

White Paper 10/12/00

THE CONCEPT AND DESCRIPTION OF AN EXCHANGE CENTER FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AND THE CHAMPAIGN-URBANA COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following introduction summarizes the conceptual description of the Exchange Center, the mission, goals and characteristics of the Exchange Center, financial implications of the Center to the University, and an overview of the body of the memorandum.

Conceptual Description

University-Community partnerships are seen as a key urban challenge of the 21st century as shown in the summary from the Department of Housing and Urban Development about university and community partnerships www.oup.org. The University of Illinois already has one continuing partnership with the city of East St. Louis--The East St. Louis Action Research Project (ESLARP). The creation of ESLARP has allowed the University to work with local neighborhoods and the city to develop coordinated and sustained projects that serve the citizens, addressing issues like unemployment-job creation, affordable housing and community redevelopment, among many other projects. The North-End community of Champaign-Urbana, is an immediate neighbor of the University and has very similar needs to those being addressed in East St. Louis. This local community has served as a setting for faculty research for decades but has seen few lasting benefits. Not only would the Exchange Center provide lasting and meaningful services and empowerment of local organizations, it would provide a more convenient, permanent and comprehensive laboratory for faculty-academic professional research, and student training courses, workshops and service learning projects at the door-step of the University. While building on the ESLARP model, the Exchange Center would develop and organize somewhat differently because it would be involved in two cities, more committed local governments, better established school and social service agency resources, and existing community partners with existing service agendas.

Throughout the last two-year history of development of the Exchange Center concept the primary partner has been the Urban League of Champaign County. As the body of the memorandum will attest, the Urban League is an established and proven social service agency with contracts with the cities and University through Partnership Illinois projects that will undoubtedly become part of the Exchange Center. The Urban League and the Strategic Partnership Illinois Initiatives sub-councils on Community Initiatives and Economic Development and Services for Children, Youth and Families

have been developing an initial project focus for the Exchange Center. Unlike the ESLARP program, which began by focusing on neighborhood organizing and community development projects, the Exchange Center would focus on family involvement in elementary education and then proceed into community and economic development. Given this focus, the faculty and students of the College of Education, College of Fine and Applied Arts and the Graduate School of Library and Information Science have expressed a desire through their deans to house the Center.

The Exchange Center's Mission, Goals, Strengths/Opportunities and Investment Characteristics

Mission: The Exchange Center facilitates and coordinates university-community efforts to address the needs and problems identified among the low to moderate income residents of Champaign/Urbana.

Goals: The goals of the Exchange Center are threefold. First, community empowerment through research and service by the University faculty, students and staff in projects identified by and involving community groups rather than projects driven solely by an academic agenda. Second, a permanent and coordinated presence by University academic units and service organizations involved in solving or ameliorating long-range and difficult community problems and needs. Third, the development of new opportunities for individual and collaborative research and learning within the University community. The Center employs a holistic, bottom-up approach in its functioning and decision-making.

Strengths/Opportunities: The Center draws from a vast pool of professionals and technical experts in the form of faculty, students and staff, as well as reference, testing and computing resources of the University. The University has an established community linkage through its partnership with the Urban League of Champaign County. Once operational, the Center will create new opportunities for University visibility and community cooperation, and the community contacts will facilitate new research and service learning opportunities. There will be greater involvement of community assets overtime from government, community organizations and private business, and greater synergy between all community stakeholders.

Basic Investment Characteristics: The Exchange Center will require some physical presence in the community being served, and on the campus in a college and department office. Community presence is especially needed for ongoing projects that continue year around. The development of the Exchange Center could be phased in through a number of steps. A first phase could include part-time and interim staffing to establish communication between the campus and the community and to design basic operational procedures and joint governance of the Exchange Center. A fully operational Exchange Center will require the commitment to a full time and possibly tenure track faculty member and staff working with community groups, municipal government, campus

faculty and other organizations to address community needs. The director of the Center will be a highly visible person, someone who is acceptable to all partners and responsible for setting research and action priorities linking campus and community partners.

