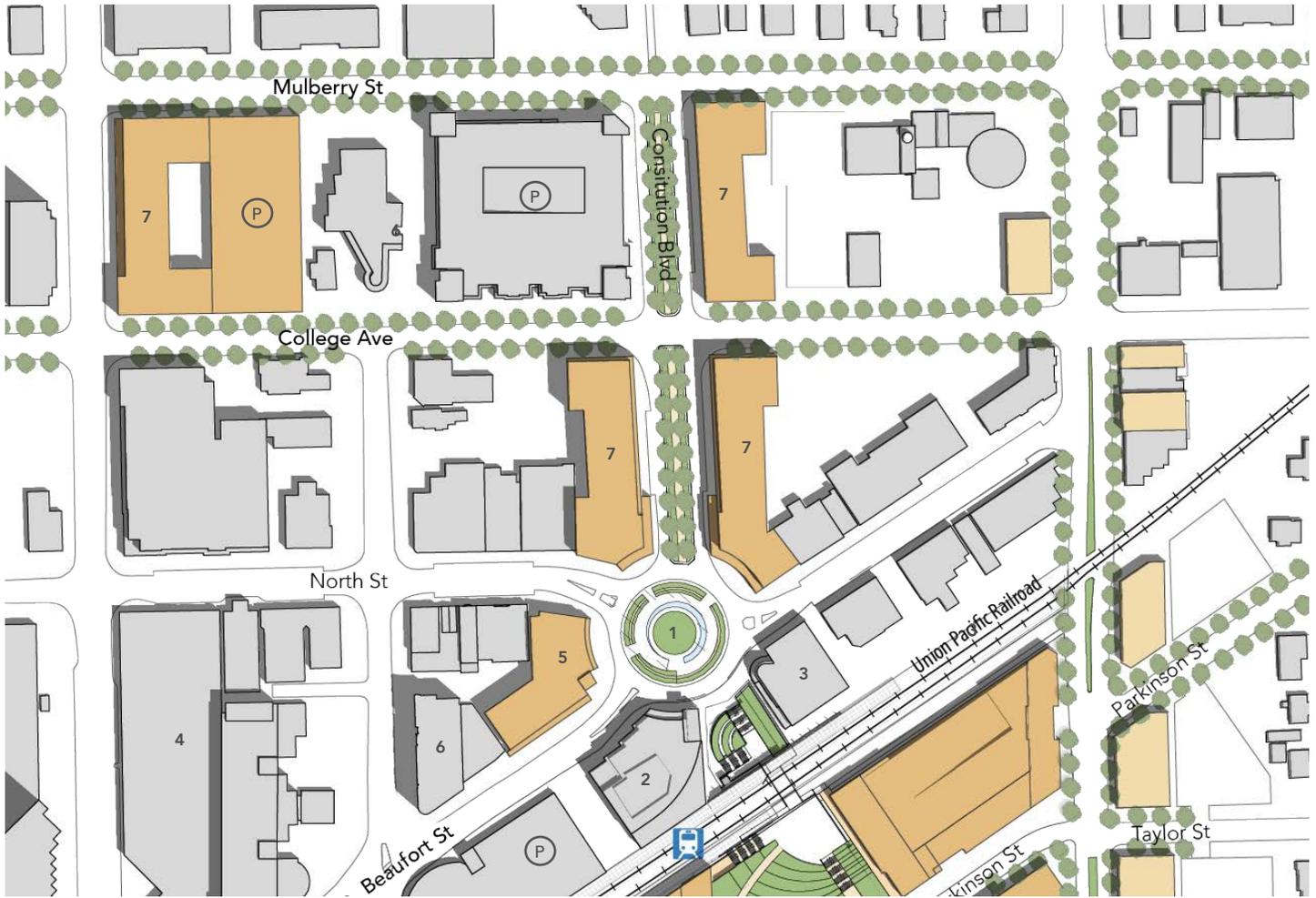
Uptown North



Remaining Uptown North Redevelopment Projects:

- 1 One Uptown
- 2-4 Constitution Blvd. Sites
- 5 Library Site

**A highly developed Uptown North has the potential to become a “complete” downtown — a vibrant 18-hour district that offers a critical mass of retail, urban-style housing, and downtown office space.**



*Uptown North*

- 1 UPTOWN CIRCLE
- 2 UPTOWN STATION
- 3 CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
- 4 MARRIOTT
- 5 ONE UPTOWN (MIXED USE)
- 6 HYATT PLACE
- 7 MIXED USE
- (P) PARKING

- Existing Buildings
- Uptown Redevelopment
- Neighborhood Redevelopment (Market-Driven)

From the standpoint of scale and compatibility with the surrounding context, an increase in height would be appropriate. Since buildings on the Circle are required by current guidelines to step back above the third floor, the apparent mass of taller buildings are concealed by the third story cornice, which is compatible with the heights of the surrounding buildings. Taller is also preferred in creating more capacity for residential and office space. The more people that work and live in Uptown, the more vibrant the district will be, so long as there is enough potential to fill all the lots.

At four to six stories, the upper level of the remaining buildings on Constitution Blvd. could accommodate as many as 260 units, and at six-seven stories, as many as 350 units. Some of this capacity should be reserved for office space. Although the current market is weak, some tenants will be looking for urban sites and Uptown will be the preferred location so long as space is available (see Chapter 2 for more information).

Ultimately, the development capacity of these sites is likely to be limited by the available parking supply more than by building size. To maximize the development capacity, the town should encourage policies that reduce parking demand by promoting alternative transportation and minimizing on-site parking requirements. Where possible, new projects should integrate structured parking.

## POP-UP RETAIL

Because the mixed-use projects on Constitution Blvd. are complex, some may take a few years to complete. In the meantime, pop-up retail can provide a short-term solution. These shops are temporary retail spaces that sell a wide range of products, from art to fashion to tech gadgets and food.

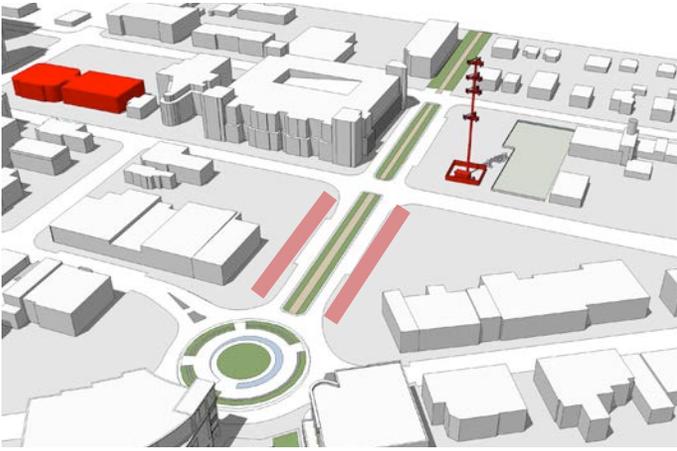
There are a number of advantages to pop-up retail. For the retailers it creates an opportunity to test products, locations, or markets, and provide a low cost way to start a business. Seasonal pop-up shops also have the benefit of not having to commit to a long-term lease. For Uptown, it provides a means to activate Constitution Boulevard and to absorb some of Uptown's sizable unmet retail demand.



