

Name (first and last)	Address of residence or property owned	Meeting date	Agenda Item (Property address or description of agenda item)	Position on Agenda Item (as applicable)	How would you like to make your public comment?	If you are providing a written comment, please leave here:	Are you representing yourself as an individual or speaking on behalf of a group?	Please name the group of people for whom you are the designated speaker.
Jane Wickenham	2629 Central Street	4/16/2025	Affordable housing	In favor	Written comment	<p>I am writing to express my support for more affordable housing in Evanston, IL. There is not nearly enough housing to accommodate many of our homeless populations, and not enough housing for people who are paying 50% or more toward their housing expenses. This typically affects older adults (our seniors) who have lived here many years and may have to give up a home or condo and begin renting only to find that there are only luxury apartments available in Evanston. Seniors want to stay in a community that they are familiar with and perhaps be fortunate enough to find an elevator building downtown where they can walk to places to meet their basic needs after having to also give up their automobile. How do we accommodate our seniors without taking away from our students who also want to live downtown and can afford more rent. We must consider all of our populations when implementing new plans and those new plans must include more affordable housing!</p>		
Michael Lohr	726 Milburn St., Evanston	4/9/2025	Envision Evanston	Undecided	Written comment	<p>March 31, 2025  Michael F Lohr  Ward 7; 726 Milburn St., Evanston  Comments on latest draft of Envision Evanston 2045 Comprehensive Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overarching comment – delete the word “zoning” wherever it appears in the document (too many times to list individually). A Comprehensive Plan is a vision document, e.g., how we hope to see Evanston grow, develop, and prosper through land use over the next 20 years. Zoning itself is but one tool in realizing the vision envisioned in the plan, and in fact, in Evanston’s case will be a very separate and distinct tool among many to be considered later in the year. It is not helpful or rational to place “zoning” or rezoning at the forefront of so many sections of the draft plan. I would argue the repeated use of the word, and similar usages, e.g., “adjust zoning map” (page 15), “revise current density limits” (page 16), detracts and distracts from the real purpose of the Comprehensive Plan – set forth a vision for future land use and development in Evanston.</li> <li>2. Page 12 – this material is very misleading. I was one of the 206 persons who responded to the survey. The survey was anything but user friendly. I felt like I was responding to the essay question on the SAT. Likewise, the Commission should ask to see the data on the text, “adjust zoning to increase housing affordability.” That does not sound a likely response based on the text and layout of survey I took.</li> <li>3. Page 14 should reflect the overwhelming feedback at the community hearings which clearly demonstrated a much more flexible approach to zoning than was reflected in the original plan and zoning map (in fact, was it not those hearings that resulted in the Plan and zoning map being addressed independently?).</li> <li>4. The Emerging Trends chart on page 28 should be deleted entirely as it is very misleading. In earlier submissions I pointed out that US Census and State of Illinois data directly contradict the text in many lines of this chart. For example, actual Illinois DPH data predicts a significant LOSS of population in the state by 2035 and US census data shows that Illinois has in fact one of the lowest number of “carless” homes in the entire US, just to point out two examples.</li> <li>5. Page 33 states that Evanston needs more housing diversity to “bridge the gap between single family homes and large apartment complexes.” However, the data in the draft plan indicates clearly that Evanston has achieved that, at levels that often exceed nearby towns and suburbs.</li> <li>6. Likewise, page 34, states, “remove barriers to housing choice in all neighborhoods.” If you live and work in Evanston, as I do, you will see that there is not a single Ward in Evanston that has not already achieved that status.</li> <li>7. Pages 42, 43 and 45 – repeated use of the phrases, “update zoning regs,” “update zoning regs to align with the Comp plan,” and page 45, three times on the same page, “update zoning regulations.” Again, this type of language is wholly inappropriate at this point, and is literally putting the proverbial cart before the horse.</li> <li>8. The discussion of housing and housing stock on page 90 and the pages that follow deserve the Commission’s close examination. Less than a third of Evanston’s housing stock is single family, far lower than many of our neighboring towns and suburbs. And another 25% of the housing stock falls in the 2-9 family range, a not insignificant percentage of overall housing in Evanston.</li> <li>9. Page 97, delete the statement and implication, and I am paraphrasing, “that homeowners are a barrier to housing development.” That is an irresponsible, completely gratuitous, and untrue statement, not supported by a single shred of data.</li> <li>10. Page 110, the section on Age is misleading (and honestly, the draft plan is replete with this sort of misrepresentation and half-truths). The entire population of the western hemisphere is aging and births are declining. This is not unique to Evanston or even the US, and is not something Evanston is going to “remedy” or fix through increased housing density.</li> <li>11. Page 124, Preservation section. I commented on this section previously. I do not understand what the drafters intend here. On the one hand they talk about the importance of historic preservation, but next they talk about more development and affordable housing in the historic districts. Is either a priority? The historic districts constitute a relatively small portion of the city – is the desire or intent to tear down historic properties and build affordable housing in their place? Who knows, as this section is incoherent.</li> </ol>		
Steve Test	1135 Hinman Avenue		Envision Evanston	Opposed	Written comment	<p>During discussion among commissioners at the March 19 meeting Commissioner Max Puchtel displayed a lack of understanding of the purpose of public comments to the commission. He stated that unless public comments coming to the LUC were in a particular form they should be rejected. The Land Use Commission is not some engineering company working on a document. The LUC is a public commission working on the people’s business. Citizens come to any commission meeting to express their opinions with the intention to educate and inform their representatives on the commission. They expect the commissioners to hear their comments, understand their concerns and take them into account when making commission decisions. Just because the public’s comments to the LUC are not in a form Commissioner Puchtel likes does not mean he should ignore them outright. He should listen to the public with an open mind. Perhaps the other members of the Land Use Commission will enlighten Commissioner Puchtel on what his proper role on the commission is.</p>		

Scott Hight	1821 Grant Street	3/31/2025	1915-17 Grant S	Opposed	Written comment	<p>I am OPPOSED to any extension for the 1915-1917 Grant Street project as currently designed. David Wallach and Blue Paint Development have failed to show that these homes offer a solution to the affordable housing crisis here in Evanston. If the 1915-1917 homes did earnestly address the affordable housing crisis, Wallach and Blue Paint would not need an extension. No one is buying a 600 square foot house for \$350,000 (plus association fees and parking) because they are NOT AFFORDABLE. Further, no bank apparently is lending Wallach and Blue Paint any money to build these homes because banks know that one is going to buy a \$350,000 600-square-foot home. Market "comparables" show similarly sized properties can be purchased in Evanston for tens of thousands of dollars less. I urge the City to let this project die so something more well-designed, sustainable, and affordable can take its place. Thank you for your time.</p> <p>-Scott Hight, 1821 Grant Street</p>		
Mike Hauser	1715 Chancellor Street		NU Concert Stad	Undecided	Written comment	<p>I assume part of signage is a discussion of how the signs are illuminated, and how many hours of the day and night the neighbors will have to endure the purple glow of a stadium that we had to trash our zoning for. NU must consider the neighborhoods when lighting these signs.</p>		
John Storey Will	864 Sheridan Road		Envision Evanston	Undecided	Written comment	<p>I am writing to urge the commission to remove all language in Envision Evanston 2045 that advocates for increased density or upzoning. Additionally, I strongly recommend that the plan explicitly prioritize sustaining and expanding homeownership opportunities as a long-term strategy to support affordability and community stability.</p> <p>As a lifelong Evanston resident and a professional in the real estate industry, I have participated in the public engagement process and have deep concerns about the current direction of this draft plan. The push for higher-density housing is not supported by credible evidence that it will meaningfully lower housing costs. Moreover, the plan inadequately addresses the critical role of homeownership in ensuring financial stability for Evanston families and fostering lasting community investment.</p> <p>Evanston already has a diverse range of housing options. Within a block of my home, there are rentals starting at \$1,100, as well as multimillion-dollar properties, illustrating that the "missing middle" narrative is misapplied. Despite overwhelming public feedback opposing increased density and single-family zoning elimination, the current draft disregards these concerns and continues to push a high-density agenda. This disconnect must be addressed.</p> <p>If affordability and equity are truly priorities, Envision Evanston 2045 must emphasize expanding homeownership opportunities. Homeownership remains the most effective tool for long-term wealth-building and economic mobility, particularly for working and middle-class families. Yet, the draft plan barely acknowledges this fundamental aspect of community stability—mentioning it only briefly and not in the Housing section where it rightfully belongs.</p> <p>For many residents, the most pressing issue is the shortage of single-family homes within the FHA loan limit of \$524,000. Rather than prioritizing high-density rental developments, which do not foster long-term affordability or stability, the city should focus on policies that encourage and sustain homeownership.</p> <p>I urge the commission to revise Envision Evanston 2045 to reflect a more balanced and community-driven approach. The plan should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove all calls for increased density and upzoning.</li> <li>Include a clear, prioritized commitment to sustaining and increasing access to homeownership in the Housing section.</li> <li>Commit the city government to study to determine how much affordable housing it feel that it actually needs.</li> <li>Align with the expressed concerns of Evanston residents rather than imposing top-down policies that lack local support.</li> </ul> <p>The future of Evanston depends on a comprehensive plan that genuinely reflects the needs and aspirations of its residents. I appreciate your time and consideration in making these necessary revisions.</p>		
Karen Appleby	1720 Maple Ave,	4/9/2025	Church Street Hi	Opposed	Written comment	<p>The proposed building is too tall for the location and does not provide offsetting benefits (increased affordable housing for families or improved neighborhood amenities) to compensate. The building will provide mostly studios and 1 bedroom luxury apartments that will appeal to students. Apartments are too small for families, who will need cars and will find the access to parking challenging. Larger apartments are mostly on the upper floors --- clearly intended to maximize views and support higher rents. Public transportation is not robust enough to support a no car lifestyle except for student populations. Parking challenges will also not appeal to the elderly or disabled. The inevitable transient populations that result will not be committed to building the neighborhood or helping provide the foundation for growing stable businesses.</p> <p>When I purchased my condo, I expected Evanston to retain its accessible, walkable character -- not become a collection of skyscraper canyons. The building height will cause wind that will make navigating Maple Street difficult -- the garage is used by disabled people accessing local doctor's and physical therapy offices, as well as families with young children accessing the movie theater and SkyZone. My own grandchildren will have difficulty navigating the street. While a few new tall buildings may be appropriate downtown, we should not be putting up residences that are so close to each other that privacy is impossible. Both owners and apartment dwellers should have access to light and air.</p> <p>If it is to move forward, the scale of the project needs to be modified to provide a better balance of neighborhood impacts.</p>		
Nate Kipnis						<p>I think that the allowable bulk massing of buildings in the residential zoning districts, should be more articulated. In Lake Bluff, they have in their zoning ordinance that once you come in for the side yard setbacks, you can go up 17' and then the massing has to be at a 45° angle. Dormers and chimneys are allowed to penetrate that bulk envelope, but otherwise, this really brings down the massing of the structures. It is very obvious when you go from Lake Bluff where that is the code, to Lake Forest right next door. Lake Bluff has a much smaller scale feel to it because of that.</p> <p>Additionally, when I went to school at the University of Colorado/Boulder, in the early '80's they instituted a 'Solar Rights Access Ordinance'. I don't recall the geometry of it, but it is similar to Lake Bluffs but was done to ensure that if you invested in a solar system for your roof, which back then was very expensive, a neighboring building could not shade your panels.</p> <p>I think both of these examples provide a solid rationale for not allowing a massing to go full up to the allowable height. I hope that this can be taken into account in the new zoning ordinance.</p> <p>Nate Kipnis, FAIA Kipnis Architecture + Planning</p>		

Fiona McCarthy		4/9/2025	NU Signage	Undecided	Written comment	Are there requirements for the time of day usage for the signage? I don't see any in the application. For example, if a football game is at night, are the stadium lights and signs expected to be off 1 hour post game? If there are no limitations to time of day, what recourse do neighbors to the East, South, and West have if the signage is lighting up their homes all night?		
Fiona McCarthy		4/9/2025	EE 2045	Undecided	Written comment	I would like to see a section on urban planning included in the EE2045 plan. For example, if we are going to allow taller high rises, we need to have a plan to address the wind tunnels, especially downtown. Davis, Sherman, Orrington, and Chicago Ave all have very high winds already and I can see that issue to only get worse with the addition of taller buildings. It makes walking downtown complicated and I believe the goal is to increase downtown pedestrian traffic. If we are marketing new buildings and walkability to families and elderly without cars, we need to make the streets walkable. How can we incorporate boulevards and more plantings to break the wind tunnel, etc. We also should address the speed of cars on Davis St. west of Sherman towards Benson and Maple. There is no need for 3 lanes and cars speed a lot there.		
Scott Roberts	320 Dempster St	4/9/2025	The April 1st refer	In favor	Written comment	<p>Hello LUC members,</p> <p>Up until recently I've attended the majority of LUC meetings over the past few months, and have made comments at several of them. The reason I stopped attending the past few meetings is due to the excessive negativity and hostility of the public comments period. At a recent meeting it was so bad that I had to get up and leave. Over and over, the same small group of people repeat their complaints about Envision Evanston, many of which refer to issues that are no longer relevant (the "rushed agenda," for example).</p> <p>One of the recurring complaints is that the initial public input for Envision Evanston only represented a small percentage of the community. I'm one of the citizens who paid attention and participated in the input stage, and I resent that our input should be considered irrelevant because others ignored the request.</p> <p>The ironic aspect of this complaint is that it's made by a small number of people who claim to represent the majority of Evanston. The number of people who have spoken at LUC against Envision Evanston is an even smaller percentage of the population.</p> <p>Opponents of Envision Evanston, and especially zoning change, made the April 1st election a referendum on these issues. They claimed that the people would express their opposition by voting the mayor out of office. The mayor didn't run away from the issue. The verdict was demonstrative: Mayor Biss received 11,000 votes, the most votes for an Evanston mayor in the 21st century ( <a href="https://evanstonnow.com/how-big-was-the-mayors-victory/">https://evanstonnow.com/how-big-was-the-mayors-victory/</a> ). John Kennedy, a frequent speaker at LUC meetings against Envision Evanston, came in third out of three in the third ward election. The people have spoken loud and clear.</p> <p>Over the past two months I have canvassed across the city for candidates who support zoning change, in all four corners and most areas in-between. I've spoken to hundreds of people about which issues concern them. The feedback I've received is vastly different from what's represented at LUC by opponents of Envision Evanston. People critical of zoning change were in the minority. Most people either aren't aware of the issue or support it (I've told most of them, on both sides of the issue, that they can have an effect by sending comments like these!)</p> <p>Please don't let the angry mob shout down the voice of 11,000 voters who support Mayor Biss and Envision Evanston.</p> <p>I know from attending your meetings that you do thankless, difficult, unpaid work as part of LUC. I wish that you could do something about the hostility, but it's part of the system. Thank you for your valuable work.</p> <p>Best, Scott Roberts 320 Dempster Street Third Ward</p>		
Korey Neibarger	864 Sheridan Rd				Written comment	<p>I am writing as a concerned community member regarding specific elements in the current draft of the Comprehensive Plan. After a thorough review, I have noted that the plan includes proposals for increased density and up-zoning—particularly in the Housing sections (pages 14–15 and 16–17) as well as in discussions on downtown development (pages 42–43). I respectfully demand that these elements be removed.</p> <p>Furthermore, I insist that the City commit to a comprehensive study to determine precisely how much affordable housing is needed to serve our community. Such a study is critical to ensure that the housing policies reflect the actual needs of Evanstonians and provide clear, data-driven targets for affordable housing development.</p> <p>Additionally, I demand that the City undertake a detailed examination of how it can foster homeownership for more Evanstonians. By exploring innovative approaches and implementing supportive policies, we can expand opportunities for homeownership and strengthen the fabric of our neighborhoods.</p> <p>Thank you for your prompt attention to these important issues. I appreciate your commitment to ensuring that the Comprehensive Plan truly reflects the values and needs of our community, and I look forward to a revised plan that supports both stability and opportunity for all residents.</p>		

