LAND USE COMMISSION

Wednesday, April 16, 2025 | 6:00 P.M.
James C. Lytle City Council Chambers, Second Floor
Lorraine H. Morton City Hall, 909 Davis Street

AGENDA

Those wishing to make public comments at the Land Use Commission meeting may submit written comments in advance or sign up to provide public comment in-person during the meeting by calling/texting 847-448-4311 or completing the Land Use Commission meeting online comment form available by clicking here, or visiting the Land Use Commission webpage, https://www.cityofevanston.org/government/boards-commissions-and-committees/land-use-commission, clicking on How You Can Participate, then clicking on Public Comment Form. Community members may watch the Land Use Commission meeting online at www.cityofevanston.org/channel16 or on Cable Channel 16.

I. **CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

II. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. **Public Hearing | Comprehensive Plan - Envision Evanston 2045**
The City of Evanston is proposing a new Comprehensive General Plan to guide development for the next 20 years. The draft plan includes a vision statement, goals, policies and actions related to the environment; land use; transportation; housing; economic development; placemaking, arts and culture; parks and open space; and preservation.

III. **COMMUNICATIONS**

IV. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

The next Evanston Land Use Commission meeting is scheduled to be held **on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at 7:00 pm,** in the James C. Lytle Council Chambers in the Lorraine H. Morton City Hall.

Order & Agenda Items are subject to change. Information about the Land Use Commission is available at: https://www.cityofevanston.org/government/boards-commissions-and-committees/land-use-commission. Questions can be directed to Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner, at mmjones@cityofevanston.org or 847-448-4311. The City of Evanston is committed to making all public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. Any citizen needing mobility or communications access assistance should contact 847-866-2919 (Voice) or 847-866-5095 (TYY). Requests for access assistance must be made 48 hours (two working days) in advance. Requests received with less than 48 hours (two working days) advance notice will be attempted using best efforts, but cannot be guaranteed.

La ciudad de Evanston está obligada a hacer accesibles todas las reuniones públicas a las personas minusválidas o las quines no hablan inglés. Si usted necesita ayuda, favor de ponerse en contacto con la Oficina de Administración del Centro a 847/866-2916 (voz) o 847/448-8052 (TDD).

Envision Evanston 2045
Comprehensive Plan

Land Use Commission Comments

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan is a long-term planning document that broadly outlines the vision, goals, policies, and actions for a city or town's growth. This plan serves as a guide for future development and decision-making related to land use, housing, transportation, economic development, infrastructure, parks, the environment, and more.

A comprehensive plan helps ensure that future development aligns with the community's values and needs. It provides guidelines for zoning decisions, investments, and public services. Additionally, it can be used as a tool to secure funding, promote consistency and transparency in decision-making, and improve the well-being of community members. Comprehensive plans typically cover a timeframe of 10 to 20 years and are periodically updated to reflect the changing circumstances and needs of the community.

Evanston's last Comprehensive Plan was approved in 2000. Since then, Evanston has experienced many socioeconomic events and shifts, such as the Great Recession, the housing crisis of 2008, and the COVID-19 pandemic, among other nationwide events. The development of a new Comprehensive Plan, part of Envision Evanston 2045, will help the City of Evanston navigate these socioeconomic and political shifts while preparing for future challenges and opportunities.

Envision Evanston 2045 is a community-driven process that will lead to a new Comprehensive Plan and zoning code. This initiative seeks to reflect a shared vision for the future of Evanston, addressing key areas such as land use, racial equity, affordable housing, and arts and culture. The Plan will provide a guiding framework to inform decision-making and prioritize resources. The Plan's contents and recommendations are developed from engaging with Evanston residents, reviewing existing plans and policies, taking stock of the city's resources and amenities, and identifying key challenges and opportunities.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

The Plan is structured into key sections, beginning with "What We Heard," which highlights major themes that emerged from engaging with the community. It then progresses to "Evanston Today," offering a historical overview, current demographics, key metrics for tracking community changes, and emerging trends to monitor. "Evanston Tomorrow" outlines the Plan's overarching goals, the vision statement derived from engagement, and the framework for guiding future development. The following sections focus on specific topic areas:

- Neighborhoods and Places
- Community Systems
- Getting Around

- Environment
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces
- Housing • Health and Well-being
- Economic Development
- Arts and Culture- Community Building, Placemaking, and Connection Making
- Preservation

Comment [1]: Edit to reflect plan chapters

Each of these chapters reviews existing conditions, describes key challenges and opportunities, and recommends policies and actions.

USING AND UPDATING THE PLAN

The final chapter of the Plan, Implementation, provides a framework for evaluating progress toward carrying out the recommended policies and actions in the Comprehensive Plan. This critical part of the Plan includes an annual evaluation and a five-year assessment that will consider new trends; policy changes at the local, state, and federal levels; and land use dynamics.

Regularly evaluating the Plan will ensure its policies and actions are built for success and widespread support. This structured and consistent review process builds transparency and accountability into Envision Evanston 2045, ensuring the Plan remains flexible and reflective of the changing needs of the community. The Plan will allow for amendments to ensure it remains a forward-thinking guide for Evanston's future. Source: City of Evanston

CHAPTER 2: WHAT WE HEARD

Comment [2]: Move survey/engagement data to Appendix and rename "Chapter 2: Key Themes and Priorities"

With Envision Evanston 2045, we aim to ensure that Evanston remains a thriving and inclusive community for people of all ages and abilities to live, work, and play. To achieve this, the plan must consider the community's diverse needs and expectations. To align the plan with lived experiences and community values, the City of Evanston designed a robust and inclusive engagement plan, divided into five phases:

- Phase 1 captured the lived experiences of thousands of community members.
- Phase 2 engaged stakeholders in developing a shared vision for Evanston's future based on the lived experiences.
- Phase 3 collaborated with stakeholders to shape strategies for realizing that vision.
- Phase 4 (current phase) aims to finalize the draft plan based on feedback.
- Phase 5 will incorporate additional feedback from final engagement activities to refine the plan.

Through these engagement phases, City staff provided community members with opportunities to shape the direction of Envision Evanston 2045. This revised version of the plan includes solutions and best practices to meet the needs and priorities voiced by community members throughout this process.

The City of Evanston's planning team launched public engagement efforts in February 2024 to inform the creation of Envision Evanston 2045, the draft Comprehensive Plan aimed at guiding progress and prosperity within our community. Between February and October 2024, City staff facilitated 70 in-person public engagement events and used various digital methods of engagement through the Envision Evanston 2045 website. To develop the Comprehensive Plan collaboratively, City staff released a draft version of the Comprehensive Plan in November 2024, allowing community stakeholders to review and provide feedback.

Engagement Methods and Opportunities

Website

In February 2024, the City launched the Envision Evanston 2045 website, providing a convenient platform for community members to stay informed about upcoming events and updates. This website was created to support all phases of the process. Visitors could subscribe to the e-newsletter, review key documents, ask questions via email, and request office hours sessions with City staff. A "Big Idea" submission feature was also available on the website, giving residents the opportunity to share additional feedback regarding Evanston's vision. The website was introduced at a launch event in February 2024, and between February and May 2024, it received nearly 5,700 visits.

Phases 1-3: Engaging and Collaborating with Community Stakeholders

During a series of in-person and digital engagements, we gathered and documented valuable input and direction from the Evanston community. We designed the engagement activities with

community members of all ages and abilities in mind. To accommodate varying schedules and needs, we hosted the events at various locations, on different days of the week, and at various times of day. All feedback gathered through these efforts has been carefully analyzed and documented, forming the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Survey #1:
Between February and May 2024, nearly 2,500 community members participated in a survey, offered in English and Spanish in digital and paper formats. The survey collected input on a range of topics including housing, transportation, downtown vibrancy, and parks and recreation, and prompted respondents to rate their level of agreement (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree) with a set of statements. An open response field allowed respondents to share more thoughts beyond the specific questions asked.

Survey #1 Outcomes:
The survey received 2,361 responses from the Evanston community, with white respondents making up the largest share at 60 percent, followed by Hispanic or Latino respondents at 16 percent, Black or African American respondents at 15 percent, and Asian respondents at 5 percent. Other racial groups accounted for the remaining 4 percent. The highest response rates came from Wards 3, 6, 4, and 7. Renters comprised 54 percent of respondents, while 42 percent were homeowners, and 4 percent did not live in Evanston but were stakeholders in other ways, such as business owners or nonprofit employees. An outreach partnership with Evanston Cradle to Career (EC2C) resulted in 28 percent of responses coming from those engaged through EC2C-led outreach.

In terms of age distribution, the largest group of respondents (31 percent) were between 45 and 64 years old, closely followed by those 65 and older at 30 percent. Individuals aged 25 to 44 made up 26 percent of responses, while those under 24 made up just 10 percent.

The survey results highlight several key insights related to housing, community needs, and perceptions of the city across various demographics. The data shows significant differences in housing satisfaction based on race/ethnicity, ownership status, and participation in Evanston Cradle 2 Career (EC2C)1. Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino respondents were more likely to disagree that Evanston currently has housing options that meet their needs compared to White and Asian respondents. Similarly, renters and nonresidents of Evanston expressed less satisfaction with housing options than homeowners. Individuals engaged through EC2C outreach were also less likely to agree that their housing needs were being met, indicating a potential gap between community expectations and available housing solutions.

The report also explored perceptions of affordability and long-term housing security. Respondents generally expressed concerns about the affordability of housing in their neighborhoods, with Black or African American and “Other” race groups disagreeing the most. Confidence that Evanston's housing options could meet future needs was relatively low among renters, nonresidents, and individuals engaged through EC2C-led outreach. Age and ward-based differences were also noted, with older respondents (65+) showing more confidence in

housing options compared to younger groups. Additionally, residents from the 5th and 8th wards were the least likely to agree that current housing options met their needs, highlighting geographic differences in housing satisfaction.

On community vibrancy and economic opportunities, younger respondents were more optimistic about Evanston as a place to open a business, whereas older groups were more neutral or skeptical. There was also a common desire for mixed-use buildings combining housing, retail, and services, reflecting a community interest in dynamic, multifunctional urban spaces. However, opinions on the visual appeal and neighborhood integration of newer buildings varied, with Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American respondents showing more positive views than white respondents. These findings underline the importance of inclusive urban planning and the need to address demographic-specific concerns to improve community satisfaction and cohesion.

Community Perspective Meetings
The City's planning team facilitated a series of in-person meetings between February and May 2024. Seven community-wide 'Perspectives' meetings were hosted in various locations and online formats. A list of these meetings is detailed in Appendix A: Public Engagement.

Organization Perspective Meetings
Between March and September 2024, the planning team held a series of in-person meetings with local organizations. A total of 12 "Organization Perspectives" meetings were hosted in various locations and online. A detailed list of these meetings is also available in Appendix A: Public Engagement.

Ward Meetings
Ward-specific meetings were held for all nine of Evanston's wards between March and October 2024. These meetings were led by the council members with support from City staff. A list of these meetings is detailed in Appendix A: Public Engagement.

Focus Groups
City staff facilitated eight focus group sessions in August 2024 covering the following topics:

- Jobs and economy
- Development
- Community design professionals
- Housing and community development
- Social gathering places
- Equity and prosperity
- Transportation and mobility
- Land use and the built environment

A digital version of the questionnaire used in the focus groups was posted on the Envision Evanston 2045 website to offer a convenient way for community members to provide feedback. A list of these focus groups is detailed in Appendix A: Public Engagement.

Pop-Up Sessions
A total of 15 pop-up engagement sessions were held by City staff and supporting consultants between April and August 2024 to provide information about Envision Evanston 2045 and allowed community members to ask questions or share their perspectives. Participants were encouraged to complete a survey and interact with boards to provide feedback via maps and sticky notes. These pop-up sessions were made possible through coordinated efforts with local organizations. A list of these pop-up sessions is detailed in Appendix A: Public Engagement.

"Meeting-in-a-Box"
To encourage further dialogue, City staff provided materials for community members to host a "meeting-in-a-box" through the Envision Evanston 2045 website. The materials included a meeting-in-a-box packet with a discussion guide related to each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Upon request, "meeting-in-a-box" events could be supported by City staff. A total of 42 "meeting-in-a-box" events were held between March and April 2024, with 184 participants. This engagement activity was popular among stakeholders between the ages of 35 and 70; 54 percent of participants were within this age range.

To expand outreach impact, the City of Evanston facilitated a partnership with EC2C, who gathered volunteers to host meeting-in-a-box activities, primarily through their networks of Advocates for Action and Advocates Para La Acción.2 The volunteers were trained by City staff on how to conduct activities and perform survey outreach.

Board, Commission, and Committee Presentations
Group-specific presentations were facilitated between February and October 2024 for all of Evanston's administrative boards, commissions, and committees. A list of these presentations is detailed in Appendix A: Public Engagement.

Development Scenario Workshop
To inform the draft zoning code, project consultants led a development scenario workshop with key community members and decision-makers. Attendees were presented with development scenarios for three locations with future development potential. Participants worked with project consultants to finalize a scenario that included height, density, and other development regulations using real-time 3D visuals.

Arts and Culture Town Hall
On August 20, 2024, City staff and Morreale Communications facilitated guided group discussions at the Evanston Arts Council Town Hall Event, held at the Evanston Art Center. Attendees included individuals engaged with the Evanston Arts Council, who were split into small groups to discuss a guide of questions focused on Evanston's arts community and its future.

Visioning Workshop

On May 18, 2024, project consultant HDR led a visioning workshop to support the creation of the Envision Evanston 2045 vision statement. Community members were invited to participate and help inform the vision statement, which was posted on the Envision Evanston website and presented at other engagement events.

Perspective Posters
Interactive posters were posted in nine community centers and local businesses to collect feedback from community members. The posters encouraged community members to write three words that would describe their ideal vision of Evanston in 2045. A list of the poster locations is detailed in Appendix A: Public Engagement.

Local Boards
Group-specific presentations were facilitated for all of Evanston's administrative boards, commissions, and committees between March and April 2024. A list of these presentations is detailed in Appendix A: Public Engagement.

Phases 4-5: Incorporating Feedback Into Draft Plan, Releasing, and Revising
Survey #2
A second survey was launched digitally on the Envision Evanston 2045 website between November 2024 and February 2025, offering community members an opportunity to provide feedback on each of the chapters within the Comprehensive Plan.

Survey #2 Outcomes
Community members were asked to provide qualitative feedback, and a total of 206 respondents participated. The key takeaways of each section of the survey are detailed below.

Land Use:
- Adjust zoning regulations to encourage affordable housing.
- Include specific incentives for green-building practices.
- Maintain protections for open spaces and community gardens.
- Revise mixed-use guidelines to better balance commercial and residential needs.
- Add more detailed protections for historic districts.
- Remove restrictions perceived as barriers to accessory dwelling units.

Transportation:
- Improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure for safer routes.
- Add electric vehicle charging stations in public parking lots.
- Remove proposals that expand car-centric infrastructure.
- Maintain current funding for bike lane expansion.
- Increase public transit accessibility, especially in underserved areas.
- Include clearer goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Parks and Open Space:
- Enhance maintenance plans for existing parks.

- Add native plant landscaping initiatives.
- Remove underused facilities and repurpose for community needs.
- Retain large natural areas for conservation and wildlife habitats.
- Reevaluate park-use policies to better support community events.
- Include more playgrounds and facilities for all age groups.

Environment:

- Strengthen climate action goals with measurable targets.
- Introduce incentives for renewable energy adoption by residents and businesses.
- Remove reliance on nonrenewable energy sources in municipal operations.
- Retain environmental education initiatives and outreach programs.
- Update stormwater management policies to address increased flooding risks.
- Add urban tree canopy expansion targets.

Economic Development:

- Prioritize support for small, locally owned businesses over large chains.
- Add programs for workforce development and job training.
- Remove incentives for developments not aligned with sustainability goals.
- Maintain focus on revitalizing key commercial corridors.
- Streamline permitting processes to attract new businesses.
- Include provisions for equitable economic growth across neighborhoods.

Housing:

- Revise density limits to accommodate affordable housing.
- Add specific targets for affordable and senior housing development.
- Remove restrictions on multifamily housing in some areas.
- Retain existing policies that promote housing for diverse income levels.
- Enhance inclusionary zoning policies to require more affordable units.
- Include tenant protections and rent stabilization measures.

Placemaking:

- Expand community engagement in placemaking projects.
- Add art installations and cultural markers that reflect community identity.
- Remove overly prescriptive design guidelines that limit creativity.
- Continue emphasizing walkable, vibrant public spaces.
- Improve accessibility in public spaces.

Preservation:

- Update criteria for designating landmarks to include more diverse histories.
- Add funding opportunities for property owners to maintain historic homes.
- Remove unnecessary bureaucratic steps in the preservation approval process.
- Retain strong protections for culturally significant sites.
- Strengthen enforcement mechanisms for preserving historic properties.
- Include digital archives for historic resources.

Land Use Commission Meetings

The key takeaways below are based on public comments shared during meetings held from November 2024 through January 2025. These meetings fostered open discussions, ensuring a broad range of perspectives from residents, families, seniors, commuters, and other community members were heard and considered. The feedback highlights the importance of addressing housing diversity, environmental sustainability, transportation, and equitable development — all of which are essential for creating a thriving, inclusive, and balanced community.Include shade structures and seating in high-traffic areas.

Key Takeaways

Housing:

- Expand and diversify housing options to accommodate a wide range of needs.
- Support for increased housing density and transparent zoning.
- Prioritize affordable housing across all demographics and protect against displacement.
- Encourage mixed-use zoning and transit-oriented development.
- Assist both homeowners and renters.
- Provide data on housing stock, supply and demand, and needs and density.

Environmental and Sustainability:

- Strengthen resiliency and sustainability language in the plan.
- Provide detailed information on natural resource growth, parks, green space, and historical context on environmental injustices.
- Emphasize a zero-waste economy and revitalization of brownfield sites.

Transportation and Mobility:

- *Work with Transit Agencies to e*~~E~~xpand transportation options and transit service offerings.
- Reduce car dependency.
- Reform parking policies to address parking in transit zones.

Zoning and Development:

- Examine R1 zoning (single-family districts).
- Create a more flexible approach to zoning.
- Safeguard existing homes and community character.

Community and Economic Development:

- Address the impact of the tax base, particularly for schools, on affordability and explore potential solutions.
- Support small businesses and strengthen local economies by improving job accessibility through improved transit options.
- Preserve community character, including architectural features, tree canopy, and green space.
- Promote repurposing existing structures, including historical buildings.

Comment [3]: Revise to reflect points of contention in public comment ("Meeting attendees expressed a range of opinions and frequently provided conflicting guidance. For example, many attendees voiced support for expanding and diversifying housing options to accommodate a wider range of residents' housing needs, and make others spoke out against it."

Should list reflect ALL takeaways from discussion?

Comment [4]: ALTERNATE: Adjust housing options consistent with finding of the Strategic Housing Plan while reinforcing neighborhood character.

Comment [5]: ALTERNATE: Support for protecting Evanston's single-family zoning in R1 and R2 districts. Support for transparent zoning.

Comment [6]: ALTERNATE: Protect R1 zoning (single-family districts)

Comment [7]: ALTERNATE: Create a more neighborhood oriented approach to zoning.

Seniors and Aging Population:

- Prioritize senior housing and aging in place.
- Ensure affordable housing options to prevent senior displacement due to rising costs.

Public Engagement:

- Facilitate an inclusive and comprehensive approach to community engagement, gathering diverse input.
- Promote communication and transparency in the planning and decision-making process.

Engagement Feedback Key Themes and Priorities (Across all engagement methods)

Neighborhoods and Places

The following themes and priorities emerged from digital and in-person engagement activities and are supported by policies detailed in Chapter 5 - Neighborhoods and Places:

- Refine zoning maps: Adjust zoning maps to align with updated land-use priorities.
- Preserve local character: Uphold neighborhood-specific zoning guidelines to preserve local character.
- Support zoning clarity: Simplify zoning codes to reduce confusion for residents and potential developers.
- Promote sustainable development: Establish incentives for developments that meet sustainability standards.
- Establish an Urban Design Committee to review all major projects for compliance with zoning, preservation, and urban character design guidelines (also to be created).

Community Systems

The following themes and priorities emerged from digital and in-person engagement activities and are supported by policies detailed in Chapter 6 - Community Systems:

- Address public safety: Empower our emergency responders to improve public safety.
- Sustain partnerships: Continue and strengthen partnerships between the City and local organizations and institutions that provide essential services for residents.
- Prioritize student needs: Employ student-centered decisionmaking across educational institutions.
- Embody fiscal responsibility: Demonstrate fiscal responsibility to continue providing essential services to community members.
- Maintain resources for vulnerable populations: Uphold the resources and staffing needed to support Evanston's homeless population and people with mental illness.

Comment [8]: Clarify: is this for K-12 students only? University students?

Getting Around

The following themes and priorities emerged from digital and in-person engagement activities and are supported by policies detailed in Chapter 7 - Getting Around:

- Improved connections: Enhance connections between different modes of transportation to elevate transportation experience and safety.

- Need for bike lanes and increased safety: Increase the number of protected bike lanes and signage to support smooth traffic flow and improve safety for bicyclists.
- Improved sidewalks: Repair, maintain, and fill gaps in sidewalk infrastructure to support pedestrian safety and active transportation.
- Sufficient parking: Increase parking access so the community can enjoy Evanston's recreational and commercial amenities.
- Public EV charging: Increase electric vehicle charging stations in public parking lots.
- Maintain funding: Uphold current funding for bike lane expansion.
- Work with Transit Agencies to ~~I~~mprove~~d~~ CTA access: Add connections to the CTA.
- Develop pedestrian-only zones at locations with a concentration of commercial, cultural, and other activities

Environment

The following themes and priorities emerged from digital and in-person engagement activities and are supported by policies detailed in Chapter 8 - Environment:

- Educate our community: Retain environmental education initiatives and outreach programs.
- Renewable energy incentives: Introduce incentives for residents and businesses to adopt renewable energy.
- Address flood risks: Update stormwater management policies and strategies to address increased flooding risks.
- Expand urban tree canopy: Set urban tree canopy expansion targets.
- Further develop the lakefront and beaches as one of Evanston's main attractions.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces

The following themes and priorities emerged from digital and in-person engagement activities and are supported by policies detailed in Chapter 9 - Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces:

- Enhance public spaces and activities: Provide more parks in underserved areas and outdoor spaces and host more street activities.
- Maintain our parks: Enhance maintenance plans for existing parks and open spaces.
- Accommodate for community events: Reevaluate park-use policies to better support community events.
- Facilities for all ages: Develop more playgrounds and facilities for all age groups.
- Encourage native plant growth: Develop native plant landscaping initiatives.
- Maintain activities and events: Uphold existing community events such as the summer concert series.

Housing

The following themes and priorities emerged from digital and in-person engagement activities and are supported by policies detailed in Chapter 10 - Housing:

- Make space for affordable housing: Revise current density limits to accommodate affordable housing needs for younger families and low-income populations.

Comment [9]: ALTERNATE: Create policies and programs that will encourage affordable housing development.

- Establish targets: Develop specific targets for affordable and senior housing developments.
- Uphold diverse housing: Retain existing policies that promote housing for diverse income levels.
- Policies for affordability: Enhance inclusionary zoning policies to require more affordable units.
- Protect and empower renters: Establish tenant protections and rent stabilization measures.

Health and Well Being

The following themes and priorities emerged from digital and in-person engagement activities and are supported by policies detailed in Chapter 11 - Health and Well-being:

- Celebrate culture: Support initiatives that recognize and celebrate Evanston's diverse cultural fabric.
- Support vulnerable populations: Strengthen existing community systems to empower our vulnerable populations.
- Promote inclusivity: Prioritize inclusive practices across all City-led initiatives and programs.
- Address brownfields: Identify programs and opportunities to address existing brownfields to mitigate their impacts.

Economic Development

The following themes and priorities emerged from digital and in-person engagement activities and are supported by policies detailed in Chapter 12 - Economic Development:

- Support local businesses: Provide more resources and initiatives to local and family-owned businesses, instead of large franchises.
- Foster a vibrant downtown: Create incentive programs that will ~~A~~add more shops, restaurants, and entertainment options downtown.
- Revitalize key corridors and neighborhood centers: Maintain focus on revitalizing key commercial corridors, such as those along Central Avenue, Green Bay Road, Chicago Avenue, Main Street, Dempster Street, Dodge Avenue, Noyes Street, Asbury Avenue and Oakton Street.
- Balance new development with existing businesses: Maintain affordability for existing and family-owned businesses amid new development.
- Encourage partnerships: Maximize the local economy through partnerships between local businesses and community hubs such as Northwestern University.
- Refine permitting processes: Simplify permitting processes to attract new businesses.
- Promote equitable growth: Establish provisions for equitable economic growth across our neighborhoods.
- Uplift the workforce: Establish programs for workforce development and job training to promote career development and job security for Evanston's residents.

Community Building, Arts and Culture, and Placemaking

- Engage the community: Expand community engagement in placemaking projects to promote Evanston's diverse cultural heritage.
- Reflect identity: Create art installations and cultural markers that reflect community identity.
- Prioritize public spaces: Maintain walkable public spaces to encourage community building.
- Promote use of public spaces: 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.
- Cultivate partnerships: Support public–private partnerships via technical assistance and financial support to implement more dynamic arts programming related to community building and placemaking.
- Follow the Evanston Thrives Plan: Implement marketing and financial sustainability strategies for community building and placemaking activities outlined in the Evanston Thrives Plan.[3]
- Support and grow Evanston's museum community.

Preservation

The following themes and priorities emerged from digital and in-person engagement activities and are supported by policies detailed in Chapter 14: Preservation:

- Preserve community character: Encourage adaptive use and rehabilitation projects that promote preservation-based development and retain cultural and built character.
- Establish ordinances: Enhance the ability to protect heritage and cultural assets through updated preservation ordinances.
- Protect natural features: Establish protective measures for Evanston's tree canopy and lakefront.
- Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) Program: Establish an NCD Program to support community-led preservation.
- Follow the roadmap: Implement guidance from Preserve 2040[4] to encourage the preservation of Evanston's diverse heritage.
- Reinstate incentive programs: Restore incentive programs for maintaining the character-defining features of commercial historic or legacy buildings and businesses.
- Honor Indigenous heritage: Refine criteria for designating landmarks to recognize Indigenous heritage.
- Fund historical preservation: Establish funding opportunities for property owners to maintain historic homes.
- Develop digital archives: Establish and maintain digital archives that support the identification and documentation of Evanston's cultural assets and resources.

VISION STATEMENT

In 2045, Evanston is a vibrant, resilient, and welcoming community for all. Evanston celebrates its diversity through our arts, culture, history, and neighborhoods. Steady growth in our local circular economy cultivates opportunities close to home while achieving ambitious and necessary climate action. Our abundance access to parks and open spaces promotes well-being and extensive housing options make living in Evanston safe and attainable. Evanston's neighborhoods are connected through a robust network of transit, bike, and pedestrian options. We achieve this vision through proactive planning, community collaboration, and bold action.

CHAPTER 3: EVANSTON TODAY

EVANSTON'S HISTORY: HOW WE GOT HERE

Evanston Today: A Call to Acknowledge Our History

Evanston is not just a city; it is a rich tapestry woven from the stories of its residents — stories that deserve recognition and respect. From the Indigenous peoples who first walked this land to the settlers who built a thriving community, understanding our history is vital in shaping a more inclusive and just future.

Indigenous Presence
Long before European settlers arrived, the land that is now the City of Evanston was home to Indigenous peoples, including the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Odawa nations, who were part of the Council of Three Fires. These communities lived, traded, and traveled along the shores of Lake Michigan and throughout the region, relying on its rich natural resources for food and cultural practices. Their presence is an essential part of Evanston's history, though forced removals and land cessions due to treaties with the U.S. government significantly changed their way of life and access to ancestral lands.[1]

Founding and Early Development
The City of Evanston's origins trace back to the mid-19th century, when settlers from the East Coast arrived in search of new opportunities. The City's development was significantly influenced by the founding of Northwestern University in 1851 by a group of Methodist business leaders and educators from Chicago, who wanted to establish a premier university in the Northwest Territory. One of these founders, John Evans, submitted city plans to the county judge, leading to its renaming as Evanston in 1857.

The arrival of the Chicago and North Western Railway sped Evanston's growth, making it an attractive option for those wanting a slower-paced environment than Chicago. Officially incorporated as a city in 1863, Evanston quickly developed into a cultural and educational hub. The Chicago Fire of 1871 prompted the arrival of many Chicagoans seeking to rebuild their homes elsewhere.

By the 1890s, Evanston had introduced several civic advancements, including telephone service, free mail delivery, and the expansion of local newspapers. During this time, a variety of social, philanthropic, and cultural organizations were born, including the Woman's Club, founded in 1899, and the Rotary Club in 1920 (Rotary International moved its headquarters from Chicago to Evanston in 1954). As part of its expansion, Evanston added the former villages of North and South Evanston to the City, as well as valuable unincorporated land in the northwest and industrial zones in the west, solidifying its status as an independent city distinct from Chicago.

Neighborhoods and Business Districts
Evanston's development pattern is deeply reflected in its built environment. Originally made up of three distinct communities — South Evanston (Ridgeville), North Evanston, and Central Evanston — each area established unique commercial hubs. South Evanston thrived around Main Street, North Evanston around Central Street, and Central Evanston around the original downtown area. These areas remain vibrant mixed-use districts to this day, supporting the broader surrounding neighborhoods.

As Evanston grew, the City became known for its unique architecture and cultural vibrancy, even being known as the "City of Homes." From grand Victorian homes of the 19th century to

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groundbreaking modernist designs of the 20th century, Evanston's architectural heritage is preserved through its historic homes and landmarks. These distinct neighborhoods and business districts celebrate Evanston's rich social, political, cultural, and architectural history, fostering a strong sense of place and collective memory.

Segregation and Housing Inequity
Evanston's history is also marked by racial inequities in housing and land-use policies. While race-based zoning was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1917, discriminatory practices such as redlining and covenants emerged, shaping the City's housing landscape. The Great Migration brought a significant increase in Evanston's Black population, yet segregation efforts, including discriminatory steering, began as early as 1918.

By 1940, Evanston had over 6,000 Black residents, the largest Black suburban population in Illinois at the time, yet over 80% were concentrated in the 5th Ward, where homes were smaller, located near industrial zones, and lacked access to essential amenities. In the following decades, urban renewal projects, such as those led by the Land Clearance Commission, disproportionately displaced Black families. While the Fair Housing Act of 1968 banned explicit redlining, its impact continues to be felt through long-standing inequality in housing access, zoning policies, and economic opportunity.

Economic Evolution
Northwestern University's presence has been a key economic driver in Evanston's history. The addition of two commuter rail lines set Evanston further apart from its northern suburban peers, transforming it into the commercial hub of Chicago's North Shore. Downtown Evanston developed into a bustling hub featuring department stores, restaurants, and corporate headquarters, including Rotary International, which remains headquartered in Evanston today.

During the mid-20th century, Evanston also served as a prominent industrial center. By the 1960s, it was home to over 70 manufacturing companies producing a diverse range of goods, from textbooks and food products to machinery. However, like many Midwestern cities, Evanston experienced industrial decline as manufacturing relocated to larger greenfield sites or was impacted by globalization. In response, the City leveraged its transit accessibility and academic presence to move toward a knowledge-based economy, attracting a workforce focused on health care, education, and creativity.

Past, Present, and Future
Evanston's rich history is deeply intertwined with its people, institutions, transit infrastructure, business districts, and architecture. Establishing Northwestern University and expanding rail lines kickstarted the City's early growth, while its economic evolution transformed it into a vibrant hub of education, commerce, and culture. However, the City's past is also marked by racial segregation and housing inequities, the effects of which persist to this day. Through its built environment, Evanston continues to reflect its storied past and look toward the future, offering a tangible connection between past, current, and future generations.

WHO WE ARE TODAY

When reviewing Census data, it is important to note that the U.S. Census Bureau has a difficult time keeping records on hard-to-count populations. This includes populations that are hard to find, contact, and/or interview, such as:

- Young children
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- People who speak languages other than English
- Low-income individuals
- Undocumented immigrants
- People who are LGBTQ+
- People with disabilities
- People who do not live in traditional housing

A subset of hard-to-count populations are historically undercounted populations, which have been undercounted in the 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2020 Censuses. These include:

- The Black or African American population
- People who indicate they are another race than the categories offered
- The Hispanic or Latino population
- Young children, ages 0 to 4
- Renters
- Males, ages 18 to 29 and ages 30 to 49

Population and Density

Evanston, located just north of Chicago, has a high population density of 9,840 people per square mile. Despite being a suburban area, it is relatively dense, likely due to its location near Chicago and its reputation as an educational and cultural hub. Northwestern University is a significant influence on the population, contributing to both the local economy and the City's cultural and intellectual vibrancy. Data on population and density can be found in Table 1 of Appendix B.

Households

Evanston has a relatively high number of smaller households, particularly one-person and two-person households. This is likely because students and young professionals are drawn to the City’s urban amenities, closeness to Chicago, and the presence of Northwestern University. Household data can be found in Table 2 of Appendix B.

Group Quarters

Group quarters typically refer to housing where residents live in a collective setting, such as university student housing, nursing facilities, correctional facilities, and military quarters.

Evanston has a rather high percentage (9%) of its population living in group quarters, far above the county (2%) and Chicago (2%) averages. It’s clear that Evanston is home to a large number of group-living arrangements, likely driven by Northwestern University. College towns or cities with large universities, such as Evanston, often have a high ratio of people living in group quarters due to on-campus housing, dormitories, or university-affiliated apartments. Data on group quarters can be found in Table 3 of Appendix B.

Race and Ethnicity
Evanston stands out in its diversity, especially when compared to other suburban areas like Wilmette and Lincolnwood, where the white population is far more dominant. However, it is less racially diverse than areas like Chicago and some urban neighborhoods like Rogers Park, which have more substantial Black, Hispanic, and Asian populations. Compared to other areas, Evanston has a balanced racial makeup, which contributes to the City's unique cultural identity and its reputation as a progressive, diverse university-driven community. Data on race and ethnicity can be found in Table 4 of Appendix B.

Age
Evanston's age distribution is relatively balanced, with 40% of its population between 18 and 44 years old. The City is also a hub for middle-aged and older residents, with 24% aged 45 to 64 and 18% aged 65+. The age diversity in Evanston reflects its role as a university town with a young, academic population, while also supporting a broad range of age groups, including a considerable number of older adults. Data on age distribution can be found in Table 5 of Appendix B.

Median Age
Evanston has a moderately older population compared to Chicago and Cook County, with a median age of 38.0. It strikes a balance between the younger population of urban areas like Chicago and the older populations of suburban areas like Wilmette and Lincolnwood, reflecting its unique mix of academic, residential, and professional communities. Data on median age can be found in Table 6 of Appendix B.

Household Income
Evanston has a higher-than-average median household income. The City has a relatively wealthy population compared to Chicago and Cook County, and is more economically diverse than wealthier suburbs like Wilmette. Evanston's income distribution highlights its status as a prosperous urban-suburban mix, with most of its residents in higher income brackets. Household data can be found in Table 7 of Appendix B.

Housing: Units in Structure
Evanston's housing stock is diverse, with a strong presence of detached single-family homes and a significant share of multifamily housing in higher-density buildings. This mix reflects its urban–suburban nature, influenced by the presence of Northwestern University and its closeness to Chicago. Compared to wealthier suburbs like Lincolnwood and Wilmette, Evanston has a more multifamily-oriented housing market. Data on units in structure can be found in Table 8 of Appendix B.

Housing: Bedrooms
Evanston has a diverse housing mix, with a significant number of one- and two-bedroom units that likely cater to students, young professionals, and smaller households. The City also has a notable share of three-bedroom to five-bedroom homes, accommodating families and larger households. Compared to suburban areas like Lincolnwood and Skokie, Evanston has a more urban housing profile with a higher proportion of smaller apartments, reflecting its university-town nature and closeness to Chicago. Data on bedrooms can be found in Table 9 of Appendix B.

Housing Vacancy
Evanston's housing vacancy rate is relatively low, with 93% occupancy, indicating a stable housing

market. A notable proportion of vacant homes are for rent or sale, suggesting a healthy level of property turnover. The percentage of vacant units due to other reasons is also typical, reflecting common housing dynamics in both urban and suburban areas. Evanston's vacancy rate is consistent with nearby regions but slightly higher than suburban areas like Skokie and Wilmette, which have near-full occupancy rates. Data on housing vacancy can be found in Table 10 of Appendix B.

Housing: Home Value
Evanston has a relatively high housing market value, especially for larger homes, indicating a wealthier and more desirable housing market compared to surrounding neighborhoods. Its three-bedroom and four-bedroom homes are significantly more expensive than those in Cook County and Chicago. Data on home value can be found in Table 11 of Appendix B.

Economy: Labor Force and Employment
Evanston's labor-force participation and unemployment rate are consistent with broader regional trends. With a 3.6% unemployment rate, Evanston outperforms Chicago. This suggests Evanston benefits from a stable economy and employment opportunities, likely influenced by Northwestern University and the City's wealthier population. Data on labor force and employment can be found in Table 12 of Appendix B.

Economy: Job Sector Share
Evanston's economy is heavily shaped by educational services, largely due to Northwestern University, and the health care sector, which account for a large share of jobs. The city has relatively fewer jobs in business services, retail trade, and manufacturing compared to Chicago. Data on job sector share can be found in Table 13 of Appendix B.

Transportation: Commuting
Evanston residents rely heavily on personal vehicles, with 42% driving alone to work. While lower than Cook County (56%) and Chicago (46%), it is still a high proportion compared to other suburban areas. In terms of alternative commutes, Evanston sees 13% of its residents using public transit, comparable to Cook County but lower than Chicago, where transit is central to commuting. Interestingly, 11% of Evanston residents walk to work, which is higher than both Cook County (4%) and Chicago (6%), indicating the City's walkability and presence of jobs within walking distance, particularly in areas around Downtown Evanston and Northwestern University. Overall, 26% of Evanstonians work from home. Community data can be found in Table 14 of Appendix B.

Transportation: Access to a Vehicle
In Evanston, most households have access to at least one vehicle (50%), and 27% have access to two vehicles. This reflects the City's more suburban nature, where personal vehicle ownership is typical, yet with a notable portion (16%) of households without a car. Data on personal vehicle access can be found in Table 15 of Appendix B.