Puma Pop-Up Store, Raffles City



Airstream Trailer

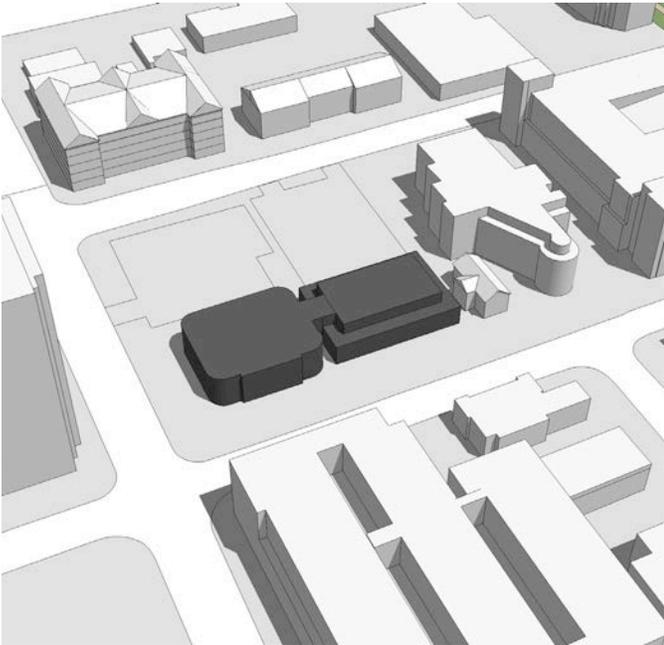


Uptown North, Existing

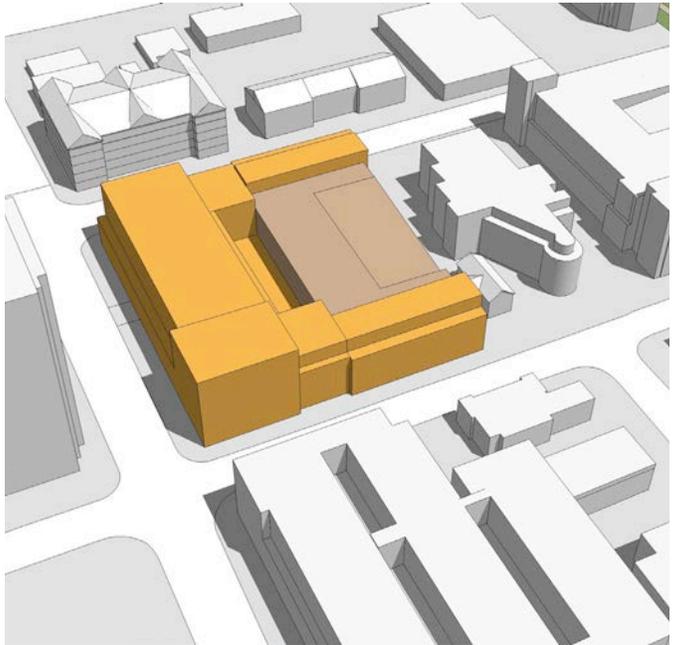
■ To Be Removed      ■ Pop-Up Retail



Uptown North, Proposed (orange, new construction)



Library Site, Existing



Library Site, Proposed Mixed Use Development

# UPTOWN SOUTH

## DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Uptown South is bounded by Constitution Trail to the west, Linden St. to the east, the rail tracks to the north, and Irving St. to the south. This eight-acre site is nearly fully under the town's ownership and presents a tremendous opportunity for the continued redevelopment of Uptown.

## THE VISION

In the 2000 Plan, Uptown South was envisioned as an urban neighborhood organized around the proposed southern extension of Constitution Blvd. and convenience retail along Linden St. This area was designed to complement the more retail-focused area north of the tracks. However, with the benefit of 15 years of progress, Uptown South is now positioned to be more than a neighborhood and to function instead as an extension of the downtown.

To accomplish this, the area needs to be developed intensively enough to provide a mix of office, retail, civic, and residential uses. It will also need to become enough of a destination to routinely attract people to pass between the north and south sides of the tracks.

## ELEMENTS OF UPTOWN SOUTH

**TRADITIONAL STREETS AND BLOCKS** - A traditional street and block system that provides a flexible development framework and integrates with the surrounding street network.

**PUBLIC PARK** - A 1.3-acre park that provides opportunities for open space programs such as concerts, festivals, and everyday activities that are too large for the limited open spaces available in Uptown North. The park provides a gentle sloping transition connecting Constitution Trail to the planned rail underpass.

**RETAIL SPACE** - Depending on the mix, ground floor retail could require from 12,000 to 30,000 SF. This could potentially include a small grocery store or pharmacy.

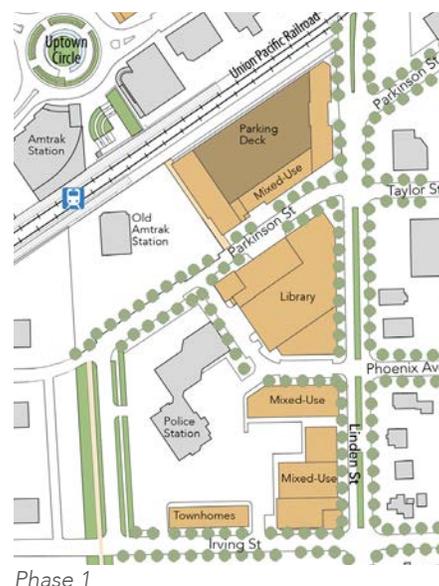
**OFFICE SPACE** - Since there is no immediate demand, the plan reserves the current Police Station/ Old City Hall site as a longer-term redevelopment site for a multi-story office building.

**LIBRARY** - The plan reserves a one-acre site for a 70,000 SF library.



**HOUSING** - The district provides a mix of multi-family and attached single-family housing types designed to appeal primarily to young professionals and empty nesters.

**PARKING** - Structured parking to support the Library, office building, and a portion of the residential demand. The parking deck could also incorporate the station waiting area and elevator connecting the underpass level to the south platform. Most residential and retail parking will be accommodated on street or on-site.





- |                           |                        |  |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 PARK                    | 6 GROCERY STORE        | Existing Buildings                         |
| 2 OFFICE/MIXED USE        | 7 LIBRARY              | Uptown Redevelopment                       |
| 3 MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL | 8 STATION WAITING AREA | Neighborhood Redevelopment (Market-Driven) |
| 4 TOWNHOUSE               | 9 STATION DROP OFF     |  |
| 5 RETAIL/MIXED USE        | (P) PARKING            |  |





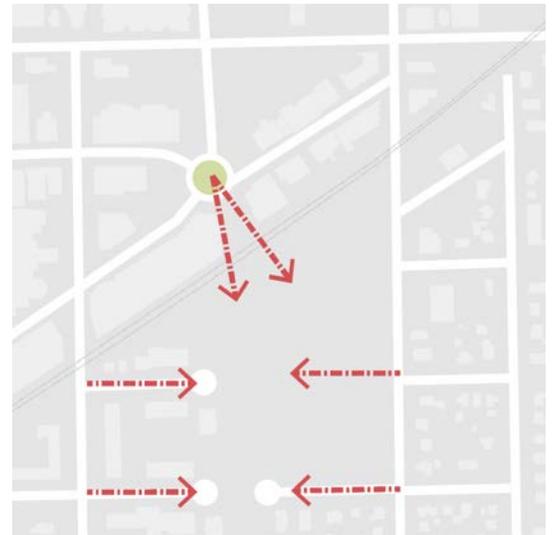
View from Linden and Parkinson

## UPTOWN SOUTH ORGANIZING IDEAS

1. **UPTOWN SOUTH** – The eight-acre site around the Police Station/Old City Hall presents an opportunity to expand the core of Uptown. It is the largest remaining site near Uptown that is under public control.
2. **ORGANIZING LINES** – The surrounding streets and view corridors create the organizing lines for new streets and the placement of landmark building features.
3. **THE PARK** – The district features a 1.3-acre park that extends from the plaza between Uptown Station and the Children’s Museum.
4. **STREET GRID** – The site is divided into streets and blocks that provide public access throughout the site and a framework for development.
5. **CONSTITUTION TRAIL** – The trail continues uninterrupted through the site except for two minor street crossings. With an underpass or at-grade crossing at the railroad, it can continue uninterrupted to the north.
6. **LIBRARY** – A prominent site on the park is reserved for the Normal Public Library. The main entry terminates the Constitution Trail view corridor.
7. **PARKING STRUCTURE** – A multi-story parking deck provides a buffer along the tracks and provides covered parking for the Library and surrounding users.
8. **RETAIL** – Retail is sited along Linden St., including a grocery store or pharmacy.
9. **RESIDENTIAL** – A variety of multi-family housing types occupy the balance of the site and create active uses on the streets.