Exchange Center Financial Implications to the University

To implement the Exchange Center it is believed that University funds will need to pay for a new senior tenure track faculty (associate professor or higher) to serve as campus director of the center. The University would also support setting up a temporary community office space, and provide some seed grant funds to get particularly important projects underway which are critical to establishing the credibility of the Center. The funding can be phased-in with a smaller commitment in the first 18 months when there would just be an interim director chosen from among the existing campus staff or hired from a local search. After the start-up 18 months the Center would be ready to begin full operations.

Increased and continued funding could be contingent on making various goals in each year of operation, but an overall University commitment is necessary to undertake this project. By the third through the fifth year, it is anticipated that the Center will begin receiving grants, contracts, and overhead from research projects that will contribute to funding community office space and staffing, and allow the Center to reduce its dependency campus funds. Assuming a suitable candidate can be recruited, the University will provide support for a faculty (campus director) line as well as campus-based offices and staff support

Overview of the Body of the Memorandum

The body of the memorandum includes a history of the development of the Exchange Center and more detail about the structure, administration, activities, partnerships and budget of the Center. The most important conclusion developed across all these sections is that the Exchange Center will become a unique asset to this University and this community. A permanent research-service center will address activities that now are funded individually by programs such as Partnership Illinois with small seed grants or 3-year sustaining grants. The presence of a Center means that projects can be linked, prioritized and compounded. It means the Center can compile data and resources, provide information, counseling and training services. It means the Center can leverage assets, and its “track record” can help it attain grants and other resources that are only available when such a Center with on-going research-service elements are present. Because it is a permanent addition to the community it can become a focus, catalyst, source of status, identity and pride for the campus, local community and the state of Illinois.

HISTORY OF THE EXCHANGE CENTER

The concept of an Exchange Center between the University of Illinois and the Champaign-Urbana Community has been an on-going experiment for many years. Back in the late 1960s and early 1970s there was the “Community Advocacy Depot” with offices on First Street in Champaign just north of University Avenue. For several years, North End community groups or individual residents could bring community problems to teams of Architecture and Urban Planning faculty and students who would design plans and working drawings for neighborhood projects, or provide data analyses addressing planning and community development questions. The Department of Community Psychology had a day care center and community action house on University and 4th Street in Champaign in the mid-1970s. It dealt with educational and social service issues with North End residents. Both these programs “died” because of lack of funds and the continuous strain on faculty with full-time commitments to teaching and research to find volunteer time to meet with the community and organize planning and research teams that could quickly and accurately address issues within the North End community. In both cases the community leaders and University participants saw the closure of these efforts as a real loss.

The idea for the current Exchange Center goes back to the arrival of Chancellor Michael Aiken, who encouraged a partnership between the University and community, similar to what he had seen in East St. Louis. In the summer of 1997 a group of faculty interested in developing such a center came together under a Partnership Illinois Seed Grant; they called themselves the “Consortium for Collaborative Community Research.” On October 4th of 1997 a proposal drafted by Professor Kenneth Reardon, of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning and Tracy Parsons, Director of the Champaign County Urban League was presented to the University. It was entitled: *Creating a Champaign-Urbana Community Exchange: A Joint Proposal by the Urban League and the Consortium for Collaborative Community Research*. As a result of this proposal, the Chancellor’s Office committed funds to help develop this Center. None of the faculty in the Consortium had the time to direct this effort and the funding was not enough to hire someone under a new line, which is what the Consortium had requested. Re-casting Partnership Illinois in 1998 into the Strategic Partnership Illinois Initiatives (SPII) with five sub-area coordinators created a new focus for the Exchange Center concept. The SPII Sub-council on “Community Vitality and Economic Development” was formed in early 1999, conducted interviews with the Consortium faculty, and developed a strategic plan which featured a renewed effort to get adequate funding and staffing to start the Exchange Center. During the fall of 1999, meetings were renewed with the Urban League as the primary community partner, and the three deans of Education, Fine and Applied Arts and Library and Information Science were brought in to lead the effort and develop the Exchange Center’s campus “home.”

The Exchange Center Proposal, as developed by the faculty Consortium and the Urban League, was modeled on the East St. Louis Action Research Project (ESLARP). The ESLARP program was already 6-7 years old at the time the Exchange Center proposal was being written and had successfully organized 11 different neighborhoods in East St.

