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.
Molly Levitt	1720 Maple Ave.	4/9/2025	900 Clark Street	Opposed	Written comm	I am very much opposed to the 900 clark St. highrise proposal. I am a 70 year old widowed woman who has owned my residence on Maple Ave since April 2014. Like many people I chose Evanston for the inviting, charming feel of the commercial area. I walk wherever I go. Building a 27 story building is not in line with Climate Action Goals. From what I understand, buildings should be limited to 10 stories. A 27 story building is going to create a lot of additional traffic and pedestrian congestion. Residents, I believe will keep their cars and if not there will much more congestion from ubers and delivery people. The wind outside already poses a problem for me. I am 5 foot 3 and weigh about 110 pounds and on windy days, I already have trouble feeling like I am being blown around.I am sure a tall building like that will increase the wind which i am also concerned may have an impact on the structural integrity of my building (has this been studied?). While the building will not greatly impact my view or privacy, I have been in neighbors units that would be greatly affected. I am certain that will negatively affect the resale value of their units and perhaps all of our units since the area will be more windy and congested. I understand that the developers sunk a lot of money into buying this property and they want to get as much money out of it as possible but I think this building , like the E2 building down the block, is going to end up housing Northwestern students more than it is going to attract new residents to the area. Hasn't Northwestern taken over enough of Evanston already? And don't we citizens deserve as much consideration as the young hungry developers? Thank you for your time and consideration of my thoughts.		
Michael Lohr	726 Milburn St, Evanston	3/19/2025	Comprehensive Plan - EE45	Opposed	Written comment	1. Evanston is already densely populated, the draft plan shows this quite clearly. It's surely a small minority who want a big increase in density. 2. Housing costs in Evanston are high due to its desirability of location, our lakefront, presence of Northwestern, suburban feel with access to Chicago downtown. We can build thousands of units; they will fill up with people who have the means to pay luxury mortgages or rents and want Evanston's desirability. 3. We have had two decades of housing construction with no apparent slowing of housing costs. 4. Our current density already manifests in negative ways. Traffic on Chicago Ave can be brutal. East- west routes like Greenleaf turn into one car at a time bottlenecks. It is nearly impossible to turn left at some intersections. 5. Housing affordability is an income problem, not a housing availability problem. Evanston should prioritize efforts to improve workers' earnings and reduce their costs: a. Incentivize landlords to rent empty store fronts. b. Use our bully pulpit to insist that Northwestern pay its staff better. c. Improve conditions for commuters by pressuring CTA to add service, accessibility. Here is another major theme in the plan that should be more specifically addressed: The comp plan's transportation chapter points out numerous deficiencies in public transit, (spotty schedules, L stop inaccessibility, lack of bus shelters, etc.,) while very short on solutions or even recommended solutions, yet the plan counts a great deal on transit-oriented development to alleviate density issues. Thus, the plan seems very disingenuous in this regard, while paying lip-service to a truly significant and growing problem in Evanston. Finally, the Envision comprehensive plan has no mechanism for permanent affordable housing and it ignores and denies the market realities of real estate development in a desirable landlocked and already densely populated community. As a consequence, it either inadvertently or deliberately will cause the displacement of lower income residents and renters if the city follows the faulty trickle-down affordability logic currently being applied.		
Frank Hill	827 Lincoln St	3/19/2025	Procedural Question regarding LUC	Undecided	In person		Self	

City of Evanston

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Remainder of Ch. 3

Jeff Smith <jeff@jefflaw.com> Sat, Mar 15, 2025 at 7:05 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>

Meagan,

Please find attached as a .pdf, with effort to compress for size, my markup of Chapters 4 and 5 to the Comp. Plan.

If these could be distributed to the LUC in advance I'd be grateful, since what I sent last Tuesday on Chs. 1-3 apparently some did not see until the day of the meeting tho I was laboring to avoid that.

Also, markups inherently seem mainly quizzical-to-negative, which may leave the impression that one is negative about everything. So I have tried to put a number of thumbsups because I do recognize where some good effort is being done.

If the elephant was not in the room we could all have a better party.

Yours,

Jeff Smith

EE2045PlanChs.4-5JPSmarkup15Mar2025.pdf
3330K

CHAPTER 4: EVANSTON TOMORROW

most of the text on this page could be the vision for AnyTown. An Evanston document should honor in greater degree who we are and how we got here, not generic futurism

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.

stable at a sustainable, optimal size

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.~~

"social infrastructure" and power lines not CoE's job.

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.

a little less repetition would make this more serious

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:

these 2 clauses don't relate

- 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, and designated bike lanes to encourage active transportation for all.
- Fostering accessible transportation systems that support individuals of all abilities.

PROPERLY lit. Our streets ARE highly lit — in pedestrian and cyclists' eyes, and in 2d floor windows. Time to retire the gaslight.

we all know this is not for small business. In fact dvpt review PROTECTS businesses. PERMITTING could be more consistent, less arbitrary, faster.

Text

all joking aside about hemp girders and garbanzo bean siding, what does this mean? Concrete and steel are not "sustainable" just because technically recyclable. I would be OK with this to the extent it means limiting to what can be built framed with wood. However I don't think the CTA is ready for bamboo train cars.

- 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.

This is ENTIRELY service economy. What about light manufacturing?

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.

It's not just biodiversity. Weeds and invasives can be biodiverse. Say "restorative biodiversity"

- Integrating biodiverse ecosystems in parks and open spaces to promote health and well-being.

natural (or native)

- 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 an equitable, resilient, and environmentally sustainable transportation system where every resident has choices by:

- Eliminating greenhouse gas emissions through increasing active transportation and mass transportation options.
- ~~Creating corridors that~~ improve the reliability and safety of all modes of transportation.

NO ONE wants to live in a corridor. This is purely technocratic wet dream

- 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.~~

JARGON and, depending what is meant, extremely cost-inefficient

INCREASE HOUSING DIVERSITY

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

Supporting our existing

- ~~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.

The "barrier" to this is not zoning; historically 2flats/3flats were owner-occupied not built on spec. Modern developers are uninterested (not profitable/efficient).

Again: we are already diverse. Reducing the % of SFH REDUCES housing diversity. And because a % of renters want to "move up," it also increases per capita demand for where inventory is low. Also: more multi-unit building is not for "our community," because those here are almost all housed and new construction will be more expensive..

CHAPTER 5: NEIGHBORHOODS & PLACES

and for the detail and care put into residences, from blocks of single-family homes to groundbreaking apartment buildings.