					<p>Evanston is a wonderful place to live and to work. We have natural resources including our beautiful lakefront and streets lined with mature trees. We are home to many architectural jewels, a range of homes and business districts with historic charm and vintage character at a human scale. It feels good to be here.</p> <p>As we look ahead and develop a vision for the future, I think it is very important that the comprehensive plan recognize, celebrate, and place equal focus on the qualities that make Evanston what it is, and that the plan include protecting and preserving these essential qualities as a core value underneath our growth and evolution.</p> <p>Regarding neighborhoods and places, I think that the word "all" should be removed when discussing policies being developed. Evanston is not a one-size fits all place, and I think it is important to evaluate each neighborhood (and street) on its own merits, especially in transition areas. Case in point, some areas adjacent to transit stations are filled with single family homes, and any development in those areas should be sensitively contemplated to preserve the quality of life for people currently living there.</p> <p>Regarding affordable housing, we should do our part to ease the issues being felt across the nation and here at home, but not at the expense of undermining our foundation so it becomes unrecognizable, diminishes our quality of life, and changes Evanston forever. At some point there is only so much space to build on and so many people per square mile to add before we are going to feel like Chicago and no longer like Evanston.</p> <p>Many who are experienced in the affordable housing, construction, and real estate industries have explained that increased housing density will not automatically create affordability. I think all references to density and up zoning should be removed from the comprehensive plan - those are tactics, not strategy - and are not proven solutions.</p> <p>Let's not ruin what we have in pursuit of changes that will not solve the problems of affordability and instead open the doors to making Evanston a developer's dream that leaves us with a crowded big city, not the town we know and love.</p> <p>The comprehensive plan should build on what is wonderful about Evanston, not focus on steps that will dismantle it.</p>		
Andrea Liss	800 Greenwood	3/12/2025	Envision Evanston	Opposed	<p>Written comment</p>		
					<p>We attended a meeting on Thursday, April 3rd at the Evanston Public Library presented by the Vermillion team to promote an overview of their proposed development at 605 Davis. The meeting was attended by interested, primarily downtown Evanston residents. Also in attendance were Sarah Flax and city council members Clare Kelly and Jonathan Nieuwsma. The room was full and standing room only. The Vermillion team provided a high-level slide overview of the proposed project. After the presentation the residents were able to ask questions.</p> <p>Vermillion appeared misleading with their presentation facts and responses. In doing some upfront homework I accessed some information on the project at various websites including Jones Lang LaSalle. Jones Lang LaSalle has been engaged by the developer to market the sale for Vermillion. The PDF on JLL link below</p> <p><a href="https://images1.showcase.com/d2/Ox-d_FINJol7QaggdcaF9x5miaPAm80xTK7m_WB9tjs/document.pdf">https://images1.showcase.com/d2/Ox-d_FINJol7QaggdcaF9x5miaPAm80xTK7m_WB9tjs/document.pdf</a></p> <p>( for the project and the overview from their website is very different than what Vermillion represented to the attendees as well as Vermillion's response to several questions that were asked. Vermillion denied that the project was focused to primarily house Northwestern graduate students. The JLL website overview attached specifically details the focus on housing Northwestern Graduate students. Quoted from the Evanston Now article on the meeting; "We have zero desire to deliver a product caters to students, Dillion (from the Vermillion team). Vermillion's slides specifically stated that the building is being targeted to house school teachers, nurses and other Evanston public employees There is also a concern that the affordable units designated in the proposed building would go to Northwestern Graduate students rather than existing Evanston low-income residents. The majority of the units proposed are studios and 1 bedroom. That represents 75/80% of the units in the building. Therefore, limiting the number of 2/3 bedrooms for families. That configuration does not lend itself to the need for affordable units for families. Of course, the cost of the rentals will be very high as the building is new construction at today's market costs.</p> <p>The proposed building is 3 times the legal allowable height currently in the D3 zone. It is not clear on why or how this project is even being considered before the community. We (current downtown residents) don't want taller buildings for many reasons. There is already a traffic congestion issue along Davis, Chicago and Sherman. We don't want our skyline that has attracted condo and apartment dwellers to downtown Evanston to be changed facing the lake with tall buildings. That is why many downtown dwellers prefer downtown Evanston to living in Chicago's high-rise areas.</p> <p>Attendees were extremely concerned about the project's ability to accommodate traffic on Davis which is already over congested. Vermillion stated the alley behind Whole Foods would provide commercial access for the building which is currently congested. As a resident overlooking Ft. Square, including Davis, Orrington and Sherman, I can clearly demonstrate that with delivery vehicles ranging from Amazon to food deliveries that Davis has primarily become a one lane street unable to handle current traffic patterns. The same with Orrington north of Davis. Vermillion stated they had not done a traffic study but assumed traffic would not be a problem. Residents of Sherman Plaza which have more than 250 units shared that their Davis street lobby residential pickup and delivery and their commercial access docks on Davis are over congested now. Vermillion was also questioned about sustainable building issues and greenhouse gas emission issues. A resident and expert living downtown shared his detailed study of the fact that taller buildings produce a more damaging environment than low rises. Wind tunnel" issues" that currently exist on Davis and the surrounding streets were raised by current downtown residents. Vermillion had no specific responses to the proposed building increasing the wind tunnel issues.</p> <p>The proposed 605 Davis building will also be built above the University building at the corner of Davis and Chicago Ave, which is a historical and landmarked building. The design shows that the project will change the visual appearance of the University building.</p> <p>This project does not fit the needs of the downtown and residents. It appears to be focused on resolving what Vermillion perceives as housing shortages for financially well to do Northwestern students. Additional density is not the solution for our revitalization of downtown Evanston.</p> <p>Respectfully, Julia and Jeff Forgash 1580 Sherman Ave</p>		
Jeffrey Forgash	1580 Sherman A	4/9/2025	Vermillion 605 D	Opposed	<p>Written comment</p>		

					<p>Please consider the effects of tall buildings (high rises) in generating dangerous wind tunnels in Evanston. For the sake of Evanston's pedestrians, there should be policies that require Evanston to consider the effects on pedestrian-level comfort and safety when reviewing new building proposals.</p> <p>Wind tunnels have a negative effect on pedestrians (i.e., anyone who walks in Evanston, particularly, in areas with a lot of tall buildings like downtown). It is already very difficult (and unpleasant) to walk in Downtown Evanston because of the high winds.</p> <p>One of the policy items in "Envision Evanston 2045 in Chapter 7: Getting Around" states, "Support walking as a preferred mode of transportation and recreation through targeted infrastructure and programs". This is a very noble policy that will benefit all residents of Evanston, and it is something I support. However, this policy and the policy for "fostering a healthy community" are endangered by a future with a lot of high rises in Evanston, or at least one that doesn't consider the effects of strong wind on its residents.</p> <p>The science (e.g., ref. 1) shows that tall building deflect upper-level high winds to the ground-level, which can create dangerous walking (or even standing) situations for pedestrian (Mittal, Sharma, &amp; Gairola, 2018). This is especially dangerous for the elderly, as high gusts can knock the frail out of balance (especially on street corners at crossing intersections; see the cornering effect). Additionally, wind also has negative effects on other parts of Envision Evanston that promote sustainable transit options. Studies have found that people are significantly less likely to wait at transit stops where wind speeds are higher (see ref. 2), and qualitatively, pedestrians cite the windiness as a reason for not utilizing sustainable transit (biking, walking, public transit).</p> <p>The same article (ref. 1) showed that high density of tall buildings causes weak air movement, which can cause the accumulation of pollutants and even airborne diseases to accumulate at ground level. Thus, high density of tall buildings, if its effects on wind are not studied, can be a public health hazard as it increases air pollution and the transmission of airborne diseases.</p> <p>Moreover, wind has negative effects on the local economy (i.e., empty storefronts) as pedestrians do not want to walk (or cannot stroll) in uncomfortable windy environments, which reduces storefront traffic (reviewed in Blocken &amp; Carmeliet, 2004; ref. 3). Evanston already suffers from high vacancy rates of storefronts and small businesses rely on foot traffic. (I would argue that our entire Downtown Evanston/Evanston Thrives campaigns rely on this, especially in the summer months when Evanston has outdoor events and festivals. I've personally experienced several Evanston downtown outdoor festivals where tents blow away, and it was not enjoyable.) I can imagine that many people who enjoy this type of window shopping will take their shopping elsewhere with less density and less dangerous wind. And, as we enter sidewalk cafe and patio season, high winds would also make dining experiences downtown extremely uncomfortable or impossible.</p> <p>Many other cities, such as San Francisco (see ref. 4) and Toronto, add a requirement for a pedestrian wind analysis and set guardrails for new developments so they do not reduce pedestrian comfort due to wind (and the subsequent effects of wind). I am not a civil engineer, but to the best of my search ability, I could not find any requirements or limitations on wind generated by new buildings at the pedestrian-level. I think Evanston and its pedestrians would benefit greatly from such policies.</p> <p>Finally, other cities that have similar initiatives as Envision Evanston, such as Southern Nevada, directly address that buildings should take into account "healthy street environment for pedestrians" including designing buildings that take into account interactions with strong winds (see ref. 5, p.20). Why can't Evanston do the same for its pedestrians?</p> <p>References:  (1) Mittal, H., Sharma, A., &amp; Gairola, A. (2018). A review on the study of urban wind at the pedestrian level around buildings. Journal of Building Engineering, 18, 154-163. <a href="https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7148650/">https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7148650/</a>  (2) Kim, H., &amp; Macdonald, E. (2016). Does wind discourage sustainable transportation mode choice? Findings from San Francisco, California, USA. Sustainability, 8(3), 257.  (3) Blocken, B., &amp; Carmeliet, J. (2004). Pedestrian wind environment around buildings: Literature review and practical examples. Journal of Thermal Envelope and Building Science, 28(2), 107-159. <a href="https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&amp;type=pdf&amp;doi=a3ac7a251056350c876f08056b56887e8e4cdf72">https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&amp;type=pdf&amp;doi=a3ac7a251056350c876f08056b56887e8e4cdf72</a>  (4) San Francisco Planning Code. SEC. 148. REDUCTION OF GROUND-LEVEL WIND CURRENTS IN C-3 DISTRICTS. <a href="https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/san_francisco/latest/sf_planning/0-0-0-18821">https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/san_francisco/latest/sf_planning/0-0-0-18821</a>  (5) Complete Streets Design Guidelines for Livable Communities in Southern Nevada. <a href="https://www.rtcnv.com/projects-initiatives/initiatives/complete-streets/">https://www.rtcnv.com/projects-initiatives/initiatives/complete-streets/</a></p>		
Alex Davis		4/9/2025	900 Clark St High	Opposed	<p>Written comment</p> <p>Suggestions for amending draft 2 of the Comprehensive Plan</p> <p>Throughout the document, the "character of Evanston", for example on page 63 it reads: "the desire to preserve the character, heritage, and vibrancy of the community". And again on page 66: "P 4.5 Prepare Neighborhood Conservation District Plans and support neighborhood planning efforts in areas where residents have expressed interest in enhancing and stabilizing neighborhood character, identity, and affordability."</p> <p>Put there is no suggestion for a mechanism to enforce good design besides one comment on page 23: "LU 7.1 Establish a Design Review Committee or process that provides technical assistance for new development and integrates it into a predictable review and approval process."</p> <p>This needs to be expanded to suggest that a new City Commission be created to oversee designs of new buildings to assure that they not only do not distract from the architectural aspects of the City, but actually enhance it. Such a commission must be made up of residents who have either a design or architecture background and should have the ability to set guidelines for new developments as well as review proposals before they proceed to zoning review.</p> <p>Kind Regards  John  (847) 642-6501</p>		
John Kennedy					<p>I am a graphic designer and communications consultant with over 20 years in the profession. I live in Evanston with my family. I read through the draft of the Envision 2025 Plan and have some feedback. The Plan contains many good ideas and goals. Unfortunately, it is not written or designed very well, and those ideas and goals get lost. This is a difficult document to interact with. Very few people are going to read it. Briefly, the main concern is it is too wordy. A good editor could reduce wordcount greatly and still create the same messaging in a much more inviting manner. Visually, the Plan is not interesting to look at. Photography selection is poor, typography and colorization are not delineated very well. Overall structure and layout lack energy and organization. I would be happy to share my feedback in depth. Feel free to reach out to me directly. Scott Hight. 773-733-2397.</p>		
Scott Hight							



Meagan Jones &lt;mmjones@cityofevanston.org&gt;

## Evanston Comprehensive Plan - comments part 2

Joseph Caprile &lt;jpcaprile@gmail.com&gt;

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 2:29 PM

To: "mmjones@cityofevanston.org" &lt;mmjones@cityofevanston.org&gt;

Cc: Joseph Caprile &lt;jpcaprile@gmail.com&gt;

To: Land Use Commission Members

As I stated in my memo of March 6th , 2025, I want to again thank all of the Commission Members for your time and dedication to this matter which is critically important to the Community we live in.

As requested, I am offering written comments to the plan with a focus on Chapters 7 through 14 and attempt to make them as specific as I can.

The comments are intended to be Constructive and Support improving the plan.

**First and foremost, given the amount of time and feedback this draft document has received from the Community, Commission Plan Members and staff another draft document should be issued for Public review and comment before being presented to City Council.**

**A number of quality suggestions, omissions to the document and errors in the document have been raised in writing and should be included in the next draft to demonstrate that the Community addressed.**

- Page 19: Vision Statement, this is my only comment from my email of March 6, 2025, due to its critical importance.  
A sentence should be added to the vision statement that the vision should be achieved with "the Long-Term Fiscal Responsibility of the City". **Being financially stable is critical.**
- Page 56, Chapter 7: The source of the policies and policy statements need to be stated, did staff, consultant, third party generate them? Without a source it highly questions their validity. Also, If the chart was deleted it might make the document easier to read since the same information is repeated later in the chapter. **This comment applies for all of the remaining chapters.**
- Page 59, Figure 3; shows the CTA bus routes 206 and 201 running east-west along Central street then south along Sheridan and dead ending at Davis Street. Is that correct? Then routes 201/ 206 start up south of Dempster along Ridge. Seems confusing.
- Page 64 Parking: the cost of parking is stated as a key revenue source but making parking payment easier and more efficient may be very helpful for residents and stated in the Policies and Actions section.
- Page 72, Environment: the Existing section does not address that the City sells water to other Municipalities and should be included. This should also be included and also stated in the Policies and Actions section on how the City should move forward.
- Page 81, a section on the open space and amenities that the schools, Both District 65 and ETHS provide should be added. I live across from one and it is wonderful.
- Page 83, Figure 4. Parks green space provided by District 65 and ETHS should be added to the map. They are substantial.
- Page 81, Notable Spaces, Fountain Square should be added since it is key to the retail revitalization of downtown Evanston. It should also be included in the Key Challenges and opportunity sections as a problem with suggested solutions.