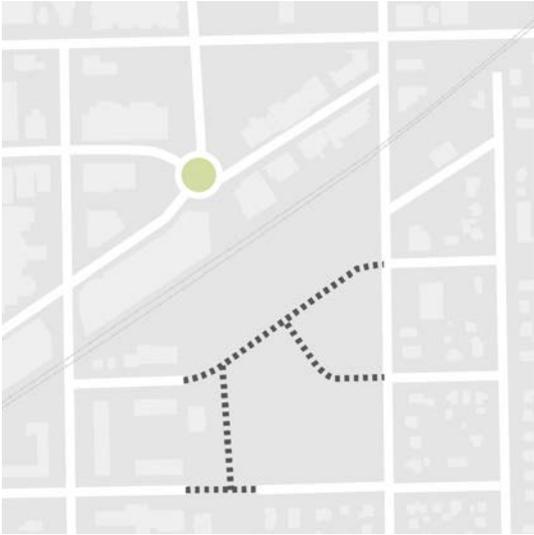
1 UPTOWN SOUTH



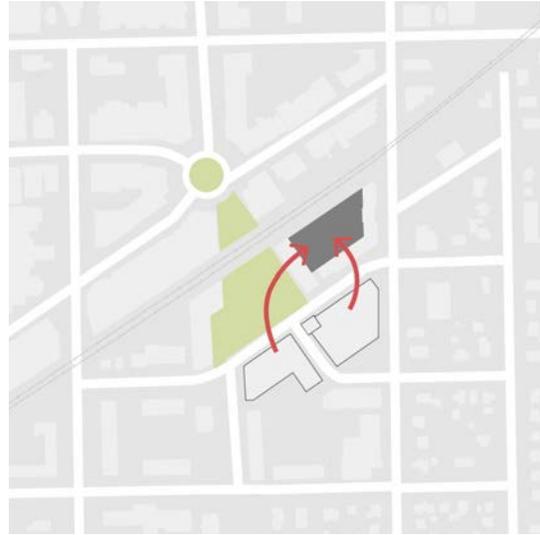
2 ORGANIZING LINES



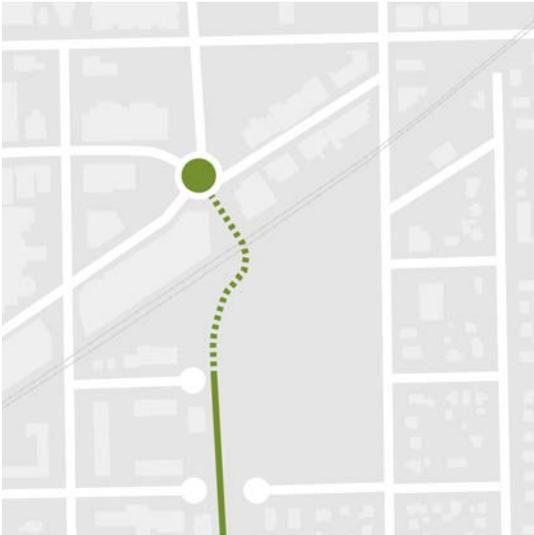
3 THE PARK



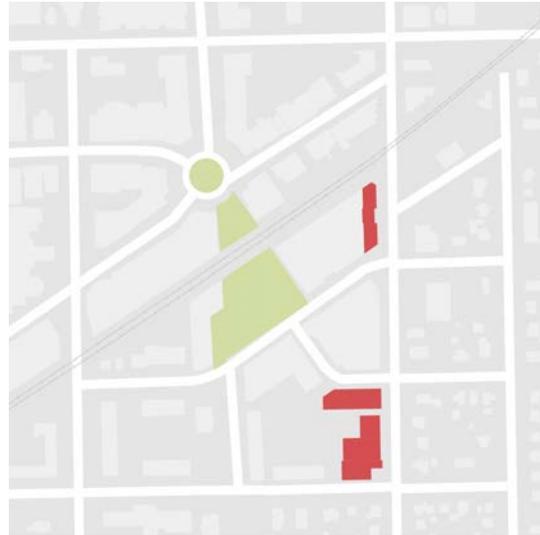
4 STREET GRID



7 PARKING STRUCTURE



5 CONSTITUTION TRAIL



8 RETAIL



6 LIBRARY



9 RESIDENTIAL

### UPTOWN SOUTH DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Uptown South can accommodate a range of development scenarios depending on the strength of the market and the particular requirements of individual users. Density similar to Uptown North should be encouraged, since more development means more people, and more people produce more activity. In addition, more private development generates more tax revenue, which can be leveraged against public investments in streets, parks, and infrastructure.

### LIMITS TO DENSITY

The factors limiting density include:

#### SCALE AND CHARACTER

The scale and character of the district should be compatible with Uptown North and the surrounding neighborhoods. In a survey taken at the February 2015 community meeting, the majority indicated five stories would be appropriate for Uptown South, and half the participants thought 6 stories would be appropriate. However, five stories should not be a uniform height. Taller buildings may be acceptable in certain areas, and shorter buildings in others.

#### HOUSING TYPE VARIETY

The housing study indicates that Uptown South should offer a variety of housing types from one-bedroom apartments, to condos, to townhouses. Although housing type variety is essential to a sustainable community, townhouses are by nature less dense than apartment buildings.

#### PREMIUM CONSTRUCTION COST

Premium costs for underground parking and high-rise construction are rarely feasible unless the demand is high and the income can justify the costs.

### PARKING SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Parking supply limits development capacity, especially when using conventional parking demand ratios. To maximize development, most parking will need to be integrated into the building, or in a separate structure. Alternatively, parking demand can be reduced through shared parking, ride sharing, biking, and walking.

### DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

SCENARIO 1 - Moderate Density, 5-story maximum, 1-story minimum

- + 2-story library
- + 1-3-story retail buildings
- + Townhouses and 3-4-story apartments
- + Total development capacity: **450,000 SF**

SCENARIO 2 – Higher Density, 6-story maximum, 3-story minimum

- + 4-story library
- + Retail integrated with mixed-use residential buildings
- + 4-story apartment buildings with below-grade parking
- + Total development capacity: **600,000 SF**



Scenario 1 - Moderate Density



Scenario 2 - Higher Density

# LIBRARY

## BACKGROUND AND PROGRAM

Normal Public Library is evaluating alternate sites for a larger new facility. Based on a programming study completed in 2009, a new library of 68,000 SF would be large enough to accommodate the expanded program needs, which far exceed the capacity of the current facility at 45,000 SF.

Over the past five years the Library Board has been evaluating numerous sites, including a few in Uptown. Currently, the preferred configuration is a two-story facility with surface parking on a large open site, preferably more than five acres. This may, in part, be due to the fact that the current facility in Uptown North, which is supported by a mix of surface and structured parking, is perceived by some drivers as inconvenient. By these criteria, the only viable sites tend to be outside the urban core.

## UPTOWN SOUTH SITE

A one-acre site is reserved for the new Public Library. This is large enough to accommodate a two-story facility with room for expansion. The site would provide covered parking across the street in a parking structure, and would be prominently sited on the new public park. The site would also accommodate a book drop-off at the main entry. This site offers the following advantages:

- + Better serves the functions of modern library facilities as social and cultural hubs for communities, beyond simply housing books
- + Better access to a broad population including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and drivers
- + Synergies with nearby retail shops and businesses that also benefit from close proximity to the library facilities
- + Ample covered parking adjacent to the front door
- + Direct access to a shared park space for learning and play space
- + Excellent visibility from Uptown Circle and Linden St.
- + Retains the library as a significant Uptown anchor institution



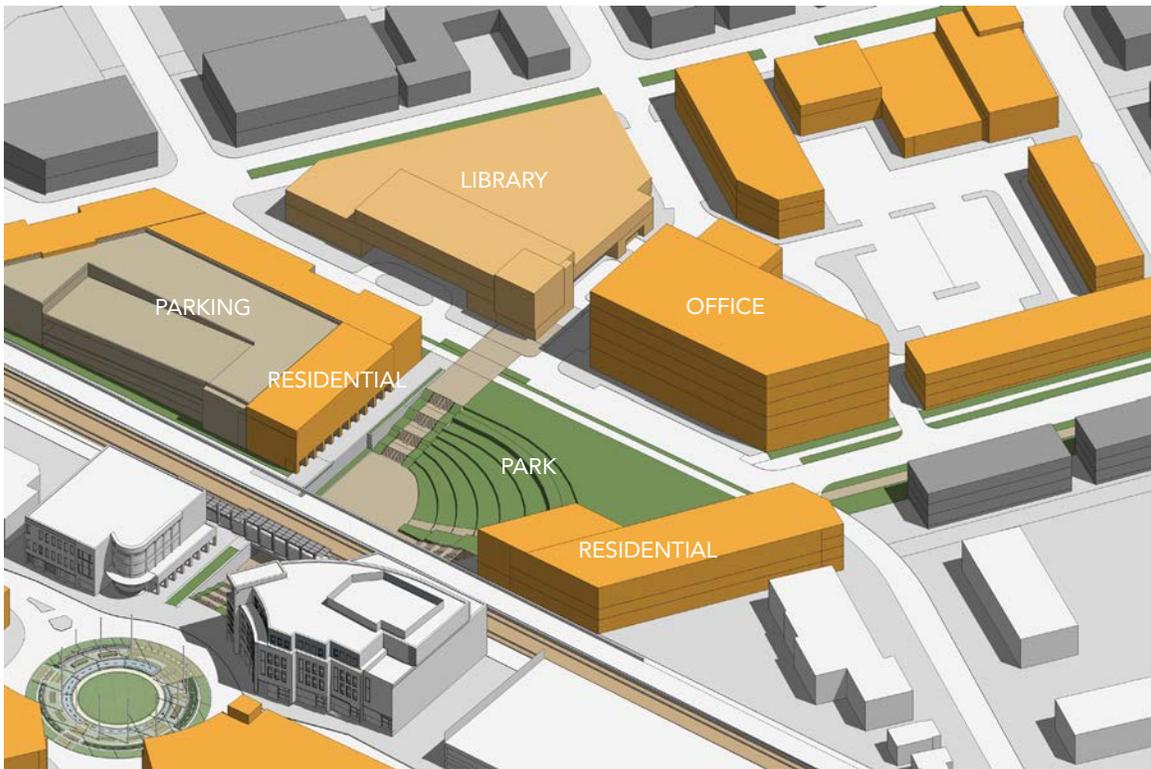
*Library, View from Circle*

**In order to remain relevant, Libraries of the 21st century need to become the social and cultural hubs for the community, not just a place for housing books.**