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.

biggest building boom was after Evanston adopted zoning.

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.

Oversimplifies, see my How We Got Here suggests submitted last week

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 line known as the 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.

This section is both weirdly detailed yet odd in what it emphasizes Omits the trolleys. Streetcar boardings were over 5 million in 1927! Lines all over the city. From at least 1901 a Yerkes company ran out to Bennett, then Lincolnwood; after 1907 a line ran out past Harms Woods. And no mention of the Evanston Express? These all greatly changed the city. Suburbs, post-1850, grew in 3 basic types: railroad, streetcar, automobile. Different neighborhoods in Evanston grew as mini-versions of each. Big reason now why can't be one size fits all.

quality of

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

no mention of the NE historical district? again, a failing of structuring by 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.

subtracting commuters, I don't think so. Art fair, theatre numbers way down post-pandemic. NU, beaches do draw. But never "millions".

2ND WARD

ignores/otherizes the downtown finger gerrymandered into 2!

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.~~

In 1889 the C&NW opened the "Mayfair cutoff" running SW from Central St. to divert trains from the more populous central Evanston and lakefront Chicago; this boosted west side land values and facilitated industrial growth to the southwest of the village. Passenger service ended 1958.

I was dismayed to see neighborhoods discussed by WARDS in this draft. Ward lines don't reflect neighborhoods but POLITICAL calculations. That contributes to wards being discussed in very stereotypical terms. We should be trying to DECREASE ward parochialism. Most Evanstonians don't identify this way, and no one markets real estate referring to ward. Folks characterize neighborhood by business district, school, park, natural features, or a development, most don't know even what ward they live in. I STRONGLY URGE redoing this entire section. I recognize it was a convenient way to organize consideration of the city. But it's wrong. Frankly, we need a neighborhood map. And the ward lines should be redrawn to reflect those, rather than wards gerrymandered for incumbency, for turf, and to disenfranchise.

3RD WARD

Located in southeast Evanston, the 3rd Ward 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

kind of short shrift for an area that, after the high ridges, was one of the first to develop. Railroad/streetcar suburb. Lots of awesome farmhouses. Neighborhood most likely to fly a peace sign wind sock.

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

ignores/otherizes the 5th Ward east of Green Bay

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.

evolving

Kingsley School, to which many 5th ward children can and do easily walk, would be in the 5th Ward in a non-politicized ward map. This was avoided because politics.

say "large contiguous" (many apts on Central, not spacious)

LINCOLNWOOD ELEMENTARY! Haven is in 7.

6TH WARD

streetcar-suburb most

built out largely between the world wars

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 Haven Middle School are key institutions that provide quality education to local students.

two business

Beloved Perkins Woods, the only county forest preserve in Evanston, well-tended by volunteers, is known for birdwatching and native plants.

7TH WARD

No mention of Lighthouse or Harley-Clarke????

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 and Haven Middle School.

the north half of

most visited

business

The boutique/gallery Central Street bus. dist. is all in the 7th. The two business districts further west are anchored by Harold's Hardware and the CVS. NO boutiques. Not restaurant districts since loss of Central St. Café.

Source: City of Evanston

On the 6th ward being "spacious": Most suburbanites wouldn't say so. It was largely built up in the 1920s when trolleys ran down Central and Harrison. When I moved in a neighbor still had a hayloft in her garage. This is not Hoffman Estates. The typical lot in NW Evanston is still only 35' or 50' wide. There are plenty of bungalows and even 25' "city" lots scattered about. Lincoln Street and Central Park are grand but atypical. Most of it is fairly similar to some Chicago streetcar neighborhoods like West Ravenswood. It also resembles other inner-ring suburbs like Park Ridge. But the grid system differentiates it from modern automobile cul-de-sac subdivisions, except far NW up past the CVS.

It would be helpful and more consensus-building to stop using loaded, judgmental and inaccurate language that polarizes the discussion. Bigger multiunit directly impacts lower R. Plus, housing "choice" is not just a choice of structure type but of neighborhood type. Development in a built-out place is somewhat zero-sum.Upzoned redevelopment, e.g., new 65' multi-use on an existing 1+1 block, TAKES AWAY the 1+1 neighborhood those residents CHOSE. Finally, the "barrier removals" suggested to date are more likely to have the opposite effect.

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.

Perpetual accentuation of differences, yet meanwhile treating groups monolithically, reinforces stereotype, retards integration, and inhibits social progress. We'd be better off ID'g and celebrating our commonalities.

CELEBRATE ARTS AND CULTURE

share perspectives

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

careful

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~~.

between all

Once again: making what is already a minority an even smaller minority does not increase diversity of something, it reduces it.

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.

New Urbanism catchphrase presupposes that growth in the most consumptive society on a planet quite possibly past its carrying capacity is smart. Future growth must be qualitative, not quantitative.

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.~~ synergistic neighborhoods.

connected

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.

changing any neighborhoods

map a little misleading to include cemetery as "open space"; realize also that much of the canal banks and Perkins Woods are wooded, so green but not truly "open." Evanston is very built up, little open space.