- Page 90, Chapter 10 Housing: The entire Section is written with an obvious bias that housing is expensive, housing shortage is prevalent, and increased density is the solution, without supportive data of any of it. Sorry I cannot make individual edits the section, it needs to be re-drafted starting with supported facts and then unbiased solutions.
- Page 101, Physical Environment: To state that "aging housing and infrastructure also carry health risks" only supported by the following statement of lead piping is totally misleading and incorrect. The problem is the piping not the housing and should state as such. As an owner of a 100 year old Landmark home this caught my attention!
- Page 101, Economic Development: the entire section has a predefined political bias and should be deleted from this section. These issues should be addressed in Chapter 10 Housing and Chapter 12 Economic Development.
- Page 108, Chapter 12: Economic Development: In the introduction it should be added that the City must adopt fiscal sound management policies for the long term financial stability of the City.
- Page 112, a new section 8 should be added to address " Supporting Additional Development for the industries the City has strength in such as Higher Education, Research and Medical for increased tax revenues. One of the actions is to engage ULI to do a strategic study on how to approach this.
- Page 134, Implementation: The Chapter is incomplete and a priority of items to address from this plan and a timeline needs to be included to make the Comprehensive Plan effective. Totally relaying on the subjective nature of staff is inappropriate. A good refence to review is the Wilmette Plan adopted in2024.

These are the end of my comments and your thoughtful consideration of the above would be greatly appreciated.

Yours very truly:

Joseph Caprile FAIA

40+ year resident of the 6<sup>th</sup> ward



Meagan Jones &lt;mmjones@cityofevanston.org&gt;

## Fwd: Comprehensive plan- concerns re: community feedback from from survey #2 & land use commission meetings, pages 12,13,14

L. G. Damashek <lgdamashek@gmail.com>  
To: mmjones@cityofevanston.org

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 5:35 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: L. G. Damashek <lgdamashek@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 5:01 PM

Subject: Comprehensive plan- concerns re: community feedback from from survey #2 & land use commission meetings, pages 12,13,14

To: <zoning@cityofevanston.org>

Dear Land Use Commissioners,

While I'm sure I will have many more edits to share with you over the weekend that you will receive first thing Monday morning, this is what I have had time to identify so far.

My primary concern is that there were many many speakers at public comment who opposed Citywide Upzoning, and this did not make a bullet point into your feedback document. You need to add this as a bullet point as a Key Takeaway from the Land Use Commission meetings for your document to be truthful.

I also read the descriptions of each one of the wards and (similar to my personal impressions) show that each ward has residential housing of many different types and commercial businesses. Evanston already has an excellent diversity of housing types spread evenly throughout the entire city . It does not need to remove single-family housing, R1 and R2 districts to accomplish this goal.

As a regular speaker at public comment, I was unaware that there was a survey #2 to fill out and I think we all should have been informed of that opportunity.

I believe the following bullet points should be REMOVED.

Page 12-Land use

\* Remove restrictions perceived as barriers to accessory dwelling units  
(1 ADU has already been approved for each household in the city- This has already been addressed)

Page 12 – Transportation

\* Remove proposals that expand car centric infrastructure  
(What does this even mean?)

Page 12 Parks and open space

\* Remove under used facilities and repurpose for community needs  
(What underused facility are you talking about? Clarify)

\* Reevaluate Park use policies to better support community events

( The lakefront master plan is in force for passive use of the lakefront and no commercialization of the lakefront)

Page 13 Economic development

\* Include provisions for equitable, economic growth across neighborhoods  
(What does this even mean?)

Page 13 Housing

\* Revise density limits to accommodate affordable housing

( No Citywide Upzoning! Retain Single-family housing zoning)

\* Remove restrictions on multifamily housing in some areas  
(Retain single-family housing zoning)

Page 13 Place making

\* Remove overly prescriptive design guidelines that limit creativity  
(If City money is being used, there should be design guidelines. Unbridled creativity can be on someone else's dime)

Page 13 (Historic ) Preservation

\* Remove unnecessary bureaucratic steps in the preservation approval process  
( The existing historic preservation processes were created very thoughtfully and should be retained)

Page 14 Key Takeaways from land use commission meetings

Housing

\* Support for increased housing density and transparent zoning  
( Increased density will not create trickle down affordable housing)

\* Encourage mixed use zoning, and transit oriented development  
( We already have mixed use zoning and transit oriented development. 10 years of transit oriented development has not created very many units of affordable housing)

Transportation and mobility

\* Reform parking policies to address parking in transit zones  
(What does this even mean?)

Zoning and development

\* Examine R1 zoning (Single-family districts)  
( Leave R1 zoning in place)

\* Create a more flexible approach to zoning  
( Clear cut zoning is best, flexibility leads to corruption)

Community and economic development

Public engagement

\* Promote communication and transparency in the planning and decision-making process

(Keep this one in, but truly do it. It is absolutely unacceptable to only put in the bullet points that politically you want to be there. You need to have this document represent what all the citizens are saying or else it is a sham document)  
(The City needs to truly walk the walk on this!)

Sincerely,

Linda Damashek



Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

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## Comments on Land Use and Community Systems chapter of comprehensive plan

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L. G. Damashek <lgdamashek@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 7, 2025 at 8:43 AM

To: zoning@cityofevanston.org, mmjones@cityofevanston.org

Dear Land Use Commissioners,

I am writing to express my concern that the Land Use section has many items written in very vague language that are clearly concerning specific plans that are in development that the City wishes to have the Comprehensive Plan green light without actually clarifying what they are. Evanston residents deserve honesty in a document that their elected officials will be voting on.

These include on pages 43-45 and 52:

LU 1.1- Update zoning regulations to remove barriers to mixed use development  
(Where is this an issue? Who is this a barrier to?)

LU 1.3- Update the development review and permitting process to... remove barriers for property owners and potential community investors  
(What kind of barriers are they talking about?)

LU 3.1- Develop criteria to analyze the economic impact, emissions, mitigation, and eliminate resiliency measures, infrastructure and utility capacity, environmental justice, implications, and housing diversity.  
(Clarify what these criteria will be in the document)

LU 4.3- Align capital improvement projects with private investment to leverage mutually beneficial outcomes  
(Whose private investment?)

LU 5.1- Streamline policies, regulations, or processes that remove barriers and support emerging sectors  
(Emerging sectors?)

LU 5.2- Strengthen partnerships with local businesses, institutions, and community groups to achieve entrepreneurship goals that lead to the creation of innovation hubs in Evanston by... Attracting and retaining startups and emerging markets that align with institutional programming"

(Align with institutional programming? Northwestern has extensive endowment money and can finance these kinds of developments by themselves)

LU 6.2- Support innovations and healthcare programming and remove barriers to ensure equitable distribution of providers and services throughout the city  
(What is this all about?)

LU 6.3- Update zoning regulations to support emerging trends in programming and the modernization of aging facilities on institutional campuses

(Again, Northwestern has extensive endowment money and can finance whatever kind of development they need to by themselves. We don't need to change our zoning for their needs)

P. 52 Community systems

CS 2.1- Design strategy to adapt and reuse public buildings and spaces, including space sharing, and a policy for selling or buying properties among community partners

(What project and what partners are being referred to here? The voting public and property taxpayers have a right to know)

Sincerely,

4/8/25, 11:24 AM

CITY OF EVANSTON Mail - Comments on Land Use and Community Systemschapter of comprehensive plan

Linda Damashek



Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

## Comments on Housing section of Comprehensive Plan

3 messages

L. G. Damashek <lgdamashek@gmail.com>  
To: zoning@cityofevanston.org, mmjones@cityofevanston.org

Mon, Apr 7, 2025 at 8:59 AM

Dear Land Use Commissioners,

Please make the Comprehensive Plan Housing section more clear to its readers by:

1) Defining vague terms, such as

Housing section, page 91

“ Gentle density”

“ Missing middle housing”

“ Focused growth in centers and corridors “

2) Giving documentation and statistics to justify the wishful thinking “ Trickle down affordable housing” approach presented in the statement:

“ New market rate developments give higher income households options to move into, making available older units with more attainable prices available”

It's more likely that new higher income households will move into Evanston to fill the new expensive market rate units and that will not create any new affordable units becoming available.

Sincerely,  
Linda Damashek

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>  
To: "L. G. Damashek" <lgdamashek@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 7, 2025 at 3:28 PM

Hello,

I am emailing to confirm that your comments in this and previous emails have been received.

Thank you for providing additional input and let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

**Meagan Jones**

Neighborhood and Land Use Planner

Community Development

City Of Evanston

909 Davis Street | Evanston, IL 60201 | 847-448-8170 | 224-307-8350

[mmjones@cityofevanston.org](mailto:mmjones@cityofevanston.org) | [cityofevanston.org](http://cityofevanston.org)

**Beginning March 10, 2025, all mail should be addressed to the City of Evanston located at the Lorraine H. Morton City Hall, 909 Davis Street, Evanston, IL 60201. ATTN: Name, Department.**

**Beginning April 1, 2025, please visit us at our new home located at 909 Davis Street.**

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Note: The contents of this electronic mail to/from any recipient hereto, any attachments hereto, and any associated metadata pertaining to this electronic mail, is subject to disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1 et. seq.

[Quoted text hidden]

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**L. G. Damashek** <lgdamashek@gmail.com>  
To: Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Mon, Apr 7, 2025 at 4:26 PM

Hi Ms. Jones,

Thank you for your confirmation of my 3 emails with comments regarding the Evanston Comprehensive Plan second draft.

My first question is regarding the process for these comments to be shared with the Land Use Commissioners. Will you be forwarding them directly to the Land Use Commissioners? Or will you be editing them in some way?

My second question is regarding the Preservation subject heading. I think it should be more clearly titled Historic Preservation as that is the topic throughout the chapter. I would like to add that comment as well.

- a) Should I write a separate email with that comment?
- b) Could you explain to me if there is some rationale for just calling it Preservation?

Thanks in advance for your answers.

Sincerely,  
Linda Damashek

[Quoted text hidden]



Meagan Jones &lt;mmjones@cityofevanston.org&gt;

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## LUC Comments

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Jennifer Drake &lt;jensrunning@gmail.com&gt;

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 8:24 PM

To: zoning@cityofevanston.org, mmjones@cityofevanston.org

Please consider my comments below:

1. Collect and analyze data on what types of housing people need.
2. On page 13, in economic development “*maintain focus on revitalizing key commercial corridors*” should be reworded to say “*maintain focus on revitalizing downtown, while preserving corridors such as central street*”. Most residents I talk with are happy with many of the existing “corridors” especially Main and Central and therefore shouldn’t be subject to drastic changes.
3. On page 13, in housing, remove “*revise density limits to accommodate affordable housing*”. Density doesn’t create affordability. This line creates false expectations and should not be in the comp plan.
4. On page 13, in housing remove “*remove restrictions on multifamily housing in some areas*” – we already have a lot of multifamily housing in Evanston. The ratio of multifamily seems more than appropriate for a suburb. In fact, compared to Wilmette , we already have double the multi-family units.
5. On page 14, in housing, it says “*expand and diversify housing options to accommodate a wide range of needs*”. Evanston already has an incredibly diverse housing stock per page 92, either explain what housing type we are missing, or strike this language.
6. On page 14, in housing, remove the line “*support for increased housing density and transparent zoning*”. Who said they wanted density for density’s sake? Provide evidence because most residents do not want this.
7. On page 14, in zoning revise the language from “*examine R1 zoning*” to “*preserve R1 zoning and the existing single-family housing stock.*”
8. On page 14, in zoning, “*Create a more flexible approach to zoning*”- explain what the intent of this is.
9. On page 16, in housing remove the language “*revise current density limits to accommodate affordable housing*”. Density doesn’t create affordability. This line creates false expectations and should not be in the comp plan.
10. Do we need to add a dedicated section for Downtown? Expand on how we could revitalize downtown to include specific strategies—such as encouraging mixed-use residential developments, adaptive re-use, office to residential conversions, attracting new businesses and filling vacant storefronts.
11. Consider instead supporting looking at building 6 story, sustainable buildings around the CTA and Metra stations in Evanston.

Thank you  
Jennifer Drake  
[2723 Lawndale Ave](#)



Meagan Jones &lt;mmjones@cityofevanston.org&gt;

## Comprehensive Plan comments for LUC

Kiera Kelly &lt;kiera.kelly1000@gmail.com&gt;

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 7:18 PM

To: Meagan Jones &lt;mmjones@cityofevanston.org&gt;, zoning@cityofevanston.org

1. Collect data on what housing we have and what we need. Which type housing has the most vacancies? Are we adding the type of housing we most need? Do we have a high demand of single family housing (as realtors and new families have shared - many of these families took up to a year until they were able to secure a home in Evanston.) Do we actually need more single-family housing? If we diminish our single family homes, will we cease to get families moving here?
2. Pages 9-12: Survey results not valid and should not be highlighted - without proof from a data analyst. A professional data analyst reviewed the survey and found so many anomalies that they believed this survey is not valid - numerous VPNs, surveys oddly, surveys input from different parts of the country, many in Chicago. Batches of identical surveys submitted from Cradle to Career. This is probably why HDR did not include the survey information. If these results are from one NU undergrad, then that is not sufficient.
3. Pages 12-13: Incorporating feedback. There is bias as to the amount of detail and emphasis skewed toward emphasis of the second survey, which only 200 people responded to (and many did not as they believed the HDR plan was so inadequate, it would be completely revised. The results of input from ward meetings is not detailed at all, so needs to be included. Meanwhile, there was a 6th and 7th ward meeting to review the plan with 130 participants, a downtown joint ward meeting that filled the EPL meeting room and a first ward meeting.
4. Pages 13-14: There is what seems like a deliberate mischaracterization of the "key takeaways" from the Land Use Commission Meetings. Many people attended hours and hours of these meetings, told by staff and the Land Use Commission that their input was important and would be noted. This feedback defies the hours of comments we all heard.
5. Please make the specific edits:
6. On page 13, in economic development "*maintain focus on revitalizing key commercial corridors*" should be reworded to say "*maintain focus on revitalizing downtown, while preserving corridors such as central street*". Many residents seem to be happy with many of the existing "corridors" especially Main/Dempster and Central and therefore shouldn't be subject to drastic changes.
7. On page 13, in housing, remove "*revise density limits to accommodate affordable housing*". Density doesn't create affordability. This line creates false expectations and should not be in the comp plan.
8. On page 13, in housing remove "*remove restrictions on multifamily housing in some areas*" – we already have a lot of multifamily housing in Evanston. The ratio of multifamily seems more than appropriate for a suburb.
9. On page 14, in housing, it says "*expand and diversify housing options to accommodate a wide range of needs*". Evanston already has an incredibly diverse housing stock per page 92, either explain what housing type we are missing, or strike this language.
10. On page 14, in housing, remove the line "*support for increased housing density and transparent zoning*". I do not remember anyone saying they wanted density for density's sake.
11. On page 14, in zoning revise the language from "*examine R1 zoning*" to "*preserve R1 zoning and the existing single-family housing stock.*"
12. On page 14, in zoning, "*Create a more flexible approach to zoning*"- explain what the intent of this is.
13. On page 16, in housing remove the language "*revise current density limits to accommodate affordable housing*". Density doesn't create affordability. This line creates false expectations and should not be in the comp plan.
14. Do we need to add a dedicated section for Downtown? Expand on how we could revitalize downtown to include specific strategies—such as encouraging mixed-use residential developments, adaptive re-use, office to residential conversions, attracting new businesses and filling vacant storefronts. Please forward this article on Wilmette's revitalization to LUC members: <https://www.therecordnorthshore.org/2024/08/18/how-wilmette-turned-its-downtown-into-a-dining-hotspot-and-a-community-hub/>
15. There is a general concern that public feedback and LUC feedback conclusions were unfoundedly brought back to the original pre-determined conclusions that were presented in the first document, from the mayor, staff and outside groups.

My second set of feedback is the attached document from Michelle Chelbek. I agree with all of this. Please note all of her comments into my comments.

Finally, realtors say that we do not have enough single-family homes, especially detached. Densification will further decrease the availability of single-family homes, especially at the entry level in the western parts of Evanston where that supply is most available. All classes, all **demographics** and races also want single-family homes - the American Dream. We must actually try to get more residents on the housing ladder and figure out how many subsidized/affordable housing units we **NEED**. Engage developers in constructing owner-occupied housing. It is hard, but they exist. Create incentives for them to do so. Create a program of subsidized housing that allows renters to become owners. Land trusts for publicly owned lots.

