

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.
Jim	Swanson	3/26/2025	2206 Maple Ave	Undecided	In person		Self	
Stuart Cleland	2145 Maple Ave	3/26/2025	Major Variations	In favor	In person		Self	

In an effort to be more specific, I am providing additional notes in red about how we can incorporate some of the 2000 plan into our new plan.

-Michelle Chlebek, 3/25/2025

After months of divisive debate over a half-baked draft that entered the community this past year, I finally had an opportunity to review the previous version of Evanston’s comprehensive plan, issued May 8, 2000. I was completely delighted to read it, as I could truly see our city in that document. A few areas if the plan really stuck out to me, and I would love to see these parts preserved in our new plan, where appropriate.

In Part 1, neighborhoods, it reads:

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

add to page 38 chapter 5, "neighborhoods and places"

“A balance is needed between preserving the character inherited from the past with meeting the demands of the present and the future. When opportunities for positive new development or redevelopment emerge, the City should (1) encourage creative ideas and adaptive reuses (placing new uses in existing structures) and (2) guide change to enhance the quality of neighborhoods.”

add to page 40 chapter 5, "key opportunities and challenges"

In housing, it states:

“Evanston is fortunate to have many large properties that contribute to the distinctive architecture of the community and to provide “borrowed” green space by virtue of large front and side yards. The preservation of these properties is an important policy for the future. When questions arise over an individual’s property’s future as a single-family residence, and conversion to multiple units should be guided to preserve the existing structure and landscaping. In general, the Zoning and Preservation Ordinances should be used together to protect those properties that particularly contribute to the historic character of neighborhoods.”

page 91 chapter 10, "housing stock". add this text

Reading this document made me wonder why we made such a drastic pivot in our new plan. Yes, we need to continue to evolve, but we do not need to re-invent our city. Yes, we should strive to accommodate new housing as appropriate, but that should not cause us to need to part ways with our past.

One section of our new plan that should be *re-done* is “increase the housing supply” on page 93. This contains references to national statistics about housing supply. There is no way a small city like Evanston can tackle a national housing shortage on our own- we are

land locked and fully built out. We need a much more responsible, sustainable approach, and I would consider replacing that section about increasing the housing supply with one from the 2020 document;

In “new housing development” it reads:

Increased residential density should be supported along major mixed-use corridors, such as Chicago Avenue or Central Street which it can also be oriented towards mass transit service. As such redevelopment occurs, sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhoods will be essential to prevent over-congestion and incompatible design. Ultimately, as proposals for new housing emerge, the City should encourage developments that will meet changing markets, while protecting the high-quality and design standards that are characteristic of housing built in the past.

page 93 chapter 10, "increase the housing supply". remove the existing text that refers to national housing statistics, and replace with this text

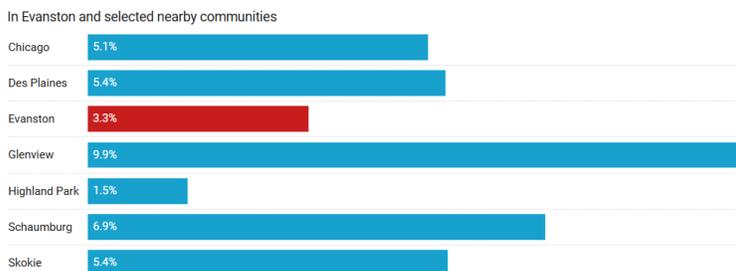
Ultimately our last comprehensive plan really nailed it, and we should consider carrying these paragraphs into our new plan where appropriate.

page 93 "soaring housing costs" is painting a picture that Evanston is becoming wildly expensive. Costs have gone up everywhere, not just in Evanston. Evanston is actually one of the most affordable north shore communities, and costs have risen more slowly here than in other nearby suburbs. Read the article in Evanston now, "Housing price gain moderate here" Feb 2, 2025, and see charts below pulled from that article.

<https://evanstonnow.com/housing-price-gain-moderate-here/>

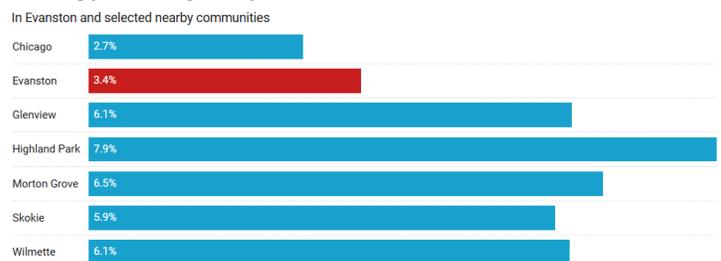
The section "soaring housing costs" needs to be removed, or entirely rewritten to more accurately explain the situation.

