

# PRESS RELEASE

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR PHILO ROAD BUSINESS DISTRICT (1/2)

**URBANA, IL** -- Urbana mayoral candidate DeShawn Williams has developed a comprehensive plan for economic development in the Philo Road Business District. When he takes office, the implementation of this five year plan to empower Urbana residents, create new commerce, and strengthen the economy begins in earnest. The summary of each of the seven steps to success are below:

### 1. Market Analysis

The city will conduct a market analysis to understand the spending patterns, preferences and economic activity of residents and potential visitors. This will also identify gaps between what current businesses offer and what would be desirable - and financially strong - in the area. This will allow DeShawn and the new administration to meet the market demands directly and tailor a plan that fits Urbana.

### 2. Community Engagement

The residents of Urbana will inform, guide, and help DeShawn implement this new vision. By organizing town halls, gathering input from residents, business owners and other community stakeholders, the new administration will be informed by what the residents envision for Philo Road. DeShawn will also form an advisory committee of these leaders to ensure the city implements this vision effectively.

### 3. Business Improvement District (BID) Designation

DeShawn will establish a BID to provide consistent funding for the district's maintenance, security, and other needs. This designation will also encourage property owners and businesses to participate in the BID, pooling resources for district-wide improvements. This ensures long-term financial success as the district grows

### 4. Business Attraction and Retention

The city will offer tax abatements, grants, low-interest loans, and other available incentives to qualifying businesses - those which residents want - to open and operate. The new administration will also develop and lead a marketing campaign to promote the district to potential investors and entrepreneurs.

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### 5. Infrastructure Improvements

By investing in the area's infrastructure, including sidewalks, roads, and other public spaces, DeShawn will prioritize enhancing both the commercial appeal for businesses to operate as well as residential interest in the space. These welcoming upgrades will ensure the environment is attractive for businesses, residents, and also provides improved safety and accessibility for Philo Road.

### 6. Cultural and Entertainment Programming

The city has a role in promoting the community-driven, resident-focused district DeShawn will create. This includes organizing regularly-scheduled events, like street fairs, farmers markets, outdoor concerts, and other family-friendly activities for Urbana residents to enjoy. Partnering with local producers is a key pillar to providing an engaging array of events to serve residents. This will also increase foot traffic and visibility for the new businesses the comprise the enhanced district.

### 7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Creating and managing key performance indicators (KPIs) to document the progress of revitalization efforts, including measurable such as business occupancy rates, sales tax revenues, and more. Regular reviews will be conducted to adjust strategies in real-time based on the results. This tracking ensures the ongoing success of the development plan and allows for data-driven decision-making to sustain growth.

Throughout his campaign, DeShawn Williams has made his commitment to a fair, ethical, and growing economy clear. The Philo Road Business District is an illustration of that vision. Financial growth from the bottom to the top - growth for the vast majority of residents - is possible. DeShawn intends to get it done.

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