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 **2025-03-25\_LUC\_michelle\_chlebek.pdf**  
617K



Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

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## Comprehensive Plan Revisions

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**Korey Neibarger** <kneibarger76@yahoo.com>

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 8:26 PM

Reply-To: Korey Neibarger <kneibarger76@yahoo.com>

To: "mmjones@cityofevanston.org" <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

I am writing as a concerned community member regarding specific elements in the current draft of the Comprehensive Plan. After a thorough review, I have noted that the plan includes proposals for increased density and up-zoning—particularly in the Housing sections (pages 14–15 and 16–17) as well as in discussions on downtown development (pages 42–43). I respectfully demand that these elements be removed.

Furthermore, I insist that the City commit to a comprehensive study to determine precisely how much affordable housing is needed to serve our community. Such a study is critical to ensure that the housing policies reflect the actual needs of Evanstonians and provide clear, data-driven targets for affordable housing development.

Additionally, I demand that the City undertake a detailed examination of how it can foster homeownership for more Evanstonians. By exploring innovative approaches and implementing supportive policies, we can expand opportunities for homeownership and strengthen the fabric of our neighborhoods.

Thank you for your prompt attention to these important issues. I appreciate your commitment to ensuring that the Comprehensive Plan truly reflects the values and needs of our community, and I look forward to a revised plan that supports both stability and opportunity for all residents.

Best regards-

Korey Neibarger

[864 Sheridan Rd](#)

[Evanston, IL 60202](#)



Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

## Fwd: Envision Evanston 2045 Comprehensive Plan Comments

Elizabeth Williams <ewilliams@cityofevanston.org>

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 5:42 PM

To: Erin Baynes <ebaynes@cityofevanston.org>, Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

FYI

**Liz Williams**

Planning Manager/

Interim Housing & Grants Manager

Community Development Department

City of Evanston

909 Davis Street | Evanston, IL 60201 | (224) 296-4489

[ewilliams@cityofevanston.org](mailto:ewilliams@cityofevanston.org) | [cityofevanston.org](http://cityofevanston.org)

**Beginning March 10, 2025, all mail should be addressed to the City of Evanston located at the Lorraine H. Morton City Hall, 909 Davis Street, Evanston, IL 60201. ATTN: Name, Department.**

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Sheila Sullivan** <[sheilasullivan17@gmail.com](mailto:sheilasullivan17@gmail.com)>

Date: Fri, Apr 4, 2025, 5:41 PM

Subject: Envision Evanston 2045 Comprehensive Plan Comments

To: <[zoning@cityofevanston.org](mailto:zoning@cityofevanston.org)>

Dear City of Evanston Zoning Representative(s):

Below please find my comments on the Envision Evanston 2045 Draft Comprehensive Plan of February 21, 2025. The draft plan is still lacking in several areas; however, these are some of my concerns. Also, the following issues identified below also pertain to the text in the associated parts of the document.

There is no discussion or analysis of the broad community concerns associated with citywide upzoning.

### Page 12- Land Use

Bullet 3 – Revise this bullet to read: Maintain protections for open space, community gardens, and surface parking lots that are fully utilized.

Bullet 6 – Remove this statement since there are currently no restrictions to accessory dwelling units.

### Page 12 – Transportation

Bullet 3 – The car-centric infrastructure that currently exists needs to be maintained. Some expansion may be needed due to the increasing density in Evanston.

### **Page 12 - Parks and Open Space**

Bullet 3 – The metric for underused facilities needs to be explained in each instance before any removal or repurposing proposals are entertained.

Bullet 5 – It is not clear what or how “Reevaluate Park use policies to better support community events” would be achieved.

### **Page 13 Economic development**

Bullet 3 – This statement “Remove incentives for development not aligned with sustainability goals” is not clear. Erecting a platinum LEED building in a green space between two other buildings is not a clear choice of sustainability.

### **Page 13 - Housing**

Bullet 1 – Remove this bullet. There must be density limits. Evanston is getting too dense already.

Bullet 3 – Remove this bullet. Restrictions must be maintained as it opens a slippery slope to unchecked density.

### **Page 13 - Place-Making**

Bullet 3 – Remove this bullet. Evanston needs design guidelines and an architectural review board to look at community aesthetics. Evanston is already a hodge-podge of mismatched buildings and most of them are the more recent developments.

### **Page 13- (Historic) Preservation**

Bullet 3 – Remove this bullet or proceed with extreme caution. \* Remove unnecessary bureaucratic steps in the preservation approval process

### **Page 14 Key Takeaways from land use commission meetings**

#### **Housing**

Bullet 2 – This does not sound correct: “Support for increased housing, density, and transparent zoning”. I have never spoken to anybody in Evanston who wants increased density.

Bullet 4 – This type of development (mixed use zoning, and transit-oriented development) has been a lackluster prospect, and a failure in some respects. The first floor of these developments for businesses are largely vacant and most TOD residents have cars.

#### **Transportation and mobility**

Bullet 3 – It is not clear how this could be addressed and what the need is.

#### **Zoning and development**

Bullet 1 - This should be removed. Single-family districts should remain as such. There is already the provision for ADUs.

Bullet 2 – This should be removed. If zoning is made more flexible than it already is, then why even have it? Zoning is enacted for a purpose and needs to be better enforced in Evanston to keep from creating more of a mess than we already have.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Sheila Sullivan  
Third Ward  
Tel: 847-845-9489 Email: [sheilasullivan17@gmail.com](mailto:sheilasullivan17@gmail.com)



Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

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## Comments on 2045 Envision Evanston Draft Plan

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**kwesterberg@comcast.net** <kwesterberg@comcast.net>  
To: Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 3:15 PM

Hello, Meagan:

I hope you're doing well at this busy time. Attached please find my comments for submittal to the LUC and staff on the most recent draft of the Comprehensive Plan . Take care,

Kristine Westerberg

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 **4-4-25 Comments on Envision 2045.pdf**  
800K

## Comments on Envision 2045 Comprehensive Plan

April 4, 2025

The most recent Draft Comprehensive Plan is a considerable improvement on the original. I want to commend the Land Use Commission (LUC) and City staff who have worked to address many of the issues that made the first draft so problematic. I also commend the decision to separate the development of new zoning regulations from the Comprehensive Plan itself: this allows the Plan to serve its intended purpose as a general guide and maintain flexibility for the years ahead.

My comments on the revised Draft are as follows.

1. **The Plan should better acknowledge the diversity of opinions regarding zoning changes in residential areas, and pledge that the process for updating the zoning code will take that into account.** For example, on page 13, the Plan cites the many meetings of the LUC that elicited a “broad range of perspectives” from the community on such issues as “the importance of addressing housing diversity.” In fact, many residents commented that Evanston already has housing diversity, and the Plan itself notes on page 91 that “Evanston has a diverse housing stock.” I agree that increasing housing options can and should be a goal for the years ahead, but recommend that the Plan acknowledge the process for doing so will take time, and should be guided by resident input.
2. **The Plan should better define “affordable housing.”** This phrase is used throughout the draft. The term means different things to different people: low-income housing, subsidized housing, “missing-middle” housing, etc., and can be misleading depending on how it’s used. Again, I agree that ensuring better housing options should be a goal for any healthy community, but building publicly subsidized housing is a different challenge. Is this something the Plan intends to recommend? The LUC and City staff should develop a definition for this phrase, so that it’s clear what the new zoning codes may be required to address.
3. **The Plan should quantify the desired increase in density, if possible.** Numerous chapters cite the need for increased density to offer more housing options, but given Evanston’s existing built environment, there will undoubtedly be a limit. Is there a percentage that we’re trying to reach? How was that developed? If there isn’t a goal, the Plan would be better served by acknowledging in each chapter that all the existing City features we want to preserve (green space, neighborhood character of architecture and scale, landmark preservation, walkability of City streets) may be at risk with increased development. The Plan acknowledges on page 85 that we don’t have sufficient green space per resident, for example. And if walkability is key for our City, so are property line setbacks that govern the scale of new developments. This isn’t an argument against development: it’s an argument for understanding which areas can accept more development, *and to what degree*, while others would see a negative impact from such development. I don’t think the Plan needs to go into detail at this point, but again, it needs to acknowledge the importance of balance. The revised downtown section does a good job of this: *Future development and zoning regulations in Downtown Evanston must carefully balance the*

*integration of new high-rise structures with the preservation of lower-density areas to maintain the district's character and livability. Thoughtful zoning and design guidelines must ensure harmony between architectural styles, walkable streetscapes, and green spaces to enhance the urban fabric (p. 42). This needs to be emphasized throughout the Plan.*

4. **The Plan still needs to acknowledge the presence and influence of Northwestern University and other non-profit institutions on our tax revenue.** The University is a major factor in the City's economic success and livability, yet little is written about housing conflicts within key residential areas, or how the downtown retail area depends on students. Where's the research on other cities with major universities who have managed growth successfully? What solutions could be adapted for Evanston?
5. **The Plan should commit the City to conduct diligent research on parking needs and predictions to guide future development.** Most of us agree that "driving is costly and environmentally harmful." (p. 64). However, as noted on page 60, driving remains the majority means of travel, in no small part because traveling west of Evanston is not easy without a car. If the City's goal is to reduce the reliance on car transportation (as stated on page 14), the Plan needs to be realistic about the fact that this depends on our transportation partners like Pace, Metra, CTA, etc. There is no assurance that options and improvements will be available as mixed-use areas are targeted for development. Expectations for growth should take that into account.
6. **The Plan needs to be more realistic with its stated goals on increasing housing supply and commit to better research on how to accomplish this.** Housing security is a growing challenge everywhere, and increasing costs won't make this any easier. I recommend that the Plan **not** include such statements as "New market-rate developments give higher-income households options to move into, making available older units with more attainable prices" (page 92). What if folks moving into newer residences are from out-of-town? Where's the evidence for the idea that prices for older units will necessarily be more attainable? I don't expect the Plan to have all the answers for this, but I do recommend that it avoid unsupported assumptions that may not hold up in our current housing climate.

Kristine Westerberg

525 Grove, Evanston



Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

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## Comments on the draft Comprehensive Plan

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**Shirley Dugdale** <shirley@dugdalestrategy.com>  
To: Megan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 5:01 PM

Hi Megan,

Can you kindly forward these comments on to the Land Use Commission and the EE45 planning team.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments and I hope some of these suggestions are useful. I look forward to hearing the next round of discussions on the plan,  
Shirley

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 **250404 CompPlan comments - Dugdale.pdf**  
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## Comments on the Draft Comprehensive Plan

To: Land Use Commission, EE45 Planning team  
From: Shirley Dugdale, AIA  
Date: April 4, 2025

Thank you for welcoming feedback on the draft plan. These general comments below relate to future land use strategy issues that apply across several chapters, but the pages that follow are specific comments by chapter.

1. **The Comprehensive Plan needs to address the western and southern sectors of the city more effectively. If a major goal is developing a walkable city, then residents in whole sectors of the city (especially those historically underserved) should not have to depend on car use to grocery shop, get to work, or lack convenient walkable access to essentials.** The Proposed Land Use Map should be revised before it is accepted as part of the Comprehensive Plan.
  - a. **Strengthen the east-west corridors, showing intentions for better east-west transit and extending mixed-use potential along them.** Steering growth along the east-west movement corridors is desirable: developers will want to build housing where there is good transit available, yet the transit systems will not invest unless there are potential ridership levels to justify it.
  - b. **Propose to add a stop on the Skokie rail line over the next decade.** This opportunity would provide thousands more with walkable access to the mass transit network and support growth of retail along active pedestrian paths leading into the residential neighborhoods.
  - c. **Show potential for mixed use development around key corridor intersections, especially in the west and south.**
  - d. **Study the impact of displacing existing large scale commercial with proposed zoning changes.**
2. **Development incentives need to be distributed better across the city, not just around the mass transit stops in the land use strategy.**
  - a. **Encourage development of small neighborhood-scale, walkable clusters** that offer local grocery, retail and basic health support and that can also grow to reflect neighborhood identity and cultural diversity, especially in the western and southern sectors of the city.
  - b. **Rethink emphasis on development around the rail stations if only 13% of residents here commute by public transit.** If 26% now work from home and 11% walk to work, that totals 37%! The 42% who drive alone may be headed to destinations in the metropolitan area not easily served by transit.
  - c. **Develop neighborhood plans with residents during the zoning review process,** not only to identify what is meaningful about local places and buildings as Neighborhood Conservation Districts, but also to envision where small walkable pockets may be desirable, residents' circulation paths and patterns of destinations, and where areas for development are desirable especially for family-oriented housing near schools.
3. **Integrate a more nuanced recognition of adverse market impacts with proposed housing strategies.** Many have been raised in the hearing so far. Changing zoning to multi-unit development in R1/R2 is unlikely to add affordable housing, may trigger demolition of older housing, risks gentrification and displacement—unless there are specific affordability mandates or Incentives.

4. **Additional data analysis would aid the process, for example:**
- a. **Better data on projected comparative context surrounding Evanston:** A summary of projections for additional housing units being developed in surrounding communities would be helpful context for planning here. For example, the Chicago Planning Commission just approved the [Broadways Land Use Framework](#) stretching from Devon to Montrose, which will upzone the corridor with potential to add **18,000 units just south of Evanston along the red line**. How might availability of new units in other locations change assessment of demand here?
  - b. **A map illustrating the areas of existing density across the city today**
  - c. **More rigorous analysis and clarification of projected plan targets:** for population growth, housing types, owner vs. rental properties, etc. as basis for planning and managing development.
  - d. **More thorough study to analyze projected car use and parking needs,** including more accurate assessment of resident parking needs today and in future; street parking capacity; potential impact of Ryan Stadium concerts on garage availability, etc.
  - e. **Use of the visualization tool during the zoning review process:** Use the modeling tool and database which the city paid ViewPro to develop in summer 2024 to analyze alternative proposed zoning revisions and examine impacts of potential sites and their surrounding context.

## COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**Notes:** Suggested edits are in red, and explanations/comments in italics. Page numbers refer to the **pdf page** numbers (single page version) (as the print page numbers do not align).

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### MAP SUGGESTIONS

*This plan draft is illustrated with maps of existing conditions and photos, and some chapters are missing a map. Consider representing the Comprehensive Plan's intentions with aspirational diagrams and maps reflecting long-term goals to achieve, once the zoning analysis is completed. Red indicates suggestions to fill gaps.*

Chapter 4 | Evanston Tomorrow:

- **Comprehensive Plan Concept** (as concept diagram summarizing future intent)

Chapter 5 | Neighborhoods and Places:

- **Neighborhood Map**

Chapter 6 | Community Systems (p.48):

- **Educational Facilities** [schools, add Northwestern, libraries, Ecology Center]
- **Infrastructure Facilities** – water, waste disposal plant, PFHQ, fire stations, emergency response hubs

Chapter 7 | Getting Around

- **Transit System Network: Existing and Proposed** (could be dashed)
- **Bike Routes Network**

Chapter 8 | Environment:

- **Map of Urban Tree Canopy** (including on private land, e.g. from Morton Arboretum Community Tree Canopy Summary or other satellite analysis?)

Chapter 9 | Parks, Recreation and Open Space:

- **Parks and Open Space** - Number each park with key to identify them; color code key symbols to indicate types (tot lots, etc.) Add?: NU athletic facilities which residents may use, tennis courts, sailing center, sports facilities, etc.