KEY METRICS

Metrics are essential for tracking community change, as they provide a clear, data-driven overview of trends and progress over time. These metrics can help the City of Evanston and partner organizations identify areas of growth, challenges, and emerging needs, helping policies and initiatives to remain responsive and effective. Additionally, tracking these metrics fosters accountability, transparency, and community engagement, as community members can see the impact of strategies and call for adjustments to plans as needed. The following metrics were selected to align with the goals of the Plan:

Metric	Current Value	Unit	Goals
Population density	9,840	Population / square mile	Housing, Sustainability, Economy, Equity, Transportation
Race and ethnicity	42%	People of color / total population	Equity, Housing, Arts and Culture
Income distribution	0.55	Gini coefficient	Equity, Health, Economy, Housing, Arts and Culture
Life expectancy	82	Years	Health, Equity
Lead exposure	9	Lead Exposure Risk Index	Health, Economy, Sustainability, Housing, Equity
Commuting mode share	42%	Drive alone / workers 16+	Transportation, Housing, Equity, Sustainability, Economy
High-frequency transit access	10%	Population within 1/2 mile of high-frequency transit	Transportation, Sustainability, Housing, Equity
Greenhouse gas emissions	36%	Reduction from 2005 baseline	Sustainability, Health, Equity
Building energy consumption	669,900	Metric tons of CO2e	Sustainability, Health, Housing, Equity
Sales tax revenue	$23,725,230	Annual sales tax dollars	Economy

Business ownership diversity	476	Businesses owned by women and/or people of color	Economy, Equity
Housing cost-burden	34%	Cost-burdened households / total households	Housing, Equity, Economy

EMERGING TRENDS

Several emerging trends are important to consider, as they may have a significant impact on the City of Evanston over the next 20 years. The following trends fall under the following categories: Demographic, Economic Restructuring, Governance, Housing, Resources, Technology, and Transportation.

Category	**Trend**
Demographic	Declining middle class
	Suburban remix
	Smart cities
	Aging populations
	Migration to the Rust Belt
	Declining life expectancy
	Rise in climate displacement
Economic Restructuring	Nomadic workforce
	Upskilling and reskilling
	Policy "pendulum shifts"
	Climate impacts
	Rising personal debt
Governance	Trust in government
	False information operations
Housing	Aging housing stock
	Gentrification and displacement
	The affordable housing crisis
	Zoning reform
Resources	Sustainable energy
	Food insecurity
	Sustainable architecture

Category	Trend
	Climate justice
	Water scarcity
Technology	Artificial intelligence (AI) regulations
	Sharing economy
	Digital inclusion
	Fourth Industrial Revolution
	Infrastructure overhaul
	Rise in innovation districts
Transportation	Carless households
	Rethinking the public right-of-way

The City of Evanston will greatly benefit from actively monitoring emerging trends to ensure sustainable growth, economic resilience, and community well-being. By staying ahead of these trends, the City will be better prepared to address community members' evolving needs, enhance quality of life, and attract investment. In a rapidly changing world, keeping a pulse on emerging trends will help Evanston remain a vibrant and inclusive community.

CHAPTER 4: EVANSTON TOMORROW

A VISION OF EVANSTON IN 2045

The community was asked to imagine Evanston in 2045, a future shaped by the collective vision and aspiration of its residents. The shared dreams and aspirations of the community helped shape Envision Evanston 2045, a Comprehensive Plan and long-range policy guide for Evanston's future development. This vision reflects the valuable feedback and collaborative efforts of Evanston's residents, whose voices are essential in ensuring a thriving, growing community.

What does this community look like in 2045?

Evanston is a vibrant, resilient, and welcoming community for all, where arts, culture, history, and neighborhoods are celebrated. With easy and convenient access to parks and open spaces, and a commitment to preserving the City's heritage, we foster physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

Evanston is energy and resource efficient, decarbonized, and resilient to the effects of climate change. Our buildings and transportation systems are constructed of sustainable materials and powered by renewable energy. Our social and physical infrastructure are designed to withstand extreme weather events and protect residents.

Evanston neighborhoods offer diverse housing choices, ensuring residents feel secure in their homes. The housing supply aligns with the community's needs and residents enjoy a wide range of social and recreational amenities without fear of displacement.

Our strong circular economy provides job security and opportunity, with steady growth and innovation creating jobs in a wide range of fields. Evanston's small, minority-owned businesses are thriving, contributing to a vibrant and resilient local economy.

Neighborhoods are connected through a robust network of pedestrian, bike, and transit options, ensuring travel is safe, convenient, and affordable.

Envision Evanston 2045 outlines our ambitious yet attainable vision. We invite community members, like you, to join us in bringing this vision to life through proactive planning, community collaboration, and bold action.

VISION STATEMENT

In 2045, Evanston is a vibrant, resilient, and welcoming community for all. Evanston celebrates its diversity through our arts, culture, history, and neighborhoods. Steady growth in our local circular economy creates opportunities close to home while achieving ambitious and necessary climate action. Our abundant access to parks and open spaces promotes well-being, and extensive housing options make living in Evanston safe and within reach. Evanston's neighborhoods are connected through a robust network of transit, bike, and pedestrian options. We will achieve this vision through proactive planning, community collaboration, and bold action.

GOALS
Achieving the vision requires identifying specific and measurable steps that serve as a roadmap to completion. Based on the themes identified through public engagement, the following goals and action steps were developed:

FOSTER A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

We strive to build a vibrant, inclusive community for all residents by:

- Improving public health through programs that provide support and wrap-around services, while proactively preparing for emergency situations.
- Reimagining Evanston through design and decarbonization efforts to enhance livability and foster physical, mental, and social well-being.
- Ensuring equitable access to safe and attainable housing and daily needs, including food and medical services, while ensuring protection from pollution and environmental hazards.
- Promoting safety by designing accessible neighborhoods with well-lit streets, abundant sidewalks, pedestrian zones, and designated bike lanes to encourage active transportation for all.
- Fostering accessible transportation systems that support individuals of all abilities.
- Enhancing the aesthetics of the built environment through thoughtful urban design, green spaces, expanded biodiverse natural landscapes for people and wildlife, and the creation of visually pleasing and inspiring places for residents to live, work, and play.

STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL ECONOMY

We aspire to build a prosperous, inclusive community where economic vitality and quality of life are interconnected and beneficial for all by:

- Supporting local businesses and promoting workforce development initiatives.
- Encouraging entrepreneurial pursuits and small business development through accessible resources, streamlined development review, and financial incentives.
- Reviving and supporting business districts to create thriving hubs characterized by a mix of public spaces, retail, dining, entertainment, office spaces, and housing.
- Celebrating and retaining Evanston's unique identity and sense of place, encouraging adaptive use and rehabilitation projects, and increasing opportunities for heritage tourism to encourage preservation-based economic development.
- Support additional development of Higher Education, Research, and Medical Industries.

PRIORITIZE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

We strive to actively preserve our natural environment for the benefit of current and future generations by:

- Fostering adaptive use and rehabilitation, repair, salvage and reuse of high-quality building materials, and prioritizing deconstruction rather than demolition.
- Conserving lakefront, beaches, and ecologically sensitive areas through sustainable management practices that build resilience to the effects of climate change, maintain water quality, support biodiversity, and provide public access and enjoyment.
- Integrating biodiverse ecosystems in parks and open spaces to promote health and well-being.
- Expanding green infrastructure to prevent flooding, reduce heat island effects, and

provide nature-based solutions to stormwater management.
- Coexisting with and managing Evanston's local wildlife communities by encouraging positive nature experiences and using best practices to reduce human–wildlife conflict.

INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

We strive to push for and invest in equitable, resilient, and environmentally sustainable transportation system where every resident has choices by:

- Eliminating greenhouse gas emissions through increasing active transportation by adding protected bike lines and mass transportation options.
- Creating corridors that improve the reliability and safety of all modes of transportation.
- Working with transit agencies to ensure accessible and reliable transit for all who depend on it and seek to use it.
- Investing in transportation choices that meet the needs of all ages and abilities.

Comment [10]: Call out Metra, Purple Line stops, adding Yellow Line stops

INCREASE HOUSING DIVERSITY

We strive to build resilient and inclusive neighborhoods where people can find suitable, efficient, and attainable housing by:

- Developing a wide range of housing types and sizes to meet our community's diverse needs.
- Implementing policies and programs that prevent displacement.
- Removing barriers to affordable housing solutions that bridge the gap between single-unit homes and large apartment complexes.
- Increasing the efficiency and resilience of housing and addressing health and safety concerns.

CREATE EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

We strive to build an equitable, inclusive, and sustainable community where every community member has the opportunity to thrive and enjoy a high quality of life and well-being by:

- Enhancing transportation options and access for all ages and abilities.
- Promoting local businesses and workforce development to enhance economic vitality.
- Removing barriers to housing choice in all neighborhoods.
- Celebrating arts and culture to bring the community together.
- Prioritizing environmental sustainability and access to nature spaces to enhance health and well-being for all residents.
- Fostering a culture of active community participation in decision-making.

CELEBRATE ARTS AND CULTURE

We aim to honor our history, celebrate our diversity, and foster a thriving cultural landscape for all by:

- Preserving, rehabilitating, and adapting our diverse historic resources to maintain Evanston's heritage and connect residents to our shared past.
- Supporting diverse cultural expressions and events that reflect our community's unique identity.

- Developing vibrant public spaces with impactful public art, fostering opportunities for people to gather, interact, and engage.

FACILITATING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Evanston must take bold action to achieve the goals of Envision Evanston 2045. The City's land constraints cause tension with important issues like increasing housing diversity and prioritizing climate mitigation and resilience. It is possible to reconcile these seemingly conflicting goals by integrating environmental justice, equitable development, and smart growth approaches to maintain healthy and inclusive neighborhoods. Envision Evanston 2045 provides a framework that can evolve and adapt as new trends emerge.

LAND-USE APPROACH

This Plan outlines a land-use strategy focused on connecting people and places through mixed-use centers and corridors. It also uses historic preservation as a land-use tool to maintain architectural diversity and celebrate cultural heritage. Additionally, the Plan incorporates a citywide analysis to identify existing community resources, amenities, and areas with development potential, supporting the development of 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. The Future Land Use Map (see right, Figure 1) and its development process are outlined in Chapter 5: Neighborhoods and Places. 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 this map.

POLICIES

In addition to land use and transportation, additional policies addressing quality-of-life factors including health and well-being, economic development, and housing work together to bring our vision to life. The chapters that follow outline recommended policies and actions in further detail.

CHAPTER 5: NEIGHBORHOODS & PLACES

Evanston's origin story is seen in its built environment today. The major economic and population boom between 1860 and 1870 allowed the City to grow and develop independently of Chicago through the 19th century. With the combination of Northwestern University, access to Lake Michigan, the mansion boom after the Great Chicago Fire in 1871, and easy access to city life in Chicago, Evanston developed a reputation as a cultural and educational hub.

Evanston was originally built as three separate communities, each with its own commercial hubs including South Evanston/Ridgeville centered around Main Street, North Evanston along Central Street, and Central Evanston as the original downtown area. These areas remain as mixed-use hubs that serve the surrounding neighborhoods. North Evanston was added in 1874, and South Evanston in 1892, to form the municipality of Evanston.

Evanston grew and developed in part because of two rail systems that provided fast and convenient public transportation within Evanston and to downtown Chicago.

The current Metra North Line started as the Chicago and Milwaukee line in 1854, was leased by the Chicago and North Western Railway (CNW) in 1866, and purchased by CNW in 1883. The Calvary station, original to the line, closed in 1958 with more than 20 stops in and near Chicago as CNW focused on suburban and long-haul traffic. The Metra North Line currently has three Evanston stations at Main, Davis, and Central streets.

The Northwestern Elevated Railroad extended its mainline service to the Evanston Line in 1908, which ran between Central Street and the Chicago Loop. The line was extended to Linden Avenue in Wilmette in 1912. The current Purple Line went into effect in 1949 as part of major service changes to the North-South rapid transit system by the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA). Several stops including Isabella and Calvary were closed, leaving the current South Boulevard, Main, Dempster, Davis, Foster, Noyes, and Central stops in Evanston. The Niles Center Branch of the Chicago Rapid Transit Company (CRT) was placed in operation in 1925 with Evanston stops at Ridge, Asbury, and Dodge, and continued to Skokie. This service was discontinued in 1948 when the CTA purchased the CRT and was replaced by the 97 bus line. The Skokie Swift line went into service in 1964 from Howard to Dempster without any Evanston stops.

As the community developed, it became known for its unique architecture, from the grand Victorian homes of the 19th century to innovative modernist designs of the 20th century. Evanston is filled with historic homes and landmarks that embody the City's rich history and cultural diversity. Over the years, the City has cultivated distinct neighborhoods and business districts that showcase a development pattern that celebrates its heritage. This built environment supports tangible connections to, and a collective memory of, the past.

Evanston's neighborhoods offer a little bit of everything—as each ward showcases below. From a walkable and urban downtown to quaint residential blocks, each neighborhood has evolved and maintains a strong sense of community.

1ST WARD

The 1st Ward includes most of Downtown Evanston and a large area of the Northwestern University campus. This ward features a blend of historic and contemporary architecture, including early 20th-century commercial buildings and modern high-rises. Residential options range from vintage apartments to newer condominiums, catering to diverse needs. The ward's location near Lake Michigan offers scenic views and access to waterfront parks. The 1st Ward is home to a diverse mix of retail shops, restaurants, outdoor terraces, and rooftop spaces with panoramic views. ~~It is a cultural and entertainment hub, featuring venues like the Evanston cinema and the upcoming opening of the Northlight Theatre. The area attracts millions of visitors annually, drawn by its dynamic urban atmosphere and cultural offerings.~~

Comment [11]: from historic homes to vintage apartments to newer condominiums

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2ND WARD

The 2nd Ward is known for its diverse residential neighborhoods and active community. Housing styles range from mid-20th-century bungalows and ranch-style homes to contemporary townhomes. Commercial activity takes place largely along Dodge Avenue and Church Street, where a variety of local businesses and services thrive. Key community assets include the Robert Crown Community Center, offering recreational and cultural programs, and Mason Park, which provides green space and sports facilities.The Ward is also home to Evanston Township High School, a key educational institution. It is a cultural and entertainment hub, featuring venues like the Evanston cinema and the upcoming opening of the Northlight Theatre. The area attracts millions of visitors annually, drawn by its dynamic urban atmosphere and cultural offerings.

3RD WARD

The 3rd Ward is located in southeast Evanston and is characterized by its historic residential areas and proximity to Lake Michigan. The ward boasts tree-lined streets and well-preserved homes with architectural styles from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, such as Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Tudor Revival. Residents enjoy easy access to lakefront recreational spaces, including Garden Park and South Boulevard Beach. In addition to the ward's scenic and residential charm, it is home to the bustling Main-Dempster Mile, a walkable district that serves as a key corridor offering a variety of dining options, live music venues, and

tasteful retail shops, galleries, and studios along Chicago Avenue, Main Street, and Dempster Street.

4TH WARD

The 4th Ward covers the central area of Evanston and includes a mix of residential and commercial spaces. Housing options range from single-family homes to apartment complexes, highlighting the ward's diverse community. The 4th Ward shares sections of Downtown Evanston with the 1st Ward, and features several local businesses and community resources that serve its residents.

5TH WARD

The 5th Ward is known for its rich cultural history and strong community ties. Its neighborhoods feature a variety of housing styles, including single-family homes, apartments, lofts, and live-work units. The Hill Art District supports a variety of local businesses. Ongoing community initiatives and development projects work to enhance local facilities and preserve the ward's history and culture. The 5th Ward has lacked a neighborhood school since Foster School closed in 1967. However, District 65 is in the midst of constructing a new K-5 school, having started in July 2024, with plans to open for the 2026–2027 school year.

6TH WARD

Encompassing parts of northwest Evanston, the 6th Ward has a more suburban feel, with spacious residential areas, parks, and schools. The ward offers a peaceful environment with tree-lined streets and well-maintained public spaces, desirable for families with young children. Commercial areas in the 6th Ward include parts of the Central Street district, known for its local businesses, bakeries, coffee shops, boutiques, and restaurants. Willard Elementary School and Lincolnwood Elementary School ~~Haven Middle School~~ are key institutions that provide quality education to local students.

7TH WARD

The 7th Ward, bordered by Lake Michigan on the east, is known for its scenic beauty and residential neighborhoods with diverse housing styles. Quality of life is high, with easy access to beaches and recreational facilities. The 7th Ward also includes parts of the Central Street district and Northwestern University's athletic campus, providing a range of cultural and

recreational activities. In addition, the ward is home to educational institutions including Orrington Elementary School, Kingsley Elementary School, and Haven Middle School.

8TH WARD

The 8th Ward is located in south Evanston and features a blend of residential and commercial areas. It is known for its active community associations and commitment to promoting local businesses and improving its neighborhoods. The ward includes the Howard Street district, which forms the southern border between Evanston and Chicago. The Howard Street CTA station is a vital transfer point for trains on the Red, Purple, and Yellow lines as well as several bus routes, offering ample connectivity for commuters.

9TH WARD

The 9th Ward stretches from south-central to southwest Evanston and comprises residential neighborhoods with a community-focused atmosphere. Housing options are diverse, and the area includes local parks, fostering a family-friendly environment. Its eastern border is part of the Chicago Avenue corridor, which runs parallel to rail lines and serves as the primary north–south route in Evanston. Chicago Avenue connects the Main Street, Dempster Street, and downtown shopping districts, so residents have access to diverse retail and dining options.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

Most of Evanston's land is developed, meaning any new development must be thoughtful and meet the community's needs. To foster a sense of place and preserve the unique identity of Evanston's neighborhoods, both new development and redevelopment should commit to quality design that reflects and enhances the defining features of surrounding areas. This encourages design solutions that are compatible with the existing built environment and responsive to the community's values and needs.

Developments should aim to complement the neighborhood's architectural style, scale, and materials while integrating modern elements that support functionality and sustainability. New projects must contribute positively to the neighborhood's sense of place by harmonizing new and existing structures. Emphasis will be placed on maintaining visual continuity, enhancing pedestrian experiences, and supporting a welcoming atmosphere that promotes community bonding.

In aligning with these principles, development should not only meet aesthetic and practical standards but also strengthen the social and cultural fabric of the neighborhood. By prioritizing quality design, we ensure our neighborhoods remain vibrant, inclusive, and resilient for future generations.

Development will also need to mitigate its impact to achieve the City's climate goals. The built environment accounts for over 70 percent of greenhouse emissions, split between natural gas and electricity. These emissions result in indoor and outdoor air pollution, which is harmful to the health and well-being of community members. The City must work to decarbonize existing buildings and ensure new development is carbon neutral to have a more resilient building stock and community.

To address these constraints, the Future Land Use Map and policies should encourage new development near transit and along major road corridors to connect people and places. The land use strategy should also prioritize the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and strategic opportunities to expand housing choices in all neighborhoods. Evanston's architectural history offers opportunities for adaptive reuse—transforming older, underused buildings into modern, energy-efficient spaces. This approach reduces demolition waste, preserves historic character, and contributes to a more sustainable built environment.

New developments and renovations must meet building codes such as LEED certification or similar standards to ensure energy efficiency, water conservation, and reduced carbon footprint. Development should also help expand the urban tree canopy and support public amenities such as parks and placemaking initiatives. These changes, combined with efforts to streamline the development review process, should improve predictability so people know what to expect as neighborhoods evolve.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

A land use map guides development decisions and describes the scale and type of development suitable for each area. The map guides the community, City staff, and decision-makers when reviewing development proposals and zoning changes to determine if they are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Future Land Use Map is designed to achieve the goals of Envision Evanston 2045 and implement the vision of new development near transit and along major road corridors to connect people and places. The following sections summarize the intent of each land use category identified on the map.

RESIDENTIAL

The residential land use category includes a wide range of residential developments, from single-family neighborhoods to more densely developed areas featuring courtyards, walk-up apartments, and condominiums. This land use category should celebrate the diversity of housing types, accommodating both low-density, suburban-style homes and higher-density urban residences. Future development in these areas should preserve the defining features of each neighborhood that form their distinct identities. This includes integrating new housing types that complement existing architectural styles, harmonizing density and scale while enhancing community cohesion and accessibility. Whether in established low-density enclaves like the neighborhoods surrounding Central Street, or more urban and walkable neighborhoods surrounding downtown and local business districts, diverse housing supports a vibrant, inclusive fabric where all residents can live and thrive.

MIXED USE

The mixed-use land use category includes areas that blend residential, commercial, and service uses, supporting walkable neighborhoods that meet both the needs of residents and businesses. These areas range in scale and include small, locally oriented business areas tucked in residential neighborhoods. These pockets provide essential services, local shops, and small businesses that enhance the quality of life for nearby residents, encouraging a tight-knit environment. Future development and zoning in these pockets should continue to prioritize a balance of residential and commercial uses, fostering local commerce while maintaining the intimate, pedestrian-friendly nature of the area.

Mixed-use areas also include established commercial hubs and vacant land—including the abandoned Mayfair railroad—that can potentially accommodate additional development. With easy access to public transportation, these districts are well suited for strategic development opportunities that expand housing supply. Future development and zoning should prioritize a mix of businesses, offices, and residences to support the local economy and create desirable places to live, work, and play.

Finally, the most intense mixed-use neighborhoods have a dynamic mix of residential and commercial properties, often located along major roads or near transit options. While some of these areas still rely on car traffic due to their past uses, there remain strategic opportunities to support new development. As infrastructure improves and transportation options increase, these areas will continue to evolve, allowing for a mix of lower- and higher-density buildings to support sustainable, walkable neighborhoods. Future development and zoning should aim to enhance the synergy between residential and commercial uses, ensuring each mixed-use area contributes to a thriving, diverse urban fabric that supports local businesses, provides services, and encourages pedestrian activity.

DOWNTOWN

The downtown land use category captures a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood that blends commercial, residential, institutional, and recreational uses. The area features a combination of historic mid-rise brick buildings, contemporary glass-and-steel towers, and traditional storefronts that contribute to a distinctive urban character. The neighborhood is anchored by a variety of retail, dining, and entertainment establishments concentrated along key corridors such as Davis Street and Sherman Avenue. Office buildings, including those serving professional services and corporate tenants, are spread throughout, particularly near transit hubs. Residential development ranges from luxury high-rise apartments and condominiums to smaller-scale multifamily housing, fostering a diverse and active community. Northwestern University’s presence along the north edge of downtown contributes to the area’s economic and cultural vibrancy.

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. High-density projects should be strategically placed near

transit nodes and commercial corridors, while mid-rise and low-rise buildings should be prioritized in areas that transition into surrounding neighborhoods. Thoughtful zoning and design guidelines must ensure harmony between architectural styles, walkable streetscapes, and green spaces to enhance the urban fabric. Sustainable development practices, including green-building initiatives and transit-oriented development, should be encouraged to support economic growth while maintaining Evanston's unique sense of place.

CREATION AND INNOVATION

These areas consist of industrial areas that host both retail and service businesses, along with some lighter industrial uses. This land use category attracts new types of businesses like research, technology, and labs to adapt and support local jobs. As these areas transition, they will reduce the impact on nearby homes and lead to fewer environmental issues.

EVALUATING ZONING PROPOSALS FOR CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Future Land Use Map is based on the policies and data contained in the Comprehensive Plan. It shows the general land use recommended and corresponds to a range of land uses and intensities within each category. The designation of an area does not mean the most intense zoning district described in the land use categories is automatically recommended. A range of densities and uses are encouraged within each category, and zoning districts reinforce this range and balance infrastructure capacity. The future land use categories should not be interpreted to support or prevent development. Zoning proposals should support implementation of the Plan's vision, themes, and policies, and mitigate impacts on streets, schools, parks, and other community facilities.

When deciding whether a proposed use or zone aligns with the Comprehensive Plan, the following questions should be considered:

- Is the proposal consistent with the vision, themes, and policies contained within the Comprehensive Plan?
- Does the proposal significantly change the recommended land use of the area?
- Will transportation infrastructure and community facilities be available at City standards to serve the proposal?

CAMPUS COMMUNITY

These areas contain various institutional campuses, like universities, high schools, hospitals, sports facilities, and senior care communities. Land within this category typically contains multiple buildings that provide an array of programming and services. Campus communities evolve as institutions change their goals. Since these campuses mostly operate within their own boundaries, rules should allow flexibility to accommodate the changing needs of the community and emerging trends.

OPEN SPACE

This category includes open space that the community values and uses frequently. This land is usually owned by the City and is used for different recreational activities, including parks and community centers. Since these are public areas, rules should keep these green spaces intact and protect natural habitats while making them available for everyone's use.

Comment [12]: Include Ridgeville/Lighthouse park districts and MWRD land?

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

To implement the vision established by the future land use strategy, Evanston will need to adopt policies and actions aimed at achieving goals of sustainable growth, climate resiliency, housing choice, and transportation accessibility.

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.

Comment [13]: ALTERNATE: Encourage developments that support opportunities for people to live, work and operate businesses near transit and within mixed-use areas.

LU 1.2 Require all development to be carbon neutral with zero on-site greenhouse gas emissions, while exploring on-site renewable electricity generation to achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

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

LU 1.4 Develop policies and update zoning regulations to attract, support, and retain local businesses.

Comment [14]: ALTERNATE: Develop policies and update development regulations and programs to attract, support, and retain local businesses.

LU 1.6 Regularly review and update zoning regulations to ensure they achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

2. ENSURE NEW DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS, AND ZONING DECISIONS IMPLEMENT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND FUTURE LAND USE MAP.

Identify any capacity constraints on the ability to provide utilities and city services to accommodate new development.

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LU 2.1 Update zoning regulations to align with the Comprehensive Plan.

LU 2.2 Develop an implementation roadmap to prioritize the policies and actions of the Plan.

LU 2.3 Create a public dashboard to track the implementation of the Plan.

LU 2.4 Routinely review and update the Plan to ensure it achieves the stated goals and proactively addresses emerging trends

3. EVALUATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS TO MEASURE THEIR IMPACT.

LU 3.1 Develop criteria to analyze the economic impact, emissions mitigation and climate resiliency measures, infrastructure and utility capacity, housing diversity, and environmental justice implications.

LU 3.2 Update development applications to require the data needed for evaluation.

LU 3.3 Include evaluation results in reports to inform decision-making and for public awareness.

4. PRIORITIZE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.

LU 4.1 Establish criteria to prioritize capital improvement projects based on equity and community impact.

LU 4.2 Develop a system to track maintenance needs and proactively invest in City facilities.

LU 4.3 Align capital improvement projects with private investment to leverage mutually beneficial outcomes.

5. ENCOURAGE THE TRANSITION OF INDUSTRIAL AREAS AND BUILDINGS TO SUPPORT INNOVATION, COLLABORATION, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SHARED RESOURCES.

LU 5.1 Streamline policies, regulations, or processes that remove barriers and support 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:

- 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.

LU 5.3 Explore the use of city-owned properties to support the creation of innovation hubs.

6. COLLABORATE WITH LOCAL INSTITUTIONS TO IMPLEMENT ENVISION EVANSTON 2045 AND ADDRESS EMERGING TRENDS.

LU 6.1 Expand and encourage partnerships with local institutions through proactive planning and communication.

LU 6.2 Support innovations in healthcare programming and remove barriers to ensure equitable distribution of providers and services throughout the City.

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

7. ENSURE NEW DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS QUALITY DESIGN.

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.

LU 7.2 Promote quality design and site planning early in the development process and before financial commitments to ensure design decisions align with the goals of the Plan and established guidelines.

LU 7.3 Develop guidelines for new development that align with the vision and goals of the Plan and consider the defining features of neighborhoods, sustainable materials, and energy efficiency.

8. ENCOURAGE THE ADAPTIVE REUSE OF EXISTING OR UNDERUSED BUILDINGS.

LU 8.1 Update zoning regulations to remove barriers and encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings in all neighborhoods.

LU 8.2 Promote incentives that support the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, including tax credits and other financial tools.

LU 8.3 Update zoning regulations to allow existing homes to add new units within the existing building footprint.

9. PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIVERSE HOUSING TYPES IN ALL NEIGHBORHOODS.

LU 9.1 Assess neighborhoods to identify opportunities to add diverse housing typologies that meet the needs of community members.

LU 9.2 Establish policies that reduce displacement of community members who would like to stay in Evanston.

LU 9.3 Update zoning regulations to allow diverse housing typologies based on the assessment.

LU 9.4 Streamline the approval process for new housing projects to reduce barriers that increase the cost of housing, even marginally.

CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

Introduction

The City of Evanston has a vibrant network of community systems that deliver essential services to all who live, work, and learn here. Community organizations, nonprofits, schools, faith-based institutions, and businesses provide vital services and create opportunities for gathering and learning. These organizations inspire community engagement and fund local initiatives, while business alliances promote economic growth and financial resilience. Neighborhood groups and nonprofits offer crucial case-management and safety-net services, tirelessly advocating for residents' needs. Together, these community-focused organizations and local government agencies weave a connected, proactive, and resilient community system that empowers Evanston's residents to thrive.

Existing Conditions

Evanston's residents have access to diverse social services and community-based organizations, in addition to health care facilities and faith-based institutions. These deliver essential social services that local governments cannot provide. The Evanston Parks and Recreation Department offers a range of activities — from summer camps to senior programs — ensuring that residents of all ages and abilities can engage in community life.

Our community proudly hosts both public and private schools that provide safe spaces for our youth to learn and engage in extracurricular activities. Evanston/Skokie School District 65 caters to students from preschool through eighth grade at elementary, middle, and magnet schools throughout Evanston. All these schools feed into Evanston Township High School, the community's only public high school. District 65 has proposed a plan to address its budget deficit of approximately $13.2 million in 2025, focused on achieving long-term financial stability, prioritizing student-centered solutions, aligning spending with revenue, enhancing operational efficiency, and upholding educational quality and support for historically marginalized students.

Northwestern University is a key player in Evanston's economic, educational, and cultural landscape, employing hundreds of residents and attracting diverse students and faculty. The university also opens its libraries, museums, concert halls, and theatres to the public and supports the City through investments in infrastructure projects and services. Its partnership with Evanston/Skokie School District 65 and Evanston Township High School enriches student experiences through tutoring, mentorship, scholarship, and research opportunities.

In support of individuals in crisis, Evanston boasts a robust emergency response and planning system through the Evanston Police Department and Fire Department, alongside the innovative Crisis Alternative Response Evanston (C.A.R.E.) program. Launched in February 2024, this initiative redefines public safety by providing a nonpolice response to specific low-risk service calls. Operating independently yet with the full support of the Evanston Police Department, the C.A.R.E. program lessens pressure on police resources, allowing officers to concentrate on

crime prevention and community safety initiatives. The C.A.R.E. team is staffed by certified crisis responders with rigorous training from Oakton College, which covers various aspects of crisis intervention, mental health, restorative justice, and community resources to equip them with the necessary skills to respond to community crises.

Evanston is committed to building and nurturing community networks to support the needs of senior residents. The City provides a range of services for seniors, including subsidized transportation and utility discounts through the Access Evanston Program. The City of Evanston, private agencies, and community organizations are equipped with resources to support vulnerable populations in our community. Collectively, these groups work together to provide services related to housing, mental health, substance use, senior care, and more.

Evanston has a robust crisis management system, led by a division chief in Evanston's Fire Department who plans and conducts joint emergency response exercises to prepare for a wide range of scenarios including tornados, release of hazardous materials, and more using FEMA's National Incident Management System (NIMS). The City has partnered with Northwestern University, Red Cross, and other emergency responders to minimize the impact of disasters and to be eligible for federal preparedness grants. Evanston's Emergency Operations Center was activated to address the COVID-19 crisis in 2020.

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Just as community organizations and local government work in harmony, Evanston's infrastructure systems form the backbone that allows our community networks to flourish. These infrastructure networks are vital for daily functioning, and their availability and capacity play a crucial role in shaping the City's future land development and redevelopment. Evanston's multifaceted infrastructure encompasses transportation, telecommunications, energy utilities, water, wastewater, and drainage. While transportation is addressed in a separate chapter, this section highlights Evanston's water, wastewater, and drainage systems, along with the region's energy and broadband utilities. These essential infrastructure systems are key to the City's continued growth and development, fostering a foundation that enhances quality of life for all residents and considers our climate future.

WATER SUPPLY AND SYSTEM

Water, wastewater, and stormwater systems have a significant impact on the quality of our lakes, rivers, and surface waters. The Evanston Water Treatment Plant, located on the shores of Lake Michigan, delivers up to 108 million gallons per day of clean drinking water to approximately 400,000 residents in Evanston, Skokie, and neighboring communities. This facility is critical to ensuring reliable and safe water for the region. The municipal water system is evaluated based on volume, pressure, and quality. It must provide water for daily use, especially during peak summer months, while maintaining essential reserves for emergencies like fires. Consistent water pressure guarantees effective delivery to residents, lessening strain on the system and minimizing risk of bacterial contamination.

SEWER SYSTEM

The City of Evanston's sewers form a complex system of interconnected private and public infrastructure. While the City manages most of the drainage system, private landowners control or own the sewers that discharge into the system, and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) operates and partially controls the interceptor sewers, deep tunnels, and the North Shore Channel downstream. Some parts of the system are more than 100 years old, while other components are new — continuously added through redevelopment and public infrastructure improvements.

The original combined sewer system consists of a series of street sewers and trunk sewers that are subdivided into 15 drainage basins. Restrictors are used in combined sewer drainage inlets and catch basins to reduce the risk of sewer overload and backups during heavy rainfall. As part of the City's Long Range Sewer Program, relief sewers and storm sewers were installed between 1991 and 2008. The relief sewer system is organized into seven drainage basins that connect directly to the MWRD Tunnel and Reservoir Plan, a system of deep, wide tunnels and reservoirs. The storm sewer system is divided into 10 drainage basins that discharge into the North Shore Channel or Lake Michigan.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Since the early 1990s, Evanston has made several large investments to improve the publicly owned drainage infrastructure. These projects resulted in a drainage system that can withstand intense storm events, protecting against widespread flood damage. As a result, reports of flood damage caused by surface floodwaters have been rare, while occasional basement backups from sewer overload have been reported and vary in location from storm to storm.

While the sewer system has performed as expected, climate change brings new challenges. The intensity and frequency of severe storm events are expected to increase in the Midwest. In 2023, the City completed a Stormwater Master Plan that included detailed modeling of the City's intricate sewer system. In the face of climate change, the model will allow for detailed analysis and evaluation of the system as we develop drainage projects and further investigate areas of concern. Comprehensive stormwater management will help reduce flooding, protect infrastructure and natural resources, and improve water quality.

BROADBAND

Evanston is well served by internet providers including AT&T, Xfinity, Verizon, RCN, and T-Mobile that provide up to 2 Gbps service, making it attractive for businesses and residents. As of 2023, 95.2% of households in Evanston have internet access, however, not all residents can afford broadband service. The City recognizes the importance of digital access to support daily life for work, education, health care, and commerce. The Evanston Public Library's free "Borrow the Internet" service provides Wi-Fi hotspots that can be checked out for 28 days at a time by Evanston residents 16 or older who are cardholders to boost digital access. The library also has job-search kits that include a Chromebook and a hotspot that can be checked out by Evanston residents 16 and older. As technology continues to evolve, promoting digital equity will become more important than ever. Ensuring access to clean and reliable energy to support digital infrastructure is also key to future planning.

ENERGY UTILITIES

ComEd provides electricity in Evanston. ComEd is a subsidiary of Exelon and a part of PJM, a regional transmission organization spanning 13 states in the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic. As of 2024, ComEd's electricity sources include natural gas-fired power (44%), nuclear power (34%), coal-fired power (15%), wind power (4%), solar power (1%), hydropower (1%), and other resources (1%). ComEd has pledged to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Illinois has committed to 100% clean energy by 2050, aligning with the City's goal of community-wide carbon neutrality by 2050 and 100% renewable electricity supply for all Evanston accounts by 2030. Evanston makes progress on its goals through the community choice aggregation program, which allows the City to combine residential and small commercial retail electric accounts and seek alternative suppliers in search of cleaner electricity.

Nicor Gas provides natural gas to Evanston. Southern Company, Nicor's parent company, set a goal of making its enterprise-wide operations net zero by 2050.

Policies and Actions

City Buildings and Facilities Policy/Action Insert

Policy: Create and maintain a system of fully accessible public buildings appropriate to the varied tasks of providing a high level of services to the community.

- Create a capital facilities and government services master plan to comprehensively understand current and projected office and other space needs in order to right size public facilities.
- Identify opportunities to incorporate revenue producing uses into underutilized city properties and/or new public facilities as they are replaced.
- Approach acquisition and construction of new public buildings in terms of improved quality of service and fiscal prudence.
- Encourage the highest quality design in new public buildings.
- Identify a location and financing plan to replace the current Police Headquarters Building
- Determine a future use for the 2100 Ridge Avenue property since it will no longer serve as Evanston's civic center.

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1. Collaborate with large and midsized institutions, such as school districts, hospitals, nonprofits, and Northwestern University, to expand programming opportunities.

CS 1.1 Establish new programming opportunities for university students and residents to work, learn, and enjoy time together to foster a greater sense of community between residents and students.

CS 1.2 Strengthen and formalize internship programs for students with City staff and support workforce development partnerships.

CS 1.3 Create collaborative programming opportunities between the school districts and the City, and enter into agreements with the school districts when appropriate for the City to provide services such as afterschool programming.

CS 1.4 Engage medical facilities and organizations in programs that link lower-income residents with chronic or potential health conditions to existing health resources.

CS 1.5 Support community hospitals and medical organizations to provide more efficient and timely services using a shared electronic documentation and reporting system that community providers can access, allowing them to provide wraparound services.

CS 1.6 Provide robust case management and wraparound services to households with insufficient resources based on their individual needs.

CS 1.7 Expand the use of restorative justice practices alongside community nonprofits to prevent conflict, build relationships, and repair harm by enabling people to communicate effectively and positively.

CS 1.8 Incorporate principles of restorative justice in ordinances and policies instead of punishing actions such as fines or fees.

CS 1.9 Support and expand the C.A.R.E. team to respond to select emergency calls, and continue using alternative responders to connect residents to community services and resources.

2. Encourage space sharing among school districts, hospitals, nonprofits, and Northwestern University to foster economic development and placemaking opportunities.

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

CS 2.2 Work with Northwestern University to use their facilities for public access to arts and cultural events, recreational and sports opportunities, and educational programming and activities for community members.

CS 2.3 Expand community and facility agreements with school districts 65 and 202 to share indoor and outdoor spaces, including auditoriums, gymnasiums, playgrounds, and ball fields to expand resource access to community members of all ages.

3. Design and maintain emergency response systems with community partners.

CS 3.1 Expand National Incident Management System (NIMS) training for City staff and community partners.

CS 3.2 Develop and maintain a NIMS core curriculum and provide guidance to community stakeholders to develop their training plans.

CS 3.3 Develop emergency management in ways that go far beyond educating a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), including communication plans, mitigation plans, hazard plans, and more.

CS 3.4 Design educational campaigns to include training on seasonal hazards, financial preparedness, cybersecurity training, and CPR; and host emergency preparedness and educational fairs to train community partners and residents.

