
CITY OF SPRINGFIELD DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING AND PLANNING

PLANNING DIVISION

TO: CITY PLANNING BOARD, CEDA, CITY COMMISSION
FROM: HEATHER WHITMORE, PLANNING AND ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
SUBJECT: UNIFIED PLAN
DATE: MARCH 8, 2007

DESCRIPTION:

To best organize and insure the success of future developments, the City Planning Board is recommending a number of zoning updates, an incentive program to induce voluntary conformance to proposed form-based land use features and capital improvement standards in the Downtown. Over the past five years, a generous amount of time and creativity has been devoted to courting new development and conceptual master planning in the downtown. The Unified Plan coordinates future development with design, capital improvement, and development incentives policies to create a single vision for the downtown.

GOALS AND VISION:

Unified Plan Goals:

- 1) Unite all downtown developments into a single plan
- 2) Create a unified development standard for downtown
- 3) Protect the character of existing downtown residential neighborhoods
- 4) Provide guidance to the private market
- 5) Establish shared goals for future zoning downtown
- 6) Achieve unified and valuable design that is feasible and flexible for developers
- 7) Achieve unified and valuable development downtown that is feasible and flexible for the City of Springfield over time
- 8) Assist in future transportation, corridor planning, and transportation demand management downtown
- 9) Promote pedestrian activity downtown
- 10) Create incentives for downtown development
- 11) Motivate a vibrant and diverse downtown economy
- 12) Encourage the construction of a vibrant and diverse downtown activity center
- 13) Inspire the community to protect historically significant structures and reuse existing structures

The Unified Plan is intended to further and protect the public health, safety, convenience, comfort, prosperity, and general welfare of the Springfield community. The Unified Plan is further intended to enhance and protect property values in Downtown Springfield and prevent impairment and destruction of property values.

STRATEGIES AND POLICY:

The Unified Plan is a comprehensive approach to organizing and encouraging valuable physical and economic development downtown. This plan recognizes the physical, economic, aesthetic, and related factors of the downtown Springfield. The land use and zoning codes consolidate land development regulations into a comprehensive (and comprehensible) document that presents guidelines in a more seamless and systematic manner. Value-added developments and design are encouraged through an incentive-based land use regulation approach. The Plan is an official statement of the City Commission that sets forth (in words, maps, illustrations, and/or tables) goals, policies, and guidelines intended to direct the present and future physical, social, and economic development that occurs downtown. The document is organized by creating clear and reasonable connection between GOALS, OBJECTIVES, and REGULATORY POLICIES by proposing a unified physical design for the public and private development of land.

The proposed land development regulations are guided by a comprehensive overlay plan (ie. the Unified Plan). The Unified Plan recommends future land use objectives and applies zoning regulations as an overlay zone in accordance with the objectives and goals established by the plan. This land use district mapping approach provides clear and understandable design and development standards, capital improvements, and development incentives.

The Unified Plan recommends a form-based approach to land use and zoning regulation. Form-based land use regulation allows market demand to determine the mix of uses within the constraints of the building design standards of the community. The Unified Plan establishes zones of building type and allows building owners to determine the uses. The look and layout of a street is carefully planned to reflect neighborhood scale, parking standards, and pedestrian accessibility, but building owners and occupants are allowed maximum flexibility to determine how the buildings will be used. Consolidating various use and building standard development regulations into a single document helps provide full disclosure of the regulations that can affect a proposed development. This leads to better predictability for all—developers, citizens, and public officials.

INCENTIVE LAND USE REGULATION:

Springfield will grant additional development possibilities to developers that provide greater public benefit. Value-added development and design is encouraged with a land use regulation approach which reward landowners for compiling with design recommendations. The zoning codes includes both required and recommend unified development standards. Applicants must comply with all required zoning regulations. Applicants are specifically encouraged to comply with recommended district uses, design standards, and economic development objectives. All plans will be reviewed for compliance and for eligibility for greater rewards based on level of compliance. The rewards included expedited plan review and approval, as well as possible financial incentives. Plans that seek to be eligible for incentives will require review by a Review Board.

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE:

- Bound to the south: Jefferson/Mulberry
- Bound to the north: Buck Creek Ravine
- Bound to the west: Race Street
- Bound to the east: Spring Street

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT HISTORY:

The Unified Planning Process included an intensive consensus-based stakeholder planning process, several public workshops, and a series of public meetings. The process began with consultant led stakeholder process for staff information gathering. This consisted of three Stakeholder meetings to include the following stakeholders: The City of Springfield, Community Mercy Health Partners, Center City Association, Wittenberg University, National Trail Parks and Recreation District, Clark State Community College, Clark County Conservancy District, Private Developers and Private Interest, Springfield Preservation Alliance, Springfield Foundation, and The Harry M. and Violet Turner Charitable Trust.

Public planning workshops were held November 30, 2006 and December 12, 2006. These were open public workshop advertised in the local newspaper and posted on 11*17 posters located across the City. The public meeting process included two informal discussion sessions with the City Planning Board and two informal work sessions with the City Commission.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) Approval of Unified Plan Overlay District
- 2) Approval of Updated CN-2, Commercial Neighborhood District 2
- 3) Approval Case #07-Z-10 – Request for a change in zoning for certain parcels generally bound by Buck Creek on the north, Washington Street on the south, Spring Street on the east, and Wittenberg Avenue on the west to CB-10, Central Business District and UPOD, Unified Plan Overlay District.
- 4) Approval of Case #07-Z-11 – Request for a change in zoning for certain parcels generally bound by Cedar and North (between the two) on the north and W. Columbia Street on the north, Jefferson Street and Mulberry Street on the south, Spring Street on the east, and Wittenberg and Race Street; also certain parcels bound by Park Rd/Buck Creek on the north, Grant Street on the east and south (where Grant St. and Yellow Springs connect at the Y inter-section), and Yellow Springs Street on the west (again where Grant and Yellow Springs connect at the Y intersection) to CN-2, Neighborhood Commercial District and UPOD, Unified Plan Overlay District.
- 5) Approval of Case #07-Z-12 – Request for a change in zoning for certain parcels generally bound by Park Road/Buck Creek on the north, in between Cedar Street and North Street on the south, Yellow Springs Street on the east, and Race Street on the west to RS-8, Medium Density Single-Family Residence District and UPOD, Unified Plan Overlay District.
- 6) Approval of Case #07-Z-13 – Request for a change in zoning for certain parcels owned by Clark State to EC-1, Educational Campus District and UPOD,

- Unified Plan Overlay District.
- 7) Approval of Case #07-Z-14 – Request for a change in zoning for certain parcels owned by the Clark County Library to G, Green Space, Government, and School District and UPOD, Unified Plan Overlay District.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Unified Plan
2. Updated CN-2
3. Unified Plan Zoning Map