Chapter 10 | Housing

- **Existing Density** – units per acre distribution across parts of the city
- **Housing Map** – showing building and lot outlines, coded by unit type (this may already exist in the visualization database)

Chapter 11 | Health and Well Being

- **Healthcare Facilities** (such as hospitals, urgent care clinics, testing facilities, physical therapy studios, pharmacies, community facilities with gyms/pools, athletic centers)

Chapter 12 | Economic Development

- **Existing Commercial Districts** (downtown, Central, Main/Dempster, Howard, etc.)

Chapter 13 | Arts and Culture, Placemaking

- **Venues for Arts and Community Engagement** (arts centers, music performance spaces (incl. NU), theaters, downtown fairs, Central St/4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, fireworks venues, etc. Ryan Stadium future concert venue.

Chapter 14 | Preservation

- **Historic Districts, Landmarks and Landmark Eligible Properties** (add to the historic districts map)

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## Chapter 2: WHAT WE HEARD ~~AND VISION STATEMENT~~

Relocate Vision Statement page to Chapter 4, and rename that chapter as “**Vision for** Evanston Tomorrow”.

*It seems out of place in Chap 2 and will strengthen Chap 4.*

p.14 Key Themes – re Environment: “**Climate action Renewable energy** incentives: Introduce incentives for residents and businesses to adopt renewable energy **and sustainability improvements.**”

*Feedback was broader than just about renewable energy.*

p. 15 Key Themes – re Housing:

“~~Make space for affordable housing: Revise Review~~ current density limits to **encourage accommodate** affordable housing **needs** for younger families and low-income populations.”

p. 16 Key Themes – re Community Building, Arts and Culture, and Placemaking:

Add: “Reflect identity: Create **neighborhood places**, art installations and cultural markers that reflect community identity.”

*This should be about creating physical places as much as the art, if this was about ‘placemaking’.*

Combine bullets 3, 4 and 5 to tighten up: “Prioritize **and promote** public spaces: Maintain walkable public spaces to encourage community building **and use by all ages and abilities**. Add shade structures and seating options in pedestrian-centric areas. ~~Enhance access to public spaces: Design public spaces for people of all ages and abilities.~~”

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## Chapter 4: **VISION FOR EVANSTON TOMORROW**

Relocate the **Vision Statement** from p.18 into this chapter.

**The Plan is missing an overall conceptual diagram** to express the vision, rather than using a proposed zoning map.

p. 31 on vision:

Redundant text needs editing. This section lists goals and bulleted action steps, then much gets repeated in each of the following chapters. Closer editing will help...

“Evanston’s small **minority-owned** businesses are thriving, contributing to a vibrant and resilient local economy.”

*Why just minority-owned – what about women-owned or other categories. Best to use more inclusive language.*

p. 31 under goal 1 Foster a Healthy Community:

- “**Strengthening Reimagining** Evanston through **planning design** and decarbonization efforts to enhance livability and foster physical, mental, and social well-being.”

*The plan should advocate for quality of life and question livability of interventions which are too dense, e.g. the container units recently squeezed in between two houses. Do exceptionally small “micro-houses” with limited windows offer the quality of life Evanston promotes for all?*

Cut last bullet on transit on this page – covered next page

p. 32 under Strengthen the Local Economy

- “Reviving and supporting **areas of commercial activity** ~~business districts~~ to create thriving hubs characterized by a mix of public spaces, retail, dining, entertainment, ~~work office~~-spaces, and housing.”

*We need to think differently about work space as Evanston has a high percentage who walk to work or work from home. The last bullet is a good capture of key points!*

p. 32 – under Prioritize Environmental Sustainability:

Add new bullets at beginning of the list:

- **Promoting planning and design of buildings to greater sustainability standards and climate resilience.**
- **Preserving and expanding Evanston’s mature tree canopy on both public and private property throughout the city, so essential to shade, cool, retain moisture, and improve air quality in a warming world.**

*This is a key issue for Evanston, beyond engineering aspects of green infrastructure.*

p. 32 under Invest in Transportation Options

“We strive to push for and invest in an **equitable**, resilient, and environmentally sustainable transportation system where every resident has choices by...”

*To achieve an equitable system, the Plan needs to focus better attention on those areas of the city which are not well served now, not just make the Chicago spine denser.*

p. 32 under Housing

Change section heading to: “Increase Housing **Abundance Diversity**”

*The chart on p. 91 shows that the types of structures here are quite diverse and bullets below address unit sizes – “abundance” captures more of the issues here.*

*It is not clear what projected targets should be for overall population growth and for desirable number of units by type. This should be part of the deliberations during the zoning review, as one will inform the other. As noted by Land Use Commissioners, targets will be important for assessment of the plan over time.*

- “Increasing the efficiency and resilience of housing, **planning for quality of life**, and addressing health and safety concerns.”

*Urban design controls will be important to support sufficient access to natural light, views onto green space, nighttime quiet and other factors at risk with increased density, which can be important to well-being, quality of life and respite.*

p.33 – under Facilitating Future Development:

**Delete and replace confusing paragraph:** ~~“Evanston must take bold action... adapt as new trends emerge.”~~

*e.g. how are the land constraints causing “tension” with “climate mitigation and resiliency” -- if increased built density is not carefully designed, it may exacerbate adverse conditions. The ways mentioned to reconcile goals don’t address the issues cited, etc.*

Suggest replacing with:

**“To achieve the Envision Evanston vision given Evanston’s built out conditions, the strategies, proposed policies and actions must be coordinated carefully to achieve the housing abundance, climate mitigation and equitable development that are fundamental to the Comprehensive Plan.”**

p. 33 “Fostering a culture of active community participation in decision-making.”

*If this is an important goal, then the Comprehensive Planning process needs sufficient review time once a revised draft v3 is developed.*

p. 33 – under Land Use Approach

**Remove the Land Use Map and relocate it to Chapter 4**, for which its detail is more relevant.

*The text here is on target but the land use map seems out of place in a chapter about goals and aspirations.*

p. 33 **“A Land Use Map is intended to serve This map serves** as an important policy tool that will guide the City’s development decisions over the next 20 years. Future changes to regulations such as zoning and development standards will be guided by **the approved this-map.**”

*The proposed land use map should be revised before it is accepted as part of the Comprehensive Plan. It needs review in detail by the Land Use Commission and the community before a final version is accepted—for which the process so far has not provided sufficient time. So any Land Use Map in the next issue of the Comprehensive Plan draft should be clearly labeled “draft”.*

p. 33 Suggested refinements to sentence under Land Use Approach:

End of first paragraph: “... supporting the development of **synergistic neighborhoods. centers and corridors.**”

“Coordinated land use and transportation planning is essential **to implementing the centers and corridors framework**, as they have a direct impact on each other. For example, directing higher-density development **toward transit stations and** along major corridors is not sustainable without a robust transportation network. Mobility plans are successful when they connect people to places that meet their needs and lifestyles, **which is largely influenced by land use so the plan not only proposes development along the existing north-south rail corridors but advocates for strengthening all corridors to encourage development across the city.** The Preliminary Future Land Use Map **(see right, Figure 1)** and its development process are outlined in Chapter 5 - Neighborhoods and Places. **This map serves** **When refined during the zoning review process, a Land Use map will serve** as an important policy tool that will guide the City’s development decisions over the next 20 years. Future changes to regulations such as zoning and development standards will be guided by **land use policy this map.**”

*There seemed to be general consensus in the hearings that reference to the “framework of centers and corridors” is no longer the conceptual driver for the plan, so it may be preferable to temper use of that language, as well as focus on evolution of the entire city, not just densify today’s main corridors between transit stations, e.g. the Chicago Avenue upzoning.*

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## Chapter 5: NEIGHBORHOODS AND PLACES

**It would be desirable to illustrate the chapter with a map of Evanston’s neighborhoods. Consider restructuring text to describe Evanston by neighborhoods rather than political wards.**

p. 37 intro - Consider integrating the neighborhood description from 2000 Comprehensive Plan into top of second column:

*“Evanston’s neighborhoods vary in character. Some are “substantial” in style—single family homes on quiet tree-lined streets, with or without a nearby shopping district. Others are more “urban” with low to mid-rise multi-family housing, high population density, busier streets, and mixed-use buildings with commercial and residential activities under one roof. This diversity offers dynamic alternatives that many claim to be a part of Evanston’s charm.”*

p. 38 about 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward: “The ward boasts a **significant tree canopy on streets and properties tree-lined streets**, and...”

p. 39 under Key Challenges and Opportunities:

*This section of text is a good summary, especially describing the importance of quality design and complementing neighborhood sense of place.*

**Indicate potential for development around key corridor intersections in the land use strategy, especially in the west and south sectors of the city.**

*Although Robert Crown now gets a lot of pedestrian and vehicular traffic at the intersection of Dodge and Main, there is only a tentative indication of a small footprint of red mixed use at that corner (appears to be just the commercial that is there now?). Let's leverage the energy there to promote more housing development! Similarly, the corner of Dodge and Oakton is a destination for James Park, Dawes School, and the Levy Senior Center, yet there is no indication of potential mixed use around it.*

p. 39 under Future Land Use Map:

Relocate the Land Use Map into this chapter and label it "Preliminary Land Use Map".

p. 41 under Creation and Innovation: "This land use category **may** attract new types of businesses like research, technology, and **incubators for new types of businesses** ~~labs~~ to adapt and support local jobs."

*It is questionable whether research labs may develop so far from Northwestern, but facilities for spinoffs, startups or incubators for inventive business ideas to serve the community may be promising, or large footprint facilities that produce for distributed outlets, like Reprise Roasters or catering services incubators.*

*The plan needs to consider where any displaced large footprint grocery stores could be encouraged to relocate and stay within Evanston to serve the western and southern sector of the city.*

p. 41 at box on "evaluating proposals":

*This Land Use map needs to be revised. As described earlier, the east-west corridors need to be strengthened with potential for mixed use and higher density along them, more mixed use on other north-south major corridors – as described in the text.*

p. 42 Under Policies and Actions

Policy 1 Support Future Development Near Transit and Mixed-Use Areas

LU 1.1 "Update zoning regulations to remove barriers to mixed-use development that support opportunities for people to live, work, and operate businesses near transit and within mixed-use areas."

***Development incentives need to be distributed better across the city, not just around the mass transit stops.*** *Transit-oriented development is a concept that has been around for decades.*

*Focusing future development on the rail spines overly caters to real estate developers' interests and does the city a disservice in terms of developing its future potential and walkability throughout.*

LU 1.2 – *Does "Require **all** developments to be carbon neutral" intend to cover new single family to 4-plex housing as well?*

LU 1.3 "Update the development review and permitting process to make it more predictable and **reduce** ~~remove~~ barriers for property owners and potential community investors."

LU 2.1 – "Update zoning regulations **so they support the goals of** ~~to align with~~ the Comprehensive Plan."

p. 43

LU 3.1 "Develop criteria to analyze **development proposals, such as** economic impact, **housing unit types, neighborhood impact and compatibility, urban design quality, site planning sustainability,** emissions mitigation and climate resiliency measures, infrastructure and utility **loads, parking strategy, capacity, housing diversity, and** environmental justice implications, **and other criteria.**"

LU 4.1 "Establish criteria to prioritize capital improvement projects, **such as** ~~based on~~ **community benefits, equity, and community neighborhood impact, and long-term contribution to the city.**"

LU 4.3 "Align capital improvement projects with **strategies for** private investment **or public-private partnerships** to leverage mutually beneficial outcomes."

LU 5.1 “Streamline policies, regulations, or processes that ~~ease remove~~ barriers to ~~and~~ support emerging sectors.”

*What are these barriers? Not explained.*

LU 5.2 “Strengthen partnerships with local businesses, institutions, and community groups to achieve entrepreneurship goals and ~~stimulate that lead to~~ the creation of innovation hubs in Evanston. ~~by:~~ • ~~Establishing regular communication and setting goals with local partners.~~ • ~~Encouraging and participating in networking events.~~ • ~~Attracting and retaining startups and emerging markets that align with institutional programming.~~ • ~~Ensuring land and spaces that support the creation of research and innovation hubs.”~~

*This is more detail than in other actions – suggest deleting the sub-bullets.*

*It is not clear what types of “innovation hubs” are being targeted and how these facilities might contribute to the city’s future.*

***Why are we “ensuring land and spaces” when we have so much vacant office spaces downtown?*** *How much office space downtown is currently vacant and could be targeted to revitalize or repurpose, or support Northwestern research spinoffs?*

LU 5.3 “Explore ~~and Identify~~ areas or facilities with potential to ~~the use of city-owned properties to~~ support the ~~development creation~~ of innovation hubs.”

*So why is just city-owned space targeted?! – seems there is an ulterior motive here...*

LU 7.1 “Establish ~~an Urban Design Review Commission Committee or process~~ that provides ~~design review and~~ technical assistance for new development and integrate-it into a predictable review and approval process.”

*This would be most effective for achieving goals if it is a commission with statutory powers similar to the Land Use Commission and the Preservation Commission.*

LU 7.3 “Develop guidelines ~~and design evaluation criteria~~ for new development that align with the vision and goals of the Plan, and consider ~~urban design issues such as massing, compatibility with context,~~ the defining features of neighborhoods, sustainable materials, and energy efficiency.

p. 44

LU 8.3 “~~Review Update~~ zoning regulations to allow existing homes to add new units within the existing building footprint, ~~subject to review and alignment with revised regulations.~~”

*Review and approval needs to be mindful of ownership issues: buying up homes and converting them from owner-occupied to rental buildings may not always be advantageous, e.g. may encourage more conversion into student-occupied housing and/or a loss of homes available for families. ADU regulations already allow adding a new unit within an existing structure. Allowing basement conversions into dwelling units where conditions are appropriate could be beneficial for adding rental units in the historic districts, but the ADU ordinance may cover that.*

LU 9.1 “Assess neighborhoods to identify opportunities to ~~develop housing add diverse housing typologies~~ that meets the needs of community members.”

*Simplify so plan language is applicable over the long-term. Evanston already has considerable diversity in housing typologies.*

Delete - LU 9.2 Update zoning regulations to allow diverse housing typologies based on the assessment.  
New 9.3: “~~Develop strategies to promote housing development in areas of opportunity identified in the assessment.~~”

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## Chapter 6: COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

Two separate maps would be desirable to illustrate existing conditions covered in this chapter.

1. **Rename as an “Educational Facilities” map** – and add other educational facilities in addition to the schools: i.e. university, libraries, museums that are educational resources for the community
2. **Create a new “Infrastructure Facilities” map** – with City hall, fire stations, police HQ, water treatment plant, waste disposal site, emergency hubs?

Create a section that specifically addresses the school system (not just a paragraph under Existing conditions).

*The CP should highlight the importance of schools which are so core to family life with small children, as are parks, and have attracted families to Evanston. Proximity to elementary schools and middle schools within convenient walking distance is valued by families, potentially as important as living near the transit stations or downtown.*

p. 52 Under Policy 4: Strengthen... Infrastructure

**Add new CS 4.10: Increase permeable surfaces by paving roadbeds and alleys with permeable asphalt or permeable pavers where feasible.**

*Citation: [Chicago Green Alley Handbook](#) (CDOT)*

**Add new CS 4.11: Develop strategies to improve local community resilience to power grid failures and explore potential of emerging technologies like microgrids to help neighborhood resiliency.**

*(This might be relevant to CS 3 as well but that seems to be more about social services than infrastructure.)*

*Examples: Strategies to tap distributed solar and battery power during power outages, protect or bury power lines along alleys with new construction to mitigate wind/tornado damage  
A plan for distributed cooling centers and shaded spaces to provide respite during heat emergencies for those without adequate air conditioning*

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## Chapter 7: GETTING AROUND

In general the chapter reads well.

p. 55: delete redundant paragraph. Several policies on summary table sound redundant – tighten up?

p. 56 – under Existing Conditions:

“These **questions** **themes** were **investigated during engagements emphasized through engaging** with the public throughout the planning process. Suggested policies and actions are outlined at the end of **the each** section.”