Louis, and raised over \$600,000 in funding including an annual University commitment of \$150,000. The ESLARP program is housed in the College of Fine and Applied Arts, with primary input of staff and students skilled in Urban Planning, Architecture and Landscape Architecture. The Champaign-Urbana Exchange Center was designed with a structure and set of service and research goals similar to ESLARP. It featured a Center that would be a repository of historic and current studies, reports, plans and designs familiar to planners and architects. It called for a series of action teams that would address community development and organizing for planning purposes, and implementation of community-generated planning recommendations. Finally, it sought to enhance the organizing, planning, development, and management capacity of the fledgling neighborhood organizations being served.

During 1999 efforts to rekindle the Exchange Center it became clear that the Urban League had expanded the concept of, and projects that would be addressed by the Exchange Center from the planning and design centered projects in the original proposal. The Urban League has been troubled by the low percentage of African American and Hispanic children in college preparatory courses and going on for higher education from the local public schools. The Urban League has also been troubled by the lack of resources and support outside the classroom by families and the community to enrich the educational background and provide supplemental and tutorial aid to these minority students. While the planning and design projects are needed at the neighborhood level as described in the initial proposal, getting parents and neighborhood groups involved in their children's education is an important and desired community focus for at least the immediate short term. Preparing parents to be more involved in their children's education and better prepared to help their children succeed in school is a priority focus to organizing neighborhood groups. One part of this effort is providing parents with better computer and Internet access to information and resources they will need to help their children. The local Urban League spent a great deal of energy over the last year writing a funding proposal to the National Urban League to fund this type of program. The proposal made the final 20 programs being considered, but was not chosen to be one of the 16 funded. Part of the reason the effort may have fallen short was the complex and ambitious objectives to transform family attitude and involvement. The support and resources of a University Exchange Center would have helped this proposal.

The local Urban League remains committed to the long-range efforts of an Exchange Center to address issues of enhanced organizing, planning, development, and management capacity in all areas of community and economic development. Both this broader focus and the immediate focus on education and enhanced access to information is why the deans of Education and Library and Information Science have joined the dean of Fine and Applied Arts in this effort to establish the Exchange Center.

EXCHANGE CENTER PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Program description will be divided into three sub-sections: 1) Community Based Partners and Their Relation to the Exchange Center and the University, 2) Types of Activities Anticipated for the Center, 3) Possible Program Structure including Steps to Phasing-in the Exchange Center.

Community Based Partners and Their Relation to the Exchange Center and the University

Community based programs can only succeed with the right set of partners who have clear roles, resources, responsibilities, and benefits for entering into the partnership. The University for its part needs to contribute the basic funding resources to establish the Center and guarantee its basic yearly continuation. The University has a clear expectation that the projects undertaken by the Center will serve research interests, community improvement and citizen empowerment, and will be funded by the joint efforts of research grant activity by faculty and departments and funding and resource contributions from the community partners. The presence of the Center and its staff will help facilitate action and applied research, by linking faculty to community partners and supporting their efforts to find and secure research funding. The Center staff will also create service learning and volunteer opportunities for students. In this way, the Center advances the University's mission of enhancing faculty research, education/training of its students and community service.

The community partner(s) must be divided into two separate entities with different roles and responsibilities. First there is a "principal partner" whose name and staff is linked to the Center for the long haul and serves as a liaison and facilitator between the Campus and the community on large projects that link multiple agencies and interests. Second there are a wide range of ancillary partners who participate in programs, bring issues to the table for consideration as well as serve as co-funding sources for specific research/service projects.

The principal partner dedicates staff and perhaps space for Center data archives, training and meeting rooms accessible to the community groups and space for some specific projects. It will be involved in many, if not all, funding applications. The principal partner gives the Center its base in the community and links the community interest groups together and keeps them in touch with the University on a daily basis. The Exchange Center's principal community partner is the Urban League of Champaign Urbana.

