

# A Campus Flourishes INTO A CITY NEIGHBORHOOD



The University of Illinois at Chicago envisioned a better environment for learning and living than its former “commuter campus.” Yet preserving the flavor of the neighboring Maxwell Street Market area — while meeting the needs of today’s students and city dwellers — would be nothing short of a revelation in urban planning.

Wight worked with UIC, and the South Campus Development Team (SCDT) to create a master plan that would completely redevelop and expand the University’s campus south of Roosevelt Road. The sheer scope of the planning initiative requires intricate and strategic cooperation between the City of Chicago, UIC and SCDT over the projected 10-year duration of the development. Bringing the plan to completion, Wight engineers are designing and overseeing construction of more than \$50 million in underground and street level infrastructure.

“With such a wide variety of stakeholders, each has a different viewpoint, a different goal,” notes Carolyn Howard, PE, Wight’s Manager, Urban Development. “Wight’s role is to bring their visions into reality.”

The unprecedented public and private partnership covered 85 acres (about 14 city blocks) and involved public roadways, utility infrastructure improvements (grading, lighting), environmental assessments and more. “Wight worked closely with all the stakeholders to take an area basically built in the 1850s and substantially redevelop it from below the ground up,” says Larry Justice, Project Executive, South Campus Development Team. “The transition is remarkable!”

Wight’s engineers continue to lay the framework for the emerging “University Village” which includes academic facilities, student apartments, parking, public parks, retail, adaptive reuse and for-sale housing.

*“The relatively rapid transformation of an economically depressed and blighted area into student housing, office space, and new homes for more than 500 families so far, is nothing short of remarkable.”*