**- From Visioning and Master Planning for the Public Library, 2013**



Library, Phase 1



Library, Long Term Build-Out

# NEIGHBORHOODS

## ATTRACTING MORE RESIDENTS UPTOWN

The housing market study indicated that Uptown could attract as many as 980 new residential units over the next six years, and that these units would be especially attractive to young professionals and empty nesters. Even with a fully developed Uptown North and Uptown South, some demand still remains for new housing within close walking distance of Uptown amenities. Providing new housing opportunities in surrounding neighborhoods would add choices and enable more residents to add to the vitality of the Uptown area.

## INCREMENTAL DEVELOPMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS

Redevelopment in the neighborhoods surrounding Uptown should be led by current land owners and local developers and is envisioned to proceed incrementally as Uptown continues to develop more attractions and services. The initial targeted priority areas that can benefit most from early investment are the Linden Corridor and areas along Constitution Trail. Properties along the Mulberry Corridor, the north side of Vernon Ave, and in the rest of the South Uptown neighborhoods can also accommodate more urban style housing choices.



Uptown Neighborhoods



Credit: Jim Meacci

Duplex



Credit: Gallery House Studio AirBnB

Single Family Accessory Unit



Credit: Domestic Observances Blog

Triplex



**NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY**

Uptown North has seen significant investments through development in the last 15 years. Now, we are broadening our scope to look into Uptown South and the surrounding neighborhoods to feed off the momentum from Uptown North. The proposed Uptown zoning boundary is marked to show the expansion of Uptown and how the crossing will play a critical role in connecting the southern neighborhoods to Uptown North.

**A SPECTRUM OF HOUSING OPTIONS**

There are numerous types of housing that can accommodate a greater density in Uptown Normal. Single-family homes and multi-family apartment buildings are the typical housing options in many cities, but they are located at opposite ends of the housing spectrum. The Missing Middle refers to the multi-family housing options

in the center of this spectrum that are often overlooked, but highly desirable. These options include duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes; midrise and courtyard apartments; bungalow courts; townhomes; mansion apartments; and live/work buildings.

These housing types are advantageous because they increase density while maintaining the scale and character of the neighborhood. With a range of housing types to choose from, the transition between single-family neighborhoods and commercial streets can be made more gradually, while accommodating the diverse needs of Uptown Normal.



Credit: Nicholas James

Townhouse



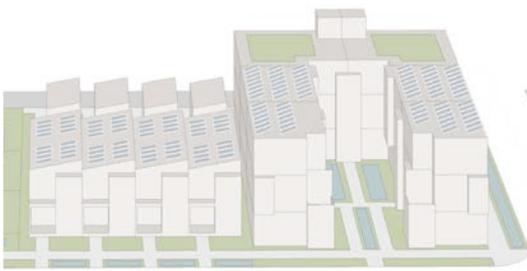
Credit: Yo Chicago

Courtyard Building



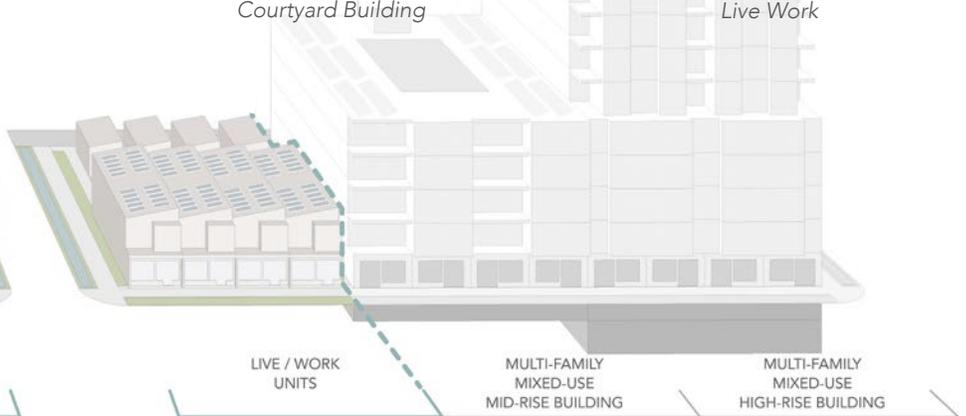
Credit: AMU

Live Work



TOWNHOMES ATTACHED

MULTI-FAMILY COURTYARD BUILDING



LIVE / WORK UNITS

MULTI-FAMILY MIXED-USE MID-RISE BUILDING

MULTI-FAMILY MIXED-USE HIGH-RISE BUILDING

The Missing Middle

# 4 SUSTAINABILITY

**Moving forward, Normal should raise the bar for sustainability, going beyond mitigating the negative environmental impacts of development and instead giving back to the environment through our developments.**



## HISTORY

The Town of Normal has a national reputation as one of the most sustainable small towns in America. In 2007, Uptown Circle was among the first projects to register for the LEED Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) Pilot Program, along with four other LEED certified buildings.

## THE HIGHEST STANDARD IN SUSTAINABILITY

Over the last 15 years, the state of the art in sustainability has continued to rise. In 2009, the launch of the LEED ND certification program set a standard for sustainable urban places. Uptown Circle was among the first projects to achieve LEED ND Plan certification, at the Silver level. To raise the bar, we recommend that Uptown South should be considered for LEED-ND Project (built), with the goal of achieving Platinum level.

Uptown South should also consider taking the Living Community Challenge (LCC), the newest and most rigorous certification for sustainable neighborhood development. This program follows a similar structure to LEED-ND, with a goal of achieving net-zero water or energy. The LCC program and its requirements are described in more detail in the following pages.



## ENERGY USE OVERVIEW

### TYPICAL BUILDING ENERGY USE

Energy efficiency is commonly measured in Energy Use Intensity, or EUI. This number takes into account energy consumption based on the size of the project over the course of a year. EUI is measured in units of kBTU/ft<sup>2</sup>/yr.

According to a 2014 EnergyStar report, a typical multi-family or mixed-use building built to code standards has a site EUI of 80 kBTU and an office building has an EUI of around 68 kBTU. Additionally, a Library has an EUI of 92 kBTU and a grocery store has an EUI of 185 kBTU.

### REDUCTION IN ENERGY USE

In order to create a sustainable and regenerative Uptown South, the average site EUI of all buildings should be reduced to 20 kBTU.

In order to achieve this goal, water and energy efficient appliances are necessary as well as increased insulation and triple-paned windows. All energy must be generated through non-combustible energy sources such as solar, wind, or geothermal. To increase renewable energy production, solar panels could be located within the right of way, or act as a carport over surface parking on site in addition to being located on building roofs.