POLICIES

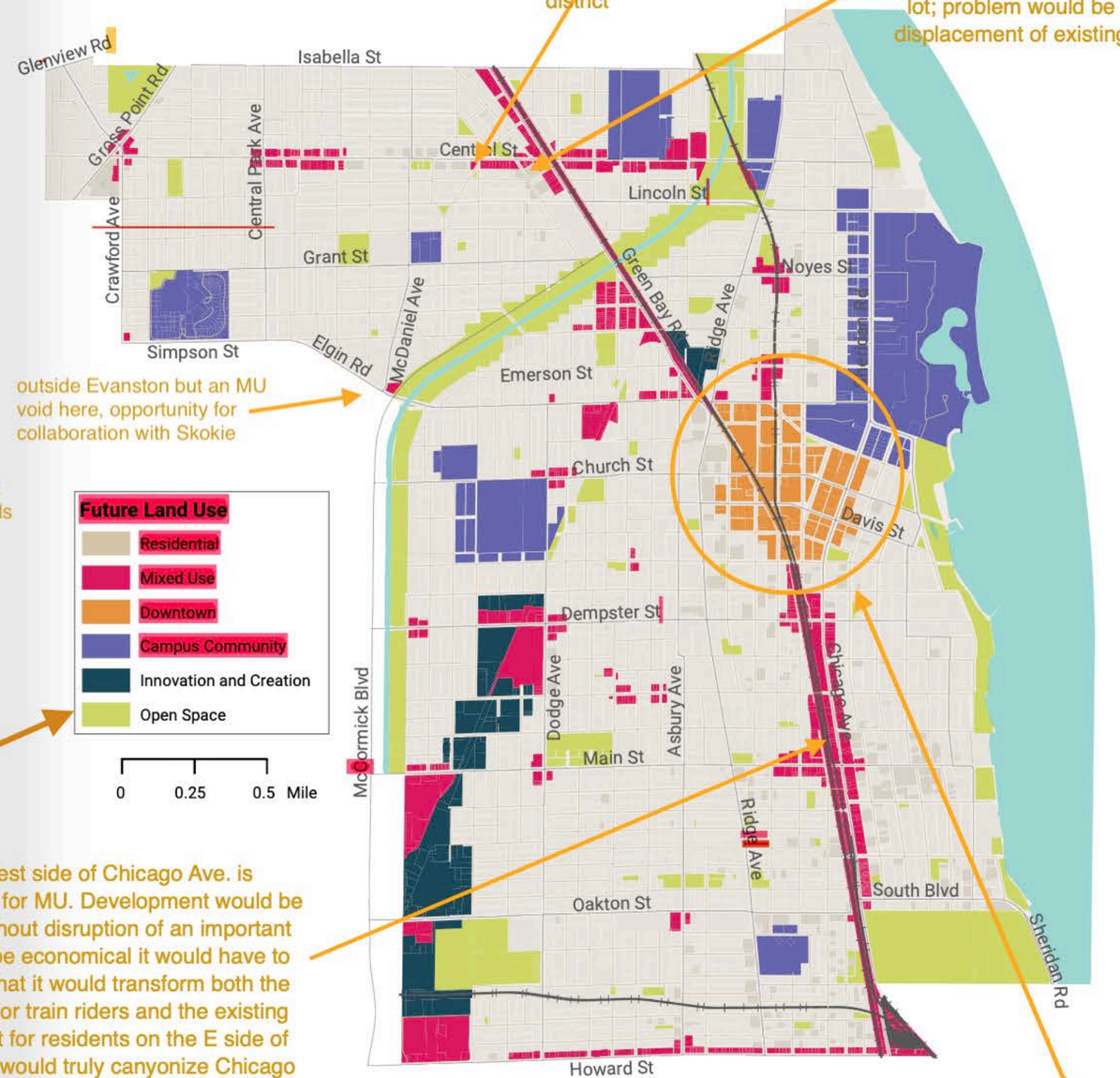
In addition to land use and transportation, additional policies addressing quality-of-life factors including health and well-being, economic development, and housing work together to bring our vision to life. The chapters that follow outline recommended policies and actions in further detail.

we are not actually talking about all choices in all neighborhoods — no one's adding SFH or 3-flats in any way to downtown, right? This is purely Upzoning. Current Evanston offers a CHOICE of NEIGHBORHOODS, all relatively elbow-to-elbow, that change each block. The idea that all neighborhoods need be the same is ANTI-choice. Just because Person A has X on his block on Custer and likes it doesn't justify imposing X on person B on Noyes against her will, when B chose and paid for something else.

current former dentist office arguably should be a preservation target, any conversion to mixed-use would need to be lowrise like existing B1a, very sensitive site, existing setback and lawn with tiny Ellingwood Park creates visual gateway from residential to "crown jewel" business district

conceivably MU in a redevelopment that included Chase Bank lot; problem would be displacement of existing

FIGURE 1. FUTURE LAND USE



outside Evanston but an MU void here, opportunity for collaboration with Skokie

map a little misleading to include cemetery as "open space"; realize also that much of the canal banks and Perkins Woods are wooded, so green but not truly "open." Evanston is very built up, little open space.

The West side of Chicago Ave. is problematic for MU. Development would be difficult without disruption of an important artery. To be economical it would have to be so tall that it would transform both the view east for train riders and the existing views west for residents on the E side of Chicago, it would truly canyonize Chicago Ave. Also, Chicago Ave. and/or land between tracks should be a prime candidate for potential future bike highway/ express lane.

Source: HDR, Inc

There is utility in having a buffer between downtown and other land uses. "Downtown Transitional" was there for a reason. It would be a mistake — and ultimately simply result in more expansion of downtown and pressure on adjoining areas — to eliminate this concept. University Transitional likewise.

8TH WARD

the west half of the 8th Ward, much of it still largely agricultural or industrial through WWII, was among the last to be developed in Evanston and features much efficient postwar architecture.

Located in south Evanston, the 8th Ward 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.

why no mention of Dawes, James Park, excellent proximity to shopping?

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~~ a bounty of retail and dining options.

the west half of 9 has more in common with the west half of 8 than with the apartment heavy east half of 9

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

a few suggestions here so the same adjective isn't used twice

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~~ aspirations.

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.

"visual continuity" is important for low-rise residential blocks for fairness and certainty to residents but less important for larger structures where, somewhat to the contrary, we (and shoppers/visitors) WANT articulation and differentiation, nooks and crannies to explore and discover, that draw us in. I would add some text about BALANCE and contextual HARMONY.

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.[1]

no such thing as carbon neutral construction

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.

being near major road corridors does not reduce any building's carbon footprint, and in fact contributes to clogging those roads

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.

THIS needs to be true for mixed-use AS WELL

building operations are not 70%. You only get up to those numbers by including construction — which is largely petroleum consumption.

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 and neighborhoods, 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.

the Central St. 'hood already has a LOT of apartments and condos, it's not all mid-density. And much of it is very walkable. I purposely bought for "walk to train." Most days I never drive. Only way "inland" is non-walkable.

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.

Not just "past uses." Decline of transit options, lack of E-W rapid transit, and realities of our metropolitan life drive this.

Source: City of Evanston

Source: City of Evanston

THIS is a recipe for displacement if applied to SFHs and 2-3 flats

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.

and align with community needs. Leverage is a + but our spending should not be driven by developers.

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.

what about jobs matching? and partnering with schools? ETHS/Oakton CC?

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. What is this? Who is driving this? Not the public.

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.

LU 7.4 Encourage a norm of new development proactively investigating and engaging with neighborhood groups and leaders to identify concerns, avoid potential conflicts, and explore ways to align the development more closely with neighborhood needs and aspirations

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 9.2 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.

Source: City of Evanston

add "unreasonable" before "barriers." Not all required steps are bad ideas. Some are there for good reason including to protect existing residents. There should NOT be a bias toward the new construction over the existing resident.

Also, the constant use of the word "barriers" in this section is misleading. The enormous amount of development in Evanston belies this myth of a Maginot Line of "barriers."