CS 3.5 Establish disaster emergency shelter needs using city, school district, university, faith groups, and nonprofit facilities; and create communication systems for use in case of disaster or emergency.

CS 3.6 Support partnerships with local businesses and nonprofits to proactively build response and recovery capabilities through established agreements.

CS 3.7 Designate “resilience hubs” — community-serving facilities activated during emergencies — to support community members, coordinate communication, distribute resources, and reduce carbon pollution.

4. Strengthen, build, and maintain utilities and infrastructure necessities.

CS 4.1 Ensure infrastructure improvements implement the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.

CS 4.2 Work with local institutions to implement Envision Evanston 2045 and address emerging trends.

CS 4.3 Ensure public facilities are carbon neutral, support workforce and customer needs, and improve service delivery.

CS 4.5 Ensure equitable and proper stormwater management by improving infrastructure, programs, and regulations to improve the health of urban watersheds.

Comment [15]: Is a separated sewer system in the plans?

CS 4.6 Ensure universal broadband access across all neighborhoods and expand free WiFi service in public spaces to close the digital divide and achieve 100% broadband access by 2045.

Comment [16]: Does this mean "free Wi-Fi for Evanstonians and guests by 2045"?

CS 4.7 Collaborate with energy utilities to modernize, decarbonize, and increase efficiency.

CS 4.8 Continue and expand the lead service line replacement program and replace all watermains over 80 years old over the next 20 years.

CS 4.9 Continue to provide excellent water service to wholesale customers and negotiate future contracts that comply with national standards.

CHAPTER 7: GETTING AROUND

INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes Evanston's existing transportation infrastructure and mobility landscape. Historically, Evanston's development has been closely tied to transportation planning and investments. This plan section focuses on creating a holistic, multimodal transportation system by expanding access to diverse transportation options. These efforts align with goals in regional and statewide transportation plans, including Connecting Cook County - 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan[2] and the Illinois Department of Transportation's Long Range Transportation Plan[3]. Furthermore, this section supports local initiatives such as the Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP), the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan, the ADA Transition Plan, and the Complete and Green Streets policy.

As climate change intensifies, reducing emissions from transportation activities is crucial. In 2022, greenhouse gas emissions from vehicle miles traveled accounted for 22% of total emissions in Evanston. Investments in public and active transportation options are essential to reduce reliance on cars, decrease vehicle miles traveled, and ultimately lower greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1) Work with regional transit partners to improve Evanston's transit network coverage, improve service levels, and further vehicle decarbonization efforts.
2) Enhance Evanston's transit infrastructure and programs to ensure transit is safe, accessible, affordable, desirable, and convenient for all.
3) Facilitate development that prioritizes safe, convenient access to public transit.
4) Invest in upgrades and policies that support a safe, accessible, and convenient pedestrian network.
5) Support walking as a preferred mode of transportation and recreation through targeted infrastructure and programs.
6) Enhance Evanston's active transportation network to support safe, convenient travel locally and regionally for people of all ages and abilities.
7) Enhance biking infrastructure to promote the use of Evanston's bike lane network.
8) Support programs and initiatives that make cycling more accessible to community members of all backgrounds and skill levels.
9) Integrate shared active transportation options into existing networks to enhance accessibility and maximize effectiveness.
10) Encourage a greater adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) to reduce emissions and support the EV infrastructure needed.
11) Support policies and infrastructure that enhance road safety and encourage responsible driving behavior.
12) Utilize data-driven strategies to optimize parking management and improve user experience.
13) Create a comprehensive network of Complete and Green Streets to support sustainable,

[2] Cook County. (August 3, 2016). *Connecting Cook County: 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan*. https://www.cookcountyil.gov/sites/g/files/ywwepo161/files/service/cookcounty_lrtp_final_webversion_august_3_2016.pdf.

[3] Illinois Department of Transportation. (2024). *Move Illinois: 2024 Long-Range Transportation Plan*. https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/transportation-management/planning/long-range-transportation-pan.html.

multimodal travel throughout Evanston.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following sections provide a comprehensive overview of current transportation modes used to move people and goods in Evanston and highlights existing challenges. Six key themes have emerged through analyzing the City's transportation network: efficiency, equity, accessibility, safety, placemaking, and carbon neutrality. These themes were emphasized through engaging with the public throughout the planning process. Suggested policies and actions are outlined at the end of each section.

Efficiency: Does the transportation system facilitate timely and reliable movement of people?

Equity: Are burdens and barriers for marginalized communities reduced or mitigated? Are options affordable and diverse?

Accessibility: Does the system eliminate barriers to mobility and create affordable, desirable transportation options for people of all ages and abilities?

Safety: Can people of all ages and abilities travel safely and comfortably throughout our transportation network?

Placemaking: Does transportation infrastructure foster community bonds and serve as a place for connection?

Carbon neutrality: Is the transportation system free from fossil fuels and resource efficient? What is its impact on air quality?

TRANSIT

Evanston's transit network includes a mix of bus and rail services connecting residents to local and regional destinations. The CTA and Pace operate nine bus lines, including the Pulse Dempster Line, which provides efficient service between Downtown Evanston and O'Hare Airport.

Commuter rail is provided by Metra's Union Pacific North (UP-N) line, with stations at Central Street, Davis Street, and Main Street. The CTA Purple Line also runs through Evanston with seven stops, offering access to Chicago. The CTA Yellow Line runs along the city's southern edge, though it lacks a stop within Evanston.

Transit usage in Evanston is relatively high, with 15.3% of workers commuting by transit — 1% higher than Cook County and more than double Illinois' average (7%).

While ridership has not fully recovered to pre-COVID-19 levels, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) reported in June 2024 that ridership is steadily increasing. May 2024 saw over 32 million rides, 64% of pre-COVID-19 levels.[4]

WALKING

Evanston's street network largely follows a grid pattern, which makes it pedestrian friendly. However, certain infrastructure elements — large arterials, rail tracks, and the North Shore channel — can disrupt neighborhood connectivity and obstruct foot traffic. Nevertheless, the sidewalk network is extensive and well maintained. Most neighborhoods feature approximately 5.3-foot detached

[4] Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). (June 2024). *Ridership Report: May 2024*.

sidewalks, separated from roadways by landscaped buffers, enhancing walkability. Additionally, back alleys used for trash collection and garage access minimize curb cuts along street fronts, promoting a comfortable walking experience.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rates Evanston neighborhoods as either “Most Walkable” or “Above Average,” highlighting the City’s exceptional walkability.[5] Residents often cite the ease of walking to the lake, grocery stores, parks, and other amenities as a key benefit of living in Evanston; this was a recurring theme across public engagement activities throughout the planning process.

[5] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). (n.d.). *National Walkability Index: Evanston Neighborhoods*.

BICYCLING AND OTHER ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Biking is a popular transportation and recreation choice in Evanston, supported by local bike shops and events like monthly rides hosted by Downtown Evanston and the Evanston Transit Alliance. The Evanston Bicycle Club's North Shore Century attracts around 2,000 cyclists each year.

Evanston features a range of biking facilities, including protected and unprotected bike lanes, bike routes, and shared-use paths, mostly along major roads and in parks like James Park and the North Shore Channel Trail. Protected bike lanes are limited to areas like Sheridan Road, Dodge Avenue, and Church Street.

The city promotes bike accessibility with racks at transit stops and retail areas, and secure, covered bike parking in two municipal garages. As of 2024, Evanston's bike share program has 14 stations and 140 bikes, supporting sustainable travel, reducing congestion, and enhancing connectivity.

DRIVING

Despite the variety of transit options, driving remains the primary mode of travel for Evanston residents. About 47.1% of workers aged 16 or older commute by car, whether driving alone or carpooling — a rate lower than that of Cook County (65.1%) and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) region (71.1%). Evanston car commuters drive an average of 10,996 miles per year, with vehicle miles traveled per person annually in Cook County and the CMAP region approximately 20% and 42% higher, respectively.

Most Evanston households own at least one vehicle. According to the 2018–2022 American Community Survey five-year estimates, around 16% of households do not own a vehicle, while 34.5% own at least two cars. This is slightly lower than in Cook County (41.4%) and the broader CMAP region (51.1%)[6]

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

Evanston has a strong network of north–south routes like Chicago Avenue, Dodge Avenue, Ridge Avenue, and Green Bay Road, along with key east–west roads such as Dempster, Central, and Oakton Streets, all crucial for traffic flow and access to I-94. Some major roads, like Dempster and Central, are state owned.

The city also has over 300 unpaved alleys, which are graded periodically to fix potholes. Paving these alleys — funded through special assessments — offers long-term benefits, including less wear on vehicles, reduced flooding, improved safety, and better access for emergency and delivery services.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EV)

The electrification of vehicles stands at the forefront of transportation policies across federal, state, and local levels — all aimed at combating climate change.

In Cook County, EV registrations saw significant growth from March 2019 to March 2024. In Evanston, the number of registered EVs increased from 316 to 1,239 during this same period.[7] The

[6] U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *2018–2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: Commuting and Household Vehicle Ownership*.

[7] Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways. (2024). *Electric Vehicle (EV) Registration Trends: March 2019 to March 2024*.

City has responded to this growing demand by installing 17 EV charging ports across five locations, in addition to public chargers managed by other entities.

Vehicle electrification is a key component of Evanston's Municipal Operations Zero Emissions Strategy, which aims for net zero municipal carbon emissions by 2035. The City has committed to transitioning its entire municipal fleet to zero-emission vehicles by 2035. As of 2024, Evanston's municipal fleet includes over 20 electric vehicles.[8]

PARKING

The City of Evanston owns and operates three parking garages and 37 surface lots across our neighborhoods. Real-time occupancy data for City-owned garages and lots is available on the City's website. Use of these parking spaces generally requires a fee. In Downtown Evanston, the City charges for on-street parking Monday through Saturday, with garage fees collected 24/7.

In residential areas outside downtown and business districts, on-street parking is generally available, governed by both permit-required and nonrestricted zones. Evanston's developmental guidelines historically require a minimum number of off-street parking spaces to accommodate the growing needs of residents and businesses.

TRUCK AND DELIVERY SERVICES

Efficient freight movement is vital for Evanston's residents and businesses. The State of Illinois, CMAP, and Cook County have developed plans for a multimodal freight network to meet current and future needs while advancing decarbonization.

In Cook County, trucks and trains account for 60% and 25% of freight[9], respectively. Evanston, however, sees relatively low truck traffic, with heavy commercial vehicles making up less than 3% of daily traffic. To manage this, the City has designated truck routes, including Chicago Avenue and Central Street, while restricting other roads like Ridge Avenue and Sheridan Road.

Evanston's limited freight traffic is due to its location away from major truck routes. Although the Union Pacific railroad passes through, it primarily serves passenger rail, with minimal freight.

COMPLETE AND GREEN STREETS

The Complete Streets approach designs streets for safe and efficient travel for all users, regardless of age, ability, or transportation mode. It promotes equitable access for historically underserved populations, including seniors, children, people with disabilities, households without cars, and communities of color. Strategies are tailored to local needs and may include protected bike lanes, crosswalks, median islands, landscaping, curb extensions, and accessible transit stops.

Envision Evanston 2045 recommends Complete Streets for comprehensive road rehabilitation projects, focusing on connectivity and safety. It also supports the development of a strong active transportation network for bikes, e-scooters, and other sustainable modes.

Green Streets enhances Complete Streets by incorporating stormwater management solutions like

[8] City of Evanston. (2023). *Municipal Operations Zero Emissions Strategy: Vehicle Electrification and Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2035*.

[9] Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways. (2024). *Freight Transportation in Cook County: Truck and Train Traffic Trends*.

permeable paving, vegetated swales, and stormwater planters. These systems help create safer, more resilient infrastructure, particularly for vulnerable road users.

Adopted in 2014 and updated in 2017, the Complete and Green Streets policy shifts focus on active transportation and flexible, context-sensitive design. It includes a Livability Checklist to ensure projects meet goals for livability, active transportation, and connectivity while addressing local needs.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

TRANSIT

Evanston offers public transit options that connect the community to local and surrounding areas; however, significant barriers to equity, efficiency, and accessibility remain, as voiced by the community during the planning process.

Transit Network Connectivity
Evanston's rail network provides good north–south connectivity, but limited access in the west. However, neighborhoods in the west and southeast lack direct connections to CTA and Metra stations, making commuting harder for those not near a rail station.

Transit Service Limitations
Bus service is sparse, ending by 9 p.m., with no Sunday service, affecting essential workers and evening travel. Inconsistent schedules also disrupt students' access to school, with buses often running late or operating at 30-minute intervals. Public feedback shows service is insufficient and unreliable.

Transit Infrastructure Challenges
Only one Purple Line station, Davis Street, is ADA-compliant, and Metra stations lack elevators. Many rail stations are far from pedestrian routes and lack amenities. Bus stops offer little shelter, seating, or lighting, making travel uncomfortable and unsafe.

Transitioning to Low-Emission Transit
As of 2025, Evanston has yet to realize any carbon-neutral transit services. Pace has committed to a 100% zero-emission fleet by 2040[10], and CTA aims to electrify its bus fleet by the same year. Although CTA trains are electric, the power source is not yet zero emission, and Metra UP-N trains are currently diesel powered, though plans are in place to gradually adopt zero-emission locomotives.

WALKING

Community members at workshops and engagement sessions shared several concerns about walking in Evanston, especially on safety and gaps in infrastructure.

Sidewalk Gaps and Accessibility Issues
Evanston faces significant sidewalk gaps and accessibility challenges, particularly for residents using wheelchairs or mobility devices. Many sidewalks are only on one side of the street or are too narrow for safe use, creating mobility barriers and tripping hazards.

Safety Concerns
Residents report feeling unsafe crossing streets, backed by 2022 data showing 30 pedestrian and

[10] Pace Suburban Bus and Chicago Transit Authority (CTA). (2024). *Commitment to Zero-Emission Fleets by 2040*.

31 bicyclist injuries[11]. Factors include high-speed traffic, distracted driving, and limited crossing options, often forcing unsafe crossings. Crashes usually take place around downtown, especially on Ridge Avenue, Church Street, and Lake Street, with emerging hotspots in the southern part of the City.

Conflict Points on Sidewalks
The growing use of bicycles, scooters, and mobility devices creates crowded sidewalks and potential crashes. Focus-group participants noted the lack of a safe on-street cycling network, pushing cyclists onto narrow sidewalks and increasing safety risks. Continuous evaluation of policies and infrastructure is needed to ensure safe, shared use for all users.

Impact on Vulnerable Populations
Safety issues affect vulnerable groups, including children and the elderly, at similar levels as pedestrians in other age groups — highlighting the need to address these safety concerns to protect the more vulnerable population.

BIKING AND OTHER ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION MODES

Evanston has made significant progress toward creating a bike-friendly environment. However, the following challenges continue to limit those who choose to cycle.

Safety Concerns Due to Inadequate Infrastructure
Many Evanston bike routes lack proper separation from traffic, leaving cyclists vulnerable. Routes like Main, Dempster, Central, and Green Bay Road are particularly unsafe, discouraging potential cyclists including children, seniors, and inexperienced riders.

Sidewalk Biking and Shared Use Concerns
Biking on sidewalks is allowed in some areas but can lead to conflicts with pedestrians. As active transportation grows, the city must ensure safe, shared use of public spaces.

Challenges with Affordable Access
The cost of bikes, safety gear, and maintenance limits access for many residents. To address this, the city offers a bike share program to improve affordability.

Need for Education and Awareness
Most residents lack formal cycling and traffic safety training. The city should promote educational programs and improve signage to encourage safe biking practices.

Gaps in the Cycling Network and Trail Connectivity
Evanston's disconnected cycling network forces cyclists onto busy streets with minimal protection and lacks clear trail connections. Many trails require detours onto residential streets, and bike lanes often end suddenly without proper signage. Lakefront trails, especially in the south, are interrupted by private property, forcing cyclists and pedestrians onto roads and increasing safety risks.

SHARED ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Evanston's shared bike docking stations are poorly integrated with public transit, making transfers inconvenient. Four of the seven CTA stations lack nearby docking stations, and many are not near bus stops. Increasing docking stations near transit stops would improve mode transfers.

Challenges with Access and Payment Options

[11] City of Evanston. (2023). *2022 Pedestrian and Bicyclist Injury Report*.

The Divvy system requires a smartphone and cashless payment, which limits access for those without these tools. While some rentals are available at kiosks for single rides, they still require a debit card and can be more expensive. This system may exclude lower-income residents, highlighting the need for more accessible payment options.

DRIVING

Driving is costly and environmentally harmful. Traffic leads to lost time and increased fuel consumption, contributing to carbon emissions. While Evanston's car commute rate is lower than that of surrounding areas, car use remains dominant. The City's 2018 Climate Action Plan calls for reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to create a more sustainable future.

Balancing EV Promotion with Investments in Transit and Active Transportation
Electric vehicles (EVs) help reduce emissions but don't address traffic congestion or reduce road space. Investments should focus on enhancing transit and active transportation to reduce car dependency and support sustainability goals.

Challenges with Speeding and Distracted Driving
A culture of speeding and distracted driving poses safety hazards on Evanston's roads, highlighting the need for continued education, enforcement, and infrastructure solutions to improve safety for all road users.

Use of Autonomous Vehicles (AVs)
Autonomous vehicles (AVs) could help with first- and last-mile connections but may contribute to congestion and exclude lower-income residents due to high costs. Cities must ensure AVs complement, not replace, public transit to meet mobility needs.

PARKING

Downtown Evanston has an extensive parking network. Despite that, challenges remain, and strategic actions are essential to ensure parking in Evanston is safe and convenient for everyone.

Land Use and Alternative Potential
Parking facilities occupy relatively large spaces, limiting opportunities for other uses. Parking lots cover approximately 5.5% of Evanston's total land area, with a larger percentage downtown. Many of these lots remain empty for most of the day, taking up space that could be repurposed for housing or other community-enhancing assets.

Impact of Minimum Off-Street Parking Requirements
Minimum off-street parking requirements force private developments to set aside space for parking that could be used for community, economic, or green spaces. These parking facilities, often along main streets and retail areas, disrupt the urban walking experience.

Consequences of Reducing Parking Fees
Lowering parking fees may make downtown more convenient but could increase traffic and economic costs and reduce space turnover. Longer parking stays could limit availability, impacting local businesses, especially during peak hours.

Financial Sustainability
Parking fees are important for funding the operations and maintenance of parking facilities. Reduced parking revenue would require reallocating other public funds, thereby reducing resources available for important municipal services that benefit the community.

TRUCK AND DELIVERY SERVICES

Managing truck and delivery services in Evanston presents unique challenges due to high demand on limited curbside space from a variety of users.

Demand on Limited Curbside Space
Although Evanston experiences relatively low freight traffic on its roads, challenges arise as commercial trucks compete with other transportation modes for limited roadway space. The growth of e-commerce has increased last-mile deliveries to homes and businesses, further increasing competition for roadway space and contributing to traffic.

Curbside Management
Implementing a comprehensive curbside management plan, similar to the Chicago Curbside Management Plan, could help manage and optimize curbside usage to balance the needs of diverse users effectively.

COMPLETE STREETS AND GREEN STREETS

Evanston's Complete and Green Streets policy faces challenges due to limited funding and competing priorities. Many guidelines are suggestions, leading to inconsistent implementation. While the policy encourages developers to adopt these principles, they are only required for projects that meet certain thresholds, limiting citywide adoption and funding.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

1. Work with regional transit partners to improve Evanston's transit network coverage, enhance service levels, and advance transit vehicle decarbonization efforts.

T 1.1 Promote the expansion of transit lines, including arterial rapid transit, to improve access to both regional and local destinations, with a focus on enhancing east–west connections.

T 1.2 Collaborate with transit partners on opportunities to decarbonize the transit system.

T 1.3 Work with transit agencies to review service needs and increase service frequencies in areas that need it.

T 1.4 Partner with regional, state, and federal agencies to secure more funding for transit services in Evanston and the surrounding region.

2. Enhance Evanston's transit infrastructure and programs to ensure transit is safe, accessible, affordable, desirable, and convenient for all.

T 2.1 Encourage all transit stops and stations to be ADA accessible.

T 2.2 Explore programs and policies to expand the installation of shelters, benches, and other street furniture to improve the transit experience.

T 2.3 Remove barriers that limit access to transit stations.

T 2.4 Implement placemaking strategies around rail stations and key bus stops (e.g., Dempster and Dodge) to create inviting community gathering spaces.

3. Facilitate development that prioritizes safe, convenient access to public transit.

T 3.1 Update zoning regulations to support development and redevelopment near transit stations.

T 3.2 Coordinate with transit agencies to align decisions, strategies, and investments with the City's land use objectives.

T 3.3 Develop and implement specific station area mobility plans with transit agencies to provide seamless transitions between transportation modes and providers.

T 3.4 Establish designated passenger pick-up and drop-off zones at transit stations to support ride-share services, improve pedestrian safety, and enhance traffic flow.

T 3.5 Integrate curbside provisions for paratransit services, placing them as close as possible to primary entrances at transit stations.

4. Invest in upgrades and policies that support a safe, accessible, and convenient pedestrian network for all users.

T 4.1 Improve existing sidewalks to ensure ADA compliance and prioritize safe travel for people of all ages and abilities, with a focus on vulnerable populations.

T 4.2 Invest in pedestrian safety measures and traffic-calming designs.

T 4.3 Review and amend City Code and policies related to sidewalks, driveways, crosswalks, speed limits, alleys, parkway plantings, and other elements impacting pedestrian safety.

T 4.4 Collaborate with neighboring communities and organizations to develop, connect, and strengthen regional trails, such as the North Shore Channel Trail.

T 4.5 Provide public amenities, including benches, drinking fountains, and restrooms, to make transit use more accessible and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.

5. Support walking as a preferred mode of transportation and recreation through targeted infrastructure and programs.

T 5.1 Review and update the Safe Routes to School program on an ongoing basis and as school attendance boundaries change.

T 5.2 Develop programs to promote and encourage walking for health and recreation.

T 5.3 Identify locations for temporary or permanent pedestrian malls or car-free streets.

6. Enhance Evanston's active transportation network to support safe, convenient local and regional travel for people of all ages and abilities.

T 6.1 Develop a complete, cohesive, and low-stress network of separated bike lanes on

identified bike routes, allowing active transportation with minimal car interaction while addressing pedestrian and traffic impacts.

T 6.2 Increase bike lane visibility through measures such as painting lanes at key conflict points, using bike traffic signals, and adding bike turn boxes at high-traffic intersections.

T 6.3 Prioritize infrastructure improvements that support safe access to schools for children using active transportation.

T 6.4 Focus on infrastructure improvements that facilitate multimodal access along the lakefront from Wilmette to Chicago.

T 6.5 Explore opportunities to deploy electric battery charging stations for active transportation.

7. Enhance biking infrastructure to promote the use of Evanston's bike lane network.

T 7.1 Install additional bike racks near commercial, retail, and institutional sites both inside and outside Downtown Evanston to encourage short bike trips.

T 7.2 Support improved bike parking at major destinations, in garages and lots, and at all transit stations outside downtown. Work to improve security and reduce bike theft.

T 7.3 Explore the installation of bike repair stations along key bike and transit routes and at popular biking destinations.

8. Support programs and initiatives that make cycling more accessible to community members of all backgrounds and skill levels.

T 8.1 Support, develop, and expand programs that facilitate bicycle ownership and access for community members with diverse needs.

T 8.2 Collaborate with area schools, including District 65, District 202, and Northwestern University, to educate on safe biking and commuting practices.

9. Integrate shared active transportation options into existing networks to enhance accessibility and maximize effectiveness.

T 9.1 Expand the bike share network by adding stations and prioritizing locations that connect existing transportation hubs with popular origins and destinations.

T 9.2 Partner with third-party providers to develop additional shared active transportation programs, increasing transportation options for the community.

T 9.3 Promote the collection and analysis of data on active transportation usage patterns and impacts to guide policy adjustments and infrastructure investments.

10. Encourage a greater adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) to reduce emissions and support the infrastructure needed.

T 10.1 Support car-sharing options through partnerships with existing third-party vendors or Evanston-specific providers.

T 10.2 Invest proactively to decarbonize and electrify all City fleet vehicles in alignment with the City's Zero Emission Strategy.

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.

T 10.4 Develop pilot programs for curbside, public right-of-way, streetlight, or utility pole charging to provide charging access for residents without off-street parking options.

T 10.5 Explore infrastructure and programs to establish EV charging solutions that reduce barriers for lower-income households.

11. Support policies and infrastructure that enhance road safety and encourage responsible driving behavior.

T 11.1 Promote safety campaigns, including educational and enforcement efforts, that encourage seat belt use, reduce distracted driving, and mitigate speeding.

T 11.2 Implement policies and infrastructure that encourage slower vehicle speeds, reduce conflicts between different transportation modes, and improve visibility at key points.

T 11.3 Establish research partnerships with Northwestern University to study the safety impacts and feasibility of autonomous vehicles (AVs) on Evanston's transportation network.

12. Utilize data-driven strategies to optimize parking management and improve user experience.

T 12.1 Pilot automated parking garages to increase parking capacity within a smaller footprint.

T 12.2 Enhance mobile payment options for parking to enable real-time tracking of parking availability.

T 12.3 Continue to collect data on general parking conditions and usage of off-street parking lots over time. Use trends and insights to inform future parking policies, such as setting parking maximums or reducing parking lots.

13. Create a comprehensive network of Complete and Green Streets to support sustainable, multimodal travel throughout Evanston.

T 13.1 Identify and prioritize areas for potential Complete and Green Streets implementation.

T 13.2 Evaluate all modes of travel in street design to ensure a balanced, multimodal approach.

T 13.3 Consider a transportation impact fee for new developments to fund active transportation infrastructure, mitigating land use impacts.

T 13.4 Review and update municipal code to include guidelines and examples for Complete and Green Streets features, ensuring alignment with best practices.

CHAPTER 8: ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

The climate we live in, the air we breathe, our natural resources, and our ability to sustain them are foundational to every aspect of life. This chapter highlights the vibrant tapestry of Evanston's natural resources, ecosystems, green infrastructure, and urban tree canopy. Embracing nature-based solutions empowers us to tackle climate change, pollution, and resource scarcity. As our City continues to grow, investing in our natural resources is key to creating a sustainable future that benefits all residents.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Incorporate climate resilience measures into infrastructure projects to expand biodiversity and mitigate future climate impacts, including increased flooding, heat waves, and storm events.
2. Effectively manage and expand natural resources to optimize ecosystem and human and wildlife health.
3. Effectively manage and expand the tree canopy to maximize urban forest benefits.
4. Implement land use practices that benefit soil health.
5. Manage land along the lakeshore and the North Shore Channel to limit habitat degradation and protect and preserve water quality.
6. Ensure a sustainable water supply by protecting Lake Michigan and promoting water conservation practices across residential, commercial, and industrial sectors.
7. Prioritize stormwater management strategies that protect water quality, manage flood risks, and enhance the natural function of wetlands, floodplains, and water bodies.
8. Increase material and resource recycling to reduce environmental burden.
9. Institute policies and practices that ensure Lakefront Protection.

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Even amidst dense development, Evanston boasts a diverse range of natural resources. Our green infrastructure promotes environmental stewardship through recreational opportunities, meaningful programming, and community engagement. Protecting this infrastructure during planning and development is important for sustaining ecosystem health. By preserving green spaces, we elevate quality of life for residents and enhance access to nature — all supported by a growing network of trails that connect neighborhoods with both natural beauty and urban vibrancy.

In our efforts to protect our infrastructure, we must bolster our community's resilience against extreme weather events and changes in climate patterns. Areas along the North Shore Channel remain vulnerable to flooding events, with the lake shore being particularly susceptible to

fluctuating water levels in Lake Michigan. This presents challenges in managing both infrastructure and ecosystems.

WATERBODIES

Evanston boasts 4.25 miles of stunning shoreline along Lake Michigan, a defining feature of our City, complemented by six beaches. Lake Michigan is part of a globally significant ecoregion cherished for its freshwater supply and rich biodiversity. For over 10,000 years, people have been drawn to the Great Lakes, relying on its waters for fishing and transportation. Today, it serves as the largest public drinking water supply in Illinois, supporting nearly 6.6 million people. If the Great Lakes are not managed carefully, this vital resource may be threatened by invasive species, climate change, pollution, and habitat destruction.

Alongside Lake Michigan, the North Shore Channel serves as Evanston's main water corridor. Originally constructed to manage sewage in the early 20th century, it has transformed into a haven for migratory birds and other wildlife. This three-mile channel also offers numerous recreational opportunities from trails and canoeing to rowing and fishing.

ECOSYSTEMS AND TREE CANOPY

Northeastern Illinois is composed of a mosaic of prairies, woodlands, and wetlands. Forest preserves stretch across nearly 70,000 acres in Cook County — about 11% of the region. These areas are core habitats for native species and are integral to the local ecosystem. Striving for harmony between urban development and these vital habitats is key for Evanston. The City is devoted to preserving these natural communities through thoughtful policies, proactive practices, and community initiatives.

Evanston, with its vibrant tree canopy and prime location along Lake Michigan, embodies a strong commitment to environmental stewardship. This dedication has earned us prestigious titles such as Tree City USA, Bird City Illinois, and the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. Our urban forest includes over 32,000 trees throughout the City's parkways, parks, and other public spaces. According to data analyzed by the Chicago Region Trees Initiative, Evanston's tree canopy cover is around 39% — more than that of similar communities.[12] The urban forest not only improves water and air quality, but also mitigates flooding, reduces urban heat island effects, provides shade that reduces summer energy use, and improves the overall well-being of community members.

However, tree canopy cover is not uniform throughout the City. Certain areas of eastern and northern Evanston have canopy coverage above 44%, while parts of western and southwestern Evanston fall below 20%.[13] As we face rising temperatures and increasing extreme weather events, neighborhoods with lower tree coverage are at higher risk of heat-related illnesses,

[12] Chicago Region Trees Initiative. (n.d.). *Community Tree Canopy Summary: Evanston*. https://mortonarb.org/plant-and-protect/chicago-region-trees-initiative/community-tree-canopy-summaries/
[13] Chicago Region Trees Initiative. (n.d.). *Community Tree Canopy Summary: Evanston*. https://mortonarb.org/plant-and-protect/chicago-region-trees-initiative/community-tree-canopy-summaries/

escalating cooling costs, and greater exposure to environmental toxins. Evanston must develop and implement strategies that address these challenges, ensuring that every community enjoys the benefits of a healthy environment.

Our urban trees experience significant challenges, including harsh conditions such as limited soil volume, poor soil quality, disturbances to root structures from utility work, and potential damage from community activities. These stressors make trees vulnerable to invasive pests, disease, and structural flaws. Furthermore, Evanston's tree canopy lacks age diversity. As the City's mature trees reach the end of their natural life, there are fewer midsized canopy trees to take their place.

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 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 the built environment, such as installing nondisruptive lighting systems, as well as stewardship of the natural environment, such as reducing pesticide and chemical fertilizer use.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As development continues throughout Evanston, the City has to accommodate growth while preserving our natural environment and mitigating climate change effects. How do we plan for future growth while enhancing our natural resources?

Climate forecasts for northeastern Illinois reveal critical challenges, including rising average temperatures, increased frequency of extreme weather events, a shorter dormant season, and more polar vortex events in winter. Precipitation patterns are changing, leading to extended droughts followed by intense rainfall. These climate shifts stress our native ecosystems and provide openings for invasive species, mosquitoes, ticks, and other disease carriers to migrate into the area and thrive. Furthermore, rising national water insecurity adds urgency to our local efforts to conserve Lake Michigan's resources, making it nonnegotiable to maintain high water quality for both people and native species. 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.

Effective management of our natural resources depends on public entities, private developers, and engaged community members working together. The City is responsible for stewarding publicly owned resources, such as parks and other green spaces; and ensuring ecosystem health through invasive species control, habitat restoration, and strict water quality monitoring. We expect developers to prioritize the conservation of green infrastructure, reclaim and reuse building materials, and adopt innovative practices to reduce emissions and embedded carbon. We can enhance our tree canopy cover, plant native and site-appropriate species, and manage stormwater infiltration effectively. Together, Evanston can take bold steps to create a sustainable and resilient environment for everyone in the community.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

1. Incorporate climate resilience measures into infrastructure projects to expand biodiversity and mitigate future climate impacts, including increased flooding, heat waves, and storm events.

ENV 1.1 Require higher building envelope standards and storm- and flood-resilient designs for new developments and redevelopments.

ENV 1.2 Incentivize green infrastructure efforts that mitigate heat island effects and provide access to green spaces, such as native tree replacement, green roofs, and community gardens.

ENV 1.3 Educate the community on climate change and resilience.

ENV 1.4 Require that outdoor lights in public areas follow dark-sky recommendations to reduce light pollution, including using light only where needed, targeting light downward, and using warm lighting at the lowest light level possible.

2. Effectively manage and expand natural resources to optimize ecosystem and human and wildlife health.

ENV 2.1 Monitor ecosystem health through assessments, inventories, and active management practices.

ENV 2.2 Protect, preserve, and increase habitat for native flora and fauna, using best practices as recognized by industry professionals.

ENV 2.3 Protect and manage larger green spaces, such as parks and the Ladd Arboretum, that provide critical habitats for native species.

ENV 2.4 Promote opportunities for education and outreach to community members on ecosystem management and support community organizations that work to protect and restore habitats.

ENV 2.5 Incentivize native plantings on private property.

ENV 2.6 Encourage positive nature experiences using best practices to reduce human–wildlife conflict.

3. Effectively manage and expand the tree canopy to optimize urban forest benefits.

ENV 3.1 Set annual tree-planting targets to increase overall tree canopy and sustainably offset projected tree losses, including setting targets by ward or neighborhood and adjusting for loss of large legacy trees.

ENV 3.2 Maintain an updated public tree inventory to capture species diversity and assess trends, patterns, and opportunities to guide urban forest management.

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

ENV 3.4 Identify funding opportunities that support urban forest health, including removing hazardous trees and planting new trees.

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

ENV 3.6 Address historic and cultural significance of trees and landscapes.

4. Implement land-use practices that optimize soil health.

ENV 4.1 Require developers to use environmental preservation methods during construction, including protective fencing and designated pathways.

ENV 4.2 Implement grading and erosion control standards to maximize plant buffers, replanting, and post-construction soil amendment and restoration.

ENV 4.3 Use best soil management practices, including reducing impervious surfaces and retaining vegetation during construction.

5. Manage land along the lakeshore and the North Shore Channel to limit habitat degradation and protect and preserve water quality.

ENV 5.1 Protect shoreland areas by encouraging buffer zones that maintain plant cover and reduce pollution in water bodies.

ENV 5.2 Maintain low-impact recreational infrastructure that allows public access to water bodies while maintaining ecosystem health.

ENV 5.3 Encourage watershed-based planning that considers human activities, land-water interactions, and impacts on aquatic life in making development decisions.

ENV 5.4 Develop lakefront-protection strategies that support climate resilience, provide drinking water security, and preserve recreational opportunities.

6. Ensure a sustainable water supply by protecting Lake Michigan and promoting water conservation practices across residential, commercial, and industrial sectors.

ENV 6.1 Continue to monitor water quality and make strategic investments to maintain long-term water supply stewardship.

ENV 6.2 Work together with regional and state regulators as well as community partners to support water conservation and protect Lake Michigan as a water source.

ENV 6.3 Promote residential conservation strategies, including replacing grass with native residential landscaping, restricting lawn watering in the middle of the day during summer, and requiring new developments to reduce watering demand.

ENV 6.4 Continue to use technology that allows water users to track their usage and encourage water-saving technologies in both new developments and retrofits.

ENV 6.5 Expand public education programs focused on protecting water sources, reducing water use, and promoting responsible watering practices.

7. Prioritize stormwater management strategies that protect water quality, manage flood risks, and enhance the natural function of wetlands, floodplains, and water bodies.

ENV 7.1 Encourage green infrastructure techniques in residential and commercial developments that slow, capture, and filter stormwater, helping to reduce runoff, prevent flooding, and protect waterways from pollutants.

ENV 7.2 Enhance public infrastructure by investing in modern stormwater drainage systems that prevent flooding and support long-term community resilience to extreme weather events.

ENV 7.3 Continue water-quality monitoring programs, including monitoring emerging pollutants like PFAS and microplastics to assess pollution levels and identify areas for intervention.

ENV 7.4 Support development that increases stormwater retention, such as bioswales, in public and private developments to reduce the burden on municipal infrastructure.

ENV 7.5 Support incentives for rainwater harvesting and infiltration systems, including permeable pavement, cisterns, and rain barrels.

8. Increase material and resource recycling to reduce burdens on the environment.

ENV 8.1 Recover food and compost organics to better manage waste locally.

ENV 8.2 Reclaim and reuse building materials.

Comment [17]: ALTERNATE: Implement a deconstruction ordinance to reclaim and reuse building materials.

ENV 8.3 Make it easier to recycle effectively, including through educational and marketing campaigns.

ENV 8.4 Encourage waste reduction practices.

ENV 8.5 Attract more circular businesses like package-free shops and thrift stores.

ENV 8.6 Install better infrastructure and services to avoid litter in business districts.

ENV 8.7 Support local procurement of goods and services to build a circular economy.

ENV 8.8 Reduce embedded carbon in building materials and explore opportunities to lower emissions through innovative building material technologies.

CHAPTER 9: PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACES

INTRODUCTION

Parks and open spaces are essential for enhancing people's physical, mental, and environmental well-being. They improve community health and fitness, elevate quality of life, foster a sense of community, connect people to the natural world, and help preserve natural areas. By providing high-quality parks designed with input from people of all backgrounds, we can increase equitable access and address environmental injustices. A park replacement schedule with equitable components will enable decision-makers to assess how effectively parks meet user needs and determine which parks should be repaired or replaced for the greatest community good.

According to the 2025 Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan, Evanston has five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, slightly more than half the national average.[14] Communities with high-quality parks tend to have higher property values and attract residents seeking desirable neighborhoods. Making sure all residents have safe access to high-quality parks and open spaces promotes social justice and enhances quality of life. By bridging equity gaps and encouraging participation, Evanston can address the impacts of its past inequitable practices.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Assess existing park and recreation programming and investment levels in all neighborhoods.
2. Align and expand park programming to provide inclusive activities for people of all ages and abilities, adapting to changing community needs and climate impacts.
3. Increase city investment to maintain, operate, and improve equitable park and recreational facilities.
4. Sustain or expand strategies to increase water access.
5. Evaluate and establish a plan to create an accessible public restroom system.
6. Focus on stewardship, education, and investments in urban habitats and natural landscapes citywide.
7. Maintain and execute the 2025 Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan as the primary blueprint for Parks and Recreation.
8. Develop a plan to increase land as it becomes available in areas with a greater need for more parkland until the national average is met.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

[14] American Society of Civil Engineers. (n.d.). Public Parks Infrastructure. Infrastructure Report Card. https://infrastructurereportcard.org/cat-item/public-parks-infrastructure/#:~:text=5-There%20are%20about%2010%20acres%20of%20public%20park%20land%20per,half%20of%20them%20need%20repair

Evanston boasts a large variety of community parks, with a total of 89 parks of various sizes offering diverse amenities. The extensive network of public spaces in Evanston includes open and natural spaces in which residents can be active and enjoy nature, including the lakefront and trails along the North Shore Channel. Other spaces, including plazas downtown, community centers, and libraries, are more urban and civic in nature and provide for communal gatherings and social interactions and functions.