Principal Partner --The Urban League

The Urban League is an African American established and administered non-profit service organization linked to a national umbrella organization of the same name. All of

its projects are geared toward improving the lives of low-income individuals. The Urban League is the most active and visible organization addressing the needs of the North End community, working with both the cities of Champaign and Urbana. It has developed the staff expertise to run the local government funded programs for rehabilitating non-code compliant houses and for “winterizing” poorly-or-non-insulated homes in North-End target neighborhoods. This project alone has given the Urban League respected access to neighborhoods across the North-End and throughout the low-income community.

The Urban League already works closely with Partnership Illinois grant recipients. Several of these partnerships with the University are growing into major sustained service programs with excellent research laboratories for university faculty and students. Among these are “Small Business Information Exchange and Computer Training” which is a first step to network residents of disadvantaged neighborhoods in Champaign-Urbana to computers and computer training. The computer center where participants are trained and have access to computer use is housed in the Urban League headquarters. This project was almost terminated in the spring of 2000 for lack of funds, but the Urban League of Champaign County, the Graduate School of Library and Information Science and Partnership Illinois has kept this important program active for now.

All parties agree that future fund raising would greatly benefit if it were housed in an over-arching Exchange Center.

The Community Networking Initiative is also developed in partnership with the “Community Collaboration for Economic Development” (CCED), a Partnership Illinois project that is now receiving a Sustaining Grant for its success in helping Champaign-Urbana low-income residents develop small businesses. The director of the Urban League sits on the board of the CCED, and the 22 stations in the League’s computer center are heavily used by, and even serve as a first office space for, these fledgling business entrepreneurs.

The Urban League has in the past worked with the Office of Volunteer Programs staff to provide tutoring and family training programs to support the education of minority school age children. This is another effort to address the overall goal of the Urban League to enhance in-school performances and expand the number of college bound minority students. University of Illinois student volunteers are a major resource in after school training and tutoring efforts. While the Office of Volunteer Programs and the Urban League are in agreement that better recruiting and training of ethnically sensitive and compatible students would be an important next step in their partnership, neither organization has the funds or staff to do this. Both parties see this as a program that could be housed in and directed by the Exchange Center, and both parties see their chances of funding such a recruiting and training program would be far better if the Center was in place and a co-applicant.

Finally, the Vice President for Community Building of the United Way of Champaign County is preparing to develop closer ties with the community and has identified the University and the Urban League as her prime targets. The presence of an Exchange Center would be an opportune way to link both of their prime targets in community

building to the United Way which has funds to contribute to such an effort once it is established.

The Urban League is committed to this partnership with the University and sees the Exchange Center as a primary means for meeting their mission of improving the lives of minority community households and supportive organizations. The Urban League staff and board are already working to help University faculty acquire ongoing applied research projects and working to help fund others.

Community-University Advisory Board

The Exchange Center would have a policy advisory board comprised of university and community members. Board activities could include setting long-range community service goals and objectives many of which would be tackled by the research and projects of the Exchange Center. The board could also serve in the role of liaison between local citizens and the University. It could undertake projects of its own, such as using its organizational structure and leadership expertise to develop organizational training for new neighborhood groups that can request assistance from and work with the Center. Finally, this board would very likely be the body to set yearly project priorities for which funding and research faculty or student volunteers would be sought. The Board will be comprised of individuals who can best govern a research and service collaboration between the University and the community.

● Types of Activities Anticipated for the Exchange Center

Permanent community service centers can address a wide array of activities that cannot be undertaken by a program like Partnership Illinois which funds discrete and small seed grants or sustaining grants for individual faculty research. The presence of a Center means the projects can be linked, prioritized and compounded. It means the Center can compile data and other resources and provide information and counseling services. It means it can leverage its assets and its “track record” to win new grants (resources) to expand its activities. Because it stays in a community it can be a focus, catalyst, source of status, security, identity and pride to a community. It is for all these reasons that we naturally want to move to this level of partnership, especially when the goal of this center is to improve the lives of a community that is an immediate neighbor of our university.