There are hurdles. Everything has hurdles. We could eliminate all "barriers" to flying and let anyone pilot a 737, too.

This was a pretty good section until morphing into some sort of "barrier"-phobic supply-side anti-regulation "Build baby Build" manifesto! None of the first 6 Policies and Actions are about helping residents preserve what EXISTS in neighborhoods. None are neighborhood specific.

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.

very well-written. Bear in mind TOD means more than just being "near transit." The residential aspect needs to synergize with jobs and other resident needs.

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 automatically 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?

plan recommendations do support or augur against development

???

complete contradiction

One thing to consider: historically most zoning codes are highest-use-inclusive. I.e., you could still build residences in a B or C district. In modern times this has led to conflict when older urban industrial areas start getting developed as lofts etc. Young couples move near the old brewery for the hip steampunk vibe. Then they have kids and hate on the trucks picking up kegs and the smell of hops. meanwhile land taxes go up because of the residential development. To some extent it makes sense to in essence have a "preservation district" for industrial so IT isn't gentrified out. TRUE planning for TOD plans in places for jobs so people can GET to them without a car. No guarantees in this era of low-employee-employer loyalty, but it's an effort.

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.

Source: City of Evanston

It's"site development allowances" and precedent of unlimited variances that makes developers think everything is on the table, always. "No means no" would create certainty! It is the "we're always ready to deal" ethos and repeated disregard of community and neighborhood desires that CREATES the uncertainty

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.

NOTHING IN THIS SECTION RESPECTS EXISTING RESIDENTS

1. SUPPORT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT NEAR TRANSIT AND MIXED-USE AREAS.

All this nice preceding prose.... and then we're back to upzoning.

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. I disagree that there are any such unreasonable barriers.

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. what about embodied emissions of construction? can't continue to have head in sand

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.

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

THIS is why the public is talking about zoning during the Plan phase.

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

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.

City of Evanston

Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>

Chs. 6, 7, and 8

Jeff Smith <jeff@jefflaw.com> Tue, Mar 18, 2025 at 2:52 PM
To: Meagan Jones <mmjones@cityofevanston.org>
Cc: zoning@cityofevanston.org, cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>, ruger Steve <sruger@cityofevanston.org>, Elizabeth Williams <ewilliams@cityofevanston.org>

Meagan,

I'm attaching a markup of Chapters 6, 7, and 8 of the Comprehensive Plan for benefit of the LUC and the planning team. Your distribution appreciated. I understand you already distributed my prior chapter markups incl. Chs. 4-5 sent Saturday?

More specific discussion is in the markup itself but the high points:

Ch. 6 "Community Systems" is largely uncontroversial but

— I don't think schools and sewers go in the same section
— too much emphasis on crisis and disaster
— omission of public library, intentional?
— narrative about public schools is scary
— section about selling assets made my ears stand up

Ch 7 "Getting Around" (what's wrong with "Transportation?") is a little unrealistic about car reduction, and zoning relief won't actually help *active* transportation let alone those impacted by a new development's vehicles. Mass transit's real challenges need addressing. But a lot of the text is good. I urge real examination of VMT, it's a terrible metric and truly an "urban privilege" stance that also ignores that everyone living car-less in a high-rise is actually totally dependent on other people's vehicles for all their life necessities.

Ch. 8 Environment I mainly have some additions (like light pollution, noise pollution monitoring) and tweaks, it's some thoughtful work and some good writing. Why not monetize our incentivizing? All the private work done maintaining our canopy, pollinators, habitat, permeable surface. Etc. goes unthanked and actually costs money.

Yours,

Jeff Smith

EE2045PlanChs.6-7-8JPSmarkup18Mar2025.pdf
6395K

CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

This chapter is an odd mashup of social services, schools, and infrastructure like utlities

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.

Not tireless. Many of us are exhausted, esp. from efforts to sell off public assets and quality of life.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Evanston's residents have access to diverse social services and community-based organizations, in addition to healthcare 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.

wide

n enriched

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. The map on the right (Figure 2) shows Evanston's public and private education institutions.

???

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.

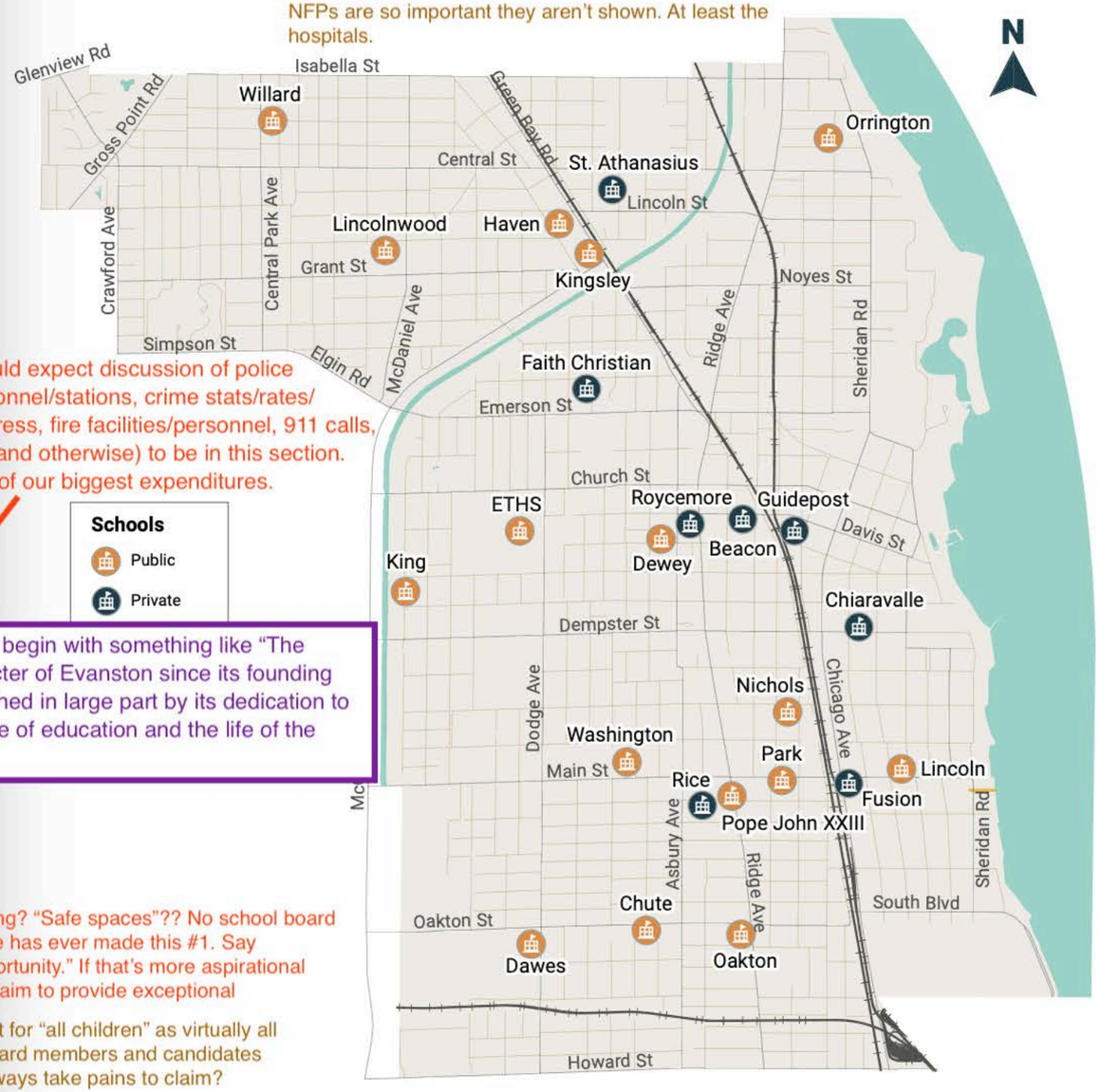
Evanston has a robust crisis management system, led by a division chief in Evanston's Fire Department who plans and conducts joint emergency response exercises to prepare for a wide range of scenarios including tornados, release of hazardous materials, and more using FEMA's National Incident Management 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.