The system features 221.5 acres of neighborhood parks, including recreation fields, facilities, and playgrounds serving local communities. Additionally, there are 63 acres designated as community parks that offer larger active fields and specialized facilities, alongside community centers. Evanston has 11.2 acres of beaches, 1.3 acres of tot lots, and 61 acres of undefined open space, providing a varied and inclusive recreational landscape for residents.

The park system is managed by several owners and operators. The City of Evanston owns the majority, managing a total of 213.1 acres. Regional entities like the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago and Cook County own land bordering the North Shore Channel of the Chicago Area Waterway System that runs from Evanston's northeast border, with Wilmette to the southeast corner bordering Chicago and Skokie, and Perkins Woods, a one-block forest preserve in northwestern Evanston. In addition, there are two additional independent park districts, Ridgeville and Lighthouse, that manage varying portions of parkland in different parts of Evanston, which adds complexity to the City's ability to meet community needs. Evanston also has a memorandum of understanding with the Skokie Park District to provide access to their pool, Channelside Park sports fields, and Pooch Park Dog Park.

Evanston is proud of its well-distributed and accessible park system, which is illustrated by Figure X. Responses to the Parks and Green Spaces Community Survey, conducted in 2023 by ETC Institute, indicate that 98% of 469 respondents had visited at least one park, recreation center, beach, or other public recreation facility within the last year.[15] Notably, 29% rated the overall condition of the parks as excellent, while 56% rated conditions as good. However, the accessibility of parks doesn't automatically equate to meeting the evolving needs of users. The Evanston Parks and Recreation Department offers over 2,875 fitness, sports, aquatics, environmental, and recreation classes and special events annually. High park usage from community engagement may lead to increased wear and tear. Future park designs should prioritize maintenance requirements and user experience to inform both programming and park planning effectively.

NOTABLE SPACES

Evanston features an expansive park system that offers the unique opportunity to enjoy the wonders and offerings of Lake Michigan. Parks cover about 50% of the Evanston

[15] The survey was randomly distributed large enough to accurately represent the population being surveyed in terms of race, age, gender and residence.

shoreline and offer unique access to spectacular views, sailing opportunities, boat launches, beaches for both humans and dogs, sand dunes, picnic areas, playgrounds, preserved bird habitats, and recreational spaces. The park system boasts a variety of community centers that help provide enriching experiences for patrons.

There are several local and national historic sites throughout our parklands. The **Noyes Cultural Arts Center (NCAC)** was originally designed as an elementary school by renowned architect Daniel Burnham in 1892 and expanded under the direction of Lawrence Perkins in 1949.[16] Today, the NCAC provides studio space to artists and features theatre and visual arts programming.

The Harley Clarke Mansion[17] is a historic English Tudor mansion. The City of Evanston purchased the property from the Sigma Chi National Fraternity in 1965 as part of the development of the **Lighthouse Landing Park**.[18] The property is a great example of Evanston's history and rich offerings.

The Jens Jensen Gardens, associated with the Harley Clarke Mansion, allows community members and visitors to experience landscape design from one of the foremost landscape architects of the 20th century. The grounds and water features, as well as the council ring, are popular destinations and are maintained by a dedicated group of volunteers.

Evanston is the proud owner of the **Gross Pointe Lighthouse**, which is part of the **Lighthouse Landing Complex**. The complex includes the City of Evanston parks properties and the Lighthouse Park District park space, the lighthouse, and the fog houses. While leased to the Lighthouse Park District, this member of the National Register of Historic Places is the symbol of Evanston. The lighthouse is not only extremely popular with visitors but also the identifier of Evanston in the city's logo. The property boasts a garden maintained by The Garden Club of Evanston and is a Certified Wildlife Habitat registered with The National Wildlife Federation, through its Garden for Wildlife program.

The **Sand Dunes** at Lighthouse Beach are the only publicly owned and accessible sand dunes in Evanston. These dunes were added in the 1970s and have become an important venue for ecological programming as well as a popular area for visitors to

[16] City of Evanston. (n.d.). *Noyes Cultural Arts Center: History*. https://www.cityofevanston.org/government/departments/parks-recreation-community-services/facilities/noyes-cultural-arts-center/history

[17] City of Evanston. (n.d.). History of the Harley Clarke Mansion. City of Evanston. https://www.cityofevanston.org/about-evanston/arts-and-culture/harley-clarke-mansion#:~:text=History%20of%20the%20Harley%20Clarke,Preservation%20Commission%20denied%20this%20proposal.

[18] Evanston RoundTable. (July 9, 2018). The Lighthouse Dunes: History and Future. https://evanstonroundtable.com/2018/07/09/the-lighthouse-dunes-history-and-future/

enjoy a wind-blown landform with unique characteristics.[19] The Dunes feature a variety of native plants and are maintained by a dedicated group of volunteers. The Dunes are a program site for environmental education classes and camps organized by the Ecology Center.

The **Ecology Center** is located in the **Ladd Arboretum**, which runs between the North Shore Canal and McCormick Boulevard on a narrow strip of land that is home to varieties of trees, gardens, sculptures, bicycle paths, and habitat restoration projects. **The Grady Bird Sanctuary** is also located here, and will become home to a new canoe launch facility in the future. The Arboretum is an area of natural beauty. The Ecology Center serves as the education nucleus of the Arboretum, presenting many programs throughout the year.

Clark Street Beach is not only a popular local spot but also serves as a crucial haven for migrating birds. Spanning two acres, the **Bird Sanctuary**, located on the beach, provides a safe refuge for birds as they travel along the lakefront. This area plays an essential role in supporting birds during their migration, a particularly vulnerable period in their journey. The sanctuary's success is largely due to the efforts of a committed group of volunteers who tend to the area. They help maintain the space, offering a peaceful and supportive environment for the birds as they rest and refuel.

The award-winning Merrick Rose Garden is another gem of Evanston's park system. The garden exhibits hundreds of rose varieties and is home to the Centennial Fountain from Fountain Square. This site is a popular destination for weddings.

The **Evans at Canal Shores** (formerly known as Canal Shores) is managed by KemperSports and is a 3600-yard, par 60-yard layout. While the land is owned by MWRD, the city leases the property and subleases the property to the Evanston Wilmette Golf Course Association. This property is known for its green space, which provides golfing and other recreational opportunities to community members.

The Lakefront is a hub for year-round activities including swimming, camps, rentals, lessons, and special events. Visitors can enjoy parks, playgrounds, bike and pedestrian paths, picnic areas, and public restrooms. Within the Lakefront are several notable areas and facilities:

- The **Arrington Lagoon** features beautiful views of fountains, Lake Michigan, the lagoon patio and building, as well as wildlife.
- **Six sandy beaches** are open for swimming from Memorial Day to Labor Day and attract over 160,000 visitors annually.
    - Clark Street Beach
    - Greenwood Street Beach
    - Lee Street Beach
    - Lighthouse Beach

[19] Evanston RoundTable. (July 9, 2018). *The Lighthouse Dunes: History and Future.* https://evanstonroundtable.com/2018/07/09/the-lighthouse-dunes-history-and-future/

    - Lincoln Street Beach (managed by Northwestern University)
    - South Boulevard Beach
- **Evanston Dog Beach** is a popular off-leash destination for many canine friends and their owners. The dog beach provides an opportunity for dogs to swim, run, and mingle on the shore of beautiful Lake Michigan.
- **Two boat launches**
    - Dempster Street Beach Launch Facility - open to nonmotorized vessels
    - Church Street Power Boat Launch - open to motorized vessels.
- **Parks**
    - Clark Square
    - Dawes Park
    - Elliott Park
    - Garden Park
    - Burnham Shores
    - Lawrence O. Lawson Park
    - Lighthouse Landing Park
    - Lunt Park
    - Patriots Park
- Northwestern University manages two lakefront sites open to the public — the **NU Sailing Center** and **Lincoln Street Beach**.

Comment [18]: Parks are missing; include playgrounds

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

To better understand the condition of existing parks and facilities, a thorough conditions assessment of 154 park amenities was conducted in 2023. The assessment used an integrative approach based on observed conditions during park inventory, the recommended lifecycle from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Useful Life Criteria, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance outlined in the Evanston ADA Transition Plan. Overall, about two-thirds of the 154 amenities were rated poor or very poor, largely based on facility ages that exceeded the recommended useful life. The assessment found that current funding and maintenance levels available to replace a significant number of park amenities within recommended timeframes are inadequate. Numerous playgrounds, sports fields, and courts have surpassed their recommended lifespan. Playgrounds emerged as a distinct trend in the data because Evanston has substantially more playgrounds than neighboring communities. While many residents have over four playgrounds within a 10-minute walk, a staggering 78% are currently in poor or very poor condition. The previous city plan notes that the national standard for park space is 10 acres per 1,000 residents. Evanston falls far below that standard, but because the city is already built out and unlikely to acquire new land, the City must prioritize current park maintenance.

The park system is well-loved, but investment in maintenance has been insufficient to provide the level of experience that users expect. Increased and equitable investment in

facilities and services, including those geared toward early childhood development, aged populations, and recreational offerings, will improve quality of life, foster community pride, increase property values, and increase tourism. The inclusion of early childhood development components can provide all children the opportunity to work on social, emotional, motor, cognitive, and literacy skills. Intergenerational design elements increase the appeal and relevance of the parks for everyone. Having parks and recreational facilities designed with a focus on public need and robust community engagement can improve current offerings. A dedicated replacement schedule with appropriate funding will ensure that assets provide safe, relevant, and healthy opportunities for all.

Parks are easy to access, but there is insufficient acreage per resident. Evanston (including 10 parks in the Ridgeville Park District, three parks in the Lighthouse Park Districts, Channel Side and Pooch Parks in Skokie Park District, and the Cook County Forest Preserve site) has one park for every 987 residents, but only five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which equals to a little more than half the national average. Although park accessibility is high, the supply does not necessarily meet the community's growing needs or provide equitable facilities and services.

The system offers diverse amenities, though unevenly distributed. Amenity mix is determined by calculating the number of a certain amenity type per 1,000 residents. Evanston offers a greater quantity of amenities than peer cities, but these amenities are not evenly distributed. In the northern central and southeastern areas of Evanston, residents have access to over six types of amenities within walking distance, such as ice-skating rinks, dog parks, and tennis courts. Conversely, residents in western Evanston along the Skokie border have much less variety.

Parks facilities are outdated with uneven conditions. Maintenance investment has been insufficient to provide the level of experience that park users expect. The quality of individual parks and amenities differ substantially. Community members have emphasized the need for enhanced park infrastructure and focus on daily maintenance. Frequently mentioned improvements needed to park infrastructure included servicing or replacing outdated equipment, restrooms, water fountains, seating amenities, and pathways. In addition, park infrastructure and amenities do not always match the needs based on neighborhood demographics. Taking these parameters into consideration will improve the relevance of park spaces for users.

Our parks are insufficiently maintained in connection with understaffed teams. Evanston has a dedicated but relatively small team overseeing its many parks and facilities compared to similar-sized communities within the region and across the country, as well as compared to historic hiring and retention trends within the City of Evanston itself. Daily maintenance emerges as the community's foremost priority during the survey.

Evanston needs improved access to natural experiences, the water, and lakefront amenities. Connecting with the natural world was identified as highly desirable in future park planning with an emphasis on natural play elements, native landscaping, and unprogrammed spaces that immerse people in nature. Altering design and maintenance practices by using an ecological approach to plant selection, minimizing the use of non-native grasses in parks, and analyzing historical habitats to predict future plant selection will mitigate the negative impacts of climate change. Improving access to beaches and waterfront facilities was consistently mentioned as a top priority for investment.

Improved inclusion and access can enhance our park system. Community members shared a variety of barriers that limited their participation in programs and park spaces — especially limited time and lack of awareness. Financial and physical constraints limit some residents' ability to engage with the City's parks and participate in programs. In focus groups, youth and senior residents expressed a shared desire for more inclusive programs and accessible facilities that cater to people of all ages and abilities, emphasizing the importance of diversity and accessibility in Evanston's park system.

Investment in the Parks System is a necessity. Lack of investment in the park system, staffing, and amenities has occurred for several years and is now at a critical point. With 11 parks with playgrounds that have not been renovated for at least 25 years, investment and updating of the park system can no longer be delayed. With no action, four additional parks will fall into this category in 2025. As zoning codes evolve and populations shift, there will be a growing need to adapt the park system to meet future challenges. Having dedicated capital improvement staff and park system budgets will help improve the current situation where staff time and budgets are divided.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

1. **Assess existing park and recreation programming and investment levels in all neighborhoods.**
    - PO 1.1 Evaluate program lifespans, park usage, and attendance in accordance with the City's Parks Master Plan.
    - PO 1.2 Recognize and evaluate national trends in recreation and leisure studies and be at the forefront of supplying these opportunities to address current and future programming needs.
    - PO 1.3 Determine a threshold for the amount of programming a park can support to prevent overprogramming an area that would decrease the positive impacts of the space.

2. **Align and expand existing park programming to provide inclusive programs for people of all ages and abilities, including adaptability to changing community needs and climate impacts.**

- PO 2.1 Develop outdoor education programs in partnership with schools and conservation organizations that encourage youth engagement in forest stewardship, wildlife monitoring, and environmental restoration efforts.
- PO 2.2 Support local community groups and organizations in their activities related to improving habitat in green spaces.
- PO 2.3 Invest in right-sizing staffing needs to meet community expectations.
- PO 2.4 Prioritize access and eliminate barriers for residents of all abilities with the greatest unmet needs.
- PO 2.5 Develop criteria to ensure programming meets Evanston's equity, inclusion, and accessibility goals.
- PO 2.6 Coordinate with District 65 and District 202 to make better community use of outdoor open space associated with elementary, middle, and high schools.

3. **Increase city investment to maintain, operate, and improve equitable park and recreational facilities.**
    - PO 3.1 Develop and right-size staffing and implement a training plan to maintain existing facilities.
    - PO 3.2 Assess the condition of park facilities and identify equity, inclusivity, and proper amenities needed to align with the demographics of communities served.
    - PO 3.3 Develop a multiyear capital improvement and funding plan that includes a park replacement matrix with equity components to support inclusive programs for all ages and abilities.

4. **Sustain or increase efforts to expand water access.**
    - PO 4.1 Develop a master plan (with respective zoning changes) to increase pedestrian access through East-West streets from downtown to the lakefront.
    - Connect the community through a mix of programs and amenities.
    - PO 4.2 Invest in offerings that meet community desires for swimming and waterfront views.
    - PO 4.3 Increase investment in North Shore Channel.
    - PO 4.4 Complete the design and build of the canoe launch facility together with the Evanston Environmental Association.

5. **Evaluate and establish a plan to create an accessible public restroom system.**
    - PO 5.1 Develop a list of existing and potential placement of public bathrooms.
    - PO 5.2 Identify parks and public spaces where the current infrastructure could use a bathroom for programming offerings.
    - PO 5.3 Identify funding sources to allow for the development and upkeep of the proposed system.

6. **Increase strategies focused on stewardship, education, and investments in urban habitats and natural landscapes throughout the city.**

- PO 6.1 Enhance existing naturalized landscapes in a coordinated effort to improve the connectivity, quality, and resilience of the network.
- PO 6.2 Utilize technology to increase ecological knowledge.
- PO 6.3 Manage volunteerism and partnerships to restore naturalized landscapes in alignment with the city's goals.
- PO 6.4 Prioritize the use of native plantings in all city operated parks and open spaces.

7. **Maintain and execute the 2025 Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan as the primary blueprint for Parks and Recreation.**
    - PO 7.1 Prioritize recommendations and improvements.
    - PO 7.2 Implement items after strategizing with internal departments.
    - PO 7.3 Update and adjust the strategic plan over the expected 15-year lifespan.
    - PO 7.4 Fund a new strategic plan once the existing plan has outlived its relevant lifespan of 10 to 15 years.

These policies and strategies should be applied in conjunction with the guiding principles and goals contained in the 2025 Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan, which is in development.

CHAPTER 10: HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the framework for increasing housing choice and supply, maintaining existing housing stock, preventing displacement, and preserving the racial and economic diversity of Evanston. Key principles of this plan include fair, safe, stable, secure, connected, healthy, attainable, and accessible housing. The table below outlines policy statements that will inform housing decisions and ensure they are aligned with key goals.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1) Increase housing supply and expand housing options.
2) Preserve existing homes and prevent displacement.
3) Support alternative housing models.
4) Prioritize healthy buildings and neighborhoods.
5) Increase funding for housing initiatives.
6) Build and leverage local capacity and foster partnerships.

Comment [19]: Align with agreed upon policies

Access to quality housing improves people's physical and mental health by providing safe and stable environments. It also boosts the local economy by increasing investment in the community. Additionally, sustainable housing not only benefits the environment but also improves quality of life for residents. Prioritizing housing that supports health, the economy, and the environment builds a stronger community for residents now and in the future.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Evanston is a racially and economically diverse community, but significant segregation remains within the City's neighborhoods. For many years, there has been a high demand to live in Evanston, leading to significant increases in housing costs — both for renters and homeowners. This disproportionately impacts people with lower income, people living with a disability, people of color, and people experiencing unstable housing.

Long-time residents, including seniors on fixed incomes, families of color, and Northwestern graduates are facing pressure to move out. Children of residents, Evanston employees, and others are being priced out of returning and/or moving to Evanston. As public and private investments continue to enhance Evanston's neighborhoods, displacement pressures should be proactively addressed.

Although little vacant land is available, this Plan outlines a path toward increasing housing choice and supply through gentle density, missing middle housing, and focused growth in centers and corridors. This plan also addresses preserving existing homes and preventing displacement. Together, the City can aim to preserve Evanston's racial and economic diversity, while increasing the prosperity and vibrancy of the community.

HOUSING STOCK

Evanston has a diverse housing stock. Less than a third (32%) of Evanston's housing units are single-unit detached buildings and 5% are single-unit attached. About 14% are in buildings with 2 to 4 units, 11% are in buildings with 5 to 9 units, and 8% are in buildings with 10 to 19 units. About 14% are in buildings with 20 to 49 units and 17% are in buildings with 50 or more units.[20]

[20] United States Census Bureau. (2023). *American Community Survey: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, B25024, Units in Structure*. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2023.B25024?g=160XX00US1724582.

A slight majority (56%) of Evanston's occupied housing stock is owner occupied and the remaining 44% are renter occupied.[21] About two-thirds (65%) of owner-occupied units have three or more bedrooms and 8% are studios or one-bedroom units. Conversely, about 80% of rentals have two or fewer bedrooms and 5% have four or more bedrooms.[22] This can make it difficult for larger households to find rental housing and for many households to find attainable housing for sale.

There are a variety of subsidized affordable housing units in Evanston. Over 440 units are restricted to income-qualified seniors and over 200 units are single-room occupancy. Over 100 units are for specific populations such as persons with disabilities and survivors of domestic violence.[23] Over 85 units are from the City's Inclusionary Housing program.[24] Additionally, over 550 Evanston households use Housing Choice Vouchers to afford monthly rent payments.[25]

The three largest permanent supportive housing providers in Evanston are Connections for the Homeless, Impact Behavioral Health Partners, and the YWCA Evanston/North Shore. Family Promise and Interfaith Action also provide emergency shelter for those in need.

HOUSING COSTS

More than one-third of Evanston households are cost burdened, spending at least 30% of their household income on housing costs. However, this disproportionately affects renters. Less than a quarter (24%) of households that own are cost burdened and 12% are severely cost burdened. Meanwhile, nearly half (47%) of Evanston's renting households are cost burdened, and 27% are severely cost burdened, spending at least 50% of their household income on housing costs.[26]

Over the past 10 years, Evanston's median gross rent, including utilities, increased about 41% to $1,625 per month.[27] In 2012, about 1,250 renter households paid gross rents of $2,000 or more per month; in 2022 that number rose to over 4,000 households. Similarly, about 4,400 renter households paid less than $1,000 per month in gross rent in 2012. Ten years later, that number shrank to under 1,500 households.[28]

Since 2012, the number of homeowner households without a mortgage has increased by 55% to about 6,500 households. Less than a third of these households spend at least $1,500 per month in housing costs. However, almost 90% of homeowner households with a mortgage spend at least $1,500 per month in housing costs, and over 43% spend at least $3,000 per month.[29] The rise in

[21] United States Census Bureau. (2023). *American Community Survey: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, B25003, Tenure*. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2023.B25003?q=Owner/Renter%20(Tenure)&g=160XX00US1724582.

[22] United States Census Bureau. (2023). *American Community Survey: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, B25042, Tenure by Bedrooms.* https://data.census.gov/table?q=Types%20of%20Rooms&g=160XX00US1724582&d=ACS%205-Year%20Estimates%20Detailed%20Tables.

[23] National Housing Preservation Database, 2024 and Illinois Housing Development Authority, 2024.

[24] City of Evanston, Community Development Department, February 2025.

[25] The Housing Authority of Cook County, August 2024.

[26] United States Census Bureau. (2023). *American Community Survey: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, B25140, Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income in the Past 12 Months.* https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2023.B25140?q=B25140&g=160XX00US1724582.

[27] United States Census Bureau. (2022). *American Community Survey: 2022 ACS 5-year Estimates, B25064, Median Gross Rent.* https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2022.B25064?q=B25064:%20MEDIAN%20GROSS%20RENT%20(DOLLARS)&g=160XX00US1724582.

[28] United States Census Bureau. (2022). *American Community Survey: 2022 ACS 5-year Estimates, B25063, Gross Rent.* https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2022.B25063?q=B25063&g=160XX00US1724582.

[29] U.S. Census, 2012 / 2022 5-year ACS, B25087, Mortgage Status and Selected Monthly Owner Costs

households without a mortgage increases current housing affordability, but also masks the cost for prospective homebuyers, who will likely need a mortgage to purchase a home.

Housing cost burdens often stem from low incomes and a lack of affordable housing, with households struggling to pay for other essentials like food, transportation, and medical care. The issue is worsened by wages not catching up with rising housing costs. Additionally, traditional housing affordability formulas overlook transportation costs — usually a household's second-largest expense. Neighborhood amenities, such as walkability and access to jobs and services, heavily influence transportation costs. Compact, well-connected neighborhoods tend to be less affordable. According to the Center for Neighborhood Technology's Housing and Transportation (H+T®) Affordability Index, Evanston households spend 46% of their income on housing and transportation, with 32% allocated to housing and 14% to transportation.[30]

HOUSING INSECURITY

Housing insecurity is a growing challenge both nationally and locally as housing prices continue to rise. Throughout suburban Cook County, close to 1,200 individuals experienced homelessness during the 2024 Point in Time Count.[31] Evanston shelters are operating at full capacity and there is a significant lack of emergency beds. Reducing barriers to providing a variety of housing options can help ensure every Evanston resident can access safe, stable housing.

STUDENT HOUSING

Evanston is home to over 13,500 undergraduate and graduate students, with over 2,500 attending public institutions, and about 11,000 attending private institutions.[32] Students represent over 17% of the City's population and are an important demographic group, though student housing needs are diverse. Evanston's student incomes and assets vary widely, mirroring the total population. Student household makeup also differ, encompassing individuals, partners, and unrelated adults — including and without children. Some students live with their parents or in student housing, while others rent apartments or own their homes.

Evanston is home to Northwestern University's main campus, which has a substantial economic, cultural, and housing impact on the City. An estimated 8,000 undergraduate students attend Northwestern University, many of whom live in Evanston. Northwestern University requires first-year undergraduate students to live on campus for two years and transfer students to live on campus for one year. It provides over 35 housing options for undergraduates, including dormitories, residential colleges, and fraternity and sorority houses. Additionally, Northwestern University provides three graduate-student dormitories.[33]

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Soaring Housing Costs

In June 2024, the Zillow Home Value Index for Evanston, which reflects the typical value of homes in the 35th to 65th percentile range, was approximately $430,000 — an increase of about 30% over the past 10 years.[34] In the same period, one- and two-bedroom home values in Evanston increased by

[30] Center for Neighborhood Technology. (2025). *Housing and Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index, 2025 Update*.
[31] Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County. (January 31, 2024). *2024 Suburban Cook County Homeless Count*.
[32] United States Census Bureau. (2022). *American Community Survey: 2022 ACS 5-year Estimates, B14004, Sex by College or Graduate School Enrollment by Type of School by Age for the Population 15 Years and Over.* https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2022.B14004?q=Type%20of%20School&g=160XX00US1724582.
[33] Northwestern University, the Division of Student Affairs. (n.d.). *Housing Options.* https://www.northwestern.edu/living/residential-experience/housing-options/.
[34] Zillow Group. (June 2024). *Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI)*.

at least 60% and 52%, respectively.[35] However, Zillow's index does not account for other costs of ownership, including but not limited to mortgage interest, insurance, closing costs, maintenance, property taxes, and HOA fees.

Renters are also experiencing significant increases in housing costs. The median rent has increased by about 41% over the past 10 years.[36] Over that same period, the number of renter households spending less than $1,000 per month on housing costs has greatly decreased, by about 67%, to less than 1,500 households.

Increase The Housing Supply

The chronic underbuilding and underinvestment in housing has resulted in a nationwide shortage of around 4.9 million homes in 2023.[37] As high housing costs are driven by a shortage of available homes, increasing the housing supply through new developments, less restrictive zoning, and repurposing underused spaces can provide renters and buyers more options. Expanding housing benefits households at all income levels, from low to high. New market-rate developments give higher-income households options to move into, making available older units with more attainable prices available.[38] Additionally, new market-rate developments with inclusionary housing units options for households of all income levels.

Furthermore, the U.S. is facing a significant shortage of 7.3 million rental homes that are affordable to renters at or below 30% area median income.[39] Among over 5,000 renter households earning less than $50,000 per year, about 9 in 10 (88%) are cost burdened.[40] This shows the need for more affordable housing for Evanston's low-income households.

Combat Displacement

Developing an antidisplacement strategy is essential to protecting Evanston's income diversity. The benefits of new development need to be felt by current residents. Without strategies, policies, and funding in place, low- and moderate-income households — particularly renter households — may be forced to move out of Evanston. Cultural displacement is also a concern, as the closure of important community landmarks, like historically Black churches or local restaurants, can erase neighborhood history and, with it, a sense of community.

Evanston can promote positive development by working with community organizations to ensure a successful revitalization that values culture, health, and positive human development, not just increased economic growth. Limiting development out of concern for displacement reduces opportunities for many long-time Evanston residents. The City plans to expand development potential while minimizing displacement, ensuring Evanston community members can benefit from new resources, services, and opportunities.

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[35] ibid.

[36] United States Census Bureau. (2022). *American Community Survey: 2022 ACS 5-year Estimates, B25064, Median Gross Rent.* https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2022.B25064?q=B25064:%20MEDIAN%20GROSS%20RENT%20(DOLLARS)&g=160XX00US1724582.

[37] The Brookings Institution. (November 26, 2024). *Make it count: Measuring our housing supply shortage.* https://www.brookings.edu/articles/make-it-count-measuring-our-housing-supply-shortage/.

[38] NYU Law and Economics. (November 10, 2023). *Supply Skepticism Revisited*. https://ssrn.com/abstract=4629628.

[39] National Low Income Housing Coalition. (March 2024). *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes*. https://nlihc.org/gap.

[40] United States Census Bureau. (2022). *American Community Survey: 2022 ACS 5-year Estimates, B25074, Household Income by Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in the Past 12 Months.* https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2022.B25074?q=B25074&g=160XX00US1724582.

ILLINOIS POLICY LANDSCAPE

Unlike other states, Illinois has not provided as much state-level leadership or mandates to address rapidly rising housing costs. For example, California requires municipalities to plan the community's housing needs, while Washington's growth management framework requires municipalities to plan housing that is affordable for all income levels. In comparison, Illinois requires municipalities with a serious shortage of affordable housing to develop a housing plan.

Another challenge is the state's ban on rent control, which limits Evanston's ability to stabilize rents. This leaves the City with fewer tools to protect residents from rising rents and displacement.

However, in July 2021, the HB2621 bill went into effect, which includes new property tax incentives for new construction or repaired buildings tied to the provision of affordable rental housing.[41] This led to the creation of the Cook County Affordable Housing Special Assessment Program. While the program has yet to significantly impact the number of affordable units in Evanston, current development proposals are planning to participate in the program, and therefore include a larger percentage of affordable units moving forward.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

By collaborating with local and regional organizations, anchor institutions, philanthropic organizations, and financial institutions, Evanston can address housing affordability on a larger scale by developing workforce housing, gathering resources for larger initiatives, reducing duplicated efforts, and unlocking grants, tax credits, or technical assistance. These partnerships will help Evanston leverage its limited resources by tapping into the expertise, funding streams, and networks of these partnerships.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

These policies and actions provide a varied approach to increase housing choice and supply, preserve existing homes, prevent displacement, and preserve racial and economic diversity.

1. Implement a comprehensive housing strategy

H 1.1 Develop and implement a strategic housing plan to guide the City's housing investments and initiatives.

H 1.2 Complete a housing needs assessment to determine the types and qualities of housing needed for Evanston's population.

H 1.3 Collect and analyze local housing data routinely to inform data-driven housing decisions.

2. Increase housing supply and housing choices

H 2.1 Encourage a diversity of housing types throughout Evanston.

H 2.2 Update zoning regulations to reduce the cost and increase the ease of housing rehabilitation and new construction.

Comment [20]: How often? (Yearly?)

Comment [21]: ALTERNATE: Preserve Evanston's diverse housing choices

Comment [22]: "Encourage a diversity of housing types throughout all of Evanston in order to provide a variety of housing price points and therefore increase access to every Evanston neighborhood."

[41] Illinois General Assembly. (n.d.). *Illinois Compiled Statutes: 35 ILCS 200/15-178*. https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/fulltext.asp?DocName=003502000K15-178.

H 2.3 Facilitate the use of new and innovative construction technologies, such as manufactured, modular, and mass timber construction, and remove barriers in plan review, permitting, and inspection processes.

H 2.4 Update live/work and occupational use regulations to allow a wider range of businesses and services.

H 2.5 Streamline zoning approval and entitlement processes, building plan review, permitting, and inspection processes to promote development.

H 2.6 Speed up the entitlement process for developments that highly exceed the percentage of inclusionary units required by the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.

H 2.7 Update building codes to accommodate more energy- and cost-efficient building designs.

H 2.8 Develop preapproved design plans for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), duplexes, triplexes, cottages, and other neighborhood-scale housing to expedite approval processes and reduce development costs.

H 2.9 Develop an ADU financing and technical assistance program to speed up the development of ADUs that provide income for low- and moderate-income homeowners and income-restricted housing units in high-cost neighborhoods.

H 2.10 Redevelop underused properties to increase the supply of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

H 2.11~~, and~~ integrate housing into new construction and rehabilitation of City assets.

H 2.12 Prioritize transit-oriented housing development.

3. Preserve existing housing stock

H 3.1 Increase funding to rehabilitate housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income residents to maintain decent, safe housing, and incorporate energy-efficient and climate-resilient features.

H 3.2 Develop funding sources to assist owners of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) — private properties that are affordable without government subsidies — to decarbonize and remove environmental hazards.

H 3.3 Work with local housing providers to protect NOAH.

H 3.4 Develop a housing database to proactively monitor and preserve existing housing stock, including vacant properties and the cause of vacancy in order to determine how to bring the unit back online.

4. Prevent displacement of Evanston residents

H 4.1 Develop and refine an antidisplacement strategy to address the changing development landscape in Evanston.

Comment [23]: Sustainability of mass timber is debated - omit?

ALTERNATE: Update zoning regulations to ease housing rehabilitation and redevelopment of vacant non-residential properties to new housing

Comment [24]: Delete?

Comment [25]: What type of properties are these re: ownership and who will redevelop these?

H 4.2 Evaluate policies and programs and update existing programs or introduce new ones that help renters, particularly those with lower incomes, maintain stable housing.

H 4.3 Research and develop technical and financial support for shared-equity housing models, including community land trusts and limited-equity cooperatives.

H 4.4 Expand the availability of and access to programs including financial literacy, education, workforce development, and career pathways to help lower-income households build economic stability and self-sufficiency.

H 4.5 Establish a down-payment assistance program for first-time homeowners.

5. Promote healthy buildings and neighborhoods

H 5.1 Adopt and enforce zero-emissions building codes and standards to improve indoor air quality, maintain natural light, achieve energy efficiency, and remove environmental hazards like lead to ensure living spaces contribute to a healthy living environment.

H 5.2 Incentivize and facilitate the construction of all-electric living spaces, installation of solar panels and heat pumps, and other technologies that address climate change and improve sustainability.

H 5.3 Promote green building practices, such as LEED certification, WELL standards, passive house, and universal design in rehabilitation and new construction.

H 5.4 Prioritize housing development on sites with access to green spaces, parks, pedestrian and bike infrastructure, and other amenities that promote physical activity and mental well-being and improve climate resilience.

H 5.5 Incorporate public health data and best practices into planning and residential and commercial entitlement processes to ensure they meet health and safety regulations and support community well-being.

H 5.6 Promote and prioritize cleanup of disused/underused brownfield sites and guide construction of new housing to those locations and away from demolition of existing housing.

6. Seek out and expand revenue sources for housing initiatives

H 6.1 Develop a comprehensive funding strategy that includes current, anticipated, and new revenue sources to support the housing goals outlined in this plan and in the strategic housing plan.

H 6.2 Evaluate and implement new revenue sources such as development linkage or impact fees to increase, diversify, and provide more consistent funding for affordable housing.

H 6.3 Work with surrounding cities, counties, and the state to establish a funds dedicated to investing in and preserving NOAH.

H 6.4 Encourage community and regional financial institutions to explore potential private financing for small-scale, locally owned, multiunit developments and home improvements.

H 6.5 Pursue additional federal, state, and county funding to address housing needs.

H 6.6 Study and implement opportunities for property tax relief for Evanston residents, increasing housing affordability.

7. Build and leverage local partnerships to expand housing availability and affordability

H 7.1 Leverage public–private partnerships with philanthropic foundations, regional and community banks, nonprofit organizations, and real estate investment trusts (REITs) to increase funding for housing.

H 7.2 Engage Evanston institutions and businesses to develop programs that expand housing availability and affordability within institutional campuses such as Northwestern University and Continuing Care Communities, and employer-assisted housing programs.

H 7.3 Establish strategic partnerships with transit agencies, school districts, and faith-based organizations for housing (re)development.

H 7.4 Initiate education, outreach, and engagement efforts that make use of social marketing best practices and storytelling to highlight the need for affordable housing and its community benefits.

H 7.5 Build relationships with developers, real estate professionals, home builders, and homeowning residents to continue removing housing development barriers.

CHAPTER 11: HEALTH AND WELL BEING

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."[42] To improve our community's health, our Comprehensive Plan must embrace the whole person, not just physical health. It requires addressing mental and emotional well-being, enhancing our sense of connection and belonging, and designing environments that empower people to thrive.

While discussions of health in the U.S. often focus heavily on individual factors such as lifestyle choices and genetics, there is increasing recognition that health and well-being are largely shaped by upstream social and structural factors beyond our control. These include access to safe housing, wages that allow a family to thrive, fair access to high-quality health care and education, and freedom from discrimination. These points highlight the importance of a robust Comprehensive Plan in advancing a healthier future for our community members.

POLICY	POLICY STATEMENT	GOALS
1	Promote equal ~~fair~~ access to opportunities and resources community members need to thrive and build wealth.	
2	Increase community access to mental health care and trauma-informed services ~~while bringing diverse residents together to create a strong, supportive community.~~	
3	Design healthy, clean, and biodiverse environments that promote active transportation, recreation, and safety.	
4	Develop an efficient, unified system that offers person-centered, team-supported services for those negatively affected by social and structural barriers.	
5	Ensure a coordinated effort to provide inclusive environments for people of all ages and abilities through comprehensive services, disability resources, transit accessibility, and housing support.	

[42] World Health Organization. (n.d.). *Constitution.* https://www.who.int/about/governance/constitution

6. Work to mitigate the impact of brownfield sites and environmental hazards that impact health.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Physical Environment

Our natural and built environments shape our ability to lead a healthy lifestyle. This Comprehensive Plan lays the foundation for all residents to achieve health and well-being in nurturing surroundings.

Accessibility is key to a healthy built environment. For the community to thrive, every resident must have access to quality schools, jobs, recreational spaces, and affordable, healthy food choices. Key to facilitating this is a strong transit infrastructure that supports active transportation and ensures ease of access for people of all abilities. While Evanston enjoys higher-than-average walkability and mobility, transit infrastructure is more concentrated in eastern Evanston, while accessibility in western Evanston is more challenging.[43]

Housing and robust building standards are also vital for a healthy community. Our residents need housing options at different affordability levels that are safe and accessible, as well as energy-efficient buildings that support healthy indoor air quality. While Evanston's older properties add charm and character to our neighborhoods, aging housing and infrastructure also carry health risks. Nearly half of Evanston's housing has potentially elevated lead risk based on age, and many homes are connected to lead water service lines.[44]

To create a healthier, climate-resilient community, it is also important to have green infrastructure that promotes the responsible use of natural resources. Preserving and protecting these precious resources helps ensure that current and future community members can enjoy clean air and water while protecting against climate-related disasters.

Economic Environment

In a flourishing economic environment, all community members have access to the vital resources they need to thrive. Our community's economic diversity is a point of pride for many Evanstonians, yet rising housing costs threaten its sustainability. A quarter of homeowners face housing-cost burdens, spending at least 30% of their income on housing. Among renters, half experience cost burdens, placing these community members at high risk of being forced to move.[45]

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[43] Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Health [Walk Score®]. (2024). *City Health Dashboard: Walkability in 2024*. https://www.cityhealthdashboard.com/il/evanston/metric-detail?metricId=27&dataPeriod=2024

[44] Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Health [American Community Survey]. (2022, 5 Year Estimate). *City Health Dashboard: Housing with Potential Lead Risk in 2022*. https://www.cityhealthdashboard.com/il/evanston/metric-detail?metricId=12&dataPeriod=2022

[45] U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, Table DP04. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2023.DP04?q=DP04%20evanston,%20illinois

To create a community where many can afford to live and prosper in Evanston, we must support policies that guarantee diverse housing choices across different affordability levels.