*These were good questions to probe on those themes.*

p. 58 - Revise the map to be: “**Existing and Proposed Transit Routes**”, to document where the plan is advocating for better expanded transit coverage across Evanston by 2045.

***The plan should diagram a well distributed grid system that serves all of Evanston equitably with better east-west connections -- assuming a primary planning goal is to reduce car use. Proposed additional routes can be shown with dashed lines (e.g. along Main St. where there is none now).***

*Chapter 3 lists these under Econ Development (p. 15), but they are not called out in this chapter:*

*“Revitalize key corridors: Maintain focus on revitalizing key commercial corridors, such as those*

along as Central Avenue, Green Bay Road, Chicago Avenue, Main Street, Dempster Street, Dodge Avenue, Noyes Street, Asbury Avenue and Oakton Street.”

p. 60 – Under Road Infrastructure:

Add sentence to second paragraph: **“As alleys and roads are repaved in the future, the use of permeable asphalt or permeable pavers will offer even more long-term benefits.”**

p.64 Policy 1: Work with Regional Transit Partners...

T1.1 This is a good general statement.

T1.1: Add sentence: **“Pursue potential to add a future station stop on the Skokie rail line at Dodge Avenue.”**

*Best to be specific in identifying this opportunity. The rails are elevated at this point so a raised platform with stairs is feasible. If a platform is built where the tracks are raised at Dodge, the pedestrian movement could support more growth along Dodge. It may help justify more frequent bus service along Dodge, providing better access for all to the shopping center on Howard, Levy Center, Robert Crown center, the Vali shopping center and ETHS using public transit.*

Delete T2.4 “Implement placemaking strategies at stations and bus stops... to create inviting community gathering spaces.”

*Unrealistic expense for likelihood of success -- and T 2.2 covers enhancement of streetscape at stops anyway.*

p. 65 Policy 3. “Facilitate development that prioritizes **safe**, convenient access to public transit **and multi-modal transfer.**”

*The repetition of “safe” in so many policy titles somewhat muddies clarity of each one. Delete here or add an action item in #3 that addresses perceptions about safety, especially with night transit use.*

p. 66 Re T 10.3 “Create a plan to expand the network of EV charging stations for public use, focusing on areas of high demand as well as broad geographic distribution for citywide EV access. Identify publicly owned properties that could serve as EV charging and mobility hub sites, and provide a publicly accessible map.”

*Note that the analysis to create this EV plan will need to be done in time to inform the city’s next phase of the “Putting Assets to Work” study. Retaining some of the existing city lots may be seen in a more desirable light if proposed new developments will be building in significantly fewer parking spaces, and the lots may enable solar panels to supplement power.*

p. 67 Under Policy 12 on utilization of data-driven strategies to optimize parking:

T 12.3: “Continue to collect...” *Doing a thorough study now of parking needs and patterns would help inform current policy on what to require in developments now being proposed – too much seems to be anecdotal.*

**Add T 12.4: “Study and project future parking garage capacity needs, especially given future Ryan Stadium concerts and additional new development with reduced parking requirements..”**

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## Chapter 8: ENVIRONMENT

p. 72 – under Existing Conditions, Ecosystems, paragraph 2:

Add under prestigious titles: “Evanston was named first city in Illinois to be certified as a National Wildlife Federation Community Wildlife Habitat.”

On: “Our urban trees experience significant challenges... As the City’s mature trees reach the end of their natural life, there are fewer mid-sized canopy trees to take their place.”

*Many mature trees of the estimated tree canopy are on private lots in single family zoning districts. Permitting more built area on any R1/R2 lot with multi-unit buildings will likely erode more of the urban canopy (especially mature trees), compared with a process that identifies appropriate lots where there is less risk.*

*Residential property is estimated to have 43% of the tree canopy\*. How can the city inventory and map known locations of existing trees on private land, especially mature ones?*

*\*According to the Morton Arboretum’s Community Tree Canopy Summary for land cover for Evanston, the breakdown of Residential land cover types consisted of 43.3% tree canopy (940 acres), 16.9% vegetation (367 acres) and 1.2% bare soil. (Building coverage in residential areas was 31.5%, roads 0.6% and other paved area 6.5%.)*

*<https://mortonarb.org/plant-and-protect/chicago-region-trees-initiative/community-tree-canopy-summaries/>*

p. 73

Add: “Human activity and infrastructure development must harmonize with the natural environment to support a healthy and diverse ecosystem. To facilitate the coexistence and management of local **insects, birds and other** wildlife, the City must encourage positive nature experiences and create best practices to reduce human-wildlife conflict. Supporting and protecting biodiversity requires thoughtful decision-making on **design of** the built environment, such as installing nondisruptive lighting systems, **bird-friendly facades**, as well as stewardship of the natural environment, such as reducing pesticide and chemical fertilizer use.”

Delete: “As climate change drives migration toward the Great Lakes region, we must welcome innovative land-use strategies to accommodate an unknown number of climate migrants to our population.”

*Is it realistic that it will be Evanston’s responsibility to plan to accommodate “unknown” numbers of climate migrants along with sanctuary city policies plus solving the affordable housing crisis, especially when neighboring communities are lagging behind?! Especially welcoming those who previously chose to live in resource consuming lifestyles in other sectors of the country?*

Add: “We expect developers to prioritize the conservation of green infrastructure, reclaim and reuse building materials, **employ passive design strategies**, and adopt innovative practices to reduce emissions and embedded carbon.

*Passive design strategies help reduce reliance on air conditioning systems, which is not addressed by reduction of emissions and embodied carbon.*

p. 74 on Policies and Actions

Policy 1: “Incorporate climate resilience measures into infrastructure projects to **expand support natural habitats and** biodiversity and mitigate future climate impacts, including increased flooding, heat waves, and storm events.”

Policy 2: “Effectively manage and sustain natural resources to optimize regional ecosystem and human and wildlife health.”

*Human health has its own chapter; muddies the intention of this policy?*

ENV 2.5 “Incentivize native plantings and groundcovers, as well as rainwater management practices on private property.”

**Add new ENV 2.7: Monitor the lake coastal waters to reduce stresses to lake wildlife, such as sound pollution caused by high-speed recreational boats.**

*Even five blocks from the lakefront, these boats can be heard.*

p. 75

ENV 3.3 “Promote urban forest health around vulnerable populations, prioritizing neighborhoods, public parks, schools, and transportation secondary corridors.”

*The primary transit corridors are very stressful for street trees – perhaps better strategy to prioritize investment in the secondary street network to encourage cooler more walkable streets?*

ENV 3.5 “Support efforts to improve tree canopy cover on private property, especially in areas where it is limited, including the western parts of the City.

**Add new ENV 3.6: Identify strategies to preserve existing tree canopy endangered by increased density with zoning changes and explore incentives such as stormwater tax breaks for properties with more canopy.**

Policy 4: on Implement land-use practices that optimize soil health:

Add to ENV 4.3: “Use best soil management practices, including reducing impervious surfaces, and retaining vegetation during construction, and returning nutrients in seasonal leaf cover back into the soil where possible.”

Policy 6 add to title: “Ensure a clean, sustainable water supply by protecting Lake Michigan through collaborative stewardship practices, and promoting water conservation practices across residential, commercial, and industrial sectors.”

p.76

Policy 7 add to title: “Promote urban landscape design strategies that absorb rainfall and prioritize stormwater management strategies that protect water quality, manage flood risks, and enhance the natural function of wetlands, floodplains, and water bodies.”

**Add new ENV 7.3: “Require use of permeable asphalt, permeable concrete or permeable pavers when replacing or constructing all street beds, parking lots, alleys, bike paths and private driveways to reduce stormwater runoff and retain moisture.”**

*Although paving unpaved alleys is beneficial, it means a loss of permeable area unless paved in the future with permeable materials. Citation: [Chicago Green Alley Handbook](#) (CDOT)*

On Policy 8 actions: **Cite the recent [Roadmap for a Circular Evanston](#) (2/13/25)**, for more detail as reviewed in the Environment Board’s [Circularity Roadmap discussion presentation](#) (3/13/25).

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## Chapter 9: PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

p. 79 In the two short intro paragraphs, there are multiple mentions of “environmental injustices”, “promoting social justice”, “bridging equity gaps”, “past inequitable practices”, etc.

*Editing seems out of balance considering statements about good distribution of parks and open space in Evanston.*

P. 80: Shift description of Noyes Arts Center to Chapter 13 on Arts & Culture.

*Seems odd to start this section with descriptions of buildings. Noyes Arts Center building seems out of place unless mentioned in relationship to Talmadge Park and the play areas there. It could also be mentioned in Chapter 14 on Preservation. Similarly, the paragraph about the Harley Clarke building might be better in Chapter 14, as it is covered below in the description of the grounds.*

P. 81: Identify photo as Arrington Lagoon.

*Perhaps add a sentence about it here, as it is so important a central focal point for communal activities (and is only listed on the following page).*

Add mention of the Shakespeare Garden, as it is part of Evanston's Jens Jensen heritage.

Add mention of Noah's Playground for Everyone – an example of inclusive design! -- and the park with lake bluff walk north of Harley Clarke?

*If the Sand Dunes at Lighthouse Beach are fragile areas, should they be described/used as a program site for environmental education camps, or should those be kept in the fog houses area?*

North Shore **Channel**, not Canal

Add footnote with link to the [North Shore Channel Habitat Walk](#), which illustrates stops along it with information about wildlife, its history and restoration.

<https://www.evanstonhabitat.org/walk/>

Last paragraph: bold the Bird Sanctuary, and add mention of its recreational value: "...who tend to the area **and promote birding as recreation.**"

P. 82 – add a number key with list of park names at bottom of map, at least the more significant ones, like the Grosse Point Lighthouse and Rose Garden. Perhaps color code the numbers to indicate type (e.g. tot lot).

*Isn't it more important to illustrate the distribution of various types of parks, or their level of urgency for rehab in the Plan, rather than legal property ownership (which could go in an appendix)?*

P. 83: The text notes that Evanston has far less than standard 10 acres per 1,000 residents and that they are in poor condition. It concludes that the city is built out and unlikely to acquire new land, so must prioritize maintenance.

*If so, will the continuation of the PAW study consider converting some of the city parking lots into parkland instead of selling the properties off to developers?*

p. 83 last paragraph: Add to "Increased and equitable investment in... will improve quality of life, foster community pride, increase property values, **attract families to Evanston**, and increase tourism."

PO 4.1 "Connect the community through a mix of programs and amenities, **waterfront access and water features in parks.**"

*The Policies and Actions are all good statements. Will be interesting to see the now-released Parks & Rec strategic plan report and how it aligns.*

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## Chapter 10: HOUSING

p. 89 - Policies in the table need to be revised to match the Policies and Actions at the end of the chapter.

p. 90 - Paragraph at top of the page is good summary.

p. 91 – chart: *what is the difference between “1,detached” and “1, attached” in the color key?*

p. 91: on Student Housing

*It would be helpful if NU could provide data breakdowns for the number of undergrads vs. graduate/post docs who live off-campus **and** rent apartments in Evanston. What is the annual churn that generates and proportion of rentable units available?*

*What is the number of faculty and administrators who live in single family homes or apartments in Evanston?*

*(The numbers need sorting out: freshmen and sophomores are required to live on campus, as are first year transfer students. Older students can live off campus, as can graduate students who do not live in one of the three on-campus dorms, but not all live in Evanston as there is also the downtown campus.)*

p. 93: on HB2621 “property tax incentives for new construction or repaired buildings tied to provision of affordable rental housing”

*What is the estimated number of additional units over the next decade when combined with proposed new developments? Is that property tax incentive out of local property tax?*

*What are the targets by 2024, as measures to assess the plan?*

p. 93 - under Collaboration and Partnerships: “developing **housing workforce**” rather than the reverse.

p. 94 under Policy 1 Implement a Comprehensive Housing Strategy

**Add new H1.4: “Complete database with documentation to map existing housing units across the city, identified by building type, capacity in units, ownership or rental, as a basis for planning.”**

**Add new H1.5: “Develop database and map of underutilized sites with potential for development.”**

*Should be searchable in the city mapping system. H3.4 just deals with a database on existing stock.*

*Can underutilized office buildings be examined for potential to convert into dwelling units, as is being done in other cities?*

Under Policy 2 Increase Housing Supply and Housing Choices

H2.2 Delete – *zoning will not reduce the cost of housing*

H2.3: “Facilitate the use of new and innovative construction technologies **and building systems. such as manufactured, modular, and mass timber construction, and remove barriers in plan review, permitting, and inspection processes.**”

*Best to just leave the sentence open ended to cover whatever innovative methods might be proposed in the future. For example, proposing “modular” units is risky given Evanston’s urban fabric and, as demonstrated in the recently built example, likely not a contextually appropriate architectural solution, with potential conflicts in form, materials, fenestration, detailing, etc. H2.5 This covers streamlining; any innovative building design or materials can go through a design review process with the proposed Urban Design Commission to confirm appropriateness.*

H2.5: “Streamline ... building **design and** plan review...”

H2.8: “~~Collect Develop preapproved model design examples~~ for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), **double houses**, duplexes, triplexes, cottages, **passive houses, row houses** and other neighborhood-scale housing to **illustrate strategies for development, approval processes and reduce development costs guided by input from an Urban Design Commission.**”

*Quality architectural design must take into consideration the context, can’t be “preapproved”! Plans would be unlikely to reduce approval or costs anyway, but providing ideas on options would be beneficial, H3.1on rehab mentions climate resiliency but it should be here too for new construction.*

**Distinguishing between terms “double houses” (side-by-side attached) and “duplex’ (one apartment over another) is important.** In Evanston there are many examples of early double houses that blend into the historic districts, so this typology may be more acceptable to the community for zoning changes and may encourage more owner-occupied units — as opposed to investment properties by absentee landlords.

H2.9: Delete “...and income-restricted units in high-cost neighborhoods”.

*The testimony has indicated that it does not make sense. Sentence stands on its own without this phrase.*

Policy 3. Add to title: “Preserve Existing Housing Stock and Neighborhoods”

**Add new H3.5: Continue to promote a range of ADU renovation strategies for single-family housing types for owners to add rentable units** (e.g. more basement apartments where appropriate).

**Add new H3.6: Develop training programs to build back construction workforce skills for rehabilitation and renovation of older homes.**

*The carbon investment of construction has already been made with existing structures, so retrofitting may outperform even the most efficient new construction over the life of the building. Skills training can include how to upgrade building envelope performance, preserve rather than replace old materials, control lead dust in exterior painting, install compatible new building systems, repair or recreate ornamental details, etc. Ideally it would also teach how to orient buildings and windows for light and views while controlling solar exposure and reducing air conditioning load.*

H 4.3 Provide footnote for “community land trusts and limited-equity cooperatives”.

Policy 5: Promote Healthy Buildings and Neighborhoods

**Add new H5.6: “Integrate climate-related resiliency strategies into housing construction to promote health for residents.”**

*Such as: incentives for more passive design strategies (e.g. considering solar orientation in new building design with exterior shading techniques to reduce solar heat gain into apartments) or promotion of more energy efficient housing models, like row housing, that minimize exterior exposure (compared with freestanding mini-suburban models like “microhomes” or 4-unit apartment blocks with narrow gaps between them -- which expose additional surfaces to extreme temperatures).*

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## Chapter 11: HEALTH AND WELL BEING

**Add map: Healthcare Facilities** (including hospitals, testing facilities, urgent care clinics, physical therapy studios, pharmacies, community facilities with gyms/pools, Northwestern Athletic Center)

P. 100: “Our residents need housing options at different affordability levels that are safe, ~~and~~ accessible, **and offer a quality living environment**, as well as energy-efficiency ~~buildings that to~~ support healthy indoor air quality.”

p. 101: “Preserving and protecting these precious resources helps ensure that current and future community members can enjoy clean air, **soil** and water while protecting against climate-related disasters.”