Partnership Illinois projects have already started to find linkages that allow them to share resources. One example is that the Community Collaboration for Economic Development (training and underwriting low-income and minority business entrepreneurs) has formed a link to Prairie-Net (programs to provide computers and computer training in the low-income community). The community based computer labs and software programs are being used in part of the training of minority business entrepreneurs. Another example is where separate projects in the College of Education and the Department of Psychology both dealing with community education programs at

Stratton Elementary School in the North End are talking together to see how they can combine or reinforce their individual efforts. As promising as these examples are, the recent yearly conference of Partnership Illinois grant recipients exposed several instances where grant recipients didn't know they shared common research interests and similar community clients. These links could come sooner, be stronger and develop common objectives faster with a director of an Exchange Center serving as an interlocutor. With an Exchange Center in place, we anticipate at least two types of activities that short term, disjointed and incremental faculty research efforts could not achieve. One is holistic and empowering action research projects, the other is a wide range of services to both the low-income community and to the university faculty, staff and students.

On-going Action Research Projects

Action research projects can include teams consisting of: local residents, area officials, non-profit community development and community service organizations, and the university's students and faculty. There are many action-research project possibilities, but based on discussions with our partners at the Urban League there is high priority need to develop the following long-range programs:

Improving community and school relations in the North End community. This involves the development of new and innovative programs that involve parents in their children's education and provide more meaningful and culturally sensitive mentoring, tutoring and extra curricular education to bolster minority student success in school. Success of programs would be measured by improved academic testing scores, number of minority children going on to higher education, and increased parent involvement in both their children's lives and community organizational development to ultimately take over and direct these programs as well as other community projects.

Community Based Adult Education in the North End community would be a complimentary program to the broader effort to improve community and school relations. This program would be directly aimed at helping parents become effective first teachers for their children. The Center staff or University based service/research projects would be developed to teach parents multiple ways to prepare their children for school and stay connected to the education of their children throughout their younger lives as mentors and involved participants in curriculum development. This program would also develop better ways to teach literacy to parents. It would develop more effective and meaningful use of community learning resources for all family members, as well as develop ways to link parents into support groups in an effort to set realistic learning expectations for their children and community and improve their children's academic development.

Job and business training in the minority community starting with middle and high school students and extending to community college students and adults. This would include Junior Achievement programs, preparation for entering the

labor force, and adult entrepreneur programs like the Community Collaboration for Economic Development group efforts. These programs would stay with the participants through various types of training and provide development from a community or neighborhood base rather than a school based approach involving private sector businesses as resources and role models.

In the future, the above types of action research projects could evolve as North End neighborhoods gain organizational expertise and resources, form independent activities and set their own priorities. Neighborhood groups in other cities this size and larger, have formed free standing Community Development Corporations (CDCs) which build new affordable houses, rehabilitate substandard housing, develop day care centers, and so on. Most of these CDCs continue to rely on Centers like the proposed Exchange Center for advice, training, plans and other reference material and assistance such as outlined in the next section.

Exchange Center Services and Volunteer Opportunities

Archival Development aimed at creating a comprehensive collection of all pertinent studies, reports, plans and designs relevant to ongoing programmatic interests of the community. The Center staff would develop a library of these resources and show citizen groups how to use them in planning, redevelopment and application for funds and city services.

Leadership Training for citizens, board members and staff of North End community-based organizations in areas such as community organizing, policy analysis, computer technology, non-profit management and fund raising.

Service Learning Activities that involve University students and faculty in cooperative research activities with local community leaders and municipal policy-makers and professional staff. With the presence of a Center these could be ongoing projects that bridge different classes and semesters. (project-oriented community services)

Community Service Internships and Sabbaticals that allow students, alumni, staff and faculty to contribute to ongoing community-building activities in North-End neighborhood organizing and community services (placement-based community services).

Short-term Technical Assistance to Community-Based Organizations provided by various units on campus. Examples include: that need for the Law-clinic to help with non-profit incorporation, or the Community Psychology Program's assistance in designing an effective survey or interview schedule, or the School of Architecture--Building Research Council's support in evaluation of an older building's serviceability as a day care center.

Urban Policy Seminars that bring nationally recognized urban professionals and scholars to the community to discuss state-of-the-art solutions to local community development problems.

University Fellows that provide local community activists and urban professionals with the opportunity to take six-month sabbaticals on the UIUC campus to conduct in-depth research on issues of personal interest to them and the Board of the Center. They could audit classes focused on the issues of concern common to their constituency/agency and the local community, and serve as a resource person for university classes examining these issues of concern and developing possible solutions with faculty and students.