Bringing about a robust economic environment requires strong community investment. We need diverse local businesses that serve as pillars of support, offering quality jobs and competitive wages that empower the workforce and drive further investment and development in our neighborhoods. In turn, our community must support local businesses, making sure to invest equitably across all areas.

Service Environment
A strong service environment ensures access to high-quality, affordable healthcare services, equitable outcomes in education, a fair and just legal system, and social supports that empower all community members to thrive. These systems work closely together to coordinate efforts and share data and resources, with the common goal of supporting our community's well-being.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
Health Inequity

Overall, Evanston has a positive life expectancy and health outcomes. Nevertheless, data shows the benefits of health and wealth are concentrated in northern and eastern Evanston, while the southern and western areas suffer from poor health and lack of investment. These imbalances are deeply rooted in historical and ongoing structural challenges that allow racial inequity to persist.

A truly healthy, flourishing community can only exist when all members have the resources and opportunities to meet their needs. To achieve health equity, we need to work collaboratively to improve access to essential resources residents need to live well, including housing, education, employment, and health care.

Mental Health
High-quality mental health care stands as the most important and urgent, yet unmet, need — locally and nationally. Underlying our mental health crisis is a failure to address the root causes of trauma, including racism, violence, housing insecurity, and the criminalization of poverty.

We must move away from relying on inadequate systems, such as emergency rooms and law enforcement, to address immediate needs while confronting underlying challenges. Aside from tackling systemic problems, protecting and strengthening mental health also requires addressing a growing sense of societal isolation and loneliness. By increasing a sense of connectivity and belonging, we can foster greater community well-being.

Climate
A healthy environment with clean water, air, soil, and habitats that sustain life is one of our most fundamental needs. The quickly growing impact of climate change threatens our health and

quality of life in profound ways. It not only strains our vital natural resources but also leads to the rise of infectious diseases and stress-related illnesses, impacting public health.

As described in the Environment chapter, safeguarding a healthy environment and mitigating climate-related threats require responsible use of natural resources, lowering emissions to achieve carbon neutrality, and reducing waste to minimize environmental burden. However, Evanston faces some environmental health challenges. The Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Screen, which provides data on Evanston's environmental health and air quality, shows high levels of ozone, nitrous dioxide, and diesel particulate matter above national averages.[46]

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Below, we outline policies and actions that are key to achieving the goals of Envision Evanston 2045.

1. **Foster equitable access to opportunities and resources that community members need to flourish and build wealth.**
    - TLW 1.1 Preserve and increase housing opportunities and develop policies to prevent community displacement.
    - 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.

2. **Increase community access to mental health care and trauma-informed services, and provide opportunities for residents of all backgrounds to come together and build a more cohesive, supportive community.**
    - TLW 2.1 Address root causes of trauma by leveraging EPLAN[47] data and the combined aims of this Comprehensive Plan.
    - TLW 2.2 Establish and maintain Living Room and Crisis Alternative programs through partnerships with the Illinois Department of Human Services, nonprofits, and grantmakers aligned with the vision and mission of trauma-informed care.
    - TLW 2.3 Reduce isolation and enhance connectivity and a sense of belonging through community health initiatives and close partnerships with entities, such as public libraries.

3. **Design healthy, clean, and biodiverse environments that encourage active**

[46] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2021, January 19). EJSCREEN: Environmental justice screening and mapping tool. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. https://19january2021snapshot.epa.gov/ejscreen_.html

[47] City of Evanston. (n.d.). *Evanston Project for the Local Assessment of Needs (EPLAN).* https://www.cityofevanston.org/government/departments/health-human-services/partnerships/eplan

transportation, recreation, and safety.

- TLW 3.1 Invest in programs and policies to reduce lead exposure.
- TLW 3.2 Reduce transit and building emissions to improve air quality.
- TLW 3.3 Increase access to diverse transit options throughout the community, prioritizing accessibility for individuals with limited mobility and promoting the ease and safety of active transportation options.

4. **Develop an efficient and unified system to provide person-centered, team-supported services to those negatively affected by social and structural determinants of health.**
    - TLW 4.1 Expand and foster partnerships with local social-support agencies through proactive planning and communication to ensure all community members can thrive.
    - TLW 4.2 Create a platform that allows us to measure impact, with respect to coordination, data sharing, and shared goals/metrics; and joint case management among nonprofit and public-sector partners.
    - TLW 4.2 Promote and connect residents to low-barrier healthcare programs that are both high quality and affordable.
    - TLW 4.3 Address the needs of all at-risk populations, including school-age children, to ensure equitable education and access to high-quality education regardless of race, income, or neighborhood.
    - TLW 4.4 Directly reach out to community members, encouraging equitable opportunity to participate in the community and to be served by its resources.

5. **Ensure a coordinated effort toward age-friendly and accessible environments through team-supported services, disability resources, transit accessibility, and housing support.**
    - TLW 5.1 Support emerging trends in aging-in-place services related to older adults' accessibility, transit, and continued community integration.
    - TLW 5.2 Update standards and streamline housing retrofits to increase accessibility for older residents ~~those with growing needs~~ who wish to age in place.
    - TLW 5.3 Provide tailored resources to promote a resident's desire to age in place with support, including case management, home visits, and intergenerational-friendly visitor programs.
    - TLW 5.4 Implement inclusive workforce development programs to benefit older adults seeking meaningful employment.
    - TLW 5.5 Support nontraditional housing arrangements, including the Village Model, which helps 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.[48]
    - TLW 5.6. Work to mitigate the impact of brownfield sites and environmental hazards that impact health.
    - TLW 5.7 Identify former industrial and other properties that could support residential development if cleaned to residential standards.

[48] Village to Village Network. (2025). *Village Movement*. https://www.vtvnetwork.org/

- TLW 5.8 Prioritize property standards inspections to eliminate mold, lead paint, and other indoor environmental hazards that adversely impact health.
- TLW 5.9 Continue to explore options to mitigate issues related to the operation of the waste transfer station.
- TLW 5.10 Consider the findings and recommendations of the current Environmental Equity Investigation as future Comprehensive Plan action steps.

CHAPTER 12: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Economic development is a transformative process through which a community elevates its economic well-being and enhances its residents' quality of life. Effective economic development not only brings about a dynamic and sustainable economy but also generates quality jobs that empower community members to thrive economically and enjoy a higher standard of living. To build a vibrant and resilient local economy, strategic planning and investments in business support, workforce development, and physical infrastructure are essential. Evanston aims to be a role model of how local economies can be reshaped — going far beyond creating jobs, and crafting spaces where people truly want to live, work, and play.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1) Increase economic mobility, especially for those with the lowest median household incomes.
2) Increase the number of families who choose to live in Evanston.
3) Support the growing senior population.
4) Continue to create and preserve attractive public spaces and vibrant retail areas ~~streets~~ that contribute to Evanston's unique identity.
5) Expand workforce development.
6) Continue revitalizing the local retail economy.
7) Increase digital presence and awareness of Evanston as a desirable place to do business, to live, and to have fun.
~~7)~~8) Encourage Public/Private partnerships

Comment [26]: "Low and moderate incomes"

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Evanston's economy has evolved over time. Northwestern University's establishment in 1851 played an important role in Evanston's birth as a city.[49] Two commuter rail lines and the creation of a train station differentiated Evanston from its northern suburban neighbors. Historically, Evanston established itself as the vibrant downtown of Chicago's North Shore, known for its department stores, diverse services, and dining options. Several corporate headquarters, desiring to be near Northwestern University, built office buildings, fueling the development of an office submarket that is remarkable for a city of Evanston's size, with Rotary International proudly maintaining its presence in our community.

In the 1960s, the City was also a thriving industrial hub, home to manufacturing companies producing goods from textbooks[50] to toys[51]. However, like many older Midwestern cities, Evanston faced challenges as manufacturing jobs transitioned to larger cities or closed altogether due to the impacts of globalization. Recognizing the exceptional value of its transit hub, Evanston adapted by incorporating high-rise residential buildings, leading to a revival of retail shops and restaurants. This

[49] Northwestern University. (n.d.). History: *Going strong since 1851*. https://www.northwestern.edu/about/history.html.
[50] Chicago Reader. (May 15, 2003). *Lessons Learned*. https://chicagoreader.com/news/lessons-learned.
[51] https://drloihjournal.blogspot.com/2021/10/the-amazing-history-of-toy-tinkers.htmlEvanston Now. (December 15, 2024). *Iconic toy once made in Evanston lives on*. https://evanstonnow.com/iconic-toy-once-made-in-evanston-lives-on/.

evolution took place alongside the growth of a creative, knowledge-driven population and a workforce heavily invested in health care and education.

EMPLOYMENT

As of March 2023, Evanston was home to around 2,500 businesses, collectively generating around 40,000 jobs. Remarkably, only 12 percent of the workforce resides in Evanston, with most people commuting from neighboring areas.

The labor force averaged 38,250 individuals in 2023, making up roughly 61 percent of Evanston's total population. This aligns closely with Chicago (61 percent) and Cook County (62 percent). In the same year, the average unemployment rate stood at 3.7 percent, outperforming the averages of Chicago (4.7 percent) and Cook County (4.4 percent). By June 2024, though unemployment in Evanston increased to 5.7 percent, it still compared favorably against Chicago's 7.1 percent and Cook County's 6.7 percent.[52]

The unemployed population is mainly concentrated in the western and southern neighborhoods, which generally has areas with lower median household incomes. Helping households secure quality, well-paying jobs is important to economic development efforts, in line with Evanston's goal to create equitable opportunities for all.

KEY INDUSTRY SECTORS

Education and health care are the main industry sectors in Evanston, accounting for 30 percent and 25 percent of total jobs, respectively. This is due to the presence of Northwestern University, a leading private research and teaching university, and two prominent hospitals. These industries are also the top two employers of Evanstonians. Roughly 15 percent of the labor force is engaged in these fields, with more opportunities filled by people commuting from other areas.

Other notable sectors contributing to employment include public administration, retail trade, professional services, and accommodation and food services — each making up around 6 to 8 percent of total jobs. These sectors encompass roles in local government, school districts, retail establishments, restaurants, hotels, and a variety of professional services, including accounting and consulting. Many of these positions are likely held by Evanstonians, as approximately 12 percent and 9 percent of the labor force are engaged in professional services and retail trade, respectively.

Jobs in the retail trade and food services are particularly important to the economy as they are largely made up of small-to-medium local businesses that enrich and define neighborhoods. However, this sector is highly vulnerable to economic shocks. The pandemic, for instance, had huge impacts on the retail and hospitality industry nationwide — in Evanston, over 30 businesses closed by the end of 2020. The City has taken decisive action, prioritizing the revitalization of its retail sector through the comprehensive Evanston Thrives Retail District Action Plan.[53]

OCCUPATIONS AND WAGES

Since only about 12 percent of people who work in Evanston also live here, it is worth examining the occupational profile of Evanstonians besides looking only at jobs that are physically based in the City. Occupational and wage data show the kind of jobs Evanstonians work in and the potential of

[52] Illinois Department of Employment Security. (2025). *Monthly LAUS Reports*. Retrieved February 12, 2025. https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/laus/monthly-reports.html.
[53] City of Evanston. (April 2023). *Evanston Thrives Retail District Action Plan*. https://www.cityofevanston.org/business/evanston-thrives.

attracting those industries to the City.

Education instruction and library occupations form the largest category of jobs held by Evanston residents, accounting for about 13 percent of the labor force. Sales and related occupations are the second-largest group (8 percent), followed by computer and mathematical occupations (6 percent), and health care practitioners and technical occupations (6 percent). Service occupations, which include health care support and food preparation, account for about 13 percent of all jobs.

WORKFORCE

As Evanston plans its economic future, it's important to ensure ample job opportunities for residents and that they possess the skills required for these roles. Thoroughly analyzing both the current and future workforce composition is critical to identifying pressing gaps and long-term challenges that need immediate attention.

AGE

Evanston has a relatively older population than its neighbors. The median age in 2022 was 37.6, slightly higher than in Chicago (35.3) and Cook County (37.5). Residents aged 20 to 24 years make up the largest age group — about 10 percent of the population.[54] However, despite a large proportion of young adults, largely due to college students at Northwestern University, other age groups suggest a concerning trend toward an aging population.

Working-age residents, those aged 15 to 64, make up about 67 percent of the City's population — a 5 percent decline since 2010.[55] This shift indicates the City is moving toward a future characterized by a shrinking pool of young people and an increasing number of older individuals, potentially harming local economic development. Older adults are less likely to work, and there are not enough younger residents to replenish the workforce.

This aging trend is also reflected in the age dependency ratio, which measures the proportion of dependent individuals (ages 0 to 14, and 65+) to the working-age population (ages 15 to 64). An increasing age dependency ratio could indicate the working population might have a greater tax burden to support the dependent population, thereby increasing their cost of living in the City.

This trend also impacts the age dependency ratio itself. In 2022, Evanston's ratio was just under 54, a significant 16-percent increase from 2010. This means that for every 100 working-age individuals, the number of dependents has risen from 46 to 54. In contrast, Chicago's ratio stood at about 50 in 2022, reflecting a slight decrease from 51 in 2010. A climbing age dependency ratio further reinforces a future with increased living costs.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The level of education within the workforce indicates whether workers in Evanston are likely to have the necessary skills and knowledge for available jobs in the City. Jobs in education and health care tend to require a higher degree of education. Residents in Evanston are highly educated, as roughly 74 percent of Evanstonians aged 25 years and older hold at least an associate's degree. More significantly, around 40 percent hold graduate or professional degrees — over double that of their counterparts in Chicago and Cook County. Furthermore, the proportion of residents with advanced

[54] United States Census Bureau. (2022). *American Community Survey: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, S0101, Age and Sex*. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S0101?g=160XX00US1724582.
[55] United States Census Bureau. (2010). *American Community Survey: 2010 ACS 5-Year Estimates, S0101, Age and Sex*. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2010.S0101?g=160XX00US1724582.

degrees has increased by about six percent since 2000.[56]

Although Evanston has an overall higher level of educational attainment as a city, this does not apply equally across age groups and racial demographics. Given higher-wage occupations tend to be in education and health care, and require higher education, the data suggests income and wealth inequality by race could worsen in Evanston, threatening the community's cohesion and economic vitality unless addressed through specific policies.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Northwestern University is a longstanding institution of Evanston and is now one of the top private research universities in the world. Research universities drive significant social and economic growth within their communities. Companies are drawn to cities with leading universities to tap into the exceptional talent pool, which directly results in more job opportunities for the local economy. By looking at the programs pursued by students and tracking their career paths after graduation, we can identify potential mismatches between local job demands and graduate qualifications and determine the effectiveness of talent retention in Evanston.

Data from 2022 indicates Northwestern graduates enter the education, health care, and pharmaceutical fields. The high percentage of graduates entering the two largest workforce sectors in Evanston highlights Northwestern's crucial role as a provider of skilled professionals. To enhance Evanston's appeal and competitiveness, it is essential for Northwestern University to continue delivering top-tier programs in these fields.

Evanston can also leverage the large number of undergraduates entering professional services and engineering by making active efforts to attract businesses from these industries. Northwestern University's recent survey of undergraduates from the class of 2023 indicates many choose to remain in Illinois for their careers. Evanston can work toward greater retention of undergraduates by improving infrastructure, ensuring affordable living costs, and creating connections between local job opportunities and students' skills.

[56] United States Census Bureau. (2023). *American Community Survey: 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates*, *S1501, Educational Attainment*. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2023.S1501?q=S1501:%20Educational%20Attainment&g=160XX00US1724582.

TAX BASE

A robust and diversified tax base builds a strong foundation for a healthy economy. Analyzing tax revenue trends over time can provide valuable insights into local spending patterns and highlight shifts in various economic sectors. Like many municipalities in Illinois, Evanston's tax base relies heavily on property taxes. To enhance Evanston's fiscal strength and enable the City to deliver exceptional services without overburdening property owners or forcing residents to move out, it is crucial to expand and diversify Evanston's tax base and housing options.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

EMERGING SECTORS

The State of Illinois' 2024 Economic Growth Plan[57], titled Open for Business, identified key high-growth sectors based on their potential for future growth and their existing foundation in institutions, businesses, and the workforce in Illinois. These sectors include life sciences, quantum computing, artificial intelligence (AI), microelectronics, advanced manufacturing, clean energy production, and manufacturing. To attract, retain, and expand businesses in these sectors, the state plans to fund capital investment and workforce development initiatives.

Most of these high-growth sectors stand to gain significantly from the cutting-edge engineering programs and outstanding research capabilities at Northwestern University.

POST-PANDEMIC WORK AND CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

The COVID-19 pandemic led to flexible work arrangements. Hybrid or fully remote work has become increasingly common, reducing the need for workers to commute daily to offices and for companies to occupy large amounts of office spaces. As a result, offices nationwide have been experiencing higher levels of vacancies — and Evanston is no exception.

Evanston needs to adapt to this new trend as changes in work arrangements can impact where people choose to live. Since many employees are no longer required to be in the office every day, some may choose to live in locations farther away, where cost of living is cheaper, and social and recreational opportunities are more abundant.

Downtown retail establishments have also suffered, due to the resulting decrease in foot traffic from office workers and the rise in e-commerce. Shopping online removes the need to visit stores in person, fueling the closure of brick-and-mortar shops in many cities across the country. In Evanston, however, market research suggests e-commerce may not have had as much of an impact as predicted.[58] Regardless, it remains critical for Evanston to strategize and revitalize its retail scene so the City remains attractive to existing and future workers who will contribute to the local economy.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

1. Increase economic mobility, especially for those with the lowest median household incomes.

Comment [27]: "Low and moderate incomes"

[57] Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. (2024). *Illinois 2024 Economic Growth Plan.* Retrieved February 12, 2025, from https://dceo.illinois.gov.
[58] City of Evanston. (April 2023). *Evanston Thrives: Tenanting & Attraction*. https://www.cityofevanston.org/business/evanston-thrives.

ECON 1.1 Support the creation of mentoring programs to expose and connect students to internships and shadowing opportunities. Bolster workforce development initiatives.

ECON 1.2 Bolster workforce development initiatives.

ECON 1.2 Support entrepreneurship initiatives for communities of color.

ECON 1.3 Remove barriers to entry, using demographic data to understand workforce composition, identify gaps, and shape organizational strategy.

ECON 1.4 Establish workforce development policies for city departments. Train individuals for certain certifications, licensing, or other qualifications needed.

2. Increase the number of families who choose to live in Evanston.

ECON 2.1 Develop incentives and create zoning regulations to encourage child-care providers to offer services throughout the City.

ECON 2.2 Encourage large buildings in strategic areas to dedicate space to infant- and child-care services.

Support the growing senior population.

ECON 3.1 Partner with agencies to develop a community-wide aging plan so workers who retire can continue to be connected through support networks and engaged in society through volunteering, employment, and continuous learning.

3. Continue to create and preserve attractive public spaces and vibrant retail streets that contribute to Evanston's unique identity.

ECON 4.1 Adopt a privately owned public space plan that encourages developments in strategic locations to provide and maintain public spaces.

ECON 4.2 Continue funding storefront improvement incentive programs and provide design assistance through community partners.

ECON 4.3 Highlight the historic architecture and heritage of Downtown Evanston and neighborhood business districts. Prepare and implement a historic building and legacy business program that describes individual building and business histories through signage, plaques, podcasts, and other digital formats to enrich visitor experience.

ECON 4.4 Establish clear gateways at the entrances of each district.

ECON 4.5 Implement larger, more consistent, and visible public signage and wayfinding.

ECON 4.6 Invest in transformative physical enhancements to support retail districts.

4. Expand workforce development.

ECON 5.1 Partner with agencies and institutions to promote the health care and education sectors for workforce development. Provide incentives to draw innovative and emerging businesses to the City.

ECON 5.2 Work with hospitals to create health-oriented districts (HOD).

ECON 5.3 Work with school districts and Northwestern University to develop and refine academic programs and degrees that support clean energy technology and life science industry needs.

ECON 5.4 Work with industry partners to create internship or residency opportunities for students to gain relevant experience as part of their coursework.

ECON 5.5 Support existing partners in growing workforce expertise in building deconstruction methods.

ECON 5.6 Convert vacant office spaces downtown into tech incubator spaces and accelerators for businesses in these sectors.

5. Continue revitalizing the local retail economy.

ECON 6.1 Connect local businesses to organizations that provide advisory services and resources.

ECON 6.2 Consider new incentives and programs with private-sector partners that support entrepreneurial activity, including a venture fund focused on new restaurants and small business startups.

ECON 6.3 Continue to support and grow programs that help legacy businesses.

ECON 6.4 Support policies that promote affordability for small businesses amid urban development.

ECON 6.5 Encourage initiatives like pop-up shops, local business incentives, and partnerships with institutions like Northwestern University, hospitals, and other partners.

ECON 6.6 Streamline City processes where possible to remove barriers for new and existing businesses.

Increase digital presence and awareness of Evanston as a desirable place to do business, to live, and to have fun.

ECON 7.1 Implement marketing strategies recommended in Evanston Thrives.

ECON 7.2 Promote the new Enjoy Evanston website on social media and other media platforms to raise brand awareness of Evanston.

CHAPTER 13: ARTS AND CULTURE - COMMUNITY BUILDING, PLACEMAKING, CONNECTION MAKING

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNITY BUILDING

The establishment of the Evanston Arts Council in 1975 marked the City's commitment to actively engaging the community in the arts and coordinating a broad spectrum of private and public cultural activities. Evanston embraces a variety of art and cultural expressions that serve to strengthen and unify the community. The City seeks to empower and amplify artists and arts organizations as community builders and catalysts for change. With a vision of making the arts an integral part of a just and sustainable city, Evanston strives to ensure diverse, authentic, and creative voices are accessible to all, creating an environment where artists flourish and are valued as key contributors to a vibrant and engaged society.

Artistic forms like painting, music, dance, literature, and theater go beyond language, conveying ideas, emotions, and experiences that unite and divide people through shared yet thought-provoking expressions. The role of arts and culture in community building is indispensable; it is rooted in shared history while also acting as a vehicle for transformation. Art becomes a voice that articulates the rich tapestry of beliefs, traditions, and experiences within a community, cementing its role in fostering human connections essential to successful cultural initiatives.

ARTS AND CULTURE

The arts are pivotal in shaping Evanston's identity and enhancing its livability. It serves as an engine for economic development, nurtures social cohesion, and encourages multicultural dialogue within the community.

There are numerous opportunities to encourage artistic endeavors — such as dance, music, murals, theater, and sculpture — to create welcoming public spaces that enhance the community's well-being. Evanston is well positioned to leverage community-building and placemaking strategies through the arts, given its rich history of arts professionals.

Recently, Evanston has enjoyed the emergence of pop-up galleries, street fairs, and other temporary cultural activities. The City can build on the entrepreneurial spirit within its arts community to encourage more initiatives like pop-up galleries, storefront theaters, cafés, and bookstores while streamlining permit processes to support street performances. Establishing a consistent schedule of performances and exhibits will create anticipation within Evanston and surrounding areas, fostering an expectation for diverse and engaging programming.

Murals stand out as a widespread and visually striking feature of Evanston's landscape. They serve as powerful tools for placemaking, often created together with community members to instill pride and a sense of place. The Evanston Mural Arts Program, founded in 2017, has significantly enriched the City's collection of murals, complemented by impressive public art installations by local artists.

PLACEMAKING

Placemaking is an approach to planning, designing, and managing public spaces that emphasizes community engagement, cultural expression, and the creation of vibrant, inclusive environments. Placemaking can take many forms, from dynamic public squares and pedestrian-friendly streets to the public art and cultural events that reflect our community's unique identity.

Effective placemaking strategies foster a strong sense of belonging and transform dull public spaces. Arts-based placemaking focuses not only on the artwork itself but also on using art to unite community members, encouraging dialogue and connection. By pursuing these methods and implementing supportive policies, Evanston can achieve its goals of celebrating arts and culture.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1) Make public spaces more accessible and friendly to all ages and abilities.
2) Encourage more grassroots arts and entertainment initiatives focused on community building and placemaking across all city wards for all ages and abilities.
3) Align placemaking strategies with climate adaptation and mitigation goals.
4) Connect public spaces through a network of active transportation infrastructure.
5) Enhance cultural arts activities in all city wards to increase participation in local arts and culture and engage all ages and abilities.
6) Integrate arts and culture in City decision-making.
7) Promote equity by including historically underrepresented communities in the creation and preservation of placemaking, arts, and culture.
8) Expand the use of public spaces for creative and cultural activities and ensure they are open and friendly to all ages and abilities.
9) Promote more innovative opportunities like pop-up galleries, storefront theaters, cafes, and bookstores, and ease accommodations for street performances.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

PLACEMAKING PUBLIC ART

The City of Evanston understands the importance of public art in enhancing placemaking and is committed to developing quality public spaces where residents and visitors can relax, socialize, and participate in activities. As covered in the Economic Development chapter, the Evanston Thrives Retail Action Plan supports the revitalization of local business districts. It highlights the importance of supporting placemaking in and out of these areas. It encourages the City to invest in placemaking and connections between public spaces to enhance accessibility. The action plan includes tailored placemaking initiatives for each of Evanston's nine retail districts. These initiatives include the installation of street furniture, landscaping, play infrastructure, lighting, public art, and various streetscape and right-of-way improvements.

ARTS AND CULTURE

Public art — whether permanent sculptures, murals, music, performances, installations, or other temporary activations — invites people to forge emotional and social connections with one another, their surroundings, and their history. The City supports art that promotes inclusion, engagement, and interaction. Public artwork can already be found in many parts of Evanston. There are many opportunities to complement the existing network and integrate public artwork with public and private investment.

EVANSTON ARTS COUNCIL

Public art initiatives are supported by the Evanston Arts Council, which advises on funding and helps source, curate, and maintain public art throughout the City. Funding primarily comes from the City's Capital Improvement Fund and is supplemented by donations or grants.

OTHER ART AND CULTURE OFFERINGS

In addition to public art, community members and visitors can enjoy a wide range of cultural events and festivals in Evanston. The city boasts a vibrant arts scene and is dedicated to breaking down barriers to organizing special events that encourage artistic and cultural expression, as well as economic growth.

Evanston is home to over 20 performing arts companies and organizations, including the Evanston Dance Ensemble, Evanston Symphony Orchestra, Piven Theatre, and the Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre Company. The City also boasts various galleries and studios that support local artists and promote artistic endeavors. These galleries not only provide space for diverse art styles and media — they also offer classes and workshops in ceramics, woodworking, and figure sculpting for community members of all ages and skill levels.

These events and venues are important to Evanston as they provide creative outlets for residents to explore their interests while enhancing the City's vibrancy and livability. They also serve as grounds for creative placemaking opportunities to take form, which, according to the National Endowment for the Arts, has shown to grow social cohesion and enhance community well-being.[59]

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Design inclusive public spaces.

[59] National Endowment for the Arts: *WE-Making: How Arts & Culture Unite People to Work Toward Community Well Being*

This Plan highlights the growing population of older people and the decreasing number of children in Evanston. Public spaces should be designed to be inclusive and welcoming to all, with placemaking strategies prioritizing the needs and preferences of older community members. Despite the decline in the number of children, ensuring safe and meaningful public spaces for them remains crucial.

Prioritize increased investment in a wider range of arts and cultural activities.

While Evanston has progressed in investing in placemaking and the arts, there is still more room for improvement. The following policies and actions summarize ways in which the City can boost placemaking efforts and further promote arts and culture. The Evanston Thrives Retail Action Plan mainly focuses on revitalizing retail districts through built environment interventions and programming. However, creating engaging public spaces near residents' homes is equally important, ensuring access to quality spaces regardless of shopping activities.

Support community-based placemaking, arts, and culture.

Community members understand the neighborhood's history, issues, daily workings, and what makes the neighborhood special and meaningful. Resources should therefore be set aside to enable initiatives suggested by the local community. These projects range from painting sidewalks or streets to transforming vacant lots into welcoming gathering spots.

Adapt our public spaces to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The design of public spaces should be mindful of changing weather patterns and climate conditions to ensure ongoing accessibility and use throughout the year. Where possible, public spaces should actively contribute to climate mitigation efforts.

Connect people and places.

Creating walkable and bikeable connections between public spaces increases accessibility for more community members, especially those who may not have access to or be able to drive, and contributes to lowering greenhouse gas emissions.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The following policies and actions support placemaking, arts, and culture opportunities outlined above to achieve the goals of Envision Evanston 2045.

1. Make public spaces more accessible and friendly to all ages and abilities.

PAC 1.1 Invest in public spaces to elevate their conditions and amenities.

PAC 1.2 Identify areas throughout the City to create more public spaces.

PAC 1.3 Explore and develop incentives for private developments to include accessible public spaces.

PAC 1.4 Remove barriers that prevent spaces like cafes and bookstores on street corners, and in other strategic locations outside retail districts.

PAC 1.5 Ensure city policies and regulations allow spaces to host a variety of performances, exhibitions, special events, and celebrations.

PAC 1.6 Improve access to electricity for special events and public use.

PAC 1.7 Support art incubators, maker spaces, and studio spaces.

PAC 1.8 Integrate art in public spaces.

PAC 1.9 Ensure public spaces are accessible and friendly to all ages and abilities and promote intergenerational activities.

2. Encourage more community involvement in placemaking initiatives.

PAC 2.1 Explore new funding sources that foster arts, placemaking, and community building.

PAC 2.2 Encourage public–private partnerships via technical assistance, financial support, and other community partnerships to implement more energetic arts programming related to community building and placemaking.

PAC 2.3 Streamline and expedite the approval process for community-initiated special events and activities.

PAC 2.4 Work with community partners to facilitate cultural arts programming that promotes local histories and community dialogues.

3. Align placemaking strategies with climate adaptation and mitigation goals.

PAC 3.1 Design public spaces to withstand extreme heat, cold, and increased precipitation.

PAC 3.2 Identify locations and install green infrastructure and solar lighting.

PAC 3.3 Design public spaces and community facilities to function as disaster or emergency shelters.

4. Connect public spaces through a network of active transportation infrastructure.

PAC 4.1 Identify key centers and corridors in the City and prioritize investment in active transportation infrastructure improvements.

PAC 4.2 Install wayfinding signage along corridors to guide people to public spaces.

5. Enhance cultural arts activities that increase participation in local arts and culture and engage all ages and abilities.

PAC 5.1 Facilitate ongoing communication and collaboration to improve arts and culture programming.

PAC 5.2 Redesign and program city facilities to include spaces that bring community members together.

PAC 5.3 Explore additional funding sources to support arts, culture, and historic preservation.

PAC 5.4 Strengthen and promote collaborative cultural initiatives between arts-based entities and cultural organizations.

PAC 5.5 Identify historic buildings, cultural landscapes, and other historic sites as prime locations for placemaking, storytelling, and interpretation.

PAC 5.6 Promote partnerships between arts, community, and business organizations that will contribute to the practical and financial stability of arts events in Evanston.

6. Integrate arts and culture in the City's decision making.

PAC 6.1 Implement marketing and financial sustainability strategies for community building and placemaking activities outlined in the Evanston Thrives Plan.

PAC 6.2 Require new construction projects to dedicate a percentage of their budget for art in public spaces. Active City participation in the planning and allocation process will ensure new public art projects enhance Evanston as a cultural destination serving a diverse public with a broad range of arts interests. Encourage the installation of public art and placemaking strategies in conjunction with capital improvement projects.

PAC 6.3 Integrate arts and culture in the City's strategic planning efforts.

PAC 6.4 Encourage use of the arts to educate and promote the City's priorities, such as sustainability and equity.

7. Promote equity by including historically underrepresented communities in the creation and preservation of placemaking, arts, and culture.

PAC 7.1 Prioritize access to arts and cultural programming for historically underrepresented and underserved communities.

PAC 7.2 Support artists from underrepresented communities and cultures.

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

8. Expand the use of public space for creative and cultural activities.

PAC 8.1 Identify and create public spaces that accommodate a variety of performances, exhibitions, special events, and celebrations.

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

PAC 8.3 Regularly review and update policies that regulate the use of public spaces and streets, such as sidewalk cafes, temporary sales, on-street dining, pop-up galleries, and temporary performance spaces, to create a more vibrant walking experience while maintaining the necessary sidewalk capacity and ADA compliance for equal access and mobility on city streets.

9. Promote more innovative opportunities like pop-up galleries, storefront theaters, cafes, and bookstores, and ease accommodations for street performances.

PAC 9.1 Develop policies and remove regulatory barriers to enable temporary uses and events that promote the arts.

PAC 9.2 Partner with organizations to actively promote these uses and events to the Evanston community and surrounding communities.

CHAPTER 14: PRESERVATION

INTRODUCTION

Historic preservation plays a key role in Evanston's future by maintaining the cultural, architectural, and historical resources that establish a sense of place and contribute to our community's unique identity. Leveraging preservation as a foundational land-use tool allows us to successfully balance and implement the City's long-term economic development, housing, sustainability, and cultural enrichment goals. By weaving historic preservation into the fabric of our future planning, Evanston will not only maintain its identity and collective memory for generations to come, but also promote new housing development, revitalization projects, and heritage tourism.

The City of Evanston first adopted its Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1978 with a commitment to identify and preserve "areas, properties, structures, sites, and objects having a special historical, community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value to the City and its citizens," and to foster "civic pride" in Evanston's unique architecture, landmarks, and districts. The Historic Preservation Ordinance also seeks to protect important buildings and resources through designating, restoring, and rehabilitating local landmarks and districts. The Evanston Historic Preservation Commission oversees the ordinance's implementation, including the ongoing survey and inventory of buildings, sites, and structures; the designation of local landmarks and districts; and the issuance of Certificate of Appropriateness for improvements, additions, and demolitions of City Landmarks as well as projects within local historic districts. Evanston was proudly recognized as one of the first

municipalities to receive Certified Local Government status from the State of Illinois in 1985, highlighting its expertise in historic preservation. This designation unlocks access to state and federal historic preservation grants and enhances the City's preservation initiatives through the federal Certified Local Government Program, established by the U.S. Congress and supported by the National Park Service and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

An effective 21st Century preservation program lives at the intersection of affordability, economic vitality, sustainability, and celebration of our diverse places, people, and stories. In order to implement the actions needed to evolve, advance, and expand the preservation program over the next two decades, a logical, transparent, and efficient framework that keeps pace with residents' evolving needs is necessary. The Preservation Commission has made strategic changes to the program over the past five years aimed at reducing burdens on homeowners and the Commission's volunteer capital. Additional education and outreach will be necessary to overcome entrenched misperceptions of the program and to communicate its value to the broader community. The Commission should continue to assess the effectiveness of the program and examine additional strategic changes that work to balance the integrity of the city's historic resources with increased flexibility for routine types of work as well as the use of innovative materials and technologies. Evanston has an opportunity to not just follow historic preservation best practices, but to lead in their discovery and implementation, and Preserve 2040 in conjunction with newly available volunteer capital on the Commission provides this critical roadmap.

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POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Safeguard the integrity of the city's landmarks, historic districts, and built resources eligible for designation.
1. Support adaptive use and rehabilitation of historic buildings to support the City's economic development and housing goals.
2. Continue to survey and document properties eligible for historic designation and protection.
3. Promote historic preservation tools and approaches in line with the City's growth, housing, environmental, and economic development goals.
4. Preserve spaces that embody the City's diverse historic, social, and cultural periods, people, and events.
5. Promote inclusive economic development in historic areas to minimize displacement and support communities.
6. Establish, maintain, and leverage a range of incentives and programs to address neighborhood rehabilitation and stabilization needs.
7. Include residents, educational institutions, and other partners in preservation efforts.

Comment [28]: ALTERNATE: Establish, maintain, and leverage a range of incentives and programs to address property maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, and neighborhood stabilization needs.

Comment [29]: ALTERNATE: Increase the number of professional staff charged with administering the preservation program and enact creative organizational structures and capacity building approaches that include a broad spectrum of stakeholders in preservation efforts.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Evanston is proudly committed to preserving its historical, cultural, social, and architectural heritage. Known for its diverse architecture — including an outstanding collection of Victorian and 20th century Period Revival, Prairie, Craftsman, Mid-Century Modern, and Contemporary styles — Evanston is set amid a landscape of mature trees and expansive parkways. Our vision is to build on these architectural and historical resources, ensuring they are cherished and celebrated by future generations. Daniel Burnham, a distinguished architect and urban designer, hailed Evanston as the place that "fills my longing," and the 1917 Plan of Evanston recognized the City's rich architectural heritage, encompassing not only grand mansions but also valuable vernacular structures.[60] The City earned the name "City of Homes" due to the artistic diversity and quality of its housing stock, a well-deserved title that continues to enhance Evanston's appeal today. These historic homes, many designed by some of the country's best architects, are preserved and celebrated for their

[60] Evanston History Center. (n.d.) *Burnham at Home in Evanston*. https://evanstonhistorycenter.org/stories/burnham-at-home-in-evanston/.

architectural, cultural, and historical significance, and feature high-quality materials and construction techniques rarely seen in new construction today.

Evanston's commitment to historic preservation ensures its heritage is celebrated and protected for generations to come. This commitment is bolstered by organizations like the Evanston Preservation Commission, which has identified, protected, and actively managed significant structures, sites, and landscapes since the 1970s. Its efforts, along with those of local history-oriented organizations and community groups, are important in safeguarding Evanston's rich heritage. The Evanston History Center (housed in the Charles Gates Dawes House, a National Historic Landmark), the Shorefront Legacy Center, Northwestern University, and the Gichigamiin Indigenous Nations Museum (formerly the Mitchell Museum) are also pivotal in preserving and interpreting Evanston's rich cultural histories — including those less acknowledged and underrepresented in the built environment.

Preserve 2040, Evanston's long-range preservation plan, was adopted in December 2022. This comprehensive plan serves as the Preservation Commission's primary guide for balancing the reality of a changing environment and the desire to preserve the character, heritage, and vibrancy of the community.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

National Register Historic Districts are geographically defined areas that have a high concentration of sites, buildings, structures, or objects with historical, architectural, or archeological significance. The National Register is maintained by the U.S. Department of the Interior. Local landmarks and historic districts are areas designated by a local ordinance as recommended by the Historic Preservation Commission. Designation as a local historic district or landmark offers protections and active management through the Preservation Ordinance, while federal designations are largely celebratory unless state or federal funding or permits are sought or required. Evanston contains five National Register Historic Districts, all of which are overlaid as local historic districts, except for the Oakton Historic District and the northern half of the Northeast Historic District. Additionally, the Women's Christian Temperance Union District is a local district but is not on the National Register.

Women's Christian Temperance Union District (ocal)
Located on the west side of Chicago Avenue between Church and Clark Street, this district was established to provide local protections for the campus of buildings associated with the Women's Christian Temperance Union and Women's Suffrage Movement. These buildings are also listed as National Historic Landmarks, the highest federal designation, because of their historic and social significance to the United States.