### UPTOWN SOUTH AS A PILOT PROJECT

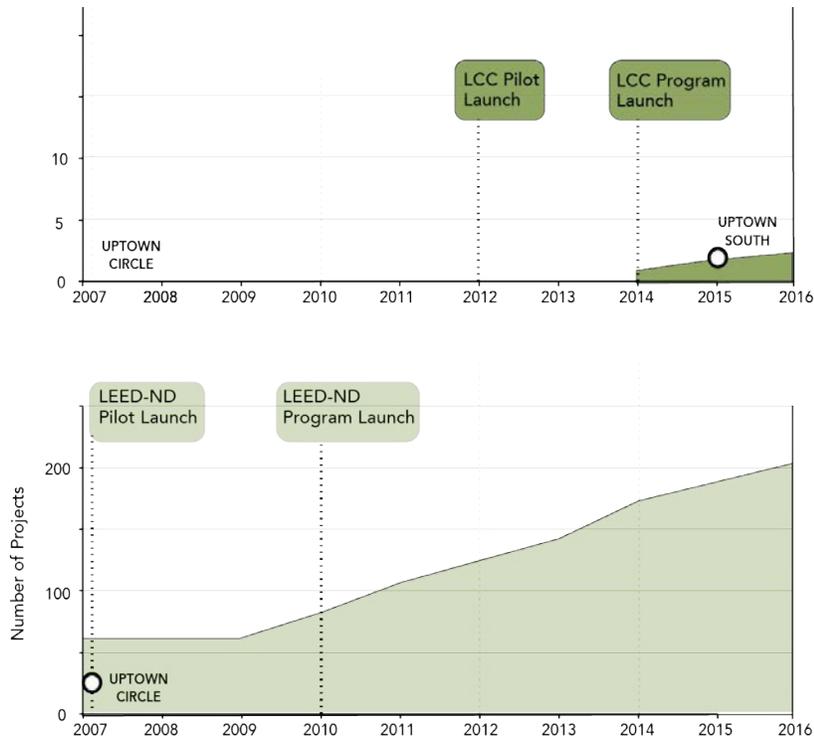
As part of this study, Uptown South was registered for the LCC program earlier this year, and is only the second project in the world to do so. The registration demonstrates interest and provides access to information resources, but is not a commitment to the formal certification process. Even so, being involved in the program once again brings prestige and national recognition to the Town's continued commitment to excellence in sustainable urbanism.

Elements that make Uptown South a good candidate for the LCC include:

- + The site is large enough to employ sustainable systems in water, energy, and waste
- + The site is under public control, which allows for coordination among multiple buildings and the opportunity to account for cost-saving impacts outside the boundaries of the project

Through the process of design and certification, Uptown South would contribute to the Town's best practices in sustainability, informing new infrastructure and development standards throughout the community and beyond.

### NORMAL WAS AMONG THE FIRST TO REGISTER FOR LEED-ND AND LCC



# THE LIVING COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

ILFI's Living Community Challenge (LCC) is grounded in the philosophy of self-reliance and living within one's means. LCC projects explore the possibilities of communities that are energy independent, focused on walking, biking, and transit options; water independent, waste neutral, and secure distributed systems; and connected cultural communities, integrated with local food production and in tune with nature and natural systems.

ILFI uses a tree as a metaphor for how communities should function. A tree is rooted in place and harvests all energy and water on-site. It adapts to the climate and site and lives in harmony with its neighbors. A tree is not only pollution-free; it also functions as a beautiful source of food, energy, and habitat for its inhabitants.



INTERNATIONAL  
**LIVING FUTURE**  
INSTITUTE™

**"The Living Community Challenge is the most advanced measure of sustainability in the built environment possible today... Projects that achieve this level of performance can claim to be the "greenest" anywhere, and will serve as role models for others that follow."**

**- International Living Future Institute**

## HOW LCC PETAL CERTIFICATION WORKS

### Achieve ONE of these



### Achieve TWO of these



#### 1 Water

Creating water-independent sites, buildings, and communities.



#### 2 Energy

Relying only on current solar income.



#### 3 Materials

Endorsing products and processes that are safe for all species.



#### 4 Beauty

Celebrating plans that propose transformative change.



#### 5 Place

Restoring a healthy coexistence with nature.



#### 6 Health & Happiness

Maximizing physical and psychological health and well-being.



#### 7 Equity

Supporting a just, equitable world.

### **UPTOWN SOUTH DISTRICT PROPOSAL**

The program is comprised of seven subject areas - called Petals - and 20 performance requirements - called imperatives. The seven Petal Certifications that form the LCC are Water, Energy, Beauty, Place, Materials, Health & Happiness, and Equity.

Uptown South has great potential to achieve Petal Certification from the LCC. ILFI worked with the Farr team and the Town of Normal to understand what the needs and assets of the site are, as well as which Petals the Town of Normal should focus on.

Based on the initial recommendations from the Sustainability Workshop, Uptown South should consider pursuing:

- + Water, Energy or Materials
- + Beauty and Place

Two additional prerequisites for Petal Certification include meeting the Limits to Growth imperative as well as the Inspiration & Education imperative (see below).

### **LIMITS TO GROWTH**

The Limits to Growth Imperative essentially has two requirements:

- + No greenfield development in developed countries; and
- + Restrict development in sensitive ecological habitats.

Given that Uptown South is currently developed and does not appear to be located in any sensitive ecological habitats, it should meet the requirements of Limits to Growth.

### **INSPIRATION & EDUCATION**

The Inspiration & Education Imperative is an opportunity for a project to celebrate the innovative thinking and systems that went into the project.

It also serves to help motivate others within the community to catalyze change. To fulfill the Petal Certification requirements, the Uptown South site must educate the public about the environmental qualities of their LCC development.



## 1 WATER

There are three primary requirements for the Water petal: (1) projects must not interrupt natural water flows through the site (such as streams); (2) all water needs must be supplied by either rainwater or another closed-loop system and cannot be purified with the use of chemicals; and (3) all stormwater, graywater, and blackwater must be treated at the community scale and either be reused or infiltrated.

The Living Futures team ran an analysis of the site based on a preliminary site design from the Farr team and determined that 112% of the development's water demand could be obtained from rooftop rainwater collection alone, assuming residents of the development reduce their usage to 10 gallons/SF/year.

**100%** of water required should be **PRODUCED ON-SITE**

**60%** **REDUCTION** in **CURRENT USAGE**



**100%** of **TARGET DEMAND** can be supplied **ON-SITE**



## 2 ENERGY

This Petal requires 105% of the project's energy needs are supplied by community-generated renewable energy on a net annual basis. The LCC does not allow for the use of combustion-based energy sources.

The Living Futures team found that the South Uptown site could generate 80% of required energy using rooftop photo-voltaic (PV) generation alone. This number is based on current levels of PV efficiency and 80% roof coverage. These numbers assume an energy use intensity (EUI) of 20 kBTU. To add perspective, a typical mixed-use development has an average EUI of 80 kBTU.

By designing Uptown South buildings to LCC standards, the annual energy consumption is reduced by 82% and meets the reduced EUI of 20 kBTU. These standards include increased insulation values for walls and roofs as well as high-efficiency triple paned windows.

A geothermal heat pump base system is recommended due to its high efficiencies and lack of reliance on natural gas, as well as its compatibility with the climate of Normal. An environmental analysis of the proposed Uptown South design indicates that the annual utility cost for the site could be reduced by 75%.

**105%** of energy required on-site should be **RENEWABLE ENERGY**

**67%** **REDUCTION** in **CURRENT USAGE**



**80%** of **TARGET DEMAND** can be supplied **ON-SITE**



**20%** of **TARGET DEMAND** can be supplied **OFF-SITE**





### 3 MATERIALS

ILFI, and specifically the Living Building Challenge (LBC), prohibits buildings from using materials on a “Red List.” Red List materials are the worst materials, chemicals, and elements that pose a risk to human health and the ecosystem.

All materials must comply with Red List restrictions; all timber must be Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-Certified or salvaged; nine DECLARE products must be used, and 10 advocacy letters sent to manufacturers not using DECLARE. Additionally, 20% of the materials construction budget must come from within 310 miles of the site, 30% from within 620 miles, 25% from within 3100 miles and 25% from anywhere.

A specific Red List of materials does not yet exist for infrastructure; however, the Red List acts as a starting point for materials that should be avoided in the urban design of communities.