“As described in the Environment chapter, safeguarding a healthy environment and mitigating climate-related threats require responsible use of natural resources, **stewardship to protect environmental quality, conversion to clean energy, lowering emissions to achieve carbon neutrality,** and **reduction of waste** to minimize environmental burden.”

Policy 1: [about equitable access and building wealth]

*This policy is about economic development – better located in Chap. 12.*

**Change Policy 1 to: “Coordinate with the many health related systems and facilities to treat, support and enhance the health of Evanston’s population.”**

*This policy should leverage potential of the major hospitals and other physical facilities located here that support health in Evanston. Need to mention access to and programmatic coordination with Evanston Hospital, Ascension-St. Francis, urgent care distributed clinics, professional medical office buildings (including the dentists’ building!), distributed physical therapy facilities, distributed pharmacy services, private athletic facilities, athletic programs in community centers, the McGaw YMCA, etc. Perhaps mention contribution of Northwestern through its community health research, availability of its athletic facilities, tennis and sailing programs – which have provision for public access to support a healthy lifestyle.*

TLW 1.2 Advance antipoverty programs that support wealth generation, such as **Guaranteed Income,** homeownership and home repair programs, and support for small and emerging **minority-and-women-owned** businesses.

*Wealth generation action is more appropriate in Chapter 12 and guaranteed income is not a policy here. A long term Comp Plan should not be too specific so “emerging businesses” is more appropriate.*

TLW 3.1 “Invest in programs and policies to reduce lead exposure.”

*Acknowledge somewhere that there is a major multi-year infrastructure program already underway to address this.*

Some of these policies seem a bit redundant – could this section be tightened up?

TLW 5.2 “Update standards and streamline housing retrofits to increase accessibility for those with growing needs who wish to age in place.”

*What exactly is this intended to apply to - subsidized public housing? – because all housing unit retrofits can’t be required to meet ADA requirements. Perhaps “promote retrofits that...”*

TLW 5.3 and TLW 5.4: delete?

*Good intentions but these are about social program policy, rather than a comprehensive plan.*

TLW 5.5 “Support nontraditional housing arrangements, including **shared cohousing and other cooperative shared models, the Village Model, which helps as well as supportive social programs, that help** older adults age in a place of their choosing, connected to their communities with the practical supports and tools they need to successfully age on their own terms.”

*Stronger if this refers to some alternative housing solutions. (The “Village Model” is a specific a neighborhood social program.)*

**Add a proposed Policy 6: Increase access to fresh produce grown locally or by regional farmers for all residents, through support for community gardens, enabling homegrown produce, strengthening the Farmers’ Market and other initiatives for both health and local independence for greater resiliency.**

*This has implications for not only for land use planning at the community scale but also at the scale of individual lots, with setbacks that can enable sun-facing area.*

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## Chapter 12: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Switch order of policies: *Change #4 to #1 gives a more positive lead into the section.*

**Add ECON 3.2:** “Encourage development of senior care providers to offer services to enable aging in place throughout the City.”

Echoes ECON 2.1. Future need for home care as business will grow, also serves other populations (disabled, injured, etc.)

ECON 4.1 “Adopt a privately owned public space plan that encourages developments in strategic locations to provide and maintain public spaces, **including rooftop facilities.**”

ECON 4.3 – *all excellent ideas to make more visible legacy business histories and buildings!*

ECON 4.4 – *not sure how important it is to invest in gateways, especially as there are multiple points of possible entry.*

**Add ECON 4.7:** “Support and grow the Evanston Farmers’ Market which attracts a weekly seasonal communal experience to downtown as one of the most successful markets in the region.” – *an effective place-making activity.*”

ECON 5.1: “Partner with agencies and institutions to promote ~~the healthcare and education sectors for~~ workforce development, **particularly for healthcare and education sectors, as well as others that may develop over time.** Provide incentives to draw innovative and emerging businesses to the City.”

ECON 5.3 “Work with school districts, Northwestern University **and Oakton College** to develop and refine academic programs, **credit transfers**, degrees and **certificates** that support **emerging industry opportunities, such as clean energy technology and life sciences.**”

ECON 5.5 “Support existing partners in growing workforce expertise in building deconstruction methods **and developing planning towards a circular economy.**”

ECON 5.6 “**Incentivize conversion of Convert** vacant office spaces downtown into tech incubator spaces and accelerators for businesses **in these sectors, leveraging downtown’s proximity to a major research university, and for potential conversion into residential units where appropriate.**”

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## Chapter 13: ARTS AND CULTURE, Community Building, Placemaking and Cction Making

**Shorten title to just: “Arts and Culture”.**

*The title is overly lengthy. In addition, the term “Placemaking” here refers to multiple things: 1) the urban design of physical exterior spaces with streetscape components (including public art), 2) the activity programming of events that take place in the public spaces to enliven them, and 3) neighborhood collaboration on public art or murals that reflect a neighborhood’s history or cultural associations. Public art is relevant to this chapter, but isn’t “place making” equally relevant to chapters on 1) Open Space, 2) Economic Development, and 3) Preservation?*

**p. 117 - Start the chapter's Existing Conditions section with description of the many centers of artistic and cultural activity that Evanston offers.**

*It curiously does not start off describing the established cultural centers for which Evanston is known (in four topics down in "Other Art and Culture Offerings"). These physical centers for the arts represent magnet "places" to bring people together to participate in creative activities ("social cohesion"), creating communities with shared interests for all ages of participants. Public art can enliven our public spaces but it is one of many types of artistic expression in this city.*

*The Noyes Center especially should be described here, not in Chap. 6 on Parks (assuming the plan is not to dispose of it as a city asset...) It also acts as an arts "incubator" – aligned with PAC1.7.*

*Facilities as Centers of artistic and cultural activity to mention?*

- **The Noyes Cultural Arts Center** rents space to over 30 artists and organizations and is a vibrant hub of theater, music, creative writing, visual arts, and photography. As an arts incubator, it offers studio and class spaces, and two art galleries. The three performance facilities include the **Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre**, the **Piven Theater** and the **Actors' Gymnasium**. Designed by renowned architect Daniel Burnham in 1892, the Center is designated as a historic landmark.
- **Evanston Art Center**
- **Music Institute of Chicago** Nichols Concert Hall
- **Northlight Theater**
- **Dance Center Evanston**
- **Pick-Staiger Concert Hall**, Northwestern U.
- **Block Museum**, Northwestern U.
- **Gichigamiin Indigenous Nations Museum** (formerly Mitchell Museum)
- **Community performance spaces** (e.g. spAce, St. Lukes' with its famous Opus327 organ)
- **Outdoor performance spaces:** e.g. Arrington Lagoon, parks

*How about place making associated with recurrent events? Does the iconic Fourth of July Parade get mentioned somewhere? The Summer and Winter Solstice celebrations at the Arrington Lagoon?*

p. 117 - On Key Challenges and Opportunities:

**Add mention of the potential for major 30,000 person concerts at the Ryan Stadium, and unlimited number at 10,000 person capacity.**

*Although Ryan Stadium promises to draw many people to events here, this may have a significant but as yet unknown impact on the city so the potential negative effects need study and mitigation.*

p. 118 – Policies and Actions: *In general, this section reads a bit lengthy compared with other chapters – might benefit from some editing.*

PAC 3.1 "Design public spaces to withstand extreme heat, cold and increased precipitation. **Design public spaces with shelters, shades, and cooling landscape design strategies that provide people with choices for comfortable places to be outside even in summertime.**"

Delete PAC 3.3 on public spaces and facilities as "disaster or emergency shelters":

*This seems out of place, more appropriate for Chap. 4 on community systems.*

p. 119 – Delete Policy 4 re active transport network.

*Seems redundant with Chap.4.*

PAC 5.3 "Explore additional funding sources to support arts, culture, **community heritage places** and historic preservation."

PAC 6.1 “~~Develop~~ ~~Implement~~ marketing and financial sustainability strategies for community building and placemaking activities to support cultural and economic vitality in Evanston. ~~outlined in the Evanston Thrives Plan.~~”

*Actions in the Comprehensive Plan action should be generic; perhaps footnote the Thrives plan as it may change over time.*

PAC 6.2 Delete first two sentences requiring new construction to dedicate a percentage of budget for art. Simplify to “~~Incentivize~~ the installation of public art and placemaking strategies in conjunction with capital improvement projects ~~and new construction projects.~~”

*Requiring art budget would introduce yet another burden on developers; incentivize provides more flexibility.*

PAC 7.3 “Engage with the community to create events and activities that give more visibility to Evanston’s diverse cultural heritages.”

***We have an opportunity to create a new Center for Cultural Heritage as one component in an adaptive reuse of the 2100 Ridge building!*** *It could offer galleries for permanent and rotating exhibits, and shared gathering spaces to celebrate and make visible Evanston’s diverse cultural heritage. [See my 3/9/25 outline for the vision.]*

PAC 8.1 on public spaces: *This makes it sound like a variety of spaces doesn’t already exist.*

PAC 8.2 “Develop policies and remove barriers to arts incubators, maker spaces, and live-work studio spaces.”

*We do need to encourage more spaces, but also to support the ones we already have -- for example, there is a long list of artists who would like to rent space in the Noyes Center building.*

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## Chapter 14: PRESERVATION

**Add all landmark and landmark eligible buildings and properties to the map.**

*This map should document all structures today, in addition to the historic landmark district boundaries. They should be entered into the land use database and interactive map.*

p. 124 – Provide footnote link to Preserve 2040 plan document.

p.129 Policy 3 – “Promote historic preservation ~~programs~~ ~~tools~~ and approaches ~~and their contribution to in-line-with~~ the city’s growth, housing, environmental, and economic development goals.”

P 3.1 “Support National Register nominations for Evanston’s historic ~~income-producing~~ resources to document their significance ~~so they may become eligible for access-to~~ financial incentives and tax credits that encourage rehabilitation and adaptive ~~reuse into income generating properties.~~ ~~efforts.~~”

P 3.3 “Establish technical assistance and incentives for building deconstruction, materials reuse ~~and salvage of significant artifacts~~ over demolition.

P 4.1 “Allow for landmark designations based on cultural and social significance and ~~consider provide additional~~ flexibility in design review.”

p.130 P 4.4 “Support the creation and designation of ~~a~~-cultural historic districts that celebrate ~~significant groups in Evanston, such as~~ residents of color and other underrepresented populations.

P 4.5 “Prepare Neighborhood Conservation District Plans and support neighborhood planning efforts in areas where residents have expressed interest in enhancing and stabilizing neighborhood character, identity, and affordability.”

***A workshop process to develop Neighborhood Conservation Plans, and to get perspectives on zoning change proposals, will be desirable early this summer. These can identify residents’ aspirations for their neighborhood’s long term development and be able to apply the findings to inform deliberations on zoning changes.***

**Substitute for P 6.3, to read: “Provide advisory services to assist residents and inform about adaptive reuse strategies to stabilize structures.”**

**Shift P 6.3 to Policy 7 -- as heritage tourism is a citywide action/effort.**

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### **Some suggestions on GRAPHICS**

- Desirable to have footer with chapter title and report date on every page (so if extracts are copied there is no version confusion).
- Identify locations for all photographs (including ones on divider pages).
- Locate the logos of the consultant team credits at the back, with clarification that the document is a product of the City of Evanston, which had input from the consultant team. It seems clear that the document has been substantially reworked by the city having to step in. It should no longer be claimed to be their product in their firm promotional material!
- When report is reissued, it might be desirable to realign page numbering so those on the page end up matching the pdf page numbers. Publishing a single page version as well as double page spreads is helpful.



Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

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## Re: Ch. 10

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Jeff Smith <jeff@jefflaw.com>

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 5:21 PM

To: Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Cc: zoning@cityofevanston.org, cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>, ruger Steve <sruger@cityofevanston.org>, Elizabeth Williams <ewilliams@cityofevanston.org>

Meagan & friends:

In January I provided a list of 20 top problems (not the top 20 problems, these are unranked and not exhaustive) with the first draft of the Plan. I reviewed the second draft to see which of those have been addressed. A spreadsheet listing the issues and asking what was done in the second draft is attached. The answer is, unfortunately, that major issues remained unaddressed.

A meta-issue is the upzoning-affordability thesis. There is much contrary theory and evidence. A quick memo listing just some of that is also attached to this e-mail.

Finally, I have previously tendered attempted markups of the plan via graphic notes on .PDFs as well as, with some earlier chapters, a .doc format (which is even more difficult since we weren't provided with a text form). I suggested edits and commented on Chs. 1-8 and 10, and, yesterday, 11 and most of 12. I have the following remaining overarching comments:

— the discussion of “placemaking” seems centered on murals. Our murals are not functioning as “places” in that sense. That section needs to have less jargon and be in more plain English to even be discussed. Otherwise, I am generally in favor of more arts and culture.

— there was an ostensible separation of zoning from the planning but the word “zoning” pervades the draft, which is why you “can't unring that bell,” as Chair Lindwall put it. It's not really appropriate for a plan that is supposed to be a broader vision. In fact, many of the “tools and policies” are WAY too specific for a Plan. That would be more appropriate for a strategy document, and each of them should be discussed in their proper time. It's not really fair to the community to dump so many tools in one document. Esp. the zoning, which is contentious. “Zoning” and many of the specifics should be deleted in favor of principles. It will be easier to reach consensus on principles.

— Preservation: the conservation district concept is intriguing but needs fleshing out. Something less onerous to owners than a Preservation District may make sense. But the emphasis on streamlining preservation approval seems misplaced. Anyone buying a landmark property knows that there are downsides that go with the benefits. The problem lies with the unceasing pushiness of folks who don't want to follow the rules that apply to property. If everything wasn't always negotiable, there wouldn't be so much grasping, and there would be less public dissent.

— Implementation: 1-year assessments and 5-year reviews w/ possibility of change of strategy annually seems like a completely open-ended, standardless process. This is one reason why there should be far fewer specific tools in the Plan. If the Plan is endlessly mutable why are we bothering? And that just invites endless attempts at dealmaking.

Please distribute the attached. Thank you in advance.

Yours,

Jeffrey P. Smith

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**2 attachments**

 **Upzoning-Affordability 4-4-25.pdf**  
70K

 **4-4-2025 20 Top Problems EE45.pdf**  
150K

## Upzoning and Affordability

### April 4, 2025

The second draft of the Comprehensive Plan of Envision Evanston, incl. materials referenced, takes a nearly completely one-sided approach to upzoning and its impacts on housing price. There is substantial contrary evidence and analysis, and longstanding accepted truth in planning is that each city is somewhat different and you have to take very local factors into effect. Draft #2 does not do that. That is not responsible.

The draft ignores all/most theories of rents, from Ricardo to Henry George to Stiglitz.

The draft also **ignores** multiple quantitative or theoretical studies that either undercut the affordability thesis of upzoning/density substantially or demonstrate that there are great complexities and likelihood of unintended consequences.

With respect to Minneapolis, singled out in the RFP stage of this process as a model for Evanston, I have discussed numerous of these at “Minneapolis: Housing Miracle or Myth?” Central Street Neighbors (Jan. 10, 2025), <https://centralstreetneighbors.com/node/1626>.

In no particular order, here are a number more.