- **Possible Program Structure Including Steps to Phase-in the Exchange Center**

Many Universities in the Big Ten and throughout the country have demonstrated that they have the resources, capacity and political neutrality to bring innovative solutions to complex social, economic and political problems in their surrounding communities. The University of Illinois has already demonstrated this through its support of the East St. Louis Action Research Program (ESLARP). East St. Louis, as one of the poorest and most needy community in Illinois, warranted being the University's first sustained effort to provide action research and a permanent service center. The North-End community of Champaign-Urbana, as the immediate neighbor of the University has many of the same needs. It has willingly participated in faculty research projects almost since the university was founded. The majority of studies and surveys conducted in the North End have served science but left little or no lasting benefits to the local residents. While Partnership Illinois research grants have begun to have some real and lasting impact, they remain outside the realm of holistic and fundamental community redevelopment programs. We now have the expertise to establish an Exchange Center that can address much more difficult problems identified by the community with the help of applied and action research skills of our faculty and students. The faculty and students will in turn benefit from this permanent and sophisticated living laboratory in the North End community.

Like East St. Louis before ESLARP was developed, the North-End has very few citizen organizations. Problems like unemployment, inferior education, substandard housing, and prejudice and discrimination require a broader resource base than these neighborhood citizen organizations can address alone. The University can be the catalyst for establishing this broader resource base. However, the University cannot "own" such a resource base. New resource infusion must be accompanied by the development of a strong voice in community planning, education and resource allocation by North-End residents. These communities can benefit from organizational training and community empowerment programs. Among the resources they will need to do this are improved socioeconomic databases, rigorous data analysis of their neighborhood's assets and liabilities, and sustained community interaction and open and constructive debate. Such needs can be meaningfully addressed by the joint efforts of the Urban League and the

University of Illinois to create and sustain a Community Exchange Center that harnesses and blends the impressive spiritual, intellectual, technological and financial resources of the community and the campus.

Program Description

The following program description and activities build on the October 4, 1997 proposal for the Exchange Center in greater detail than the original proposal. However, the “details” will largely be suggestive, as it is not the intent of this paper to dictate the structure or administration of the Center, but to only illustrate possible ways the Center might develop.

The Exchange Center would be community based with an office conveniently located to serve North End residents and University representatives. It would have a board comprised of North-End residents and leaders. This board would set both long and short-range project goals and objectives. The Center could be either a special project of the Urban League or a separate non-profit entity with 501c3 status. The University is being asked to fund a tenure track faculty person to be director or co-director of the Center. The University based director would be a fundraiser for both Center development and research/service projects. He/she would also work in the community and oversee the coordination of task forces, linked and inter-related faculty research, service learning projects, class studios and workshops, and student volunteer projects. All activities initiated, endorsed, coordinated or funded by the Center would address needs, tasks and project priorities identified by the community run board.

The structure of the Champaign-Urbana Exchange Center could be very similar to the East St. Louis project, which is now divided into two service arms. ESLARP (East St. Louis Action Research Project) is a faculty board headed by a faculty member. It is the overall intellectual entity being funded by the University. A second entity, NTAC (Neighborhood Technical Assistance Center) is headed by a community-based director who is funded by the University. The community based office and board for the Exchange Center described above would be the equivalent of NTAC. Every faculty/student action research project completed in East St. Louis comes through ESLARP, but the NTAC board chooses the overall research/service direction, and every product from that action research has a public component that is administered by the NTAC staff. An equivalent of NTAC could be the neighborhood-based arm of the Exchange Center. It could be under the direction of the Urban League, and the director could be an Urban League staff person. For the following text let's assume such a split in Exchange Center structure and call one the Exchange Center Campus office and the Other the Exchange Center Community office.

