



Business Brief



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Insights, Updates and Opportunities



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May Brings Retail Recruitment, Rivian Growth, and Development Updates

As summer activity ramps up in the Town of Normal, this month's Business Brief highlights several important developments shaping our community and local economy. In this issue, we recap the Town's participation at the ICSC Las Vegas convention, where staff connected with retailers, developers, and industry leaders to promote new investment opportunities in Normal.

We also highlight Governor JB Pritzker's recent visit to Rivian's R2 manufacturing facility, demonstrating the continued momentum of Normal's growing EV manufacturing sector. In addition, this edition covers the Town's temporary data center moratorium and what it means for future development discussions, along with a few helpful planning and zoning reminders and tips for local businesses navigating property improvements and code requirements.

As always, thank you for reading and for being an important part of Normal's growing and thriving business community.

Normal Heads to Vegas for the International Council of Shopping Centers Conference

The Town of Normal was well represented at the the annual International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) Las Vegas

convention, widely regarded as the premier retail real estate conference in the world.

The event attracts more than 25,000 attendees each year, including national retailers, commercial brokers, developers, investors, and industry decision-makers from across the country.



As one of the largest and most influential gatherings in the retail and mixed-use development industry, the conference serves as a key platform for communities to promote investment opportunities and build strategic relationships.

Throughout the conference, Town staff met with a variety of retailers, site selection consultants, developers, and brokerage professionals to discuss current and future development opportunities throughout Normal with conversations focused on retail recruitment, mixed-use projects, and new development opportunities. Participation in ICSC allows the Town to strengthen existing relationships as well as to promote Normal as great place to do business.

Governor Pritzker Visits Rivian R2 Manufacturing Plant

Illinois [Governor JB Pritzker recently visited Rivian's R2 manufacturing facility](#) in Normal to tour the company's expanding operations and highlight the continued growth of Illinois' electric vehicle industry. The visit focused on the continued growth of Illinois' electric vehicle ecosystem and the significant economic impact Rivian continues to generate throughout Central Illinois as production ramps up for the company's highly anticipated R2 model.

During the visit, Governor Pritzker emphasized Illinois' ongoing investments in advanced manufacturing, workforce development, and infrastructure improvements that have helped position the state as a national leader in electric vehicle production. Leaders toured the facility and discussed Rivian's continued expansion in Normal, including the development of the supplier park, growing workforce initiatives, and the long-term opportunities tied to the company's future growth.



Mayor Koos joined Governor Pritzker in recognizing Rivian's continued commitment to the community and the transformational role the company has played in the local economy. Rivian's investments in Normal continue to support job creation, attract additional suppliers and advanced manufacturers to the region, further strengthening Bloomington-Normal's position as a hub for innovation and advanced manufacturing.

Normal Council Approves 6-Month Data Center Moratorium

The Town of Normal Council has approved a six-month moratorium on new data center development applications as staff and community leaders evaluate potential updates to local zoning and development regulations. The temporary pause will allow the Town time to study the rapidly evolving data center industry and ensure future projects align with Normal's long-term economic development goals, infrastructure capacity, land use priorities, and community character.

Data centers have emerged as a growing sector nationwide due to increased demand for cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and digital storage infrastructure. While these facilities can provide significant private investment, communities across the country are also carefully examining their impacts on energy consumption, water usage, land availability, and overall economic return to the local community.

During the moratorium period, set to expire at the end of November, Town staff will review best practices from similar communities, engage with utility providers and industry experts, and evaluate potential policy considerations related to the impacts and effects of data centers. The Town remains committed to supporting responsible and sustainable economic growth while ensuring development decisions continue to reflect the best interests of residents and businesses throughout the community.

Council Approves New Contract for Uptown Underpass

The Normal Town Council recently approved moving forward with a new construction contract for the long-planned [Uptown underpass project](#), a major infrastructure investment designed to better connect Uptown North and Uptown South beneath the Union Pacific rail lines.

The underpass will create a safer and more accessible connection for pedestrians, cyclists, and Amtrak passengers while also supporting future economic development opportunities south of the tracks.



Did You Know?

Helpful Tips from Planning & Zoning for your Business

Commercial Lighting

Outdoor lighting is regulated by the [Town's zoning code](#), including requirements related to fixture style and maximum illumination levels.

In many cases, LED replacement bulbs can produce excessive brightness that contributes to light pollution and may create distractions for surrounding properties and roadways.

Before making any changes to outdoor lighting, please ensure that all required permits have been obtained and consult with [Planning & Zoning](#) to confirm compliance with applicable regulations.

Commercial Landscaping

All commercial and multifamily properties in Normal are required to maintain an approved landscaping plan in accordance with Town code and these requirements are intended to be maintained in perpetuity.

Before making any changes to site landscaping, particularly the removal of trees, shrubs, or other plant materials, please contact Planning & Zoning to ensure compliance.

If needed, Town staff can also provide a copy of the approved landscaping plan for your property.

The Department of Planning and Zoning is responsible for the coordination of orderly growth and development in the Town of Normal through enforcement of the Zoning and Subdivision codes.

To contact the Planning and Zoning Department, please call [Mercy Davison](#) at [309-454-9590](#).



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