- A Rodríguez-Pose, M Storper, “Housing, urban growth and inequalities: The limits to deregulation and upzoning in reducing economic and spatial inequality,” *Urban Studies* 57(2): 223–248 (2020) (criticizing the housing-as-opportunity literature, because (a) deregulation and upzoning in large and dynamic cities are unlikely to benefit those at the bottom of the income pyramid facing the greatest affordability problems; and (b) greater deregulation will not facilitate interregional migration from low opportunity regions to booming cities, thus having no discernible impact on within-city and cross-regional inequality. Authors also make the case that burden of proof is on those who want sweeping change.
- Cheung, Monkkonen, and Yiu, who feel that upzoning is an important tool, nonetheless concluded that upzoning substantially **increased** the appraised value of properties’ redevelopment options, and that it was “complicated” to assess whether that occurred to a greater degree in higher-income and more centrally located neighbourhoods. “The heterogeneous impacts of widespread upzoning: Lessons from Auckland, New Zealand,” *Urban Studies* 2024, Vol. 61(5) 943–967, [sagepub.com/journals-permissions](https://sagepub.com/journals-permissions). DOI: 10.1177/00420980231190281, [journals.sagepub.com/home/usj](https://journals.sagepub.com/home/usj)
- A study of established suburbs found that relaxing zoning to allow for greater density and increase housing supply did not result in substantial increase in supply but was robustly related to higher housing prices. Mark Limb, Cameron K. Murray, “We zoned for density and got higher house prices: Supply and price effects of upzoning over 20 years,” December 2020

DOI:10.31219/osf.io/zkt7v, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346713407\\_We\\_zoned\\_for\\_density\\_and\\_got\\_higher\\_house\\_prices\\_Supply\\_and\\_price\\_effects\\_of\\_upzoning\\_over\\_20\\_years](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346713407_We_zoned_for_density_and_got_higher_house_prices_Supply_and_price_effects_of_upzoning_over_20_years)

See follow-up in the debate, Cameron K. Murray & Joshua C. Gordon, “Pricing Upzoning: A Reply to Critics,” Cameron K. Murray & Joshua C. Gordon  
Pages 261-266 | Received 24 Jun 2023, Accepted 03 Jul 2023, Published online: 26 Jul 2023,  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2023.2234892>

- Upzoning “reforms” are associated with less than a 1% increase in housing supply within three to nine years of reform passage, but mainly for higher-end units, with no statistically significant evidence that additional lower-cost units became available or moderated in cost in the years following reforms. Christina Stacy, et al., “Land-use reforms and housing costs: Does allowing for increased density lead to greater affordability?” *Urban Studies* Volume 60, Issue 14 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1177/00420980231159500>, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00420980231159500>

- Max Celant (master’s thesis), “The Impact of Density on Residential Property Values: Evidence from Dutch ‘VINEX’ Locations,” 3 April 2023 – 7 July 2023, School of Business and Economics, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, <https://spinlab.vu.nl/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/The-Impact-of-Density-on-Residential-Property-Values.pdf> (effects are complicated, depends on density factors)

- Richard Florida, “Does Upzoning Boost the Housing Supply and Lower Prices? Maybe Not.” *Bloomberg News* (Jan. 31, 2019), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-01-31/zoning-reform-isn-t-a-silver-bullet-for-u-s-housing> (study of zoning changes in Chicago finds that they led to higher, not lower, local home prices, while having no discernible impact on local housing supply).

Study cited: Yonah Freemark, “Upzoning Chicago: Impacts of a Zoning Reform on Property Values and Housing Construction,” <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3622-6354>, Volume 56, Issue 3 <https://doi.org/10.1177/107808741882467> (short-term, local-level impacts of upzoning are higher property prices but no additional new housing construction)

- Jim Russell, “Illusion of Local: Why Zoning for Greater Density Will Fail to Make Housing More Affordable,” *Pacific Standard* (July 7, 2014), <https://psmag.com/social-justice/illusion-local-zoning-greater-density-will-fail-make-housing-affordable-85313/> (discussing impacts of immigration and regional population as drivers of housing costs, and the phenomenon of vacant investment properties)

Far deeper analysis is needed. I particularly urge attention to the caution of Rodriguez-Pose et al who say that the burden of proof is on those who want sweeping change. This should absolutely be the case. A community should not a guinea pig. This is especially so given the normal and

understandable resistance of many. Pushing “reform” on a substantial portion of unwilling residents can lead not just to community division but to litigation. See, e.g., Robbie Sequeira, “The YIMBY push for multifamily housing hits a ‘nope’ from homeowners,” *Minn. Reformer* (Sept. 17, 2024), <https://minnesotareformer.com/2024/09/17/the-yimby-push-for-multifamily-housing-hits-a-nope-from-homeowners/>.

Jeff Smith

## Major Top-Level Problems with the Comprehensive Plan Draft: Update

	<b>Problem</b>	<b>Problem type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>FIXED in Draft #2</b>
1	<b>Lack of baseline housing data over time, or analysis</b>	CONTEXT	Plans typically baseline with facts and trends as an honest and objective starting point for analysis before attempt at strategies, tactics, or tools. A Plan should not backfill to support a thesis. The EE45 draft Plan lacks much baseline analysis, most glaringly with respect to housing and land use (historically the heart of a comprehensive plan). Previous plans going back to 1917 discuss why people move to Evanston, who the buyer markets are, how they have changed and might change, what other municipalities are doing, and how that relates and compares, cumulative impact, and similar variables. Making sweeping assertions about housing shortage and solutions, and proposing drastic overhaul in the name of affordability without even tracking the growth that has occurred, and assessing impact on rents and prices, makes the entire basic thrust ungrounded in fact.	Mainly NO. Economic section has some attempt.
2, 7	<b>Misrepresenting that Evanston suffers from lack of population density; failure to analyze pros, cons, costs, benefits of increased density</b>	CONTEXT PREMISES ANALYSIS	Data shows Evanston is already extremely dense, in top 99th or 99.5th percentile of US municipalities in people per sq. mi., among very densest for cities under 100,000. If, as EE45 contends, density leads to affordability, very-dense Evanston should already be affordable and should have gotten more so as we've built. But testimony was that increased density has correlated with more expensive and less black. A long body of work, an important original reason for planning and zoning, documents negative effects of crowding on neighboring lot-owners and the community overall. Density is controversial because many people have lived experience with it, impact of adjacent use is immediately felt, and economic impact is uneven and inequitable.	NO. City in response to FOIA says it has never even studied impacts

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3	<b>Misrepresenting actual state of housing diversity and “choice.”</b>	CONTEXT PREMISES	First draft suggested Evanston was a monoculture that needs to be more “diverse” in housing choices. Plan lacked data allowing comparison of what is and what has been, as well as narrative of how that occurred. Actual facts: Evanston has more variety of housing than most suburbs and abnormally high percentages of units in multi-unit buildings, abnormally low % of single-family detached. This was result of overzoning desirable land for multi-unit. Second draft acknowledges this in passing in some places but continues to harp throughout on needing more “options” and “choices.” In order to make housing choices more diverse we would need to build more SFD which is unlikely/impossible. More multi-unit and more density will make Evanston more monolithic, not more diverse.	PARTLY
4	<b>Dubious premise of growth</b>	PREMISES	First draft relied on a solitary CMAP estimate, assuming growth from a current 75,000-77,000 to over 84,000, and thesis was needing to grow to “accommodate” that. But most fits to the growth curve would conclude flat/declining population. Draft had no analysis or explain of past or future growth. Plan did not discuss that growth is a choice, let alone pros and cons.	No. NOW DELETED
5	<b>Unsupported/ inaccurate diagnosis of causes of high Evanston housing costs</b>	PREMISES	The half page of premises and analysis on p. 89 of Draft 1 as to housing “lack of supply” was at best superficial. Lacked foundation (see ##1 and 2 above), discussion of drivers of demand, or how impactful and enduring pandemic effects might be. No mention of supply chain or construction costs, or interest rates. No mention or analysis of submarkets — no nuance.	No.
6	<b>Unsupported thesis that a more crowded Evanston will be more affordable and livable</b>	PREMISES	Analyzing drivers of costs of land, especially in a highly developed, already-dense, mature and above-average affluent (yet unequal) inner-ring suburb, that contains a major research university committed to growth, is a complex matter. Evanston’s existing zoning is complex <b>because</b> of its already existing density, because that multiplies potential conflicts and makes more likely negative and unfair/undesired impacts on adjacent properties. Draft 1 did not address this or fairly examine how densifying what is already dense and/or desirable results in higher prices. Instead, coupled with zoning, had “solution” of ignoring conflicts and negative impacts by upzoning everything to what is nonconforming.	No. Doubled down.

	<b>Problem</b>	<b>Problem type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>FIXED in Draft #2</b>
8	Misrepresentation that clamor for density is the public opinion	CONTEXT; PROCESS	This assertion appeared not so much in Draft 1, which simply leapt to advocacy for greater density, as in presentations. In fact, this was the result of a highly organized and vocal lobbying campaign. A referendum on “no more high-rises” would probably pass and one on the effective elimination of single-family and two-family zoning would fail.	No. Made worse through non-representative “what we heard”.
9	<b>No accounting for lifecycle greenhouse gas impact of new construction.</b>	ANALYSIS	The greenest building is the one already built. Construction using cement, glass, and/or steel has enormous carbon footprint. Greenhouse gas (GHG) footprint of buildings in CO <sub>2</sub> e, both with respect to construction and operation, increases with height. Evanston has never calculated this or tracked this for even a single development let alone cumulatively. Failure to consider embodied emissions of construction, or the smaller but impactful impacts of demolition, self-deceives. Reduction in VMT makes no sense if climate impact of construction won’t be recaptured over the tenure of residents. Larger and taller buildings are the bigger culprits.	No.
10	<b>Grossly insufficient discussion of displacement/gentrification</b>	ANALYSIS	Regional experience as well as that of other college towns is that increasing structure density and population density in Evanston will generally gentrify instead of increasing affordability. Existing residents expressing concern about “affordability” were primarily not talking about future newcomers but about their own ability to live and age in place. Draft #1 had no analysis of this. Draft #2 touches on some of the reasons but completely avoids what density does to land value and so continues to only say “we will study this” and assures, without evidence, that “housing choices” is a solution, which ignores transaction and other costs of moving. What is still needed is real analysis of the causes of gentrification and displacement, what type of development does or does not accelerate that, and what mitigation factors, if any, work. Many here believe that that careful downzoning keeps rents lower by throwing cold water on speculation.	No. Only symbolically .
11	<b>Elimination of parking requirements not based in reality</b>	PREMISES ANALYSIS	The assumptions in Plan 1 were unsupported and unrealistic. Data to date indicates multi-unit construction isn’t getting folks out of cars, and that after building thousands of additional units, the most common way Evanston gets to work is still to drive, alone. Some of these facts are now mentioned but	

	Problem	Problem type	Description	FIXED in Draft #2
12	<b>Disrespect/ destruction of existing planning for no reason</b>	PROCESS ANALYSIS	Few if any residents urged throwing the carefully crafted, award-winning Central Street Master Plan under the bus, nor was there a widespread public clamor for undoing the Downtown or West Side plans, none of which are ancient history. The neighborhood has not been been polled or consulted on redeveloping Kingsley School or the Civic Center as a stacked subdivision. Evanston is a delicate ecology of many different neighborhoods that developed separately at different times and for different reasons.	No.
13	<b>Stealth elimination of R1/R2</b>	PROCESS	Land use map was deceptive when it effectively converts R1 and R2 into what is now R3 or R4, and R3 into what is R4 or greater.	Yes, labels addressed by deleting l map. But stealth aspect actually increased.
14	<b>Seniors ignored</b>	ANALYSIS	Similar to gentrification. Almost no discussion.	Yes and no. Now mentioned. Misses point with respect to many.
15	<b>Distorted and selective narrative history of zoning</b>	CONTEXT	<p>Evanston was a pioneer in zoning. The Zoning Analysis underlying the Plan appears to be template criticism of a zoning-overhaul shop ignoring the deep history in Evanston, and the myriad and complex reasons for how zoning developed here and nationally, not just in southern cities. Cherry-picking defies the weight of the historical record. Evanston zoning made town very attractive to many.</p> <p>Also, dismissing the entire existing Zoning Code because of the 1993 date of the total re-write is a logical fallacy, since the Code is constantly revised and tweaked. The “800 rules” are not that hard to understand. Only a fraction of those apply to any specific property or issue.</p>	No.

	<b>Problem</b>	<b>Problem type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>FIXED in Draft #2</b>
16	<b>Distorted and selective narrative history of Evanston</b>	CONTEXT	Plans, particularly in Evanston, whose sense of exceptionalism is a matter of documented history as well as its brand, typically have an in-depth discussion of what shaped the municipality and why, and the ramifications for both desirability and feasibility of change, with deep respect to history and residents' lived experience. Such discussion is conspicuous by omission here. The Plan lacks the sensitivity and empathy of past Plans and reads more like a party platform plank or prescription plan written by strangers, technocrats, or AI.	No.
17	<b>Mass transit assertions not based in reality.</b>	PREMISES ANALYSIS	This is similar to the parking requirements issue. The Plan has virtually no data at all, let alone narrative description of system evolution and use, the recent let alone historical data on amount of service, boardings and disembarkments, and who is using what transit lines for what. The Plan has no realistic discussion or projections of future system growth, decline, or capacity. All of these are needed to inform real decisionmaking that makes reduction in personal vehicle use and reliance on mass transit key elements. Especially considering the current dire straits of mass transit in Chicago, the likely lack of support from the federal government, and a state government with its own fiscal problems, this is irresponsible	No.
18	<b>No tabulation of data, responses.</b>	PROCESS ANALYSIS	The failure to include real tabulation of raw data demonstrates (a) why the release of the Plan was grossly premature and (b) that the data didn't really matter.	Partial.
19	<b>No accounting for Evanston fiscal situation or scenarios.</b>	PREMISES ANALYSIS	The flow of free money from the Biden Administration is over. The federal government will be hostile to a sanctuary city in a blue state. Evanston has announced that it has a structural deficit. The capacity of the City to raise taxes has to be account for the likelihood that District 65 may also continue to raise taxes. The rosy pictures of the Plan all need to be squared against fiscal reality. At least possible different scenarios need to be discussed. However, none of this exists in the first draft.	No.

	Problem	Problem type	Description	FIXED in Draft #2
20	Process problems	PROCESS	<p>Multiple procedural problems affecting content and fairness were laid out in my January memo. It is undeniable that this has been a unique and different planning process for Evanston. The mayor’s messaging stresses collaboration, but there is consistent skew in every aspect from initial input to outreach to data collection to data release through narrative and rollout. It is exhausting to residents and a reason why this has become so contentious.</p> <p>I cautioned in January that any new draft absolutely must not be “a brief that simply doubles down on previous product only with more ammunition, but must meaningfully show attention to the considerable resident input (and even outrage).” However, Draft #2 in fact doubled down by up-fronting density and all its codewords even more, and the push for faster delivery has been unrelenting.</p>	Not really.

A consensus Plan is still possible but requires additional public process providing meaningful opportunity for review and input, as well as for complete and thorough vetting by the Plan Commission or its successor, the LUC. To aid in its development, the LUC should both convene the committees it contemplated in early 2022, and commission a resident advisory committee directed to hold public sessions and work on the plan in collaboration with staff and with periodic report to the LUC. That would free staff to collect the data to which staff has far better access than residents, while allowing for much more input from a resident population that is far more conversant with Evanston history and neighborhood detail.

The zoning subconsultant should be terminated. Within the community is sufficient expertise to develop a reviewable Plan draft, working off the structure though not necessarily the content, by early summer, for revision as directed by the LUC and then forwarding to the Council. It is probably not feasible to meet an August deadline for Zoning Code revision, but since no particular Code sections have even been identified as deficient, simply a blanket assertion that it’s “too hard to understand,” an entire rewrite is likely unwarranted.

Jeff Smith  
April 4, 2025