

Olympian Drive RFP Scope Recommendations

Submitted by the farmers and residents of the proposed Olympian Drive region and concerned citizens from across CU
Rejected by the Urbana City Council at its meeting of April 12, 2010

BEFORE SPENDING \$5 MILLION ON ENGINEERING DESIGNS AND LAND ACQUISITION, WE NEED TO KNOW MORE!

Thank you for the opportunity to submit input for the process of selecting a contractor to provide additional study and information regarding the proposed Olympian Drive region. Our goal in wanting a study of the region, the proposed project, and the influences on Urbana and the region is mainly to re-assess where the community (its citizens, economics, dynamics, etc.) currently stands to provide a better, more updated assessment of the proposed project. While some of the studies impacting the proposed project are newer than others, some are old enough to demand a fresh look, as much has changed in the field of development, growth, and economics in this time. Our ultimate end goal is information – current data, fresh opinion, and accurate statistics – that would impact the project as proposed and perhaps provide logical and meaningful alternatives. Our goal is not to engage in a region-wide re-do of community planning or to use this requested study as a means to stymie or kill a process or project. We are interested in good, solid information and a community fully engaged in planning for the future based on sound, current data.

As we proceed with the process of defining an RFP for consultant consideration, we request:

- The requests in this document be considered in full in the drafting of a project scope/RFP
- Representatives from our group be provided a place at the table in the selection of the consultant;
- Representatives from our group be given a meaningful, contributory role on the project oversight committee;
- Representatives from our group be provided a role in designing meaningful public input strategies.

Issues we seek to have addressed in the project scope/RFP:

COMMUNITY SURVEY/HISTORIC DATA/FUTURE PROJECTIONS

- Comparative analyses: case studies of success and failure in similar rezoning projects in Illinois and the Midwest. What are the key determinants of success and failure in such endeavors? Which success and failure dynamics are already in play for the proposed Olympian Drive development?
- Scope and detail on industrial land availability in Urbana, as well as county-wide, including data on current supply and demand; supply and demand historical trends; and supply and demand projections.

- Local and state trends re: abandonment of old industrial sites and take-up of new; local data regarding successes and failures of infill/sprawl developments.
- Evidence of present demand for industrial land by enterprises internal and external to the county.
- Comparative advantages of location of enterprises on industrial land in Urbana compared to other locations in the county (e.g., Champaign, Rantoul).

ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Historical trends re: industrial attraction to Urbana, over a multi-year timeframe; projections of prospects for further industrial attraction.
- Impacts (i.e., economic, jobs, etc.) associated with the displacement of conventional agriculture.
- Prospects for local foods enterprises and employment and corresponding economic losses associated with displacement.

DESIGN / OLYMPIAN DRIVE PROJECT AS CURRENTLY PROPOSED

- Updated project cost projection based on most recently available Olympian Drive project proposal.
- Capital costs: capture all primary and ancillary capital costs related to the project—e.g. contributions to Olympian Drive, Lincoln Avenue connection, services infrastructure e.g. fire, etc.
- A full analysis of the costs/benefits of the proposed Olympian Drive project if Urbana cannot find the resources to construct, farmers don't sell to industry, or projections re: industry/employment attraction to Urbana do not materialize (i.e. risk scenarios).
- Sewer and other infrastructure: infrastructure that would be required and costs of construction in opening up the rezoned land.
- Sources of capital/project funding: who must or will pay what, the probabilities of all parties having funds and agreeing to fund.
- Development of a no-waste strategy in which all funds are definitively committed and participation of all parties confirmed before commencing design or construction.
- Alternative capital resource investments; comparative returns.
- Attraction costs: subsidies routinely offered to enterprises like those sought for the proposed industrial zone along with a full cost/benefit analysis of such subsidies.
- Ongoing service costs: additional immediate and indirect operational costs of a new industrial zone (i.e., road and infrastructure maintenance, fire, police, public transport, schools, etc.); modeling based on a matrix of relative success/failure scenarios in 5-, 10-, and 25-year time frames.
- Tax revenue projections in relation to operational costs (as outlined above); net costs/benefits.
- School district issues: relative benefits to Urbana and Champaign given district boundaries along the Saline; costs of new school services at different success level/timeframe scenarios.
- Annexation processes and assessment of likely project success given current patterns of landownership.
- Comparative traffic analysis: current and projected uses in relation to 1-74, Ford Harris Road, Leverett Road; post-construction route/traffic projections; likely benefits for residents of Urbana specifically.

ALTERNATIVES

- Analysis of advantages and disadvantages of alternative road scenarios.
- Analysis of the value of single bridge over the railroad line in attracting fast rail; how significant a determinant would this be in attracting fast rail?

JOBS/EMPLOYMENT

- New jobs: projections based on long term employment trends in Champaign County in employment categories relevant to the proposed industrial zone; also projections based structural shifts in the Illinois economy.
- Employment quality analysis: pay and conditions; comparative analysis of alternative employment types.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Geological evaluation; analysis regarding Mahomet aquifer and other geologic considerations pertinent to the region, etc.
- Environmental analysis: Impacts of the proposed project on Big Grove remnants, wildlife corridor(s), endangered and threatened species, wetlands and waterways, and other significant environmental considerations of the region.
- Archaeological analysis: Native American sites.

Stop Olympian Drive Group

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