Entire section appears written by someone who has no experience with Evanston public schools and zero understanding of their importance to families, children, home life, and property value. This paragraph taken as a whole actually reads as if actively trying to discourage people from moving to Evanston "for the schools" which historically had a good reputation. Why else would the (too long) sentence on D65 LEAD with the deficit??

Institutions such as the Evanston Art Center, Oakton Community College, and

FIGURE 2. SCHOOL MAP

It makes no sense to lump schools in with water, sewer, and utilities. It is bizarre that in a section with more discussion of infrastructure the only map is of schools, and that if hospitals and faith-based orgs and NFPs are so important they aren't shown. At least the hospitals.



I would expect discussion of police personnel/stations, crime stats/rates/ progress, fire facilities/personnel, 911 calls, (fire and otherwise) to be in this section. Two of our biggest expenditures.

This needs to begin with something like "The unique character of Evanston since its founding has been defined in large part by its dedication to the importance of education and the life of the mind."

This is the #1 thing? "Safe spaces"?? No school board or candidate here has ever made this #1. Say "exceptional opportunity." If that's more aspirational than reality, say "aim to provide exceptional opportunity."

not for "all children" as virtually all board members and candidates always take pains to claim?

Source: City of Evanston

crisis, crisis, crisis, and disaster. Did the Hagerty co. write this?

is our public library not part of our Community Systems? It's not under parks & rec… so…just omitted from entire Plan? except for allusion to wi-fi?

labored analogy; probably a result of trying to tie together two things that should be in different sections.

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.

more accurate to say that these systems are THREATENED or at least challenged by continued growth and development, or that they are "key" to existence itself, but probably best to avoid the apocalyptic in a comprehensive plan.

WATER SUPPLY AND SYSTEM

are critical to

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.

no mention of plans for lead service line replacement? That pops up in CS 4.8 but has no antecedent here.

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.[1] Some parts of the system are more than 100 years old, while other components are new — continuously added through redevelopment and public infrastructure improvements.

some of the landowners are public. City sewer map erroneously lists ETHS sewers as "private" which is incorrect.

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.

Numbers?

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.

This is all good but is undercut by the call for increasing impervious surface through mass infill construction

Most Evanstonians would probably be shocked to know that our enormously expensive seemingly perpetual 17-year re-do did not produce a complete separation of sewage and stormwater systems. Reducing openings of the Wilmette the locks and the seemingly INCREASING number of flows into Lake Michigan, which close beaches and threaten health (again, no data here), needs to be a priority.

Source: City of Evanston

BROADBAND

Evanston is well served by internet providers including AT&T, Xfinity, Verizon, RCN, and T-Mobile, all of which provide up to 2 Gbps service, making it attractive for businesses and residents. As of 2023, 95.2 percent 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, healthcare, 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.

From the 90s on we were constantly promised fiber optic and better speed. Mbps in Evanston is a cruel joke for a university town, esp. considering the municipal taxes on phone, cable, internet, satellite. Upgrades should have been required as part of the cable franchise extensions and other service agreements.

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 percent), nuclear power (34 percent), coal-fired power (15 percent), wind power (4 percent), solar power (1 percent), hydropower (1 percent), and other resources (1 percent). ComEd has pledged to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Illinois has committed to 100 percent clean energy by 2050, aligning with the City's goal of community-wide carbon neutrality by 2050 and 100 percent 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.

this pops out of the blue and is not warranted by anything in the previous two pages nor in "what we heard." This section does not even LIST or inventory the public properties.
Also ignores the community outcry over the attempts of previous city managers to sell off public assets and character. In general public trust properties should only be added to.
I do agree that a formal policy with principles and standards would be an improvement over current dealmaking.

POLICIES AND ACTIONS

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. leverage and share knowledge and experience and

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.~~ Not CoE's job. Also: privacy/HIPAA?

CS 1.6 Provide robust case management and wraparound services to households with insufficient resources based on their individual needs. Efficacy/cost-benefit/duplication unclear. Need evaluation.

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. Need evaluation.

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.
city already negotiated AWAY some of this with stadium deal!!

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. This all needs to be cost-benefit analyzed first with real assessment of likelihood of the risk. Otherwise it invites slush, and contributes to availability bias in perception of likelihood. I.e. self-terrorization courtesy of the disaster industry. Disasters and crises command inordinate attention but you can't plan for or prevent everything; on a bang-for-buck basis attending to more mundane needs may be more efficient.

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. Why?