Lakeshore Historic District (federal and local)
Nestled in southeast Evanston, this district has a total of 774 primary structures and 557 secondary structures. It is primarily residential, and a prime example of late 19th and early 20th-century inner suburban development. It features a grid plan with rectangular blocks and alleys. Most major streets run north to south, with deep parkways lined by mature trees and ornamental lamp posts. Buildings comprise a wide range of architectural styles, with parks and public gathering spaces spread throughout the district, including Burnham Shores, Centennial, Clark Square, Dawes, Elliot, and Garden Parks as well as Kelly and Snyder Tot Lots.

Ridge Historic District (federal and local)
Set apart by its topography, which attracted early settlers in the 1830s and 1840s, Ridge Historic District has evolved into a dynamic residential area. Following the Chicago Fire, it was shaped by residents engaged in professional, mercantile, and manufacturing work. Land use in the district is mainly residential, with large, owner-occupied detached homes with 2 to 2.5 stories on large, deep lots and spacious parkways. This district has 397 primary structures, 129 of which are architecturally significant and another 136 that contribute to the district's overall history.

Northeast Evanston Historic District (federal and local)
Located north of the Central Business District, this district includes 546 primary buildings and structures within a long and narrow area of approximately 12 blocks within the former town of Evanston and Village of North Evanston. Primarily made up of detached homes, the district also includes multiunit buildings, university offices, educational facilities, and parks. Architectural styles are highly varied, with buildings constructed from 1860 to the present. Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and Tudor Revival are the main styles, which were popularized during the height of development along Evanston's streetcar system on Sherman Avenue and Central Street. The district features properties on lots ranging from 4,000 to 35,000 square feet, similar to the Ridge Historic District and Evanston Lake Shore National Register Historic District. The district benefits from one of the widest rights of way in Evanston at around 100 feet, resulting in generous sidewalks and parkways lined with mature trees and streetlights. The northern half of the district, located north of Lincoln Street, is not overlaid with a local historic district — leaving these significant resources vulnerable to development pressure, including demolition and improper alterations.

Oakton Historic District (federal)
Located at Evanston's southern border with Chicago, 203 primary buildings and 134 outbuildings shape this residential district. The housing landscape is characterized by a mix of detached homes, duplexes, apartment buildings, and townhouses constructed between 1913 and 1964. Like other historic districts, it features a variety of architectural styles on lots ranging from 4,300 to 8,500 square feet, slightly smaller than in the Northeast Evanston and Ridge Historic districts. Despite its narrower right-of-way width of around 62 to 63 feet, the district's streets have sidewalks and parkways with mature landscaping and the ornamental lamp posts found in other districts. Like the northern half of the Northeast Historic District, the Oakton District is also vulnerable to increased development pressures, including demolition and improper additions and alterations due to the area not being overlaid as a local historic district.

Northwest Evanston Historic District (eligible)
The Preservation Commission has identified the Northwest Evanston Historic District as eligible for historic designation, although it has not yet been nominated for national or local designation. Explored as part of the Illinois Historic Structures Survey of 1972 by the State of Illinois for a potential historic district, northwest Evanston was surveyed in the late 1980s with funding from a Certified Local Government grant, and is currently listed as eligible for designation by the Preservation Commission due to its architectural significance. It includes over 60 landmarked properties and additional sites likely to be eligible for landmarking or designation as contributing structures. The area is southwest of, and adjacent to, the original village of North Evanston, with Harrison and Golf/Simpson Streets forming its north and south boundaries, Lawndale and Pioneer Avenues its west and east boundaries, and Bennett Avenue on the southeast. It merits consideration as both a national and local historic district as a distinct type (single unit) and period (1895 to 1937), and includes the work of several master architects of that period.

Suburban Apartment Buildings District (federal)
This category refers to 48 buildings dating from 1890 to the 1920s that exemplify the suburban apartment building styles popular in Evanston during the unprecedented building boom of the 1910s and 1920s. These structures range from rowhouses, duplexes, triplexes, and railroad apartments to courtyard buildings. These suburban apartment buildings contain elements common to detached homes, such as projecting bays, sun porches, gables, chimneys, and decorative façade treatments. The layout of units and hallways is designed to promote natural light and ventilation. These apartments offer lots of green space, typically in the form of courtyards with neat lawns, flower beds, benches, and fountains.

LANDMARKS

In addition to local historic districts, 56 properties are individually listed in the National Register, and dozens more have been identified by the State Historic Preservation Office as eligible. The City also has over 850 registered individual local landmarks. Most are in the federal-only portion of the Northeast Historic District and the proposed Northwest Evanston Historic District, and about 430 are not in a local historic district. Most landmarks outside a designated district are single and multiunit residences or institutional buildings, including a few on Northwestern University's campus, and other local historic school buildings. Furthermore, the Preservation Commission has gathered a list of over 60 properties, identified through surveys conducted in Downtown Evanston and along the Chicago Avenue corridor, that are eligible for local designation but not housed within existing historic districts.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Balancing Historic Preservation and Development Needs

Evanston's historic resources are major factors that define Evanston's built environment and identity. As the City removes barriers to housing production, addresses climate change and resilience, and supports economic development, synergies exist with historic preservation. Currently, preservation initiatives tend to focus on high-style architectural achievements, often overlooking the significant contributions of working-class, marginalized, and ethnic communities. It is crucial to actively research, identify, and document these cultural heritages. By prioritizing preservation that advances racial equity, addresses housing affordability, and prevents displacement, Evanston can foster inclusivity and bolster economic resilience. Engaging historically excluded communities in the preservation process, safeguarding local businesses, and offering financial assistance for community-driven projects in historically significant neighborhoods will enhance the City's commitment to sustainability and affordable housing while honoring its rich history.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The following policies and actions highlight the important role preservation plays in achieving the goals of Envision Evanston 2045.

Safeguard the integrity of the city's landmarks, historic districts, and built resources eligible for designation.

P 1.1 Maintain a strong Preservation Ordinance that aligns with best practices and evolving trends.

P 1.2 Establish advisory review requirements for demolition and construction of principal structures within the city's National Register Historic Districts that lack local protection.

P 1.3 Provide technical assistance and advisory review for construction of new principal structures adjacent to individual landmarks outside of a local historic district.

P 1.4 Establish demolition delay procedures for properties the Preservation Commission has identified as eligible for landmark designation.

1. Support adaptive use and rehabilitation of historic buildings to help achieve the City's economic development and housing goals.

P 1.1 Streamline the permit review process for adaptive use of historic properties.

P 1.2 Provide technical and financial assistance for owners of historic properties, including support for decarbonization efforts.

P1.3 Promote preservation-based economic development strategies in the City's existing commercial environments, downtown, and neighborhood business districts.

P 1.4 Explore regional and national membership programs that support local businesses and districts.

P 1.5 Support the adaptive use of significant institutional structures, such as schools and buildings of assembly, to increase residential density while preserving their historical, architectural, cultural, and social value to the community.

2. Continue to survey and document properties eligible for historic designation and protection.

P 2.1 Implement the survey and documentation recommendations of Preserve 2040.

P 2.2 Conduct a cultural landscape survey of Evanston.

P 2.3 Support landmark nominations for eligible properties.

Comment [30]: ADDITIONS:
-Expand the Northeast Evanston Local Historic District boundary to include the Northeast Evanston National Register District.
-Create an Oakton Local Historic District to be conterimous with the Oakton National Register District.
-Create a Northwest Evanston National register and Local Historic District

3. Promote historic preservation tools and approaches 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 provide access to financial incentives and tax credits that encourage rehabilitation and adaptive use efforts.

P 3.2 Designate historic districts in areas with cohesive artistic and architectural compositions or concentrations of existing landmarks.

P 3.3 Establish technical assistance and incentives for building deconstruction and materials reuse over demolition.

P 3.4 Improve procedures for designating commercial landmarks that identify where change should be minimized and highlight where flexibility is appropriate.

P 3.5 Incorporate environmental elements, such as trees, landscapes, parks, and open spaces, into preservation plans — especially within historic districts and along Evanston's lakefront.

P 3.6 Encourage the use of innovative materials and technologies for flexible and sustainable preservation.

P 3.7 Promote adaptive reuse of structures to align preservation efforts with sustainability goals.

4. Preserve spaces that embody the City's diverse historic, social, and cultural periods, people, and events.

P 4.1 Allow for landmark designations based on cultural and social significance and provide

additional flexibility in design review.

P 4.2 Collaborate with local community organizations to support the collection of oral histories and personal narratives from residents of color and underrepresented population groups and identities to inform future designations.

P 4.3 Require appropriate names for new developments and streets to foster and retain the cultural and historical aspects of the community.

P 4.4 Support the creation and designation of a cultural historic district that celebrates 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.

P 4.6 Work with tribal representatives to identify reburial sites for Indigenous remains, fostering respect, healing, and environmental stewardship.

5. Promote inclusive economic development in historic areas to minimize displacement and support communities.

P 5.1 Strengthen programs that recognize and support businesses owned by historically marginalized communities, offering financial aid, marketing support, and partnerships to prevent displacement.

P 5.2 Use asset mapping to identify culturally significant businesses and areas vulnerable to development and market pressures and ensure they receive targeted support to maintain their presence.

6. Establish, maintain, and leverage incentives and programs to address property maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation and neighborhood ~~rehabilitation and~~ stabilization needs.

P 6.1 Create funding programs or partnerships to support community-led projects aimed at revitalizing and preserving landmark buildings and resources associated with historically underrepresented and marginalized neighborhoods in Evanston.

P 6.2 Protect naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) — private properties that are affordable without government subsidies — and prevent displacement by creating conservation districts.

P 6.3 Promote heritage tourism to expand knowledge of cultural history.

7. Include residents, educational institutions, and other partners in preservation efforts.

P 7.1 Work with community partners to advance preservation efforts and decision making.

P 7.2 Spread awareness of preservation efforts and increase education and advocacy efforts to foster community pride.

Comment [31]: ALTERNATE: Increase the number of professional staff charged with administering the preservation program and enact creative organizational structures and capacity building approaches that include a broad spectrum of stakeholders in preservation efforts.

P 7.3 Encourage private historic protection measures by providing information on incentives to property owners.

P 7.4 Ensure the City of Evanston leads by example and follows preservation best practices in municipal decision making and capital improvements.

P 7.5 Support the value and policy statements within Preserve 2040 and expand implementation of the Plan's initiatives through 2045.

P 7.6 Consult more with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, whose ancestral homeland includes Evanston, to ensure potential archaeological resources are treated with the sensitivity and respect they deserve.

CHAPTER 15: IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

Envision Evanston 2045 is a roadmap to achieve this ambitious and attainable vision over the next 20 years. Implementing the goals and strategies outlined will make Evanston a vibrant, resilient, and welcoming community for all. Our Plan also provides a framework for decision making, including when to pursue goals, what resources to set aside for development, infrastructure investments, programming, and more — and how to balance strategies that may, at first glance, seem to work in conflict with each other. We must be flexible and responsive to changes in federal and state priorities that may affect funding, receptive to new technologies that facilitate our ability to address impacts of climate change, and other factors that are not yet known.

The successful realization of Evanston's Comprehensive Plan depends on a structured, continuous, and transparent implementation process. Below, we outline the framework for

translating the Plan's vision into action, ensuring its goals, policies, and recommendations effectively inform decision making in a clear, practical, and measurable way.

Annual Review of Progress, Priorities, and Strategies

To maintain relevance and effectiveness, the implementation strategy incorporates an annual evaluation to track and assess progress, address emerging priorities, and adjust strategies as needed. Facilitated by City staff, City Council, and the Land Use Commission (LUC), this yearly review will keep city initiatives aligned with the changing needs of the community while maintaining accountability in meeting the Plan's objectives. City staff will lead the annual review, with LUC supporting the preparation of the work plan and recommending its approval to the City Council. The annual report will then be presented to the City Council, where it will be accepted and placed on file.

Additionally, every five years, a comprehensive assessment will be conducted to evaluate the Plan's overall effectiveness. The assessment will consider new trends, policy changes, and evolving land use dynamics, allowing for amendments to ensure the Plan remains a forward-thinking and adaptable guide for Evanston's future. Key updates may include changing policies, adding or removing strategic initiatives, and revising the future land use map as needed.

By committing to this structured review and update process, Evanston can ensure that its Comprehensive Plan remains a dynamic tool for sustainable development, responsive governance, and community-driven progress.

REQUESTED ADDITIONS

Items below have been requested by at least two (2) commissioners. Staff acknowledges the need to add these items without need for additional discussion by the Land Use Commission (unless requested).

General themes:
-Refine/omit "growth" as used throughout plan
-Discuss housing
-Streamline survey data in table format
-Definitions: affordable housing, Gini coefficient, "privately owned public space"
-Correct action labels, numbering, or other inconsistencies in template format

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 2: WHAT WE HEARD, VISION STATEMENT
-Omit specific references to "digital and in-person engagement activities" in subsections

-Update list to reflect chapter names
-Survey data concerning household income (Survey #1)?
-Expand on survey structure for both sections ([Insert here an explanation of the survey's structure. Explain that there were questions asking respondents to select from a range of provided options as well as open-ended questions. Include here the tabulated results of the likert scale, dropdown, raking, multiple choice, etc. questions.
-Tables showing bedrooms by rent and owner-occupied units? (Housing: Bedrooms)

Following the presentation of the closed-ended survey results, state something like "the survey also included open-ended questions" and list the open-ended questions. Then state something like "Staff analyzed open-ended responses to identify regularly-occurring themes, which are a, b, and c." Is the below 3 paragraph narrative the analysis of the open-ended questions?)
-Streamline survey data with numbers
-Expand on specific topics that received extended feedback

CHAPTER 3: EVANSTON TODAY
-Expand on "centers-and-corridors framework" in rest of plan
-Add median income and median home value of all demographics (Segregation and Housing Inequality)

CHAPTER 4: EVANSTON TOMORROW

CHAPTER 5: NEIGHBORHOODS AND PLACES
-Suggest ward descriptions focus on unique attributes; consider adding narrative describing shared resources
-Local schools, theaters
-Urban Design Commission (LU 7)

CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY SYSTEMS
-Add names of private schools (Existing Conditions)
-Add hospitals

CHAPTER 7: GETTING AROUND

CHAPTER 8: ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER 9: PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE
-Percentage of open space in Evanston (Existing Conditions)
-Inclusion of lakefront, lakefront paths, playgrounds

CHAPTER 10: HOUSING
-Population projection for 2045 (Key Challenges and Opportunities)
-Evanston-specific data (Increase the Housing Supply)
-Data of cost of housing and rent in Evanston (Existing Conditions)

CHAPTER 11: HEALTH AND WELL BEING

CHAPTER 12: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
-List hospitals (Key Industry Sectors)
-Median household income for current residents (Occupations and Wages)
-Statistics and data from Evanston Thrives

CHAPTER 13: ARTS AND CULTURE - COMMUNITY BUILDING, PLACEMAKING, AND CONNECTION MAKING

CHAPTER 14: PRESERVATION

CHAPTER 15: IMPLEMENTATION
-Timeline for action review (i.e. Immediate 1-2 years, mid-term 3-6 years, long term 7-10 years)
-Structure for periodic reviews, metrics, reviewing bodies

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

APPENDIX B: SUPPORTING DATA

CITATIONS

Public Comment

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.
Anonymous					Written comme	my priorities for Evanston are affordability for families, outdoor spaces, biking/walking, and pedestrian-only commercial spaces. This idea focuses on pedestrian-only spaces and the community the foster. When you visit cities in other countries, whether European, Canadian, or South American, they all generally have pedestrian only zones. These are the places tourists visit, in part because of their historical significance, but also because of their walkability, living culture, and ability to bring people together. I grew up in a town, Charlottesville, VA, that made the bold (at the time) decision to pave its main street with brick and create a pedestrian mall about eight blocks long. This has become the jewel of the city: everyone wants to walk, shop, and eat on the mall, and proximity to the mall is a huge driver of real estate value. I am surprised that 40 years later, this trend has not caught on in other places. I would like to see Evanston create business zones downtown but also throughout the city that are closed to car traffic. This could be done cheaply, and given the grid system of streets, would not necessarily impact traffic. There are car-dependent businesses that will fight it, and many more businesses that will benefit or thrive with it. However, it is the people of evanston and our sense of community that will benefit the most.		
Mike	Broscio	4/9/2025	Envision Evansto	Opposed	Written comme	Controlling high rise structures is essential to maintaining the character of Evanston. We should not be trying to be a little Chicago. The newer proposals seem to be catering to students with studio and 1 bedroom apartments. In fact, renters will not have the same commitment to our city as owners. As far as more traffic for businesses, etc., the new city hall, Northlight Theater and several recently approved projects will help. Let's not go wild! What will help is not more fast food restaurants, but higher quality restaurants that provide a real destination. Look at what downtown Wilmette has accomplished without ANY tall structures.		

City of Evanston

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Evanston zoning (historical context)

Jeff Smith <jeff@jefflaw.com> Thu, Apr 10, 2025 at 4:18 PM
To: Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>, zoning@cityofevanston.org
Cc: cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>, ruger Steve <sruger@cityofevanston.org>, Elizabeth Williams <ewilliams@cityofevanston.org>, Daniel Biss <dbiss@cityofevanston.org>

Meagan & friends:

In both a list of problems with the ongoing planning process to date and in marginal markup of the draft Plan I've alluded to the misrepresentative history of Evanston and its zoning. However, those comments were part of much larger documents and may have seemed like just one more opinion, of which Evanston has many.

I'm attaching for additional context a draft — work in progress — of a chronological table of over 300 additional facts that provide fuller context for how Evanston got to its 1921 and present zoning. It represents a distillation of considerable reading and research, but any Evanston general plan should be informed by, at minimum, multiple older histories of Evanston as well as familiarity with the city planning movement (and its progenitors), and the evolution toward zoning, especially in the 1904-1922 period, with strong influence from earlier happenings in New York and Great Britain. Likely some staff and LUC members already are. However, rarely are these organized in contrast with other things that were ongoing in the country or world, or in Evanston.

As both a schoolchild and later a parent I found that the period between the end of the Civil War and the First World War, as well as some less-savory aspects of our economic history, receives relatively short shrift in history lessons, leaving adults with only a murky sense of a period where America was led by a series of bearded presidents in dark coats and top hats whose names are the least likely to be remembered. But it was during this period that massive fundamental transformations were occurring, including the first Progressive Era of which housing reform, planning, and zoning were part, as well as what gave those momentum. Many of the conflicts and dilemmas identified then persist today.

I hardly agree with all views of any person quoted, nor, in particular, with negative or unfair characterizations of people or groups; inclusion of those, and older usage, is only for historical accuracy. History can be uncomfortable and saddening. Nor do I claim that this list is anywhere near comprehensive or complete; it is meant as supplement and counterweight to asserted facts or narratives already part of the record from other sources, and to encourage deeper dive. Another 300 items could easily be instantly added. Ideally, there would be parallel timelines broken out separately, but that's a larger project.

Items without sources are either generally available through many sources or, in some cases, just a function of my notes being too voluminous to ID retroactively where I pulled something from.

Because it's in table form and the right-column sources can be largely ignored, the attached can be absorbed fairly quickly. Thank you in advance for inclusion in the next packet, and distribution. My hope is that this will be additional material that helps make our eventual Plan even more "Evanston," in the best sense.

Yours,

Jeffrey P. Smith

Evanston zoning timeline 10 Apr 2025.pdf
683K

Evanston Zoning: Additional Historical Context and Markers

Year or date	Event	Source
600 B.C.	Roman cities such as Ostia employ zones to separate industries, cemeteries, and different classes of housing while providing a framework for public amenities such as fountains	Zeyu Wang, "Urban Planning and Engineering in Ancient Rome: A Case Study of Ostia Antica," https://engineeringrome.org/urban-planning-and-engineering-in-ancient-rome-a-case-study-of-ostia-antica/
1647	the Dutch in the colony of New Amsterdam establish controls over the types and location of houses	Ordinance Regulating Buildings in New Amsterdam (Jul. 25, 1647), N.Y. State Archives, translated at https://iarchives.nysed.gov/xtf/view?docId=tei/A1875/NYSA_A1875-78_V16_pt1_0009.xml
1785	Thomas Jefferson writes, "it is not too soon to provide by every possible means that as few as possible shall be without a little portion of land. The small landholders are the most precious part of a state." As one state study put it two centuries later, "The trend towards suburbanization in the United States has been attributed to the ideas set forth by Thomas Jefferson…. Jefferson hoped that the infinitely expandable grid would encourage the proliferation of equal, independent homesteads."	Letter dated October 28, 1785, from Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, in THOMAS JEFFERSON, WRITINGS 840-42 (1984). State study reference is to KCI Technologies, Inc., Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology," (Md. Dept. of Transp. I-495/I-95 Capitol Beltway Corridor Transportation Study, Nov. 1999) ["MD. SUBURB STUDY"], at B-1
1787	The Northwest Ordinance opens up potential land ownership to unprecedented numbers of commoners. "The craving for land ownership, and the independent status that went with it, brought a steady stream of settlers across the Appalachians from the east coast and Europe….The European peasant was a tenant whose interests were subordinate to a landlord. Only in America were extensive opportunities to obtain fee simple title available."	Fred P. Bosselman, *The Commodification of 'Nature's Metropolis': The Historical Context of Illinois' Unique Zoning Standards*, 12 N. Ill. U. L. Rev. 527, 534 (1992). MD. SUBURB STUDY, above ("land meant equality and freedom, so despite the familiarity of urban living… large tracts of open land in America beckoned families to claim independence on their own parcel of land")
1790-1840	Second Great Awakening spawns great growth in evangelical Methodist and Baptist movements, with notable participation by African-Americans; women constitute the majority of converts. "Local churches saw their roles in society in purifying the world through the individuals to whom they could bring salvation, and through changes in the law and the creation of institutions. Interest in transforming the world was applied to mainstream political action, as temperance activists, antislavery advocates, and proponents of other variations of reform sought to implement their beliefs into national politics."	"Second Great Awakening," Wikipedia. See generally Timothy L. Smith, REVIVALISM AND SOCIAL REFORM: AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM ON THE EVE OF THE CIVIL WAR (1957)
1810s-1850s	Commonwealth of Massachusetts residential deeds in Boston area require setbacks from property lines, limit height, and restrict uses such as stables or "mercantile"	Back Bay Deed Restrictions, https://backbayhouses.org/back-bay-deed-restrictions/; Mahbub Rashid, *City Form and Changing Process: The Case of the North End, Boston, 1860-1930* (Dept. Arch. Dissertation, M.I.T., June 1993)

Year or date	Event	Source
1833	Old Green Bay Road is surveyed and laid out from Chicago to Milwaukee; later called Ridge Boulevard through north side of Chicago and Evanston	"Chicago Communities, Rogers Park," Chicago Tribune (Feb 18, 1900)
1840-1860	**Third Great Awakening:** "there was a great awakening along lines of intellectual freedom. It spread like a tidal wave over the country, and it traveled into the frontier West in 'the prairie schooner.' The slave question became a burning one, and one that required courage to attack openly. Women caught the spirit of the times and began to enter their own claims for greater freedom. Equal suffrage came to the front, enlisting men as its champions.… The question of a more liberal education for women became a question of fervent heat, permeating every walk of life."	Eliza H. Root, M.D.., "The Woman's Medical School," HISTORICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ILLINOIS Vol. I, ch. XIV (Chicago, 1906) at 119
1844	Friedrich Engels meets with Karl Marx in Paris, shows him drafts of his book in progress, convinces Marx that the working class can lead a final revolution	
1845	Friedrich Engels, after three years living in Salton and Manchester, England, publishes *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, in German, arguing that the industrial age has reduced incomes of workers below that of the pre-industrial age, and causing them to lived in more unhealthy and unpleasant conditions	
1846	A dozen or so families have settled, mainly on the higher and drier ridges in the swampy "Grosse Pointe" area extending west from Lake Michigan, north of present-day Chicago; Gross Point post office established at home of Edward Mulford (near later site of Evanston Hospital)	Viola Couch Reeling, EVANSTON, ITS LAND AND ITS PEOPLE (Chicago, Fort Dearborn Chapter D.A.R., 1928), at 169; Goodspeed, Weston A. & Healy, Daniel D., HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II (Goodspeed Hist. Ass'n, Chicago, Ill. 1909) at 250-54
1848	Widespread revolution throughout Europe, French monarchy overthrown, Pan-Slavic Conference held in Prague, "potato famine" in Ireland; Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels publish the *Communist Manifesto*	
1848-1851	Success of European aristocracy in quashing democratic and revolutionary movements, combined with economic calamity, sparks decades of mass emigration to the U.S., esp. from Germany and Ireland; 90% will go to northern "free" states, and enormous numbers arrive in large cities	
1849	Illinois passes law providing for the organization of townships	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 252
1850	Ridgeville Township, spanning from North Ave. in Chicago to the south border of the Ouilmette Reservation (along what is now Central Street in Evanston), is organized. The western boundary is what is now Western Avenue in Chicago (Asbury in Evanston). All township trustees and officers except Edward Mulford live in what is now Chicago. Census shows 441 white and 3 colored inhabitants.	Reeling, at 180; HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 251-252; U.S. Census, Population of Civil Division Less than Counties (1870), at 110. *Cf.* Edgewater Historical Society, "Early Andersonville - Ante fire (1871)," https://www.edgewaterhistory.org/ehs/articles/v18-3-2 (2007), which date the organization as 1848.
May 1850	Group of Chicago Methodists mutually agree to form the first university in the then-northwestern portion of the United States	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 254
1850	Town of New Trier is organized north of the Ouilmette Reservation; New Trier has 473 inhabitants, all white	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 262; U.S. Census, Population of Civil Division Less than Counties (1870), at 110

Year or date	Event	Source
1851	Northwestern University chartered by State of Illinois; trustees choose what is now the Evanston campus, over a day's travel north from Chicago, as situs for a college and community in the northwestern U.S.; University is formally organized	
Aug 1853	John Evans on behalf of Northwestern purchases approximately 380 acres from Chicago physician Dr. John H. Foster near present downtown Evanston, in unincorporated land in Ridgeville Township, for university use; other trustees also purchase land	Currey, J. Seymour, CHICAGO AND ITS BUILDERS: A CENTURY OF MARVELOUS GROWTH (S.J. Clarke Publishing, Chicago, 1912) ["Currey"], at 327
Sept 1853	A special investigative committee of NYC's Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, after examining tenement houses throughout the city, issues a 32-page report finding housing conditions incompatible with health or social or moral improvement, and identifying crowding within dwellings, too great a density in certain districts, and neglect of ventilation as among the causes.	Veiller, Lawrence, "Tenement House Reform in New York, 1834-1900" (1900) ["Veiller 1900"], at 7
Dec 1853	Eliza Garrett, widow of wealthy Chicago mayor Augusta Garrett, makes will leaving large bequest to found a seminary; Methodist founders of NU prevail upon John Dempster to establish Garrett Bible Institute in Evanston	
July 1854	Methodist Episcopal Church holds first quarterly conference in log schoolhouse near present-day Ridge & Greenleaf; Northwestern business agent Philo Judson records plat for "Evanston" with Cook County	History of Cook County, Vol II at 254
1854	John A. Pearsons, Harvey Hurd, Philo Judson, John L. Beveridge, James B. Colvin, and Albert Danks among others, move to Evanston.	Currey, at 330-31
1854	Eliza Garrett founds North Western Female College prep school for girls in Evanston; Northwestern University breaks ground on first campus building; Chicago & Milwaukee RR line after agreement with Northwestern trustees routes through and adds a stop at Evanston	
1854	Winnetka is platted	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 262
Feb 1855	Northwestern charter amended by state at university request to prohibit sale of alcohol within 4-mile radius of the University and to exempt the University from taxation; Garrett Bible Institute incorporated in Evanston by organizers of Northwestern	https://www.library.northwestern.edu/documents/libraries-collections/university-archives/nu_charter.pdf; HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 255
March 1855	Alderman and "Know-Nothing" candidate Levi Boone, endorsed by Chicago Tribune, elected mayor of Chicago on nativist and temperance platform	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levi_Boone
April 1855	"Lager Beer Riot" protest by German immigrants against new Chicago anti-Sunday-drinking laws enacted as both a temperance and anti-immigrant measure	Grossman, Ron, "Chicago's Lager Beer Riot proved immigrants' power," Chicago Tribune ((25 September 2015), https://www.chicagotribune.com/2015/09/25/chicagos-lager-beer-riot-proved-immigrants-power/
1855	Northwestern and Garrett Bible Institute open for classes; North Western Female College constructs its first building. US Postal Service changes name of post office from Ridgeville to Evanston.	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 116, 255

Year or date	Event	Source
Apr 1856	N.Y. state assembly legislative committee makes report after investigating tenements, recommends greater ventilation and cleanliness, legislative ban on renting basements, requiring stairways for fire escape, limits on room occupancy to prevent incest and prostitution, and "the prevention of drunkenness by providing to every man a clean and comfortable home." Says that the horrible conditions found are "the natural and fearful result of the rapacity of the landlord in every crowded city unrestrained by conscience, and wholly unchecked by legislation." Submits bill to license and regulate tenements to legislature, which fails to adopt it.	Veiller 1900 at 11
1856	First Methodist Church constructed in Evanston	
1857	State legislature per Evanston request splits Ridgeville Township into two, renames portion north of section line between 40N and 41N (current Devon Ave.) as Evanston Township, southern portion renamed Lake View Township	Laws of the State of Illinois passed by the Twentieth General Assembly (Lanphier & Walker, 1857, at 206); HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 263-64
1858	First Baptist Church organized in Evanston. Methodist publications and preachers tout Evanston, a "prohibition village" and "Methodist heaven," to congregations in other communities; Frances Willard's family, whose home previously served as an Underground Railroad station, moves from Wisconsin to Evanston when she is ~18 years old; she enrolls in Northwestern Female College	Frances E. Willard, GLIMPSES OF FIFTY YEARS: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN AMERICAN WOMAN (Chicago, 1889) ["Willard, GLIMPSES"] at 332
1858	Frederick Law Olmsted and his partner Calvert Vaux win the competition to design the new Central Park in New York City	
Mar 1860	Frances Willard writes in her journal, "Evanston has no poor people."	Willard, GLIMPSES at 132
April 1860	Abraham Lincoln makes only visit to Evanston, riding the train up to Evanston with his friend, abolitionist Harvey B. Hurd, an ally of John Brown	Jeffrey P. Smith, "When Lincoln Came to Evanston," Evanston Roundtable (Apr. 27, 2010)
1860	Evanston Township has 829 white and 2 colored inhabitants; Chicago has 111,214 white and 985 colored inhabitants	U.S. Census (1870), *supra*
1863	"Draft riots" by tenement dwellers in NYC; journalist W.P. Willis writes that the mobs originated in "high brick blocks of closely packed houses"	Veiller 1900 at 15
1863	Printer, philanthropist and later Lord Mayor of London Sir Sydney Waterlow founds the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company and constructs first apartment project, the Langbourn Buildings, in a series of London projects designed to provide better conditions for working people; at height the company will have 30,000 occupants in its developments	"The Improved Industrial Dwelling Company," Waterlow Estate History (Aug. 11, 2010), https://wilmotst.com/53-the-improved-industrial-dwelling-company/
Dec 1863	Evanston votes to organize as an incorporated town under [Illinois] General Laws of 1845. Town limits are Foster south to Crain, Wesley east to the lake. Harvey B. Hurd is first president.	THE EVANSTON CODE OF 1915 (Evanston, Ill., 1915), at xv; REVISED ORDS. OF THE CITY OF EVANSTON (ALSO SPECIAL LAWS AND ORDINANCES OF GENERAL INTEREST) (City Council of Evanston, 1893), at v; *Evanston v. Gunn*, 99 U.S. 660 (1878); Kitagawa, Eveleyn & Taeuber, Karl, eds., Local Community Fact Book | Chicago Metropolitan Area | 1960 (U. of Chicago 1963) ["COMMUNITY FACT BOOK 1960"], at 186

Year or date	Event	Source
1864-1865	Leading citizens of NYC form "Citizens Association" and its Council of Hygiene subcommittee conducts survey of "tenant houses," maps arrangement of structures in detail, recording amount of land occupied, shape and height of buildings, number of families and occupants, prevalence of disease, and number of neighboring liquor stores. Produces 360-page report.	Veiller 1900 at 16
1865	Orrington Lunt gives 165 acres of land in the Evanston area to Northwestern University to fund a library	Currey, at 352
1867	There are 15,000 tenement houses in NYC; NYC passes first tenement house legislation in the country, requiring transoms or other ventilation to outside air, fire escapes, regulated stairs and sanitation, minimum room sizes, and minimum spacing between buildings on same lot, increasing with height, and rear setbacks	Veiller 1900 at 18-19, 20-21
1868	Evanston College for Ladies established	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 256
Mar 1869	Voters of Evanston by referendum reject proposal to reorganize as a city	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 257
1869	Village of Winnetka incorporated	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 262
1869	Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, now using the title "landscape architects," deliver a city plan for Riverside, southwest of Chicago, arguably the first planned suburb in the U.S. Olmsted "designed the town to remove the town's residents from the stresses of modern urban life as much as possible, living in close harmony with nature, while retaining key modern conveniences (such as a mere 20-minute train ride to downtown Chicago)." The curvilinear layout and design "presaged today's urban planning goals of walkability, green space, public transportation access, sustainability, and resiliency."	"Riverside: Frederick Law Olmsted's Illinois Masterpiece," Enjoy Illinois (Jul. 19, 2018), https://www.enjoyillinois.com/plan-your-trip/travel-inspiration/riverside-frederick-law-olmsteds-illinois-masterpiece/; "Presentation: Olmsted's Riverside: Stewardship Meets Innovation in a Landmark Village," Frederick Law Olmsted Society of Riverside, https://www.olmstedsociety.org/events/lectures/presentation-olmsteds-riverside-stewardship-meets-innovation-in-a-landmark-village/; "Riverside, Illinois," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riverside,_Illinois
1869	Illinois Supreme Court says that a property owner has no legal recourse if "the proprietor of an adjoining lot erect[s] thereon a row of mean and unsightly tenements"	*Cooper v. Randall*, 53 Ill. 24, 27 (1869)
Nov 1869	Citizens' Party wins Chicago mayoral race and a majority of aldermanic seats, besting the Republicans and Democrats	
1870	Census shows 3,062 inhabitants of Evanston, 98.6% white (although almost 30% foreign-born); 43 colored residents. Population of Chicago is over 298,000, almost 100x the size of Evanston.	U.S. Census
Feb 1871	Frances Willard becomes President of the new Evanston College for Ladies; Evanston Library Association opens free private library with 900 volumes	Willard, GLIMPSES at 199; HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 257
Oct 1871	Great Chicago Fire destroys over 17,000 structures, killing 300 and leaving 100,000 residents homeless	

Year or date	Event	Source
1871-1873	Boom and speculation in Evanston real estate and single-family homes. "Evanston receiving a large influx of people at the time of the Chicago fire. ….The preference of the people for homes outside of Chicago created an unusual demand for houses and lots in Evanston. Prices advanced rapidly, and the building of houses and the selling of them became a profitable business."	Frank M. Elliott, ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ILL. & HISTORY OF EVANSTON. VOL. II (1906) ["HoE2"] at 297, 298
July 1872	Town of Evanston nearly doubles in area by annexing land north to the boundary of the old Ouilmette Reservation	
Oct 1872	Evanston votes to become a village under the new Illinois city and village act	REVISED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF EVANSTON (ALSO SPECIAL LAWS AND ORDINANCES OF GENERAL INTEREST) (City Council of Evanston, 1893) at v; *Evanston v. Gunn*, 99 U.S. 660 (1878)
Nov 1872	South Evanston incorporates as a village	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 260
1872	Village of Wilmette incorporated	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 263
1872	Engels writes that "poor districts" in which workers are crowded together are "breeding places of all epidemics which afflict towns." Engels, however, *opposes* home ownership because it makes the owners too "contented," letting them identify with the capitalists, which inhibits a revolution that requires a quantum of a dissatisfied proletariat of renters	Friedrich Engels, *The Housing Situation* [Parts I and II) (1872). *See also* K. Marx & F. Engels, COMMUNIST MANIFESTO (1848), at 104 ("The proletariat will use its political supremacy, to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie")
1873	Rev. A.G. Button is authorized to form a congregation; South Evanston Methodist Episcopal Church is formed in village of South Evanston, where "Most houses had a barn for their horses, pigs, chickens, well water, plank sidewalks, Kerosene Lanterns, etc."	"Hemenway UMC Church History," Online Gatherings - Hemenway UMC, https://hemenwayumc.com/about (accessed 4/5/25)
April 1873	Evanstonians vote to establish a free public library supported by a property tax	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 257
1873	Illinois Supreme Court says that a property owner has no right to be protected against neighboring construction preventing light and air from reaching his windows; "[s]uch a doctrine is not applicable in our growing cities and villages"	*Guest v. Reynolds*, 68 Ill.478, 488 (1873)
1873-1879 (or 1899)	**Panic of 1873 sets off "Long Depression."** In Evanston, "The buying of acres and subdividing them was [too] extensive …to bring them into the market for residence purposes. As we view some of these outlying sub-divisions, now occupied, fallowed or returned to nature, we wonder at the credulity, the misguided judgment and the almost criminality of the men who made them…. [Real estate] prices took a tumble from which, after thirty years, they have scarcely recovered. Evanston was tainted by the same wild speculation in 'undigested' real estate as Chicago. Many people suffered the bitter experience of losing their property by foreclosure and many were burdened with property they could not afford to keep."	Frank M. Elliott, HoE2 (1906) at 298; see generally "Long Depression," wikipedia.com