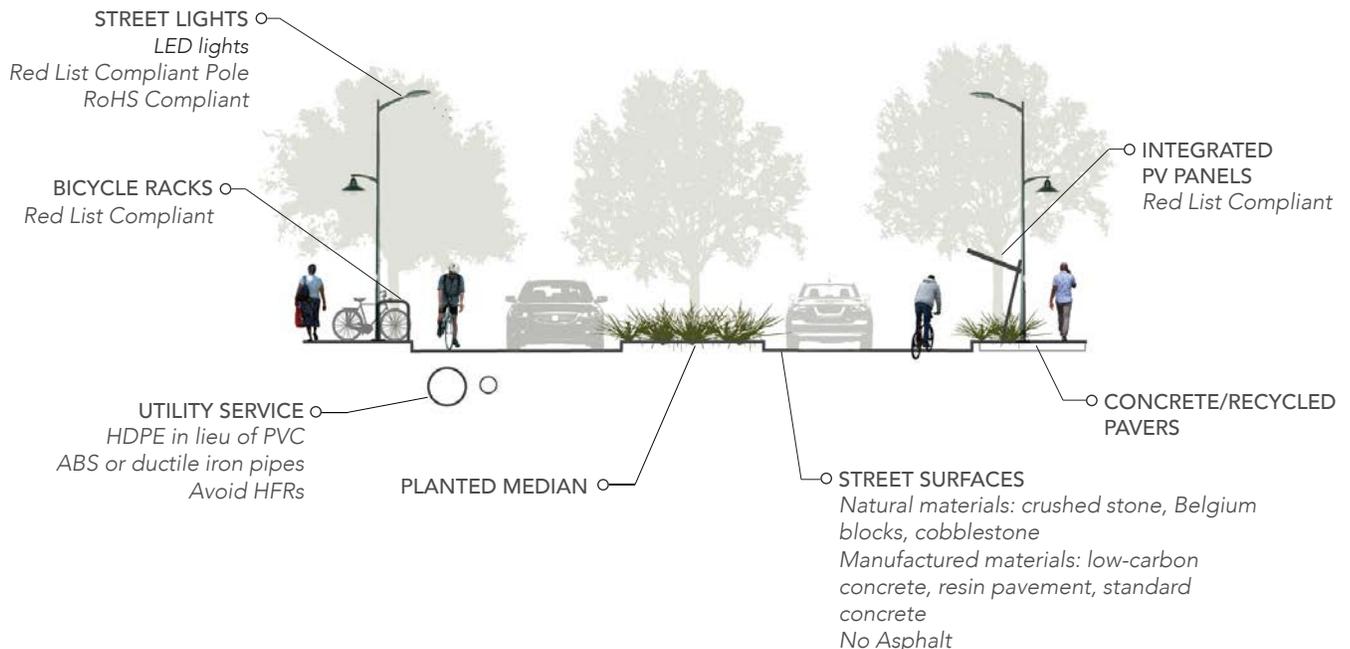
### THE RED LIST

*surprisingly common, extremely hazardous*

- + Asbestos
- + Cadmium
- + Chlorinated Polyethylene and Chlorosulfonated Polyethylene
- + Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)
- + Chloroprene (Neoprene)
- + Formaldehyde (added)
- + Halogenated Flame Retardants (HFRs)
- + Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs)
- + Lead (added)
- + Mercury
- + Petrochemical Fertilizers and Pesticides
- + Phthalates
- + Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC)
- + Wood treatments containing Creosote, Arsenic or Pentachlorophenol

**Red List materials are the worst materials, chemicals, and elements that pose a risk to human health and the ecosystem.**

#### RED LIST COMPLIANT STREETS





#### **4 BEAUTY**

The Beauty Petal asks the community to recognize the need for beauty as a precursor to caring enough to preserve, conserve, and serve the greater good. If we extend care to farms, forests, and fields, care should also be extended to homes, streets, offices, and neighborhoods. The ILFI team also points out that when billboards, parking lots, freeways and strip malls are accepted as being aesthetically acceptable, in the same breath we are accepting clear-cuts, factory farms, and strip mines. Uptown South now has the wonderful opportunity to make a positive and beautiful change to the Uptown area.

Based on the size of the Uptown South Development, three minor art installations are required to obtain this Petal. Minor art installations are defined as art pieces that can be easily seen from 30 feet away. Since Uptown South is currently primarily owned by the Town, this presents a unique opportunity to carefully and thoroughly incorporate artwork in the park, the buildings, the signage and street furniture, and beyond – right from the beginning.



#### **5 PLACE**

The Place Petal aims to restore a healthy coexistence with nature. Based on the density of the site, Uptown South would need to dedicate 20% of the site to agriculture. This could include a combination of fruit-bearing street trees, planted medians, green walls, gardens, and roof gardens. This Petal also requires the dedicated preservation of land equivalent to the project site size using either the ILFI HABITAT program or an approved land trust.

The Place Petal also requires the project be designed in such a way as to support walking, biking, and transit use as the primary modes of transportation in the community, with connections stemming from every building. There must be bike storage for at least 15% of residents, which would equate to about 50 bike racks for Uptown South. The project must also ensure that any one occupancy type (office, residential, retail, etc.) does not exceed 60% of the occupancy uses. If built as planned, Uptown South will meet the requirements for sidewalks and mix of uses, but will need to explicitly designate adequate bicycle storage.



## 6 HEALTH & HAPPINESS

The Health & Happiness Petal focuses on maximizing physical and psychological health and well-being. Frequent social connections between people through shared programs and systems within the community are critical. To achieve this, the Petal requires the following: local food program; car-share program; bike-share program; transit information center; community tool sharing; community book library; art and recreation programs for all ages; community information and meeting space; and paid or voluntary staff to maintain these programs. Many of these programs could easily be accommodated in the library or through partnerships within the community.

In addition to parks and active recreation facilities located within a half-mile of the LCC site, the community must foster a biophilic environment. Specifically, a one-day biophilic design charrette that results in a biophilic framework is a requirement to fulfill this Petal.

Lastly, the project team must create and maintain emergency contacts, shelter locations, and plans for likely problems; assign one block captain versed in first aid and emergency response; create a contact roster of all residents; and have a neighborhood watch/community program focused on resident safety.



## 7 EQUITY

The Equity Petal intends to support a just, equitable world. To achieve this, all aspects of the project must be designed at a human scale. Streets must have a maximum of two travel lanes and ample provisions for sidewalks and planting strips. Design limits are placed on the size of building footprints and parking lots to ensure proper circulation for all members of the public, regardless of background, age, socioeconomic class, and physical ability.

There must be access to shopping, fresh food, places to congregate, work, and learn within a half-mile of the site. Given the proposed program of Uptown South and the district's proximity to Uptown Normal, the multi-modal transit center, and the Chiddix Junior High School, these requirements should be easily met.

Public agencies and charitable organizations are exempt from the requirement that \$0.005 of every \$1 of project cost must be donated to a registered charity or use EQUITY exchange.

Two members of the project team must have "Just." labels. Just. is an ILFI program that provides a platform for organizations to provide insight to their operations, including how they treat their employees and where they make financial and community investments.

# 5 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

**In the last decade, development in Uptown Normal has gained momentum and higher design standards that are now more feasible.**

In order to align development controls with the redevelopment goals, the current approach to zoning and design standards needs to be reconsidered.

To date, almost all of Uptown's redevelopment has been regulated under the B-2 zoning district, which incorporates the Uptown Design Guidelines. The B-2 zoning requirements provide crude tools for regulating form, which are limited to height, setback, and site coverage. The Uptown Design Guidelines supplement the zoning by providing additional design recommendations such as the size and proportion of building elements, transparency, location of entries, and materials.

Together this hybrid system has worked reasonably well for Uptown North, though the results have been mixed. The strength and weakness of the system is that it relies a great deal on interpretation, which can be good in that it allows for flexibility, but the review process can be time intensive; and because the guidelines are fairly general, the interpretation can sometimes be difficult to predict.

As the Uptown redevelopment focus turns southward, there is an opportunity to shift from the current zoning system to a more unified and comprehensive form-based approach. This would address the extremely varied patchwork of zoning districts that currently govern development south of the tracks, which are far too varied to produce a unified urban district. The new code would address all of Uptown including Uptown North, Uptown South, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the primary street corridors framing Uptown. The details of this approach are described on the following pages.

### REVISITING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Since the recommendations of the 2000 Plan, the Town of Normal has developed the Uptown Design Guidelines (2002, 2005) with the intent to have new development complement the historic character of the district, better define public spaces, create a pedestrian-friendly environment, and create an aesthetically-pleasing and context-appropriate Uptown Normal. To date, these design guidelines have helped Normal influence the design of buildings and sidewalks, establish a higher standard for new civic building architecture, enact a landscape ordinance, and draft building codes that are mixed-use friendly. It is important to revisit these design guidelines now as expectations for Uptown Normal continue to evolve.



Roundabout Guidelines Overlay

### WHAT IS A FORM-BASED CODE?

A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle. A form-based code is not merely a guideline; it is a regulation adopted into city, town, or county law. A form-based code therefore offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation.