The Exchange Center Community office director

The director would most likely oversee daily running of the Community Center office and staff. It is anticipated that over time the Center would accumulate plans, research documents, data, instructional pamphlets and other information. It will need to be equipped to handle more and more community requests for information and resource material that are readily available at the Center or can be researched in a few days by staff. The director might also be trained at community organizing and leadership training. The community offices and director might not be needed in the early stages of development of the Center—not until enough projects are completed and a service component is warranted. Long term funding for such a person might come from “soft money” as part of successful grants to develop the Center, or from research project overhead, or from city community development funds. Short term funding would come from the Exchange Center Campus office. The Exchange Center Campus Office would have a faculty director. Since this director is paid by the University and is a tenure track faculty member, she/he would be hired through the hiring processes of the department or college where the faculty line is located. The permanent or acting board of the Campus Office of the Center would have advisory input into the search and selection process.

“Ownership” of Collaborative Products of Campus/Community Projects

Every research project of the University carried out in collaboration with, or using the facilities of the Exchange Center, must agree to produce a database or handbook or neighborhood study, or other product that serves the community. This is given to the the Exchange Center staff who then help neighborhood groups use this information in writing grant application proposals, in planning for their neighborhoods, in educating their members and the broader community, and so on.

All the action research done by any faculty, student, academic professional or other University person for the Center would be subject to the by-law policy of the Exchange Center Policy Advisory Board. Those by-laws can call for all research done in the name of, endorsed or sponsored by the Exchange Center to sign a contract to produce a “product” that would go to the Exchange Center Office. This “product” would be in the public domain for that Center to use as its staff saw fit. It would be a separate product from any paper, book or other academic publication of the researcher(s). This produces a clean and clear separation of the “ownership” of “intellectual property” coming out of the work of the Exchange Center.

Possible phases for Exchange Center Development

The idea for this Exchange Center has been bandied about for two years now, and it is time to get it started. It could, and probably should, be developed in phases. The key to getting started is a full and lasting funding commitment by the University. This financial commitment could also be phased in, with funding for each subsequent phase dependent on achieving certain goals in the previous phase. But the key remains that a full support

base for the Center be pledged up-front and honored so long as developmental progress is made. Without this commitment we cannot get started. No college or department of the University will commit time, resources or risk its reputation in the community without this. Neither will the community partner, the Urban League, commit staff time and reputation to this undertaking. Discussion of the financial commitment needed to establish and sustain the Center at its most basic level is presented in the Budget section of this paper. The budget has been purposely kept general for the purposes of this White Paper. The following three funding and activity phases are anticipated.

Phase One: Defining the Center and its Base of Operation (October 2000 – March 2002)

This first phase will need an acting director of the Campus Office of the Exchange Center who could be chosen from the ranks of the University staff in consultation and agreement with the Urban League. The role of this acting director would be to work with the Urban League to hold community meetings to begin to define the Center's role and to identify a community and faculty steering committee that could precede the Center board of directors or evolve into that Board of directors. The first task of this body would be to develop the initial structure and by-laws of the Center. The next task would be to participate in a national search for a permanent director. Beyond this point the descriptions of positions can only be suggestive, because only the Center's structure and by-laws can fully define the job of director or directors and the process to fill the job(s).

It is clear from discussions on campus over the last two years that the Center needs a tenure track faculty member to oversee the University end of this partnership. If University faculty, students, staff and resources are to be used for complex inter-departmental and long term service/research projects in the community, there has to be University based direction, coordination and responsibility for the Center. What is less clear is whether there needs to be a community based staff person serving as director of a Community Office from the very start of the Center, or whether such a person couldn't be phased in as products and service capacity grow and evolve over time.

Assuming there is just a campus-based director at the outset, the search for the "transition" or "interim director" to serve for the first 18 months will be conducted by the Office of the Chancellor. The interim director will be supervised by Associate Chancellor Steven Schomberg. Once a permanent director is ready to be chosen, a search will be conducted by the campus units that will house this person. The acting board of the Community Arm of the Center would, in all likelihood, help design the criteria used to screen candidates and select a director.

In conclusion, Phase 1 would last about 18 months and would complete the above five tasks. These tasks are: 1) selection by the two partners of an acting director, 2) holding public hearings on the role and function of the Center, 3) selection of a steering committee or pre-board of directors, 4) development of an initial

structure and by-laws for the Center, and 5) search and selection of the first director of the Center.