Year or date	Event	Source
1873-1874	The "poor of Europe" flood into Chicago to meet post-Civil War period demand for unskilled labor; Workingman's Party of Illinois, dominated by foreign-born workers from primarily Germany, Bohemia, and Poland is formed.	Perkins, Margery Blair, EVANSTONIANA: AN INFORMAL HISTORY OF EVANSTON AND ITS ARCHITECTURE (Ev. Hist. Soc. 1984) ["EVANSTONIANA"], at 65. S*ee gen.* Hirsch, Eric, URBAN REVOLT: ETHNIC POLITICS IN THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY CHICAGO LABOR MOVEMENT (U. Cal. Press 1990) ["URBAN REVOLT"]
Apr 1874	Evanston annexes Village of North Evanston and an equal-sized area west of that village, from approximately present-day Hartrey west to Lincolnwood	
1875	City of Chicago after the Great Fire adopts the nation's first comprehensive building code and adopts nuisance laws to protect residents from some of the most onerous land use problems	"Zoning," Encyclopedia of Chicago; Joseph P. Schweiterman & Dana M. Caspall, THE POLITICS OF PLACE: A HISTORY OF ZONING IN CHICAGO (Lake Claremont Press, 2006) at 6-7
1875-1900	"housing problems—in particular the growth of slums—became acute during the 19th cent. in the cities of the eastern seaboard and in the larger Midwestern cities. A leading cause was the heavy immigration from Europe that began in the middle of the 19th cent. and reached a peak at the turn of the century"	"Housing: Reforms in the United States," Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th ed. (Columbia U. Press 2025), https://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/arts/visual/architecture/housing/reforms-in-the-united-states
1875-1900	People are leaving Chicago because of congestion, noise, and air pollution, migrating "to places like Evanston." Suburbs also benefit from having, for a while, less strict fire codes: "stringent regulations drove beyond the Chicago city limits those people, who, desiring to build houses for themselves, had not means for the erection of structures of brick…These circumstances acted decidedly in favor of suburban localities"	POLITICS OF PLACE at 6-7; Frank M. Elliot, HoE2 299
May 1876	Bohemian lumber workers strike in Chicago area	EVANSTONIANA, at 65
1877	Illinois Industrial School for Girls opens in Evanston, building erected at what is now Main & Sheridan	Reeling, at 313
July 1877	Attendant to national Great Railroad Strike, rail traffic in Chicago is paralyzed when angry mobs of the unemployed wreak havoc in rail-yards, shutting down two lines; copycat strikes bring other railroads throughout Illinois to a standstill. Workingmen's Party protests in Chicago draw crowds of 20,000. Battle between state militia and strikers/protestors leaves approx. 20 dead.	E.g., "Chicago railroad strike of 1877," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chicago_railroad_strike_of_1877
1878	Socialists elect first Chicago alderman, and three socialist state representatives and one socialist state senator are elected to the Illinois legislature	URBAN REVOLT
1879	Henry George's *Poverty and Progress,* is published (often considered the commencement of the Progressive Era), illustrating the excesses of capital and proposing remedial measures, especially through capture of rents from land value. The million-selling book and George's ideas influence countless reformers from John Dewey to FDR. Illinois Governor John Peter Altgeld will later say that George "made almost as great an impression on the economic thought of the age as Darwin did on the world of science."	
1879	NYC eliminates loophole in rear setback requirement for tenements, requires 10' from lot line	Veiller 1900 at 20
1879	Chicago has become "the most important site of socialist activity in the nation." Socialists are elected to City Council in five Chicago wards in April	EVANSTONIANA, at 65; History of Cook County, Vol. II, at 586

Year or date	Event	Source
1879	Frances Willard becomes President of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, "advocates suffrage as a means to social agenda"	Nat. Park Service, "Abolition, Women's Rights, and Temperance Movements," https://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/abolition-womens-rights-and-temperance-movements.htm
1880	Census shows Village of Evanston proper has 4,400 inhabitants. The larger Evanston Township (which also includes South Evanston) has 6,114 residents (after subtracting 529 in the Village of Rogers Park); 200 Evanston village residents live in New Trier. For comparison, Chicago in 1880 has over 500,000 inhabitants, more than 100x the population of the Village of Evanston. Cook County overall is only 1.1% colored.	U.S. Census, Table III, Population of Civil Divisions Less than Counties, in the Aggregate, at the Censuses of 1880 and 1870, at 132
1880	Family of Thomas Tallmadge moves to Evanston	
1884	First building in Evanston of standalone apartments, i.e., not above stores	Benjamin, Susan, "National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form: Suburban Apartment Buildings in Evanston, Illinois," National Park Service (1984), https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/0ed9030d-a452-4426-a568-64852963c213 ["Benjamin (1984)"] at Item 8, Cont. Sheet 2.
May 1886	mass strikes in Chicago, police violence, Haymarket Square bombing	
1886	Architect Daniel H. Burnham moves from Chicago to escape crowding and what he perceives as dangerous conditions for raising a family, purchases riparian estate in Evanston	"Burnham at Home in Evanston," evanstonhistorycenter.org/stories/burnham-at-home-in-evanston/
June 1886	Only 6 weeks after the Haymarket incident, trial of eight anarchists begins in Chicago and a jury is seated despite most admitting prejudice against the defendants	
1887	Chicago adopts 600' neighboring-property-owner "consent" ordinance to regulate livery stables	Bosselman, 12 N. Ill. U. L. Rev. At 567-573
1888	Edward Bellamy's utopian/authoritarian novel *Looking Backward* is published, becomes the #3 best-selling novel of the 19th century in America	
June 1888	Chicago hosts Republican national convention; Frederick Douglass is a speaker	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 617
1888	Prohibition Party national convention, attended by Frances Willard, gives speaking time to three "gifted" black ministers and unanimously adopts plank calling for civil rights for colored people	Willard, GLIMPSES at 440
1889	Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr found Hull House in Chicago, a "settlement house"	
1889	Lake View Township is annexed to Chicago, bringing the northern border of Chicago up to Devon Avenue	http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/714.html
1889	C&NW builds and opens the "Mayfair cutoff" line running southwest from Central St. to divert freight trains around the populated Evanston city center and lakefront Chicago; this boosts west side Evanston land values and facilitates industrial growth southwest of the village.	Evanston News-Index, Feb. 23, 1889

Year or date	Event	Source
1889-1905	Seven international congresses on housing are held in Paris (1889), Antwerp (1894), Bordeaux (1895), Brussels (1897), Paris (1900), Diisseldorf (1902), and Liege (1905), showing dramatic change in sentiment from initial opposition to any government intervention "to compete with private enterprise or influence the level of rents," whereas the 1905 conference unanimously resolved to "favor and encourage the building and purchase by the workingmen of healthful and cheap dwellings"	U.S. Dept. of Commerce & Labor, 80 *Bulletin of Dept. of Labor* (Jan. 1909), at 117
1890-1900	general U.S. mood for progressive reform grows increasingly powerful: "many Americans were finding it difficult to recognize their country. What once had been a rural and agricultural society culturally based upon basic Protestant mores, had become urban, industrial, and increasingly affected by new Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. A new prosperity had been achieved (though at the cost of cycles of boom and bust), but the twin pressures of a new entrepreneurial group of 'robber barons' and a restive working class seemed to threaten the essential middle-class character of American life. Accordingly, it was primarily the middle class that demanded reform that would draw from the values of the past and the new efficiency of the present."	Richard Allen Morton, "Public Transportation And The Failure Of Municipal Socialism In Chicago, 1905-1907," 9 Ill. Hist. Teacher 1 (2002) at 29-30, https://www.lib.niu.edu/2002/iht910228.html
1890	Jacob Riis publishes widely-read photojournalistic essay, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York*, linking political reform movement to fighting virulent diseases associated with crowded urban centers	Aimee Heidelberg, "Living Hell: New York's Tenements were Nightmares in the Early 1900s," HistoryCollection.com (Jan. 30, 2024), https://historycollection.com/living-hell-new-yorks-tenements-were-nightmares-in-the-early-1900s/
1890	Population of Chicago has exploded from less than 300,000 in 1870 to nearly 1.1 million in 1890, largely due to influx of immigrants who constitute up to 40% of population. Black population of Chicago is 14,271, only approximately 1.3%.	U.S. Census
1890	Evanston Township population is 13,079; small parts of Village of Evanston are in Niles and New Trier Townships, and some of Evanston Township is outside Village of Evanston	U.S. Census
1891	Frances E. Willard, now a famous suffrage and prohibitionist leader, publishes a history of Evanston portraying it as "a quiet city that still prefers to call itself a village," "a center of books and thought and character," and "the literary center of the great Northwest" where the "glory of the village is its trees" and where "[b]road streets bordered with parks and walks that run by unfenced velvet lawns, tell of freedom and peaceful security"	Frances E. Willard, A CLASSIC TOWN: THE STORY OF EVANSTON BY 'AN OLD-TIMER' (1891) at 5, 13-14, 148
1892	Village of Evanston by referendum votes 784 to 26 to incorporate as a city	ORDINANCES 1893, at vi
1892	Evanston holds first elections as a city; multiple allegations of corruption and fraud arise, and the Evanston Press criticizes Evanston's "undue haste and nonobservance of the laws [that] create confusion in its first civic election."	
1892	Chicago & North Shore Street Railway Co. is organized to construct a streetcar line from Evanston to Chicago. Residents "who claimed they had come out to Evanston to get away from this sort of thing" oppose the project.	HoE2 179
1892	Evanston begins requiring building permits	

Year or date	Event	Source
1892-1893	Columbian Exposition world fair in Chicago attracts over 25 million visitors including a record first day attendance of over 750,000. The designed layout (by Evanston architect Daniel H. Burnham, with landscaping by Frederick Law Olmsted) is considered both attractive and a success in accommodating massive crowds, and along with the new electric lighting (by Westinghouse, using Tesla's alternating current system) inspires futurists and city planning advocates. Fair is credited with ushering in the "City Beautiful" reform movement that sought to improve social conditions through better urban design. "The landscape and architectural features of that world's fair were probably responsible to a very important degree for the advancing movement of the last decade in American cities generally toward a more orderly physical development."	George E. Hooker, delegate from the City Club of Chicago, quoted in PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CITY PLANNING [1909] (American Society of Planning Officials, Chicago, Ill., Sept. 1967) ["CITY PLANNING 1909"] at 96. *See gen.* "City Beautiful movement," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_Beautiful_movement#; "World's Columbian Exposition fair, Chicago, Illinois [1893]," Brittanica, https://www.britannica.com/event/Worlds-Columbian-Exposition
Feb 1893	Panic of 1893 triggers new depression (or extends continuation of Long Depression from 1873, depending on POV); effects last through 1897	
1893	first height limits (NYC) to limit "canyon effect"	POLITICS OF PLACE at 9
1893	Evanston municipal ordinances are codified and published in a 345-page volume. Buildings over two stories are prohibited unless made of brick, stone, iron, or non-combustible material. Height of main floor of halls, churches, and places of public assemblage is limited. Landlords must register. Certain business activities (second-hand and junk shops, distilleries, breweries, selling alcohol, brothels, gambling, keeping livestock, tanneries, glue factories) as well as unspecified offensive or unwholesome businesses are banned as nuisances or regulated. Dense smoke from businesses is prohibited but exception made for residences. Sanitary standards (garbage receptacles, bathrooms, cisterns) for tenement or lodging houses are prescribed.	City of Evanston, ORDINANCES 1893 ¶¶261, 264, 439-460, 646-652, 725, 735-749, 830, 839, 866
Aug 1893	While Columbian Exposition is ongoing, thousands of workers, many Czech and Polish, demonstrate in downtown Chicago demanding work	Chicago Tribune, August 26, 1893, September 14, 1893
May 1894	Wage cuts trigger wildcat strike by nearly 4,000 employees of Pullman Company's factory in Chicago, sparking nationwide strike and rail boycott by American Railway Union (ARU)	
Nov 1895	First cross-country automobile race in U.S. held, with round-trip route from Jackson Park in Chicago to Davis Street in Evanston. Only a few vehicles even finish.	Russell H. Anderson, "The First Automobile Race in America," J. Ill. St. Hist. Soc. (1908-1984) Vol. 47, No. 4 (Winter, 1954), pp. 343-359
Nov 1896	Buffalo, NY becomes first city to be lighted by electricity, with alternating current from Niagara Falls	
Sept 1897	"Lattimer massacre" of approximately 20 unarmed striking immigrant mine workers near Hazleton, Penn. by sheriff and deputies	
1898	English urban planner Ebenezer Howard, inspired by Bellamy and Henry George, espouses the "garden city" concept of planned communities outside urban centers, to capture the best of both city and country life, with fresher air, lower rents, and no slums, in his influential book *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, revised/republished in 1902 as *Garden Cities of To-Morrow*.	Howard, Ebenezer, TO-MORROW: A PEACEFUL PATH TO REAL REFORM (London, 1892)
1898	After graduating from M.I.T., Thomas Tallmadge returns to Evanston and joins architectural firm of Daniel H. Burnham, with whom he will work for 7 years	

Year or date	Event	Source
1898	The “old immigration” from, primarily, northwest Europe, led by arrivals from Germany and Ireland, wanes to its low, with fewer than 230,000 immigrants arriving in the U.S.	House of Reps. Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, “Report (to accompany H.R. 4075) | Restriction of Immigration,” 67th Congress (Apr. 19, 1921)
Jun 1899	Prior to 1899, probably no apartment buildings in Evanston contain more than six units. “A typical apartment of the metropolitan type would be wholly out of place anywhere in Evanston” but an atypical, well-designed building receives positive advance reviews.	"Handsome Structure to be Erected at Chicago Avenue and Church Street,” Evanston News-Index, June 24, 1899; Benjamin (1984) at Item 8, Cont. Sheet 4
1899	Two small apartment buildings are built in Evanston	Benjamin (1984) at Item 8, Cont. Sheet 2
May 1900	Housing reformer Lawrence Veiller, 28, secretary of the New York State Tenement House Commission, delivers a history of tenement reform in NYC, finds conditions have worsened “tenfold” in NYC since the 1856 investigation, and finds paramount the principle that “the number of persons on a given area of soil cannot be increased beyond a certain limit without endangering health."	Veiller 1900, at 7
1900	Clayton Mark opens a well supplies factory at Dempster and Dodge, outside Evanston city limits, employs “a large group of people who emigrated from northwest Poland and settled in modest wooden cottages near the factory.”	EVANSTONIANA, at 129
1900-1906	Flats and apartments begin to appear in numbers in Evanston. “During the past five years … the first flat and apartment buildings have made their appearance in our midst. … they bring a far greater income than can be obtained by other improvements.” “About 1900, like the camel that poked its nose into the Arab's tent, the first flat building appeared. Slowly at first, and then with the rapidity of a contagion these buildings sprang up, most of them designed by contractors and built by promoters from the nearby metropolis, perfectly willing to exploit and defile the peaceful and beautiful village whose greatest treasures were its sunlit lawns, its arching elms and its hospitable homes”	Frank M. Elliott, HoE2 299 wrote first quote in 1906. Thomas Tallmadge is quoted as writing the second in 1919, in Benjamin (1984) at Item 8, Cont. Sheet 6
1900	Since 1892, 60 dwelling units in three-story apartments have been built in Evanston; 36 are located near the center of town, 12 near Main Street	Benjamin (1984) at Item 8, Cont. Sheet 2
1900	Chicago Tribune characterizes Evanston as “important, intellectual, ambitious, and wealthy”	“Chicago Communities, Rogers Park,” Chicago Tribune (Feb 18, 1900)
1900	U.S. census states Evanston city (incl. parts in New Trier and Niles townships) has population of 19,279. This represents 42% growth since 1890. It is not listed as among the “principal cities” of Illinois. Chicago, by comparison, has grown by 54% in the previous decade and has a population of nearly 1.7 million.	1900 U.S. Census
1901	New York State passes new Tenement House Act, emphasizing light and ventilation, with unprecedented minimum yard requirements, effectively restraining both the mass of structures and their proximity	E.g., Va. Commnw. U. Social Welfare History Project, “Tenement House Reform,” https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/issues/poverty/tenement-house-reform/ (collecting source materials)
1901	First factory built in Evanston city limits	

Year or date	Event	Source
1901	A sudden increase in multi-unit building construction (from 14 building permits in 1900 to 109 in 1901) turns public opinion against them in Evanston; proposed construction of an apartment building a block from the lake in an area "built up with a number of beautiful homes" causes an "uproar." Evanston City Council first passes resolutions preventing the issuance of building permits to "banish flat buildings from the city as snakes were banished from Ireland"; later replaces that with fire ordinances that greatly restricted the number of apartment buildings constructed.	Benjamin (1984) at Item 8, Cont. Sheet 5, quoting Evanston News-Index (Dec. 7, 1901). Note: I have not personally reviewed the resolutions referred to, but have confirmed that fire ordinances were passed.
Nov 1901	U.S. President William McKinley is assassinated by anarchist Leon Czolgosz, a U.S. citizen who is a son of Polish immigrants	
1902-1911	between 1902 and 1911, only 249 apartment units are built in Evanston, slightly more than twice the number built in 1901 alone	Benjamin (1984) at Item 8, Cont. Sheet 6,
1902	Lincoln Steffens publishes *The Shame of the Cities*, documenting financial and political exploitation of the poor in tenements	
1902	Prof. James H. Robinson of Columbia U. publishes *An Introduction to the History of Western Europe*, beginning the New History movement that focuses on social, scientific, and intellectual progress as opposed to only or primarily military and political changes	James Harvey Robinson, AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF WESTERN EUROPE (Ginn & Co., 1902)
1902	Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch, a social work volunteer and academic who has studied with Prof. James H. Robinson, co-founds Greenwich House, a settlement house in Greenwich Village in New York City	
1902	Formal movement for "intelligent" city planning started by publication of "The improvement of the park systems of the District of Columbia," a report by a commission consisting of Daniel H. Burnham, Charles F. McKim, Frederick Law Olmsted, and Augustus St. Gaudens.	Frederick L. Ford, City Engineer, Hartford, Conn., "The Scope of City Planning in the United States," CITY PLANNING 1909 at 70-71
March 1903	Congress passes Immigration Act of 1903, a/k/a the Anarchist Exclusion Act, banning anarchists from immigrating and expanding grounds for deportation	
May 1903	Booker T. Washington, speaking at the Women's Club in Chicago, says, "In proportion to the rapidity with which we can give our colored people homes and bank accounts, so will the moral and religious life advance to a higher plane."	"Resents Cheers for Watterson," Chicago Tribune (May 10, 1903), at 6 col. 1
1904-1905	Massachusetts passes laws limiting the heights of buildings in Boston and prescribing different heights in different sections of the city	
Dec 1904	President T. Roosevelt inveighs against urban overcrowding: "The overcrowding of cities and the draining of country districts are unhealthy and even dangerous symptoms in our modern life. We should not permit overcrowding in cities. In certain European cities it is provided by law that the population of towns shall not be allowed to exceed a very limited density for a given area.… The death-rate statistics show a terrible increase in mortality, and especially in infant mortality, in overcrowded tenements [and the] increase of mortality, and especially of infant mortality, with … overcrowding is startling. The slum exacts a heavy total of death from those who dwell therein … in the great crowded slums of high buildings in New York and Chicago"	T. Roosevelt, Dec. 1904 address to Congress
1905	Teamsters in Chicago go on strike in solidarity with garment workers. Chicago Employers Association employs blacks as scabs. Some racial violence follows. Ida B. Wells at 1,000-person meeting praises black strikebreakers.	

Year or date	Event	Source
Dec 1905	President T. Roosevelt urges Congress to "see to it that the City of Washington is made a model city in all respects, both as regards parks, public playgrounds, proper regulation of the system of housing, so as to do away with the evils of alley tenements"	T. Roosevelt, Dec. 1905 address to Congress
1906-1917	Panhandling becomes problem in Evanston; police report lodging [complaints against?] 1,243 transients per year	"Novel League Is Means of Ousting Tramp Nuisances,"
Feb 1906	Pres. T. Roosevelt as followup to his address to Congress commissions James Bronson Reynolds to investigate conditions in Washington DC	Reports Relating to Affairs in the District of Columbia, 60th Cong., Doc. 599 (Gvmt. Printing Off. 1909), at 5
Apr 1906	25,000 buildings on 490 city blocks burn in fires following the San Francisco Earthquake, with damage disproportionately to older, crowded residential districts	
1906	Harvey B. Hurd in a massive two-volume history of Illinois and Evanston terms Evanston "a city of homes" where people settled because they "desired large lawns and plenty of room"	HoE2 180
1906	Daniel Burnham is quoted as saying that "the greatest charm about [Evanston] is its atmosphere of refinement and culture that is reflected in every one's daily life."	Frank M. Elliott, HoE2 301
1906	Frank M. Elliot writes that people come to Evanston seeking "intellectual and congenial society" and "quiet and scholastic atmosphere," and that Evanston's roadways, well paved streets and walks, spacious and well cultivated lawns, views of the lake, and "comfortable and often palatial homes of its residents" combined to form a "city beautiful," earning the well deserved title of a "city of homes."	HoE2 296-97, 316
April 1907	James Bronson Reynolds after 15 months and visits to >350 living quarters, and with "the assistance and advice of many of the leading citizens of Washington [DC] both white and colored," delivers report to Pres. Roosevelt recommending reorganization of DC governance. Devotes a few pages to housing, describing gross and unhealthy conditions, compared unfavorably to stables by one colored resident. Says DC District Commissioners are unable to give "the housing problem the time and serious attention which it demands." Recommends a new DC agency to address tenements and substandard housing. Recommends a special commission investigate housing, the "physical, social, and moral welfare of the dwellers in small houses," "the need of recreation grounds and public baths, remedial agencies for the immoral life in the alleys, and agencies for social betterment, such as industrial education, the free public library, and the encouragement of … model workingmen's dwellings." Says commission's work is necessary to drafting a housing code, "rearrangement of the building space, and … bettering the physical, moral, and social condition of the industrial classes [so that] the homes of the poor might have a consistent place" in DC.	Reports Relating to Affairs in the District of Columbia, 60th Cong., Doc. 599 (Gvmt. Printing Off. 1909), at 5, 11, 16-18
1905-1909	British planner Raymond Unwin moves to Hampstead and with Richard Barry Parker lays out Hampstead Garden Suburb, following garden cities principles	See generally Unwin, Raymond, NOTHING GAINED BY OVERCROWDING HOW THE GARDEN CITY TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT MAY BENEFIT BOTH OWNER AND OCCUPIER (1912), reprinted by Town and Country Planning Association (April 2012), https://tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Nothing_Gained_By_Overcrowding.pdf ["NOTHING GAINED"]
May 1907	President Roosevelt names a commission of fifteen members to pursue the recommendations in the Reynolds report on housing the poor in D.C.	

Year or date	Event	Source
1907	Commercial Club of Chicago commissions world's fair architect Daniel H. Burnham to prepare a report on a plan for Chicago	
1907	Temperance advocate Rev. Frederick J. Stanley asserts at a mass meeting in Chicago that "the great mass of Germans, Slavs, Bohemians, Poles, and other foreigners in our great cities will unless checked, inevitably bring our nation to destruction."	"Friends and Foes of Saloon Ready; Lines of Battle Drawn for the Conflict Tomorrow; All Day Rally Held by W.C.T.U.," Chicago Daily Tribune (Nov 23, 1907) 1, at 2
March 1908	Housing and Town Planning Act introduced in British Parliament	E.g., "Housing, Town Planning, etc. Act 1909," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Housing%2C_Town_Planning%2C_etc._Act_1909#; Ackerman, Frederick L., "What Is a House? IV," THE HOUSING PROBLEM IN WAR AND PEACE (J. Am. Inst. Arch., Washington, D.C., 1918) at 26-27
1908	President Theodore Roosevelt declares, "When compared with the suppression of anarchy every other question sinks into insignificance"	
1908	Preliminary report of President's Homes Commission reports that demolition of unfit homes in D.C. per ordinance "will, in time, remedy existing evils [of] houses unfit for occupation," but that absent suitable replacements, there will be overcrowding in remaining houses left and the exaction of exorbitant rents by "greedy landlords" which "adds to the heavy burden of the poor, and especially of unskilled laborers." Says there is a "housing famine" and recommends charities build lots of small houses, since for-profit sector won't, and that better-off wage-earners "should be encouraged to purchase suburban homes." Recommends converting alleys, where over 19,000 people reside, to streets for better light, air, and freedom. Says that there are limits to forcing people to improve their houses and that "social betterment" is the best remedy that can be applied in many cases, and determines to investigate that.	Reports Relating to Affairs in the District of Columbia, 60th Cong., Doc. 599 (Gvmt. Printing Off. 1909), at 24-25
1908	"speculator suburbs" ring New York City	John R. Stilgoe, "The Suburbs," 35 Am. Heritage 2 (Feb./Mar. 1984), https://www.americanheritage.com/suburbs
1908	Chicago City Council designates corner of State and Madison as baseline of new street numbering system, re-numbers inconsistent addresses throughout city (created as a result of annexation of various towns) to conform	Edward P. Brennan, "Chicago's Muddled Street Names," Chicago Tribune (Apr. 7, 1935)
1908	Russell Sage Foundation acquires 142-acre farm; intending to create model suburb, the non-profit employs noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and architect Grosvenor Atterbury, to design site and structures for Forest Hills Gardens	Stilgoe
Dec 1908	President T. Roosevelt transmits reports on D.C. to Congress, noting increase in population, and recommends departments of labor and housing be established	Reports Relating to Affairs in the District of Columbia, 60th Cong., Doc. 599 (Gvmt. Printing Off. 1909), at 3
1909	*The American City* magazine established	

Year or date	Event	Source
1909	Building limits are well-established in Europe. Munich and Vienna limit building height at 4 and 5 stories, respectively, by districts, with some districts limited to single-story. Cologne in its most congested area limits building upon 80% of a corner lot and 75% of an interior lot, and to only 40% lot coverage on the outskirts of the city where land is cheaper.	CITY PLANNING 1909
Mar 1909	Boston 1915 movement begins, a City Beautiful-type effort supported by a coalition of city leaders such as Louis D. Brandeis and mayor John Fitzgerald to make Boston "the finest city in the world" by 1915 through a public-private coalition to improve "public finances, health, industrial resources, transportation facilities, branch libraries, art, lectures, open-air concerts, etc."	
April 1909	Chicago voters vote by large majority to annex Evanston, but Evanston voters reject annexation	HISTORY OF COOK COUNTY, VOL II at 689-690
April 1909	Housing and Town Planning Act re-introduced in British Parliament	"Housing, Town Planning, etc. Act 1909," Wikipedia
5/17/1909	U.S. Supreme Court upholds Boston ordinances limiting height and prescribing different heights in different city districts. Court preface notes that state regulation of buildings "has been recognized and exercised ever since the population of our cities became dense enough to make regulation desirable and necessary for the protection of the inhabitants from fire and disease."	*Welch v. Swasey*, 214 U.S. 91, 101, 29 S. Ct. 567, 53 L. Ed. 923 (1909). Also notes that until recent adoption of steel-frame construction, such laws were unnecessary because of natural engineering limits on height.
May 21-22, 1909	First National Conference on City Planning held in Washington, DC. Principal promoter is Committee on Congestion of Population in New York. Copies of *Welch v. Swasey* SCOTUS opinion released the previous week are distributed. Landscape architect Robert A. Pope extols virtues of sunlight and suburbs, parks and playgrounds. George B. Ford, calling housing "the most vital phase of city planning," urges keeping commerce in city centers and developing less congested suburban residential districts exterior, with transit to workplaces.	CITY PLANNING 1909 at 75-81
May 21, 1909	President's Homes Commission delivers its report to Pres. T. Roosevelt. Gen. Sternberg, chair of the Commission, advises national planning conference that "To supply every family in the city of Washington belonging to [the laboring] class of the population with an independent home, having light and well-ventilated rooms, good plumbing, and all sanitary requirements, would greatly reduce our mortality rates and would no doubt have a marked effect in limiting crime and promoting good morals. But to bring about such ideal conditions would call for the investment of a large amount of money." Says private enterprise has "proved to be inadequate for the relief of" inadequate housing and it will require "philanthropy, business philanthropy, or governmental aid" to build "model houses for the poor of the city of Washington."	Gen. George M. Sternberg, "Housing Conditions in Washington," CITY PLANNING 1909 at 62-63

Year or date	Event	Source
May 21, 1909	Real estate tycoon Henry Morgenthau, addressing national planning conference, urges amelioration of poor urban living conditions to eradicate evil "gnawing at the vitals of the country…that breeds physical disease, moral depravity, discontent, and socialism." In order for "the masses" to be "given a chance to be healthy, moral, and self-respecting" and to spur "the exodus from congested areas" he urges planning transit-oriented suburbs of "one or two family houses" with building restrictions, occupancy restrictions on tenements, and artistic planning of districts with "proper parks, playgrounds, public baths, and decent mode of transit." Because replacing houses with apartment buildings increases land value so much that affordable housing can no longer be built — "the little house is torn down and a tenement takes its place….You can not afford to put a $2,000 house on a $5,000 lot" — he urges attendees to plan cities with factories away from the heart, "and then restrict certain zones surrounding them to one or two family houses" with good radial transit. In this way, "Everybody will have an opportunity to find a real home in accordance with his earning power and not be compelled to submit to being packed away in a disease-breeding tenement." He reports that as a result of New York's efforts to do that, "the congested areas have been partly depleted, the rents have been largely reduced, and the values of the pest holes lessened."	Henry Morgenthau, "A National Constructive Programme For City Planning," CITY PLANNING 1909 at 60.
May 21, 1909	NYC landscape architect Robert Pope for progressive reform reasons urges "limiting building heights, depth of blocks, number of houses per acre, and land speculation with all its attendant evils." Promotes suburbanization, primarily for working classes, as a means of relieving congestion "by aiding in the decentralizing and more equitable distribution of land values" than the "extreme concentration of values and its attending evils" in city centers. Says rings of suburbs bring about "the safeguarding of light and air," bring "parks, playgrounds, gardens, and other open spaces," and a move of "the laboring classes from the congested districts" to suburbs promotes industrial efficiency, brings greater health through sunshine and fresh air and more attractive surroundings, and reduces the cost of living for workers through "lower rents, less outlay for sickness, and in many instances lower cost of supplies." Says the nation and upper classes will benefit indirectly via trickle-up.	Robert Anderson Pope, "Some of the Needs of City Planning in America," CITY PLANNING 1909 at 76-77.
May 21-22, 1909	First city planning conference attendees discuss that image of city planning is suffering from linkage to the "city beautiful" movement perceived as not useful to businessmen; "city beautiful" and questions of aesthetics in city planning become "taboo" at National City Planning Conferences for next decade	George B. Ford, "Planning the Attractive Town," Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Conference on City Planning, Pittsburgh, May 9-11, 1921 at 197-198
May 22, 1909	Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch, given the pre-keynote speaking slot at the national city planning conference, expounds that urban congestion (overcrowding) is "an evil in itself" as well as a contributory cause of other evils. She urges "planning new cities properly and reducing the evils of the old cities to a minimum," "a rational, conscious suburbanization and a development of country life with social centers from which to radiate," and height limits on tenements to cap population density and the profitability of tenements, and gradually direct population outward	CITY PLANNING 1909 at 103-04.

Year or date	Event	Source
May 22, 1909	Benjamin Marsh, host committee chair, in keynote banquet address at national city planning conference, states that city planning is fundamentally a health and economic proposition, with key principles including • putting "sunlight to fight disease … within the reach of the workingman" • establishing "home, with its significance of privacy, peace, and restfulness" as an American right • recognizing that environment influences morality and conduct • land speculation and exploitation cause ills and must be checked by government Marsh concludes, "American cities have, in the main, capitulated to real estate interests, and they are now summoned to conserve the health, well-being, and morals of the community, to which end a city plan in its fullest significance is essential."	CITY PLANNING 1909 at 104-05
May 22, 1909	Boston architect and "Boston 1915" participant J. Randolph Coolidge concludes national city planning conference with urging for continuous programs of improved municipal accounting and efficiency, greater consideration for workers, public education, more library circulation, the creation of civic centers, wise building laws, and careful city planning, including coordination with transport companies. He expresses optimism that such a movement could look for support from citizen organizations, churches, unions, and elected officials regardless of their "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."	CITY PLANNING 1909 at 105
June 1, 1909	Benjamin Marsh in testimony before U.S. Senate on city planning, notes that New York, Chicago, and Pittsburgh are the top three "skyscraper cities" and suggests that on grounds of equity "there should be a fixed relation between the area of the site and the volume of the building."	U.S. Senate, CITY PLANNING HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, 61st Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 422 (Gvmt. Printing Off. 1910)
July 1909	Daniel H. Burnham and Edward Bennett publish Plan of Chicago and Commercial Club of Chicago presents it to city government	
1909	Los Angeles establishes districts with prohibitions on noxious and heavy industry	POLITICS OF PLACE at 14
1909	Chicago mayor Busse appoints businessman-philanthropist Charles H. Wacker Chairman of the Chicago Plan Commission	Yuri Artibise, "A Brief History of Urbanism in North America: 1910-1919," https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/ex/sustainablecitiescollective/brief-history-urbanism-north-america-1910-1919/22533/
Dec 1909	King Edward assents to Housing, Town Planning, etc. Act 1909 (9 Edw. 7. c. 44), the first statutory embodiment of municipal planning in Great Britain. While more tepid than some would like, authorizes local authorities to limit number of dwellings per acre, to reserve certain areas for residential purposes, to limit height and character of buildings by district, to limit lot coverage, to purchase land for open spaces, and to fix setbacks to secure the proper air-space and sunlight for each home.	Anthony Sutcliffe (July 1988). "Britain's First Town Planning Act: A Review of the 1909 Achievement". Town Planning Review. 59 (3). Liverpool University Press: 289–303; "Housing, Town Planning, etc. Act 1909," Wikipedia; Ackerman, "What Is a House?" at 27
1910	Lawrence Veiller's influential HOUSING REFORM is published by the Russell Sage Foundation	Veiller, Lawrence, HOUSING REFORM: A HAND-BOOK FOR PRACTICAL USE IN AMERICAN CITIES (Russell Sage Found. 1910)
1910	Plan of Chicago 1909 is adopted by City of Chicago, catalyzed by the Columbian Exposition and blighted areas created by unconstrained development	

Year or date	Event	Source
1910	Frederick Law Olmsted elected chairman of National Conference on City Planning	
1910	Evanston has a population of just under 25,000, slightly more than 95% white. Chicago metro area overall is 98.1% white, 1.9% non-white; 35.7% of population of Chicago is foreign-born.	U.S. Census; COMMUNITY FACT BOOK 1960, at 11
Nov 1910	Emil Seidel elected mayor of Milwaukee on Socialist Democracy of America (non-Marxist social reform) ticket	
1910-1911	The Chicago plan of Daniel H. Burnham and associates fails because, in 1909, only way to implement was condemnation. However, Plan promoters Charles Norton and Frederic Delano will become influential in New York's regional planning efforts.	Jonathan Barnett, AN INTRODUCTION TO URBAN DESIGN (Harper & Rowe, 1982), ISBN 0-06-430376-4, at 62; Marc A. Weiss, "Density and Intervention: New York's Planning Traditions," in David Ward and Olivier Zunz, eds., THE LANDSCAPE OF MODERNITY | ESSAYS ON NEW YORK CITY, 1900-1940 (1997)
1911-1913	Massachusetts enabling legislation allows municipalities to prohibit three-deckers and regulate setbacks in residential districts, ostensibly for fire prevention but also to limit the spread of multifamily housing on moral grounds because ownership of a single-family home was the ideal.	Maycock, Susan E., and Charles M. Sullivan, BUILDING OLD CAMBRIDGE (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge Historical Commission, 2016) at 78
1912	Daniel H. Burnham dies; his two architect sons, Daniel Jr. and Hubert, succeed to the management of his architectural firm, the largest in the world, and rename it Burnham Brothers	Hartzell, Osborne, & Thompson, "Home in Evanston Fills My Longing Daniel Burnhams Evanston," Chicago Tribune (Apr. 30, 2009)
1912	Raymond Unwin publishes influential "Nothing Gained by Overcrowding," reviewing lessons learned on site layout, density, and development economics, and outlining principles of garden city planning used in, e.g., Hampstead Garden	See gen. Unwin, NOTHING GAINED
1912-1916	surge in apartment construction occurs in Evanston; the 989 dwelling units built in three-story apartment buildings in the five-year period 1912-1916 is more than double the number built in the previous 19 years	Benjamin (1984) at Item 8, Cont. Sheet 6
April 1911	Richmond Va. City Council forms a committee to investigate how to relieve congestion of the colored population and facilitate white-colored "domiciliary segregation"	
1911	Chicago drafts a residential district bill that passes the state assembly, but after the Attorney General deems it unconstitutional, the governor vetoes it	POLITICS OF PLACE at 15
1911-1915	Ford Motor Co., in the 5 years following the rollout of the Model T, sells over 1.25 million vehicles. Automobile ownership skyrockets. Municipalities struggle to deal with traffic, congestion of cars and trucks and related businesses (garages, storage, repair shops), inadequate roads	Newman F. Baker, "Zoning Legislation," 11 Cornell L. Rev. 164, 165 (1926) ("a traffic problem undreamed of when narrow and poorly planned streets were laid out")

Year or date	Event	Source
1912-1913	Courts rule "consent" ordinances for incongruent uses invalid as delegation of legislative power; urban reform movement shifts attention to zoning. Evanston requires stables, tanneries, and other noxious uses to be a minimum distance from residences, schools, churches, public parks and playgrounds, hospitals, lodging houses, and other quiet uses. Livestock is separated from residential uses. Evanston has consent ordinances for stables, automobile storage, blacksmith shops, lumber yards, foundries, machine shops, laundries, theaters, medical dispensaries, sanitariums, junk stores, and more. Billboards had their own consent requirements. These ordinances remain on books altho now invalid per court rulings.	Bosselman, 12 N. Ill. U. L. Rev. at 572-573; Ev. Code §§472, 1009, 1115-1119, 1186, The Evanston Code of 1915 (Evanston, Ill., 1915), at 160, 408-409 et seq.
Nov 1912	Eugene Debs, running on Socialist ticket, wins 6% of vote in presidential election	
1913	Boston, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, and Washington D.C. enact height control by district	POLITICS OF PLACE at 14
1913	Juvenile Protection Association releases report detailing pervasive racial discrimination in employment and other opportunity, and demonstrating adverse social consequences. Report states, "Colored people are very eager to own their own homes and many of them are buying small houses, divided into two flats, living in one and collecting rent from the other."	Louise De Koven Bowen, THE COLORED PEOPLE OF CHICAGO: AN INVESTIGATION MADE FOR THE JUVENILE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION BY A.P. DRUCKER, SOPHIA BOAZ, A.L. HARRIS, MIRIAM SCHAFFNER (Chicago, 1913)
Feb 1913	New York City appoints Commission on Building Heights and Restrictions. The commission's successor will become known as the Zoning Commission. Lawson Purdy, a follower of Henry George, begins service as vice-chairman.	Harold S. Buttenheim, "Foreword" (to "Essays in Honor of Lawson Purdy, LL.D. On the Occasion of His Eighty-Sixth Birthday"), 9 Am. J. Econ. & Soc. 1 (1949)
1913	Illinois legislature grants all women suffrage for local and national elections	
May 1913	Evanston annexes area southwest of city, from Crain south to Howard, from Wesley west to Crawford.	
1914	George McAneny, President of the NYC Board of Aldermen, organizes a Committee on the City Plan, consisting of the presidents of the five boroughs, with himself as chairman, Robert Whitten as secretary, and George B. Ford as consultant.	Letter from Charles Norton to Frederick A. Delano (Nov. 24, 1921)
1914	Evanstonians, "fearing that the area would become totally filled with apartments," by referendum approves disannexation of Germania Subdivision south of Calvary Cemetery, whose residents had petitioned for that	EVANSTONIANA, at 131
Aug 1914-July 1, 1920	"on account of the incidents of the war, immigration was practically suspended. During that time the number of immigrants just about equaled the number of emigrants."	House of Reps. Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, "Report (to accompany H.R. 4075) | Restriction of Immigration," 67th Congress (Apr. 19, 1921), Minority Report at 18