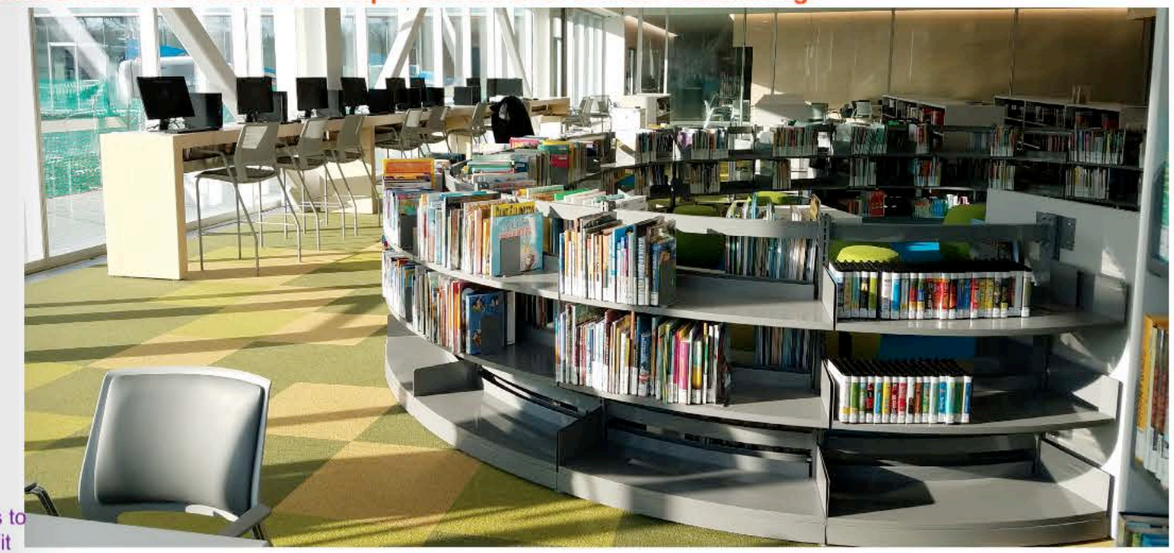
CS 3.2 Develop and maintain a NIMS core curriculum and provide guidance to community stakeholders to develop their training plans.

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~~. reasonable

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.

The City needs to be more than an enabler of the schools, esp. D65. The fiscal and community stability of Evanston depends on its public schools and children deserve education that works. By any measure we are spending more and getting less (except rhetoric). The City needs to be more of an advocate for its residents against the policies and practices that have made a dumpster fire out of our elementary-middle district.



Source: City of Evanston

"Emergency planning" needs to take into account the consequences of emergency measures. The generational damage done to our economy, our downtown, and schoolchildren has still not been completely measured but awareness is growing. Was completely discounted at the time of COIVD-19.

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.

CS 4.6 Ensure universal broadband access across all neighborhoods and expand free Wi-Fi service in public spaces to close the digital divide and achieve 100 percent broadband access 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. **and regional compacts.**

I don't think the theory of restorative justice is that all anti-social acts are simply a communication problem. Teaching better communications is a positive but B here doesn't logically flow from A.

CHAPTER 7: GETTING AROUND

INTRODUCTION

This is unsupported, and misleads to the extent that it doesn't account for the CO2e of embodied emissions from processes outside Evanston with end-users here (delivered goods, construction using cement, etc.). Also, 2/3 to 3/4 or more of "transportation" emissions are commercial sector. The focus/obsession on personal passenger VMT needs to stop.

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[1] and the Illinois Department of Transportation's Long Range Transportation Plan.[2] 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~~ transportation accounted for 22 percent 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. Additionally, 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.

duplication from above.

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

NOTE: VMT is NOT the issue. Bad metric. A diesel truck can idle for an hour in a parking lot, or a bus outside a stadium, go nowhere, produce enormous emissions — with ZERO VMT! Being stuck in traffic, excessive stops, etc. are what make "city" MPG worse than "highway." The vehicle with higher VMT can produce less GHG.

POLICY	POLICY STATEMENT
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. frequent and reliable, people won't ride transit unless predictable
3	Develop standards for ~~Facilitate~~ comprehensive development that prioritizes safe, convenient access to public transit. (just being "near" rail doesn't mean car-less unless one's life is all N-S)
4	Invest in upgrades and policies that support a safe, accessible, and convenient pedestrian network.
5	these 2 seem duplicative 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~~ timely adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) to reduce emissions and support the EV infrastructure needed. there is enormous footprint to EV manufacture.
11	Support policies and infrastructure that enhance road safety and encourage responsible driving behavior.
12	Utilize data-driven strategies and traffic controls to optimize parking management and improve user experience.
13	Create a comprehensive network of Complete and Green Streets to support sustainable, 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?

To my knowledge we still have never studied how Evanstonians use transportation and esp. why drivers drive and where. Instead we have slid/lurched into a very judgmental approach that implicitly assumes most travel is unnecessary, or that residents don't lead time-stressed lives in which personal vehicular travel is usually the only option for getting everything done. A comprehensive transportation plan needs to study before making rules prescribing norms.

ENVISION EVANSTON 2045

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. Figure 3 on the right illustrates the transit routes and stops throughout Evanston.

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

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 percent of pre-COVID-19 levels.[3]

This really glosses over the dire strait of public transit. Metra ridership is a ghost of what it was and CTA is more likely to collapse than to expand service. 1% more than Cook County is not really very high. Most of IL has no mass transit so 2x statewide is actually kind of sad.

Source: City of Evanston

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 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.[4] 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.

FIGURE 3. TRANSIT ROUTES AND STOPS

Source: City of Evanston

Source: City of Evanston

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.

Utilization?
Again, data?

DRIVING

This is judgy and oblivious to the extreme limitations of all other modes combined.

~~Despite the variety of transit options,~~ driving remains the primary mode of travel for Evanston residents. About 47.1 percent of workers aged 16 or older commute by car, whether driving alone or carpooling — a rate lower than that of Cook County (65.1 percent) and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) region (71.1 percent). 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 percent and 42 percent higher, respectively.

Most Evanston households own at least one vehicle. According to the 2018–2022 American Community Survey five-year estimates, around 16 percent of households do not own a vehicle, while 34.5 percent own at least two cars. This is slightly lower than in Cook County (41.4 percent) and the broader CMAP region (51.1 percent).[5]

NO MENTION of non-driving car use? This has increased enormously. It is a major component of transportation not to mention gridlock and "circling" behavior. City can get figures from Uber and Lyft and their ilk.

City should STOP the practice of putting burden of sidewalks and alleys on residents! These are public ways! If a City can't take care of its public ways it should not be putting money into luxuries and shiny objects.

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.

My alley was last paved in the 1920s I believe. City sewered 1/3 of the east end for a TV show (!) and is happy to let the other buckled, cracked end flood every rain.

