ISU students have the opportunity to get involved in Normal, Mayor Chris Koos said at the mayor-student forum Tuesday in the Founder's Suite at the Bone Student Center.

The forum was organized by the Off-Campus Student Association with the purpose of informing students and calling them to act and participate in the town of Normal.

"There's so many activities out there in the community depending on what your interests are," Koos said. "I'm certain there's things we can pair [students] up with."

The first half of the evening was given to Koos to talk about Normal's current projects, what the town has in store for the future, what Normal is currently working on and what projects are up next. Koos then opened the floor to questions from students.

With the presence of ISU, State Farm and Country Financial, Normal is well off financially and has been able to weather the recent recession better than other communities, Koos said.

A living complex is being built in front of the College Avenue parking deck and will include 38 to 40 apartments.

The new student oriented structure fits into town's goal of incorporating more student and multi-family housing near ISU.

Other housing complexes had been suggested, but they were turned down in favor of easier access to the university for students without cars and who did not want to take public transit.

The additions, however, would cost the town millions of dollars in underground power wiring, Koos said.

A local group is attempting to bring a fresh food co-op to Uptown Normal because of the high student population in the area.

The mayor is working with a consultant on a study to determine if there is enough of a fresh food market in the ISU area and what kind of produce it should have.

The mayor would also like recycling dumpsters to be distrubuted to student apartments.

The dumpsters would decrease the amount of garbage going to landfills, keep the cost for shipping the garbage down for Normal residents and save landlords money in the long-term.

Although landlords have been fighting against the dumpsters because of space and the cost of pickup, Koos thinks landlords would start putting them in if enough tenants demanded it.

One of the mayor’s main objectives is to improve his relationship with students, the university and Normal, David Marquis, OCSA president, said.

Compared to other college towns he has talked to, Normal is ranked high when it comes to communication between the community and the university, Koos added.

The mayor said he would do his best to keep the lines of communication open after President Al Bowman leaves.

Whether the new university president is communicative depends on what kind of president the board wants, Koos added.