Year or date	Event	Source
1915	Evanston ordinances between 1893 and 1915 grow from a few hundred to over 1,000 pages, largely due to detailed regulation of buildings, for fire and safety, and also, per the City Building Inspector, "to keep out the cheaper grade of buildings, the firetraps put up by contractor for sale only." Code limits structures per lot and lot coverage, and limits height of buildings to a multiple of least base dimension, with a maximum of 5x for metal-or-concrete "skeleton frame" and as little as 1.5x for wooden frame construction. Evanston also limits height of buildings by type of use, e.g., storage and manufacture facilities are limited to 100' (and only 70' unless fireproof), apartment houses are limited to 70' and 5 stories, hospitals and detached dwellings are limited to 60', dry goods stores to 6 stories. Roller coasters were limited to 55'. Fences, billboards, and signs are also height-limited. Evanston also imposes detailed minimum requirements for ventilation, windows, and sanitation for apartments. No new building may impede or subvert ventilation, light, sewerage, or precautions for the preservation of health "in or about any such building or structure."	Ev. Code §810, THE EVANSTON CODE OF 1915 (Evanston, Ill., 1915), at 317-318; *Id.* §450, 460-472, 571, 621, 626-62, 631-639, 643 at 155, 160-168, 201, 226, 227, 230-23, 247, 250; Benjamin (1984) at Item 8, Cont. Sheet 6. EVANSTONIANA, at 131, citing Evanston News-Index (Jan. 14, 1915), states that the Evanston City Council set "limits" on apartment buildings in Jan. 1915, but the only "limits" in the 1915 codification are those stated here.
1915	Scottish scientist, philanthropist and town planner Sir Patrick Geddes publishes influential book emphasizing preservation, public engagement in planning, and research into history and tradition of city building; characterizes modern (esp. Scottish) crowding into multi-unit quarters as "slums" regardless of wealth, praises "garden cities" and the housing movement to use rail to allow suburbs outside cities	Patrick Geddes, CITIES IN EVOLUTION: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TOWN PLANNING MOVEMENT AND TO THE STUDY OF CIVICS (London, 1915), https://dn790006.ca.archive.org/0/items/citiesinevolutio00gedduoft/citiesinevolutio00gedduoft.pdf; see Artibise, "History of Urbanism"
1915	British Town Planning Council publishes a why-and-how manual for town planning. Reform principles include "The Creation of Model Suburbs" and "the proper development of villages by encouraging the provision of adequate and cheap means of transit."	Aldridge, Henry R., THE CASE FOR TOWN PLANNING. A PRACTICAL MANUAL FOR THE USE OF COUNCILORS, OFFICERS, AND OTHERS ENGAGED IN THE PREPARATION OF TOWN PLANNING SCHEMES (National Housing and Town Planning Council, London, 1915)
5/11/1915	Pennsylvania in order to promote "public health, safety, order, and general welfare," passes law allowing larger cities to regulate the location, size, and use of buildings, and to make different regulations for different districts.	(1915) Pa. Laws Act 175
Nov 1915	Charles Norton drafts memo from Advisory Plan Commission to NYC government urging expenditure on a planning effort: "To end [municipal financial] waste [from poorly planned projects]; to bring order out of a disorder that may fitly be characterized as chaos; to make convenience and thrift take the place of discomfort and extravagance; to realize the potentialities of commerce and industry as well as of beauty and comfort and pleasure; these are the objectives of a city plan."	Letter from Charles Norton to Frederick A. Delano (Nov. 24, 1921)
12/20/1915	Against constitutional objections, U.S. Supreme Court upholds Los Angeles ordinance prohibiting brick manufacture within specified areas; this is considered the first Supreme Court approval of regulation of location of land uses	*Hadacheck v. Sebastian*, 239 U.S. 394 (1915)
Feb 1916	More than 175 apartment units have been built in Evanston; city establishes "restricted residential districts"	EVANSTONIANA, at 131, citing Evanston News-Index (Feb. 16, 1916, and Jun. 7, 1916)

Year or date	Event	Source
Feb 1916	Two out of three speakers at national Methodist conference in Evanston argue in favor of keeping the black and white Methodist churches unified	Rev. W.B. Norton, "Sex Equality in New Church," Chicago Tribune (Feb 18, 1916), at 13
April 1916	Evanstonians vote 2,630-438 to annex approx. 50 acres in NW Evanston, from Lincolnwood west to Highland north of Central, and from Lincolnwood west to Crawford south of Central	
May 1916	Chicago Ald. Charles Merriam, also a professor at U. of Chicago, issues an influential report detailing how other methods of land use control (e.g., nuisance laws, consent ordinances) failed and why zoning was necessary, effective, and legal	Merriam, Charles A., "Building Districts and Restrictions: A statement of the desirability of giving the City of Chicago power to create Building Districts, presented to the Sub-Committee of the City Council's Committee on Judic-iary" (May 8, 1916); Bosselman, 12 N. Ill. U. L. Rev. at 572-573 (note: Bosselman dates this to 1913 but the report itself says 1916
May 1916	Chicago plan commission begins studying zoning and asking corporation counsel as to legality; Chicago Tribune editorializes that zoning means "protection of the liberty of the individual by relieving him of the tyranny of an unscrupulous and inconsiderate neighbor," that housing, tenement, and slum problems resulted from "unrestricted growth," and that "only stupidity" wants to continue "unrestricted and wasteful development"	"Grow, But Grow Right," Chicago Tribune (May 15, 1916), at 6
June 1916	Evanston amends building code to require 17' setback from street	EVANSTONIANA, at 131, citing Evanston News-Index (Jun. 10, 1916)
July 1916	NYC enacts first comprehensive zoning ordinance; aim is to impose minimum standards of light and air for streets, which, particularly in lower Manhattan, had become increasingly dark and canyon-like as buildings grew ever taller, and to separate activities viewed as incompatible, such as factories as opposed to retail shops and homes. New York's zoning is one more milestone in "a long line of farsighted, massive and highly acclaimed planning efforts, including the 1811 street plan, the creation of the Croton Aqueduct and the water system, the development of Central Park and the park system, the building of the subways, bridges, tunnels, highways, and public housing projects."	*Miller v. Board of Public Works*, 195 Cal. 477, 485-86 (Cal. 1925); Artibise, "A Brief History of Urbanism," POLITICS OF PLACE at 14; Barnett at 60-61
1916	Lawson Purdy becomes chair of National Municipal League	
Aug 1916	Chicago Tribune reports that New York City's failure to zone sufficient area as single-family to meet demand is causing buyers to seek the suburbs if they want "individual private dwellings" that are "in the open and in anything but multi-family houses."	"Zone Scheme in New York," Chicago Tribune (Aug 27, 1916), at 76
1916	Evanston Small Parks and Playgrounds Association commissions a Plan of Evanston to be prepared by architects Daniel H. Burnham Jr., Dwight Perkins, Thomas Tallmadge, and Hubert Burnham	D. Burnham, et al., PLAN OF EVANSTON (1917)
Nov 1916	Socialist Daniel Hoan elected mayor of Milwaukee	
Dec 1916	Another 76 apartments have been constructed in Evanston	EVANSTONIANA, at 131, citing Evanston News-Index (Dec. 12, 1916)

Year or date	Event	Source
Feb 1917	Congress over Pres. Wilson's veto passes Immigration Act of 1917 (a/k/a the Literacy Act or Burnett Act), banning immigration from much of Asia and the Pacific, and generally restricting immigration, incl. from Europe, on numerous grounds incl. anarchists, "idiots", "illiterates", "imbeciles", "persons with constitutional psychopathic inferiority", and "political radicals."	
Mar 1917	"February Revolution" in St. Petersburg; Czar Nicholas abdicates throne	
3/28/1917	Burnham Jr., et al. through parks association publish Plan of Evanston with three principal "vital concerns": (1) providing for future park and playground space, (2) street circulation, and (3) controlled location and development of business centers. Plan is labeled a "city beautiful" example. Plan suggests that for "newly developing sub-centers the city may well consider regulating the building lines for shops, height of buildings, and even the type of shops. We are here confronted with the need of districting and zoning laws." A short two-and-a-half pages of text discusses "Districting and Zoning Regulations" and recommends that the City Council appoint a commission to study the experience of other cities, and thereafter secure enabling legislation.	D. Burnham, et al., PLAN OF EVANSTON (1917) 8-9, 39, 57-61; "Evanston Plans 'City Beautiful,'" Chicago Tribune (Mar. 28, 1917), at 17; "Zone Ordinance is Biggest Item, Review Shows," Evanston News-Index (Jan. 22, 1921) at p.1, col. 1.
4/6/1917	U.S. declares war on Germany, enters WWI; over 4.7 million American men ultimately mobilized. Over 2M serve in France, incl. 200,000 African-Americans.	
1917-1919	Housing construction in urban production centers in both U.S. and U.K. slows due to wartime labor and materials shortages. Congestion and rent gouging increase. Vacancy rates in cities drop to near zero, families "double up" in housing units, NYC sees wartime rent strikes. Public officials fear the spread of disease and radical ideologies in cramped urban centers.	Moss & Bolton, *Financing American Housing Construction in the Aftermath of War*, Harvard Business School (Jan 23, 2008 (Rev'd 2009)), https://hbsp.harvard.edu/product/708032-PDF-ENG; Robert Fogelson, THE GREAT RENT WARS (Yale U. Press 2013)
5/15/1917	With the U.S. newly at war, Evanston City Council refers Plan of Evanston to Parks Committee to await consideration at "a more auspicious time"	"Evanston Council Refers City Plan to Committee," Chicago Daily Tribune (May 16, 1917) at 17
5/21/1917	Great Atlanta Fire starts in a warehouse and grows rapidly after spreading to adjacent area crammed with shanties and lean-tos; burns 300 acres and 1,900 structures displacing over 10,000 people	
5/31/1917	California passes 6 building and housing-related laws on same day: (1) dwelling house act setting standards, and establishing responsibilities for municipal housing departments (2) hotel and lodging house act setting building, safety, and sanitation standards for hotels and lodging houses (3) tenement house act regulating and setting standards for tenements (4) immigrant commission housing act to promote better housing for immigrants, (5) act authorizing municipalities to zone, and directing reference to plans and the work of plan commissions, and (6) an act authorizing municipalities to set and enforce lot setbacks	Cal. Stats. 1917, chs. 734-738, 740, pp. 1419 et seq.
6/15/1917	U.S. passes Espionage Act of 1917	
11/7/1917	Bolshevik-led Russian "October Revolution" begins, precipitating Russian civil war	

Year or date	Event	Source
11/7/1917	Socialists elect 10 state assemblymen, 7 city aldermen and one municipal judge in New York City, most of them Jews of Eastern European descent; socialists draw significant vote in Chicago municipal elections and three socialists sit on Chicago city council	Gil Ribak, "'For Peace, Not Socialism": The 1917 MayoraltyCampaign in New York City and Immigrant Jews in a Global Perspective," 101 American Jewish History No. 4 (October 2017), at 465; "Socialist Parties," Encycl. Chicago, http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1161.html
12/18/1917	Senate concurs in House amendment to Eighteenth Amendment, formally proposing Prohibition to the states, but by a year later, only 15 had ratified it	
2/7/1918	After Lawson Purdy speaks in Chicago, expressing belief that zoning would improve conditions of property there, the [Chicago] Real Estate Board on motion of Wyllys Baird refers an investigation of zoning to its legislative committee	"Realty Board Opposes Special Tax Session," Chicago Tribune (Feb. 7, 1918), at 14
Mar 1918	"Spanish flu" pandemic begins in U.S., widespread by April 1918, kills an estimated 500,000-850,000 (0.5-0.8 percent of U.S. population) 1918-1919. Cities are affected worse than rural areas, with higher mortality among immigrant communities, and mortality associated with crowded living conditions; Evanston quarantines itself several times during pandemic	
5/16/1918	U.S. passes Sedition Act of 1918	
May 1918	Minneapolis planner H.U. Nelson, at 10th national planning conference, says, "from a sociological standpoint there is no doubt that single-family dwellings are the better ones. If you establish a standard of life wages will tend to approximate that standard. While houses may be more expensive for a time, the ultimate effect will be that the wages of the workingman will approximate what the community considers a decent standard of living. If city planners look with disfavor on multiple housing it would be a great assistance in promoting home ownership, and home ownership is the best thing to produce good citizenship."	PROCEEDINGS OF THE TENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON CITY PLANNING, St. Louis, Mo., May 27-29, 1918, at 155
1918	Milwaukee Mayor Daniel Hoan organizes Housing Commission for city beautification and to alleviate cost of housing through planned development	
Sept 1918	Eugene Debs convicted of violating federal Espionage and Sedition acts for antiwar speech, sentenced to 10 years in prison	
Oct 1918	British Parliament, anticipating housing shortage as soldiers return, commissions Tudor Walters report, which, influenced by Raymond Unwin and garden city movement, recommends building cottage houses with large frontages and at a density of 12/acre in town and 8/acre in the country, for sunlight; report is "hugely influential" and 12 houses to the acre becomes "almost a universal norm for suburban development around London and other big cities"	Tudor Walters, Sir John (24 October 1918). Report of the Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board...to consider the Provision of Dwellings for the Working Class, Cd. 9191: HM Stationery Office; Prof. Sir Peter Hall, "Foreword," in NOTHING GAINED at 2
1918	American Institute of Architects republishes series of articles on affordable housing problem, comparing British and American experiences, discussing economics of housing production and failure of private speculation, philanthropy, or corporate development to produce affordable housing; advocates for greater governmental involvement in producing housing	Whitaker, Charles, Ackerman, Frederick L., and Childs, Richard S., THE HOUSING PROBLEM IN WAR AND PEACE (J. Am. Inst. Arch., Washington, D.C., 1918)
Oct 1918	Congress passes Immigrant Act of 1918 to make it easier for the government to deport undesirable aliens, especially anarchists, communists, and sympathetic labor organizers or activists	

Year or date	Event	Source
11/11/1918	World War I armistice signed; millions of troops begin demobilizing and returning to US and civilian life while pandemic is still ongoing, creating unemployment and housing shortage. Immigration from areas of the defeated German and Austro-Hungarian empires and the disrupted former Russian empire increases dramatically, compounding U.S. domestic pressures.	Note: in UK, “severe housing shortage” with “many slums” persisted after WWI for entire decade.
Jan 1919	Within a two-week period, Illinois and 20 other states ratify Eighteenth Amendment; Prohibition begins	
1/16/1919	Nebraska is 36th state to ratify Eighteenth Amendment	
Feb 1919	General strike in Seattle, WA	
Apr-Nov 1919	Race riots in multiple US cities, primarily in South but incl. Chicago; no riots in Evanston	
July 27-29, 1919	Three days of interracial mob violence in Chicago; 38 persons killed and 537 injured	Chicago Comm’n on Race Relations, THE NEGRO IN CHICAGO: A STUDY OF RACE RELATIONS AND A RACE RIOT (U. Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill. 1922), at xv
7/31/1919	British government passes Addison Act (a/k/a Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act 1919) giving teeth to 1909 Act, in order to create new housing, requiring local councils to implement recommendations of 1917-1918 Tudor Walters report	E.g., "Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act 1919,” Wikipedia; Sutcliffe,"Britain's First Town Planning Act,” *supra*
8/1/1919	Representatives of 48 private organizations, incl. the Urban League and representatives of immigrant groups, meet at Union League Club and unanimously pass resolution urging governor of Illinois to appoint an emergency state committee to study the psychological, social and economic causes underlying the conditions resulting in the Chicago race riot the week before	THE NEGRO IN CHICAGO at xv
8/20/1919	Illinois Governor Frank Lowden appoints a 12-person Commission on Race Relations, 6 white and 6 black, to study and report upon the broad question of relations between the two races.	THE NEGRO IN CHICAGO at xvi
10/11/1919	Evanston voters by a 9:8 ratio narrowly approve bond issue to purchase 55 acres for a new high school building at Church & Dodge, a swampy site “which Evanstonians considered as completely out in the country and knew to be somewhat populated by Negroes.”	Board of Ed., Dist. 202, HISTORY OF EVANSTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL | FIRST SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS 1883-1958 (1963), at 62
Oct 1919	Edward M. Bassett, author of New York’s ordinance and the “country’s leading authority on zoning,” speaks at a two-day conference in Chicago, with 400 in attendance.	Politics of Place at 19
11/7/1919	First “Palmer raids” by US Department of Justice to capture, arrest, and deport suspected socialists, especially anarchists and communists	
Nov 1919	Red Scare; last Chicago socialist alderman (until the 21st century) is defeated for re-election	How Socialism Permeated City Council
11/18/1919	Evanston City Council adopts resolution appointing a committee for the study of the subject of zoning	*Deynzer v. Evanston*, 319 Ill. 226, 227, 149 N.E. 790 (1925); Evanston News-Index 1/22/21; Alexander 1939
1920	Lawson Purdy assumes chair of National Conference on City Planning	

Year or date	Event	Source
1920-1921	Milwaukee Mayor Hoan organizes Garden Homes Company; entity buys 21 acres north of Milwaukee and builds 105 affordable homes, for which they receive over 700 applications	National Park Service, "The Garden Homes Community," https://www.nps.gov/articles/the-garden-homes-community.htm (accessed 3/15/25)
1920	US Census shows "foreign-born white" as over 18% of the Evanston population, more than 2-1/2 x the black population. In Chicago, the more than 800,000 "foreign-born white" are 30% of the population.	U.S. Census
1920	there are an estimated 3,500 cars in Evanston, one for every two families	Evanston League of Women Voters, *This is Evanston* (2000) ["LWV 2000"], at 26
July 1920	After a lull during WWI and its aftermath, immigration to the U.S. explodes, going from an average of less than 10,000/month in 1919 to over 60,000 immigrants per month in the 8 months beginning July 1920. The "new immigration" is heavily central, eastern, and southern European as opposed to the "old immigration" dominated by arrivals from northwestern Europe	House of Reps. Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, "Report (to accompany H.R. 4075) | Restriction of Immigration," 67th Congress (Apr. 19, 1921)
1920	More than 7,000 apartment units have been built in Evanston, "transforming the landscape"; "uncontrolled building" results in "large apartment houses … springing up on the vacant land in south Evanston."	LWV 2000 at 31; Evanston League of Women Voters, *This is Evanston* (1955) ["LWV 1955"], at 1
Aug 1920	19th Amendment, granting women's suffrage, is ratified; former suffragettes organize League of Women Voters	
9/21/1920	Evanston City Council passes an ordinance appointing a zoning commission	*Deynzer* at 227
Oct-Dec 1920	Evanston zoning commission holds meetings, visits entire city, studies existing conditions and possible future developments, holds public hearings. Hired expert supervises preparation of maps showing existing uses of property in the whole city, types of residential structures, commercial and industrial uses, location and classification of every store or industry, heights of buildings by stories; % of lot-occupancy by each building; and all new buildings erected since 1915.	*Deynzer* at 227-228
1920	Newly-formed Evanston League of Women Voters supports enactment of zoning in Evanston	Evanston League of Women Voters, *This is Evanston* (2000), at 1
Nov 1920	Eugene Debs, while in prison, wins 3.5% of presidential vote as Socialist nominee	
Late 1920 / early 1921	Draft Evanston zoning ordinance prepared and submitted to the zoning commission, considered at series of conferences, amended, and published. Public hearings held; further changes made.	*Deynzer* at 228
12/28/1920	100 wealthy east-side Evanstonians sign a last-ditch petition against proposed zoning which would establish "stores and hotels in neighborhoods where they do not belong." Ald. Hiram McCullough, chair of the zoning committee, responds by saying "Evanston has been a hick town long enough, and it is now time that it cease to be a bedroom for Chicago."	"Rich of Evanston Protest Stores in Home Sections," Chicago Tribune (Dec 29, 1920), at 3
1/3/1921	1920 is reported to have been a record year for crime (primarily burglaries and robbery) in Evanston and on the North Shore	"Evanston Crime Record Hidden, Alderman Says," Chicago Tribune (Jan. 3, 1921), at 5

Year or date	Event	Source
1/18/1921	Uncontrolled building leads Evanston City Council to pass zoning ordinance, the first in Illinois, near-unanimously. The ordinance establishes restricted residential districts to uphold the city's reputation as "a city of homes" and protect residential property against the encroachment of business and apartment buildings. The zoning divides city into three "Height Districts" (35', 45', 80') and also into five use districts ("A" residence, "B" residence, "C" commercial, "D" industrial and "E" unrestricted), plus three overlaid minimum lot area districts.	*Deynzer* at 230; "Zone Ordinance is Biggest Item, Review Shows," Evanston News-Index (Jan. 22, 1921) at p.1, col. 1; Kiwanis Club of Evanston, EVANSTON (1924), at 18; Evanston League of Women Voters, *This is Evanston* (1955), at 1; *This is Evanston* (2000), at 29-31
1/20/1921	*Evanston News-Index* runs front page op-ed saying "Tenancy does not harmonize with liberty. It has caused revolution and anarchy in places where ownership of land is denied the masses….Home building and home owning will cure most of our social evils."	Christian J. Golee, " 'Own Your Own Home' Another Work of Thrift," Evanston News-Index (Jan. 20, 1921)
1/22/1921	Lead story in *Evanston News-Index* describes new zoning ordinance as "a means of ensuring a regular, well ordered and healthful growth of the business, residence and industrial sections of the city," and "the most constructive step in city planning taken in many years."	"Zone Ordinance is Biggest Item, Review Shows," Evanston News-Index (Jan. 22, 1921) at p.1, col. 1.
4/8/1921	Minnesota passes law allowing cities over 50,000 to limit height, size, and use of buildings and to create different districts for use	CHAPTER 217—S. F. No. 577
4/19/1921	U.S. House committee recommends restricting immigration from central, southern, and eastern Europe to be less than from northwestern Europe and no more than 3% of existing US population of that ethnicity. Report cites large unemployment in the US, lack of housing, existing presence of 10 million un-naturalized aliens, risk of contagious disease, and inability to assimilate. Report describes Polish and Polish Jews as "subnormal… very low standard" broken-spirited people, Lithuanians as "an undesirable type," Rumanians as "economic parasites," Russian Caucasus immigrants as "highly undesirable," habituated to lawlessness, and multiple groups as potential bolshevik recruits. Recommends the "severest kind of control" over such "undesirable" immigration.	House of Reps. Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, "Report (to accompany H.R. 4075) | Restriction of Immigration," 67th Congress (Apr. 19, 1921)
May 9-11, 1921	Thirteenth Annual Conference on City Planning is held	Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Conference on City Planning ["13th Planning Cfc."], Pittsburgh, May 9-11, 1921
May 9, 1921	Cleveland's chief planner points to Evanston as an example of a city that has adopted zoning to control congestion and population density.	Herbert S. Swan, "The Effect of Zoning on Living Conditions," 13th Planning Cfc. at 39
May 11, 1921	First resolution passed by 13th National Planning Conference is that "every city should try to create conditions that will make one family detached houses possible for people with small incomes: and further that in zoning the largest proportion of residence districts should be such that the regulations will tend to produce one family detached houses or one family houses in small groups."	13th Planning Cfc. at 204
5/19/1921	Pres. Harding signs the Immigration Restriction Act of 1921, formulated mainly in response to the large influx of Southern, Central, and Eastern Europeans; immigration falls by half in 1921	
1921	Russell Sage Foundation, a reformist philanthropy, creates the Committee on the Plan of New York and its Environs and appoints Norton as Chairman	
Nov 1921	Evanston zoning is seen as stimulating apartment construction. Former president of Evanston Real Estate Board reports that zoning has stabilized property values and is "largely responsible for Evanston's building boom, the biggest in its history," because now someone "feels secure, when he buys property, that he won't have a sausage factory, or a garage, or foundry built next door."	Al Chase, "Oak Park and Evanston Find Zoning Pays," Chicago Daily Tribune (Nov. 13, 1921), at 126

Year or date	Event	Source
Mar 1922	Riparian mansion owner Sarah V. Brown Deynzer, per some accounts the richest woman in Evanston, proposes a 33-unit "citadel" apartment complex on her 6-acre property south of the lighthouse between Sheridan Road and the lake; request is refused because of residential zoning	
May 7, 1922	Dr. Will Walter is influenced by Evanston upzoning of his neighborhood to "B" commercial to plan a 7-story, 28-unit co-op apartment building at Hinman & Grove, designed by Holabird & Roche	Al Chase, "Plan Evanston Co-Op Flats to Suit Tenants," Chicago Daily Tribune (May 7, 1922, at 155
May 14, 1922	Headline story on front page of Chicago Tribune Sunday real estate section trumpets how Evanston zoning is attracting large project proposals and an influx of capital now that "it was definitely determined where apartment buildings could and could not be erected."	"Zoning Brings Evanston Big Business Block," Chicago Tribune (May 14, 1922) at 31. Cf. Benjamin (1984), at 14: "Evanston apartment buildings constructed after 1921 … had a path cleared for them when Evanston passed the state's first zoning ordinance; thereafter the number of suburban apartments built in areas zoned multi-family residential increased."
May 22, 1922	66 municipalities in the United States are on record as having zoning ordinances already enacted, and 114 have zoning plans in progress.	A ZONING PRIMER BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ZONING APPOINTED BY SECRETARY HOOVER (U.S. Gvmt. Printing Office, 1922), at 6
1922	Sherman UMC founded by Mrs. Lula B. Sherman, an African-American woman and resident of Evanston	"History," SUMC | Sherman UMC, https://www.umcsherman.org/
Jun 1922	U.S. government supports zoning movement, Dept. of Commerce issues booklet explaining rationale and benefits, serialized for newspaper publication; NY Times runs front page story	ZONING PRIMER; "The Zoning Law and Its Benefits; Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce, Issues New Zoning Primer for Cities." N.Y. Times (Jun. 25, 1922)
Aug 1922	U.S. Department of Commerce promulgates a "Standard State Zoning Enabling Act" that endeavors to provide for zoning "without injustice and without violating property rights." The uniform act lists as recommended purposes of zoning "to lessen congestion in the streets; to secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers; to promote health and the general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements." The first three powers of zoning recommended are the ability to regulate and restrict height, number of stories, and size of buildings. Recommended powers also include regulating and restricting "density of population" and "location and use of buildings, structures, and land." Publication notes that limiting density of population is "highly desirable" and that including this power in a state act will "will make possible the creation of one-family districts" as a "way of reducing congestion of population." Recommended public process involving a comprehensive plan, a plan commission, and a zoning board of appeals are included. Within a year, eleven states adopt a version of the Standard Act.	Newman F. Baker, "Zoning Legislation," 11 CORNELL L. REV. 164, 175 (1926); Advisory Committee on Zoning, A STANDARD STATE ZONING ENABLING ACT: UNDER WHICH MUNICIPALITIES MAY ADOPT ZONING REGULATIONS (1926 ed.), at 5 n.22, 6-7.
Oct 1922	Russian civil war ends, U.S.S.R. established as communist state	

Year or date	Event	Source
Nov 1922	Euclid, Ohio, a small village of less than 10,000 near Cleveland, adopts a comprehensive zoning plan for regulating and restricting the location of trades, industries, apartment houses, two-family houses, single family houses, etc., the lot area to be built upon, the size and height of buildings, etc.	*Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.*, 272 U.S. 365 (1926)
Feb 1923	Architect Harvey W. Corbett says New York is bound to become "the most beautiful and distinctive city in the world as a result of zoning which has brought in the newest style in architecture, the 'setback,'" which Corbett predicts will eventually influence all American architecture.	"'Five Years to See 1,000-Foot Building in N.Y.,'" Chicago Daily Tribune (Feb 5, 1923), at 3
Early 1923	Chicago Real Estate Board, led by realtors from Hyde Park, Kenwood and Oakland, lobby for racial zoning regulations to restrict African-Americans to certain sections of Chicago; African-American leaders oppose the proposal; effort fails	
March 1923	Factions of wealthy Chicago residents debate allowing highrises of up to 284' v. mid-rise apartment buildings and hotels along Lake Shore Drive in pending zoning. Counsel for the group favoring lower height limits states, "The question appears to be, shall zoning permit certain damage to existing values in order to create a possibility of speculative future profits for a few owners."	"Gold Coast Divided Over Zoning Plans," Chicago Daily Tribune (Mar. 2, 1923), at 5
4/3/1923	Democrat William A. Dever elected mayor of Chicago, characterized as "crushing" the "old regime" and "evil forces" of Republican "Thompsonism," with its "demagogy, graft, fraud, and trickery," and paving the way for reforms such as "scientific zoning for the greater growth and stability of the city's prosperity."	"A New Chicago | The Tribune's Platform for Chicago," Chicago Daily Tribune (Apr 4, 1923), at 8
4/5/1923	Two days after municipal elections, Chicago City Council in order to reduce crowding and conflicting uses passes zoning ordinance unanimously. Ordinance has four categories of use districts: residential, apartments, commercial, and manufacturing. "Residential" includes only single-family homes. Each lot also assigned to a district in an overlaying "volume" map that regulates bulk on lots.	POLITICS OF PLACE at 25 ("Zoning was not only a tool to reduce land-use conflicts, it was seen as an integral part of the effort to rid Chicago of its image as a crowded, dirty, and corrupt city")
4/24/1923	Chicago Tribune is selling copies of new Chicago zoning ordinance for 10¢	"Tribune Scoop on Zoning Ordinance," Chicago Daily Tribune (Apr. 24, 1923), at 26
4/27/1923	Chicago Building Commissioner attributes unprecedented rise in building permits in part to passage of the zoning ordinance and its "stabilizing" effect on property, predicts growth in apartment buildings will result in more affordable rentals	"City Building Continues on Booming Way," Chicago Daily Tribune (Apr. 27, 1923) at 17
1923	African-American developer Charles S. Duke is named one of the initial members of Chicago's first Zoning Commission	
1923	more than 60 apartments with accommodations for 750 families are built in Evanston in 1923	Kiwanis Club of Evanston, Evanston (1924), at 18
1923	Evanston is a city of about 50,000 people; almost all the apartment buildings are in the southeast portion of the city	*Deynzer* at 228
6/15/23	Wealthy heiress Sarah Deynzer sues City of Evanston for denying her application to rezone her block of land south of the lighthouse to "B" residence so as to build an apartment building; a real estate expert and Deynzer testify, respectively, that her land value would be worth 3x to 4x more if so upzoned.	*Deynzer* at 228
6/24/1923	Olcott's Blue Book reports that Evanston land values rose from 15 to 100 per cent largely as a result of its adoption of zoning	"Chicago Realty Values Go Up $300,000,000,"Chicago Sunday Tribune (Jun 24, 1923), at 35

Year or date	Event	Source
July 1923	Rev. Thomas of Second Baptist Church in Evanston announces formation of a company with plans to build houses for colored people in Evanston; has already started construction of four houses on Dewey between Simpson and Payne	"Company to Build Homes for Evanston Colored Folk," Chicago Tribune (Jul. 14, 1923), at p. 5
1924	Kiwanis Club of Evanston reports that "Evanston is in the midst of the biggest building boom in its history" but declares Evanston would always be the "City of Homes."	Kiwanis Club of Evanston, Evanston (1924), at 18
1924-1928	Three additional small annexations by Evanston in NW Evanston, adding parcels along Gross Point Road	
1925-1929	Evanston building "boom period" continues; "there was greater activity in the apartment house building field. In the five-year period from 1925 to 1929, 199 multiple dwellings were erected at a cost of approximately $9,600,000." During this same period, most of an area in NW Evanston is built up with single-family homes.	Harry Alexander, "Preliminary Report Upon the Proposed Zoning Ordinance | Evanston, Illinois" (Harland Bartholomew & Assoc., March 1939) ["Alexander 1939"] at 14; Jack Weiss, "Eye on Evanston: Thoughts on Design | Coming of age in the 20s," Evanston Roundtable (Oct. 12, 2022), https://evanstonroundtable.com/2022/10/12/eye-evanston-thoughts-design-nw-historic-district-1/
2/27/1925	California Supreme Court reviews history and constitutionality of zoning, finds "a prevailing and preponderating [national] sentiment in favor" and strongly defends single-family zoning as incentivizing "those of moderate means to own their own homes." Discusses individual and societal benefits of home ownership and "factors which make a single-family home more desirable for the promotion and perpetuation of family life than an apartment, hotel or flat." Court approves the exclusion of even "one apartment house or flat" into a single-family district because of effect on "value of neighboring property" and because "the apartment house, tenement, flat, and like structures, tend to the exclusion of homes."	*Miller v. Board of Public Works*, 195 Cal. 477, 234 P. 381, 388, 38 A.L.R. 1479 (1925))
11/24/1925	NY highest court upholds single-family zoning in Mt. Vernon, NY, as reasonable to avoid infrastructure strain on sewer and water, congestion, increased risk from traffic, fire, and disease, and to preserve "the advantages and value of property devoted to private residences."	*In re Wulfsohn v. Burden*, 241 N.Y. 288, 297-98 (N.Y. 1925)
12/16/1925	Illinois Supreme Court holds Aurora and Evanston zoning ordinances constitutional; explains police power in *Aurora*; affirms lower court ruling denying Deynzer's suit against Evanston	*Deynzer v. Evanston*, 319 Ill. 226 (1925); "Evanston Zoning Law Is Upheld by the Supreme Court," Chicago Tribune (Dec 17, 1925) at 3; *City of Aurora v. Burns*, 319 Ill. 84 (1925)
1926-1927	Evanston zoning commission re-examines its zoning, hiring experts, holding public meetings, and conducting a comprehensive study of conditions.	*Kennedy v. Evanston*, 348 Ill. 426, 430 (1932)
11/22/1926	U.S. Supreme Court rejects constitutional challenge to Euclid, Ohio zoning that kept industry out of a residential district, holding generally that zoning ordinances are constitutional under the police power of local governments as long as they are not arbitrary or unreasonable and have some relation to public health, safety, morals, or general welfare	*Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.*, 272 U.S. 365 (1926)

Year or date	Event	Source
June 1927	Illinois Supreme Court upholds constitutionality of Illinois zoning enabling law and single-family districts, quoting the California *Miller* case at length and saying "the development of detached-house sections is greatly retarded by the coming of apartment houses….constructed in order to take advantage of the open spaces and attractive surroundings created by the residential character of the district. Moreover, the coming of one apartment house is followed by others, interfering by their height and bulk with the free circulation of air and monopolizing the rays of the sun which otherwise would fall upon the smaller homes." The court also notes that noise, increased traffic, congested streets, less parking, and child safety concerns may destroy a neighborhood's "desirability as a place of detached residences. … Under these circumstances apartment houses, which in a different environment would be not only entirely unobjectionable but highly desirable, come very near to being nuisances."	*Minkus v. Pond*, 326 Ill. 467, 475-76 (1927)
1927	Evanston zoning ordinance amendment changes various classifications in parts of the city, reducing number of maps to only two, changing land in southwest of Evanston from commercial to residential, and making text clarifications	*Kennedy v. Evanston*, 348 Ill. at 430; Alexander 1939 at 5
1927	Streetcar boardings in Evanston peak at over 5 million for the year	
1928	In a new history of the city published by the D.A.R., Evanston is termed a "gem suburb."	Reeling, at 11
1929	Evanston zoning ordinance amendment upzones a few blocks in southeast Evanston from "A" (residential) to "B" (allowing apartments of 45' height)	*Kennedy v. Evanston*, 348 Ill. at 430
1932	In Evanston, according to the Illinois Supreme Court, "about 30,000 people live in apartments, 5000 live in apartment hotels, and about 30,000 live in single-family residences."	*Kennedy v. Evanston*, 348 Ill. at 430
Nov 1933	Evanston completes final significant annexation, approx. 6 square blocks south of Simpson and north of Golf, west of McDaniel	
1921-1938	Evanston zoning has helped maintain character of Evanston built environment. "Evanston has been very fortunate in maintaining a reasonable height limit of seven stories or 80 feet. As a result, apartment house and commercial development has been more in scale with the needs of the community than in many cities where speculative buildings of excessive height resulted in disruption of property values and over-congestion."	Alexander 1939 at 20
1939	Consultant Harry Alexander, hired by City of Evanston to review zoning, advises, "The common policy has been to create new wealth by speculative building in anticipation of an unlimited population increase…..Zoning ordinances almost invariably were drawn to meet the demands of this speculative urge.…The zoning of unnecessarily large areas for apartment houses … retards small home development which in most instances is the logical and only economic way for the property to be utilized." With respect to Evanston specifically: "The percentage of population housed in single-family residences is considerably less than in many other suburban cities" and "Evanston zoning results in desirable single-family districts being vulnerable to blighting from apartment house development…The reduction of excessive multiple dwelling zoning is one of the most pressing needs in Evanston today. "….It is obvious that Evanston is over-zoned for multiple dwellings. This condition arose from speculative enhancement of land values in Evanston and the universal exaggerated idea of the extent to which the city would grow."	Alexander 1939 at 14

Year or date	Event	Source
1949	Evanston LWV begins publishing a new publication on Evanston; devotes entire third chapter to housing, titling it "City of Homes," and saying: "Evanston is nationally known as a city of homes. If these homes are suited to the way of living of Evanston families the city is sound. People will want to live here. If they are not suitable, if the homes are obsolete for today's living, if the houses cling to each other so closely that fresh air and sunlight and outdoor living room are at a premium, if immediate financial gain rather than pleasant living dictate housing conditions, blight will descend."	League of Women Voters of Evanston, THIS IS EVANSTON (1949), at 17 et seq.
1950-1959	New residential construction in Evanston is particularly heavy in the southwest corner of the city	COMMUNITY FACT BOOK 1960, at 186
1954	Evanston "has been built solid, border-to-border."	John McCarron, "Nowhere to Go But Up," Chicago Tribune (Jul. 11, 2004)
1960	Evanston, unlike other north shore suburbs, has an unusual number of multi-unit structures; only 41% of housing units are in single-family structures	COMMUNITY FACT BOOK 1960, at 186
1972	Evanston is a "fully developed community without reserves of vacant land for new development"	Evanston Plan Comm'n Task Force on the Comprehensive General Plan & Evanston Planning Dept., Part I of the Source Book on the Comprehensive General Plan, Evanston, Illinois (adopted 1972) ["1972 Plan"] at 1
May 2000	Evanston is a "fully developed community"	Evanston Comprehensive General Plan, adopted May 8, 2000 ["2000 Plan"] at 96
2006	"a growing number of residents have come to believe the City Council has become too supportive of the real estate development industry, all for the sake of enhancing the tax base. They believe that flexible zoning regulations and a 'let's make a deal' approach has been to the detriment of quality design and public benefit."	Robert B. Teska, Downtown Evanston Revitalized, 1956 - 2006 (2006), at 92