Text

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.[6] The 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.[7]

Entire City network of excessive traffic controls and signage has ruined grid system advantages, resulted in excessive stopping and idling, increased dangers from low-MPH stop-start driving, and needs to be zero-based/ sunsetted and re-designed from ground up.

, its historic efforts since its first Plan to divert and discourage truck through traffic, its loss of manufacturing since WWII, its lack of distribution/ logistics facilities, and its congestion and lack of flow.

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 percent and 25 percent of freight[8], respectively. Evanston, however, sees relatively low truck traffic, with heavy commercial vehicles making up less than 3 percent 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.

large

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.

Section title says "delivery services" but there is no discussion. Evanston sees an enormous and increased amount of SMALL truck traffic. This has correlated with the difficulties for brick and mortar. Get data from Amazon, UPS, FedEx, USPS.

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

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.

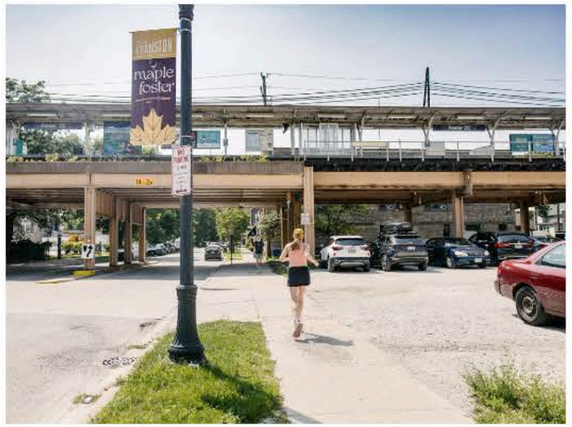
outdated. Happy to debate my fellow enviros on this!

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.



Source: City of Evanston

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.

but is often the only realistic option, esp. for parents

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 percent of Evanston's total land area, with a larger percentage downtown.[11] 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.

The 1-hour free was never widely enough known. Should be a PR campaign.

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.

My wife and I would both prefer Evanston take a stand AGAINST "autonomous" vehicles. I prefer human autonomy. I will accept self-driving vehicles as soon as all computers and phones are glitch-free and all hardware and software never freezes up or fails, and when auto-correct ceases to be Loki-like. The belief that "science will save us" and fetishizing of robots is pretty contrary to Evanston humanistic traditions.

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.

Unsupported. Most people get to most stores by driving. Even "TOD" developments have residents with cars. At minimum this language needs toning down. Evanston does not have enough innate attraction to start making the parking experience — which been a longtime deterrent to visitors — even more hostile and inconvenient.

Source: City of Evanston

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.~~

"gather" around transit? "Let's go hang at the bus stop?" Deters use. I'm open but skeptical.

I can't think of a single "parking-reduced" development that instead has gratefully and graciously devoted expensive land to community space. This is fiction! Reduced parking AT BEST is passed on to tenants/buyers but more often is simply more profit for the developer. If below what residents/customers need, it is a TRANSFER OF WEALTH to developer or tenants/residents from the surrounding neighborhood and/or general area visitors/commuters.

COMPLETE AND GREEN STREETS

most of this is very good

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 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.

Source: City of Evanston

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 percent zero-emission fleet by 2040, and CTA aims to electrify its bus fleet by the same year.[9] 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.

and most of the northwest since elimination of the Grant St. bus. Many blocks are too far to walk to transit. Shoot, on Sundays there is no bus service period.

There is very little high-speed traffic in Evanston. Again, stop-start is an issue, produces frustration, impatience. Distracted pedestrians are also an issue.

SOME of this is apologistic. I have biked into downtown Evanston for decades and could also watch downtown streets from my office for years. Many bicyclists are smart and responsible. Many however blithely ride wrong way down Church or Davis, on sidewalks, etc. You can see students every day ride down sidewalks on Sheridan where there is a separated lane. Not for lack of lanes, just oblivious/irresponsible.

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.

This is actually very safe considering the volume.

Safety Concerns

Residents report feeling unsafe crossing streets, backed by 2022 data showing 30 pedestrian and 31 bicyclist injuries[10]. 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.

How about a bridge over McCormick Blvd at Bridge?

Source: City of Evanston

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.

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.

Zoning NOT the problem. MAYBE reduce reqmts 50%. Need covenants.

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.

enhancing traffic flow needs to be a broader focus, period

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.

It was a major CoE fail to let the café facilities at Metra stations disappear. Re-engage with C&NW and get vendors back into those spaces. Additionally, the Central St. CTA station once supported a restaurant or take-out, and I think a convenience-store, possibly a cleaners. ED should actively work with CTA and try to match a business or two for those.

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.

ADA compliance tends to be a large cost-increaser yet extremely low-utilization. Utilization and bang-for-buck has to be a consideration, within the limits of the law. If cost of compliance degrades the system so that no one will use it and revenues plunge, no one is helped, including the mobility-challenged….

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.

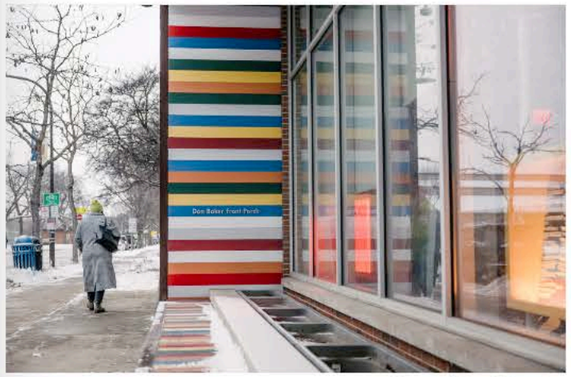
T 7.3 Explore the installation of bike repair stations along key bike and transit routes and at popular biking destinations.

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 students on safe biking and commuting practices.

more effective and aesthetic real lane separation instead of symbolic (dirty, taped) PVC posts would be a plus, would help normalize biking



Source: City of Evanston

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.

all

10. ENCOURAGE GREATER ADOPTION OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EVs) TO REDUCE EMISSIONS AND SUPPORT THE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED.

EV

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.

produce more consistent and predictable traffic flow

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.

T. 11.4 Encourage time-shifting in employment that reduces rush hour congestion

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.