The five main elements of form-based codes are:

- + A Regulating Plan
- + Public Standards
- + Building Standards
- + Administration
- + Definitions

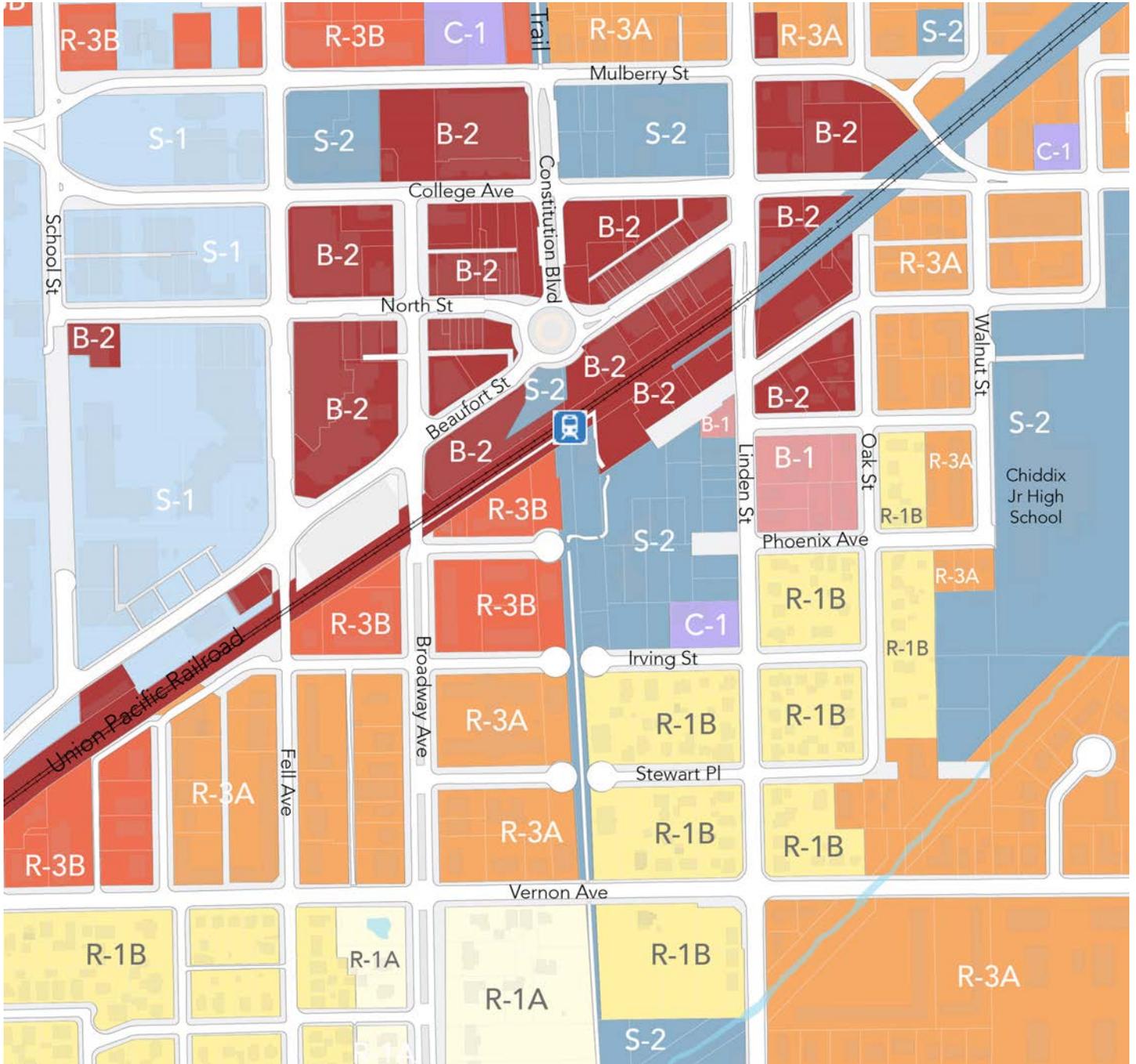
Additional elements can include adding architectural standards, landscaping standards, signage standards, environment resource standards, and specific annotations. For an example of a nearby Form-Based Code, see Peoria's at: <http://formbasedcodes.org/codes/peoria-form-districts>.



South Uptown Overlay

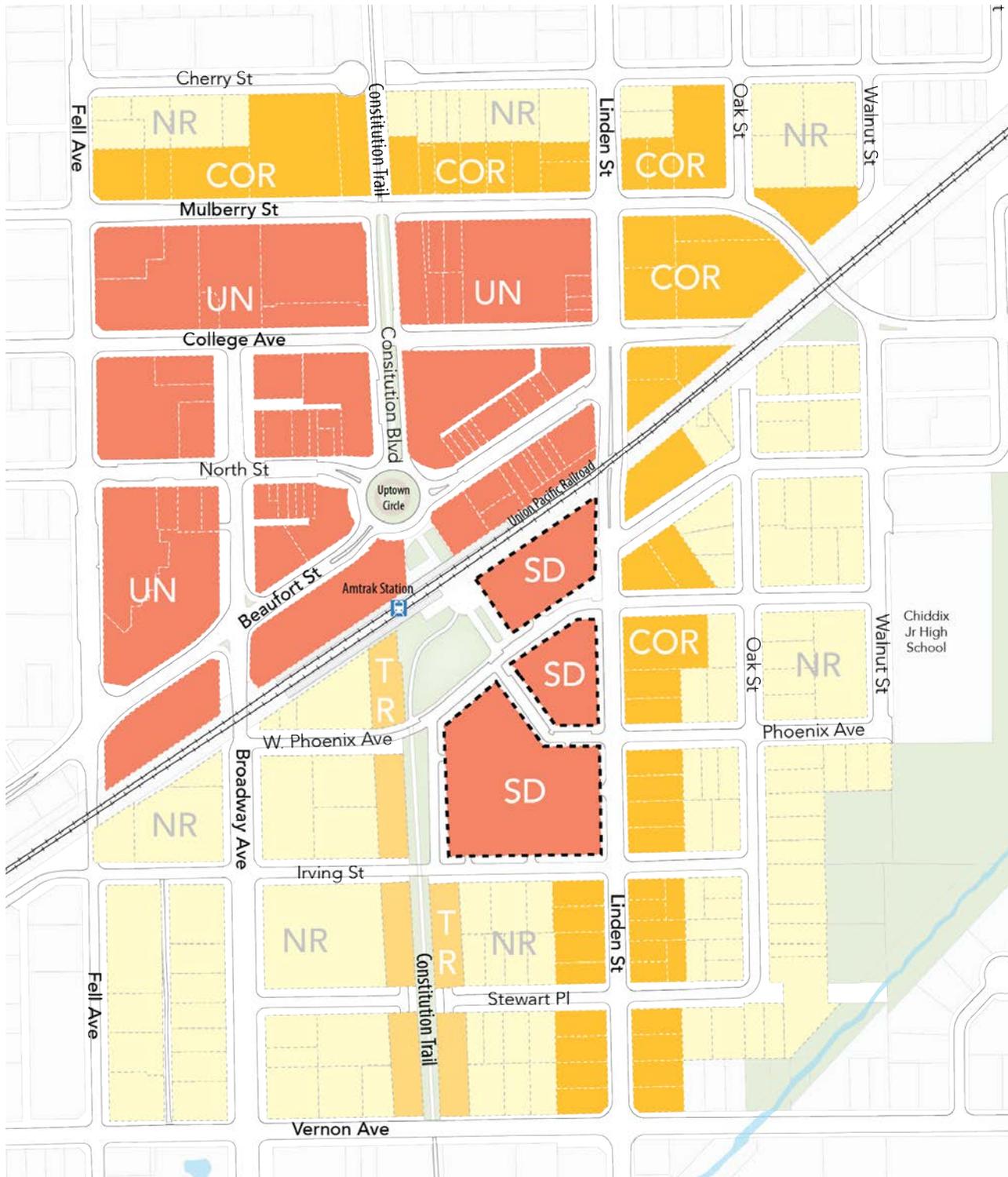


Uptown Design Guidelines Overlay



Current Zoning

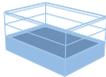
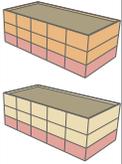
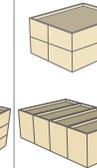
# PROPOSED FORM-BASED CODE



Form-Based Code, Regulatory Map

### HOUSING TYPES

While there is a range of housing types, not all housing types are appropriate in all contexts. Refer to the Regulatory Map and Missing Middle Housing Matrix to see what is appropriate throughout Uptown Normal. To achieve this density and maximize the benefits of these building types, alley systems need to be incorporated as the neighborhoods redevelop.