Phase Two: Begin Operations of the Exchange Center – The Next 2-3 Years

This phase would be where the Exchange Center begins full operation and establishes a broader financial base and research/service capability.

The first task might be to find a physical space in the North End community to house the Center. University funds to rent such space and modestly furnish it would be part of the basic funding package.

Among the initial activities of the Exchange Center director and board would be to seek funding for the Center's initial long-term research/service projects. As part of its University budget the Center would have some funding for small seed grants and service projects. It would be the responsibility of the director and board to begin organizing community groups and faculty groups to write and submit grant and contract proposals to foundations and federal, state and local government for larger and more sustained research/service activities.

This phase would also be a time of outreach, taking the Exchange Center message to neighborhood groups, local government and service offices and agencies, and to campus faculty, students and staff. The message would be to describe what the Center is capable of doing in cooperation with each group and soliciting ideas and priorities for projects and linking community clients with university resources to form partnerships in community development.

Depending on how fast projects get underway and show progress, and how fast The Center accumulates funding for on-site staffing beyond the basics to operate, it might start providing wider support services to the community. Among these services are: a resource library, organizational training, and staff to help with long-range community planning, budgeting, and service provision projects neighborhood groups undertake totally on their own. This would begin the empowerment and transition of the Center to an eventual self-sufficient North End community.

One measure of a successful second phase of the Center's development is permanent or semi-permanent contracts for research and services with local government. Examples of such funding might be School District contracts for enriching education, or contracts with Community Development divisions of local government in the form of Community Development Block Grant funding or HOME funds to rehabilitate housing. This phase might also see partnerships and co-funded projects or coordinated services with groups like Habitat for Humanity, Homestead Corporation, the Illinois Center for Citizen Involvement, the Center for Women in Transition, the Provena Mental Health Center or Family Services of Champaign County, etc.

In summary, phase two would be the establishment of the Exchange Center's place, and presence in the community.

Phase Three: The On-going Operations of the Exchange Center

By phase three we might expect a permanent site that is purchased and funded by non-University funds.

The functions and projects of the third phase are impossible to anticipate. But it is possible to describe this phase in terms of output and reputation if the Center has been able to achieve its goals. By the third phase the Exchange Center should attain a level of financial comfort and self-sufficiency and a board of directors and community partner(s) able to take over the reigns. It is a time when faculty involvement in action research and classroom service learning projects is widespread and a natural extension of University activity. It is also a time when the Center begins to see long term projects and services started in phase two that are completed and no longer needed because the problem has been ameliorated. It is a time when neighborhood groups are empowered with the organizational skills to deal directly with funding sources and faculty on projects. It is a time when this University has acquired a state and national reputation for its leadership in university/community partnerships and the faculty and community partners are recognized for their successful models for community development and sought out as consultants for other communities.

BUDGET

It was not our goal in this White Paper to come up with a very focused and detailed budget with line-item costs by phases of the development. After all, the Exchange Center is still just a concept, which needs a great deal of additional planning by a board that does not yet exist before realistic line-item costs can be devised. The previous section of this Paper gives a broad picture of cost items that are likely to appear in each of the three anticipated phases of the development process. It is our goal in this section of the Paper to estimate what we feel is the likely overall cost to the University by the major elements of the Exchange Center.

To implement the Exchange Center, we feel that University funds will need to pay for a new senior tenure track faculty (associate professor or higher) to serve as campus director of the center. This is the single biggest cost. It would begin in the second phase of the Center's development stages and become a permanent cost commitment. The University would also pay for office staffing, temporary community office space, and some seed grant funds to get particularly important projects underway which are critical to establishing the credibility of the Center. By the start of the third phase in no later than five years, it is anticipated that the Center will be receiving grants, contracts, and overhead from research projects that will contribute to funding community office space and staffing, and allow the Center to cut-back on temporary funding. Increased and

continued funding over the first few years as the Center becomes established could be contingent on Center reaching various development goals in each year of operation.

The first phase might cost as little as \$75,000. We anticipate a yearly commitment from the University for the 3-5 years in the second phase. Once The new faculty (campus director) line and campus-based offices and staffing costs would be a permanent commitment on the part of the University.