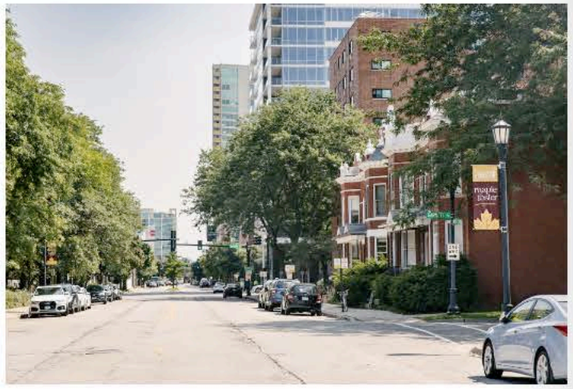
13. CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE NETWORK OF COMPLETE AND GREEN STREETS TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE, MULTIMODAL TRAVEL THROUGHOUT EVANSTON.

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.



Source: City of Evanston

Let private sector pilot this. We allegedly don't need this for our public garages right now, and it is too costly to let CoE be the one to work out the bugs. Plus liability.

Tech is not the answer to everything. The public would like government to be more human, less like robots. Probably weekly I see someone stuck at the tollgate in a public garage because of a glitch or unforeseen issue.

I parked at a parking meter in a county outside Cook the other day. How refreshing. I put a coin in. Done. Who ever said "Gee I'd like to have an entire new software program on my phone for parking (or have to walk to my car 2x to see the license plate number), that might or might not be working/need updating, and mainly let Big Data know everything about my commuting and shopping patterns"?

The impacts are mainly on neighbors and other drivers! Giving money to cyclist improvements doesn't help the impacted!

Source: City of Evanston

Other than weekend drag racing on McCormick Blvd, Traffic in Evanson is already almost at a crawl. Average auto travel speeds throughout the city are probably between 8 and 15 mph total including all the stops. It easily takes 5 min. more to get to Howard from Central than when I moved here. If I was doing that 2x/day, 5 days a week, that's 50 min. a week from my life in added time, 42 hours a year — an entire weekof free time stolen by how much Evanston has slowed down traffic already.

You could reduce the average to 5 mph and there would still be people saying it's too fast. Again, part of this is perceptions, plus modern impatience, people not wanting to walk an extra 20 steps to the corner where there is a stop sign or a light, not wanting to wait until it's safe to cross.

After highway speed, the speeds at which most accidents occur — the greatest danger — are low speeds, between 0-5 mph or 5-10 mph. Stuck in traffic, crawling, stop-start, and then being late because of congestion produces much smaller intervals, bad driving, inattention, frustration. It's actually dangerous.

"Slowing Evanston traffic down" has an enormous economic cost. The goal of traffic and the best way to reduce conflicts is to make it smoother and more predictable, with everyone aware of the rules. If drivers know that they can drive relaxed and get to their destination at a predictable time they will drive better.

That and no cellphone use by drivers, cyclists, skateboarders, pedestrians.

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	POLICY STATEMENT
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.

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 percent 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 percent — more than that of similar communities.[1] 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 percent, while parts of western and southwestern Evanston fall below 20 percent.[2] As we face rising temperatures and increasing extreme weather events, neighborhoods with lower tree coverage are at higher risk of heat-related illnesses, 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.

Source: City of Evanston

CoE should re-think how it permits basements and requires sump pumps, which can create voids under foundations and unnecessarily deplete groundwater. If foundations are properly sealed when poured no sump pump should be needed.

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.

Source: City of Evanston

These are all pretty good. Flood-resilient requirement, I dunno, not for most, look at maps/ terrain

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

resident A is not allowed to drench neighbor B's yard with smoke, flood neighbor's yard with water, or play loudspeakers audible to neighbor B at midnight; why is Resident A allowed to light up Resident B's yard all night long? Both mayoral candidates at the CSNA forum said they would support a light pollution ordinance (really, light trespass is the issue). Private persons should keep their own light on their own yard. We should in meantime educate public on harms of light pollution and on the superior qualities of downlighting (as opposed to omnidirectional "coach lights")

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.

opt-in for private tree inventory and/or use NFP/NGO for this

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.

What if we rewarded our treekeepers instead of simply making them rake leaves (and pay for disposal)?

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.

Noise pollution? Esp. monitoring of proposed concerts?

Nothing to reduce plastics? If all fast food had to do it at the same time, no one suffers a competitive disadvantage in the community.

Pilot program for bio-reduction of plastics?

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. that don't crack and die in the winter

Why not a property tax credit for enviro features like rain gardens, treekeeping, pollintor habitat etc?

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.

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~~.~~ and antique stores. Explore a safe CoE-sponsored alternative to Craigslist/eBay.

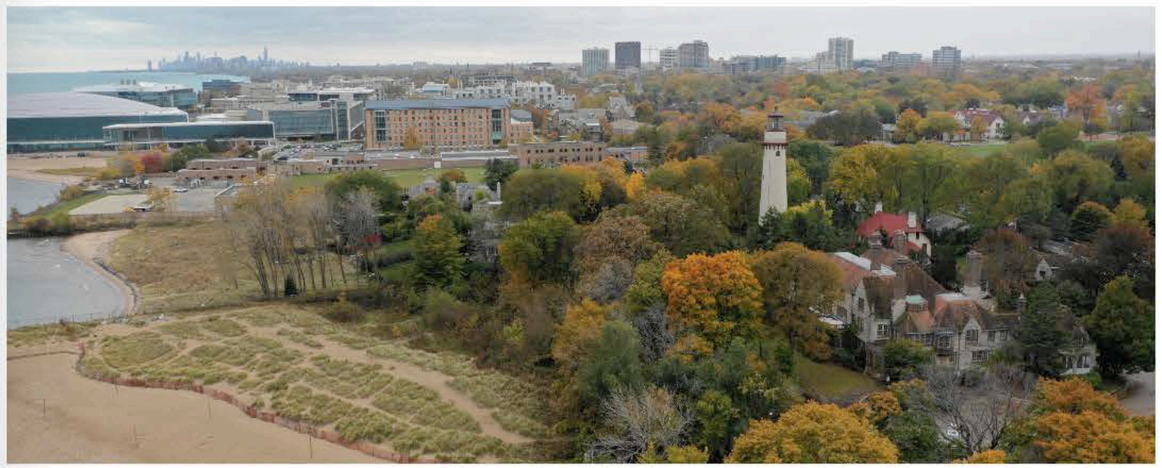
ENV 8.6 Install better infrastructure and services to avoid litter in business districts.

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.

ENV 8.9. Require calculation and disclosure of embedded CO_2e in construction, and cumulative annual impact of construction in Evanston.

ENV 8.10. Require wood or engineered-wood framing for all new buildings. No more steel-concrete.



Source: City of Evanston