		DU/ACRE							
		N/A	30 - 35*	N/A	30 - 35	14 - 30	20 - 30	6 - 8	
		BUILDING TYPE							
		INSTITUTIONAL & CIVIC	VERTICAL MIXED-USE	RETAIL	MIDRISE & COURTYARD	ROWHOUSE & QUADPLEX	DUPLEX & STACKED DUPLEX	SINGLE FAMILY	
ZONES									
UPTOWN NORTH	<b>UN</b>	●	●	●	○	○	○		
UPTOWN SOUTH DEVELOPMENT	<b>SD</b>	●	●	●	●	●	○		
CORRIDOR	<b>COR</b>	●	●	●	●				
NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL	<b>NR</b>	○			●	●	●	○	
TRAIL DEVELOPMENT	<b>TR</b>				●	●	○		

● ALLOWED

○ SPECIAL USE PERMIT  
Requires permission by  
Design Review Committee

\* If adding one level of parking below units, double du/acre.

# BUILDING TYPOLOGIES

VERTICAL MIXED-USE (OFFICE)



Dwelling Units/Acre	0
Lot Size	NA
Setback (Front, Side)	0-5', 5'
Stories Max (ZONE)**	7 (UN); 6 (SD); 4 (COR)
Uses	Retail, Office
Parking Requirements	2.75 sp/1000 SF Retail, 1 sp/du
Vehicular Access	From alley; if no alley exists, 1 driveway per street frontage

VERTICAL MIXED-USE (RESIDENTIAL)



Dwelling Units/Acre	30-35
Lot Size	NA
Setback (Front, Side)	0-5', 5'
Stories Max (ZONE)**	7 (UN) 6(SD) 4(COR)
Uses	Retail, Residential
Unit Type	Condo/apartment; soft loft
Parking Requirements	2.75 sp/1000 SF Retail, 1 sp/du
Vehicular Access	From alley; if no alley exists, 1 driveway per street frontage

RETAIL



Dwelling Units/Acre	0
Lot Size	NA
Setback (Front, Side)	0-5', 5'
Stories Max (ZONE)	2 (UN, SD)
Uses	Retail, Office
Parking Requirements	2.75 sp/1000 SF Retail, 1 sp/du
Vehicular Access	From alley; if no alley exists, 1 driveway per street frontage

MIDRISE & COURTYARD



Dwelling Units/Acre	30-35*
Lot Size	120' +
Setback (Front, Side)	0'-10'
Stories Max (ZONE)**	6 (TR) 4(NR)
Uses	Residential
Parking Requirements	1 sp/du
Vehicular Access	From alley; if no alley exists, 1 driveway per street frontage

\* If adding one level of parking below units, double du/acre.

\*\* 5' setback after 2nd story

### QUADPLEX



Dwelling Units/Acre	20-30
Lot Size	50' x 110'
Setback (Front, Side)	0'-10'
Stories Max (ZONE)	2 (NR)
Uses	Residential
Parking Requirements	1 sp/du
Vehicular Access	From alley; if no alley exists, 1 driveway per street frontage

### ROWHOUSE



Dwelling Units/Acre	20-30
Lot Size	66' x 110'
Setback (Front, Side)	5-15', 5'
Stories Max (ZONE)	3 (SD, COR, TR, NR)
Uses	Residential
Parking Requirements	1 sp/du
Vehicular Access	From alley; if no alley exists, 1 driveway per street frontage

### DUPLEX / STACKED DUPLEX



Dwelling Units/Acre	20-30
Lot Size	50' x 110'
Setback (Front, Side)	5-15', 5'
Stories Max (ZONE)	4 (SD, COR, TR, NR)
Uses	Residential
Parking Requirements	1 sp/du
Vehicular Access	From alley; if no alley exists, 1 driveway per street frontage

### SINGLE FAMILY



Dwelling Units/Acre	6-8
Lot Size	50' x 110'
Setback (Front, Side)	5'-15', 5'
Stories Max (ZONE)	3
Uses	Residential
Parking Requirements	1 sp/du
Vehicular Access	From alley; if no alley exists, 1 driveway per street frontage

# 6 IMPLEMENTATION

**The implementation timeline provides a baseline for coordinating projects, schedules, and responsibilities.**

This section outlines projects, roles, costs, and timelines necessary to implement the Update. It is designed to serve as a framework for decision-making, and though it may not be executed precisely as planned, it provides a viable baseline from which alternative timelines and priorities can be measured. It also shows how projects relate in terms of timing - for example when the process of revising zoning would need to occur to coordinate with new development projects.

# IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

PROJECT/TASK	LEAD	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS</b>									
Transportation Study			█						
<b>Bike Share Program</b>									
Bike Share Study	Town	█							
Secure Vendor/Operator Agreement	Town		█						
<b>Linden Road-Diet/Median Improvements</b>									
Engineering/Design	Town		█						
Construction	Town			█					
<b>Vernon Road-Diet/Trail Crossing Improvements</b>									
In-House Engineering	Town		█						
Construction	Town			█					
<b>Convert of College and Mulberry to 2-way</b>									
Engineering/Design	Town/FRA/ICC			█					
Construction	Town/FRA/ICC				█				
<b>Beaufort/Broadway Intersection Improvements</b>									
Engineering/Design	Town		█						
Construction	Town			█					
<b>UPTOWN NORTH REDEVELOPMENT</b>									
<b>Pop-up Retail Along Constitution Boulevard</b>									
Amend Zoning to Permit Temporary Uses	Town	█							
Install Temporary Structures	Town		█						
Manage Tenancies, Remove Structures	Town		█	█					
<b>Develop One Uptown Circle</b>									
Design and Engineering	Developer	█	█						
Construction	Developer		█	█					
<b>Develop Remaining Development Sites</b>									
Design and Engineering	Developer		█	█	█				
Construction	Developer			█	█	█			
<b>Remove Cell Tower</b>									
Lease Expires 2024	Tenant				█				
<b>Redevelop Existing Library Site</b>									
Design and Engineering	Library	█	█						
Construct New Library (Offsite)	-								
Relocate to New Facility	Library				█				
Shared Parking Agreement for Rear Parking Lot	Town/Developer				█				
Design and Engineering	Developer					█			
Construction	Developer						█		

PROJECT/TASK	LEAD	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>RAIL CROSSING</b>									
Decide on Overpass or Underpass Option	Town	■							
<b>Overpass Option</b>									
Construction	Town	■	■						
<b>Underpass Option</b>									
Preliminary Design and Engineering	Town	■	■	■					
Secure Permits	Town/RR/State	■	■	■					
Final Design and Engineering	Town/RR/State	■	■	■					
Construction	Town/RR/State		■	■	■				
<b>UPTOWN SOUTH REDEVELOPMENT</b>									
Living Community Challenge Certification	Town					■			
<b>Construct Library</b>									
Design and Engineering	Library			■					
Construction	Library				■				
<b>Construct Phase 1 Site and Infrastructure Improvements</b>									
Design/Engineering	Town		■	■	■				
Construct Site Improvements	Town				■				
<b>Remove Old Amtrak Station</b>									
Remove Structure, Prepare Site	Town				■				
Complete Park	Town					■			
<b>Complete Uptown South Phase 1</b>									
Design and Engineering	Town/Developer				■	■			
Construction	Town/Developer				■	■	■		
<b>Complete Uptown South Phase 2</b>									
Design New Police Station (offsite)	Town			■					
Construct New Police Station (offsite)	Town				■				
Relocate Police Department	Town					■			
Clear Site for Redevelopment	Town					■			
Design and Engineering for Office/Residential	Developer						■		
Construction	Developer							■	
<b>UPDATE ZONING</b>									
Make Code Adjustments for Temporary Structures	Town	■							
Draft & Adopt New Uptown Code	Town			■	■				

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## **Town Council**

Mayor Chris Koos  
Cheryl Gaines  
Jeff Fritzen  
Kevin McCarthy  
Scott Preston  
Kathleen Lorenz  
R.C. McBride

## **Steering Committee**

Mark Peterson, City Manager  
Sally Heffernan, Assistant City Manager  
Wayne Aldrich, Director of Public Works  
Gene Brown, Town Engineer  
Mercy Davison, Town Planner  
Greg Troemel, Director of Inspections  
Joe Tulley, Uptown Manager

## **Special thanks to the following for providing your ideas, suggestions, and concerns throughout this process:**

Normal Residents  
Community Leaders  
Normal Public Library Representatives  
Normal Planning Commission, Zoning Board, and Uptown Review Commission  
Town Employees  
McLean County Chamber of Commerce  
Illinois State University  
City of Bloomington  
McLean County Regional Planning Commission  
Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council  
Heartland Community College  
Major Private Employers  
Student Housing Companies  
Commercial Property and Business Owners  
Arts/Music Community  
Residential and Commercial Developers and Brokers  
Local Advocacy Groups

## **Consultant Team**

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Zimmerman/Volk Associates  
HR&A Advisors  
Sam Schwartz Engineering  
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