Monthly rent change last year



Smoothed, seasonally adjusted 35th to 65th percentile range, all homes plus multifamily. (December 2023 data not available for Highland Park.)
Chart: Bill Smith / Evanston Now • Source: Zillow • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

Housing price change last year



Smoothed, seasonally adjusted 35th to 65th percentile range, single family homes, condos and coops.
Chart: Bill Smith / Evanston Now • Source: Zillow • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

page 93 chapter 10, "soaring housing costs". replace with this:

Housing Costs in Evanston

Nationwide statistics show that housing costs have risen in recent years. While home prices and rents in Evanston have increased, they have done so at a more moderate pace compared to several nearby communities. In 2024, the median home price in Evanston rose by 3.4%, slightly above the 2.9% increase in the consumer price index but well below the growth seen in places like Highland Park (7.9%) and Glenview (6.1%).

Long-term trends indicate that since 2000, home prices in Evanston have increased by 81%, slightly trailing inflation (87%) and significantly lagging behind Chicago's 108% increase over the same period. Similarly, rental costs in Evanston rose 3.3% in 2024—lower than the 5.8% increase across the broader Chicago metro area and below increases in suburbs like Glenview (9.9%) and Skokie (5.4%).

This relatively moderate growth in housing costs positions Evanston as a more stable market compared to some of its neighboring communities. However, affordability remains a key concern as we try to address housing supply and cost challenges.

2. INCREASE HOUSING SUPPLY AND HOUSING CHOICES

H 2.1 Encourage a diversity of housing types throughout Evanston.

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

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

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

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

zoning will not reduce the cost of housing

on page 90, modify policy 1 statement to more closely align to the 2000 comp plan housing goal

Encourage both new housing construction and the conversion of underutilized non-residential buildings to housing in order to increase housing variety and to enhance the property tax base.

**Comments related to the Second issue of the Comprehensive Plan
Submitted to the Land Use Commission**

March 25, 2025

From:

David Galloway

VP Design Evanston

728 Noyes Street, H3

Evanston IL 60201

Dagalloway72@gmail.com

Chapter 2

p. 12 – Land Use

Add: “improve existing and encourage the creation of new mixed-use walkable neighborhoods.”

p. 13 – Economic development

Add: “Continue to support and encourage mixed-use developments at rail transportation nodes”

p. 13 Housing

revise first bullet point: Allow increased density development allowances for multifamily developments that include affordable units.

Add: “Allow greater residential densities in appropriate walkable neighborhoods – within ¼ mile of mixed-use centers, rail transit nodes, etc.”

p. 14 Housing

Add: “Encourage the improvement of existing and create new walkable neighborhoods”

Revise: Expand and diversify housing unit options to accommodate the needs of younger demographics”

p. 14 Zoning & Development

Add: “Execute creative ways to increase the possible residency in existing residential buildings”

Add: “Establish a participatory process that involves urban design professionals, city staff and citizens in the investigation of increased density, high quality design developments”

p. 15 Key Themes, Neighborhoods & Places

Add: “Support existing walkable neighborhoods and encourage the creation of new ones.”

p. 15 Getting Around

Add: “Provide pedestrian walkway oriented lighting at mixed-use and commercial area walkways”

p.16 Housing

Add: “Promote developments which provide more attainable smaller units that younger generations and empty nesters desire”

Add: “promote home ownership”.

p.16 Health & Well-Being

Add:” Promote Walkable Neighborhoods”

p. 16 Economic Development

Add: “Support increasing the generation of mixed-uses at all rail transit nodes”

p. 19 and p. 32 - Vision Statement – this needs work. What about our downtown? Our great service industries and local-owned small businesses? Our unique rail transit system? Our unique mini-downtowns at mixed-use centers and rail transit nodes? Our variety of enviable walkable neighborhoods? Our great lake and relatively stable climate? Our world class school system and University? Our historic design heritage?

p. 32 – Foster a Healthy Community

Add at bullet-point No. 4: well-lit walkways

Add: “Encourage Walkable Neighborhoods”

p. 33 Strengthen the Local Economy

Add: “Investigate way to economically support local-owned businesses in first floor mixed-use developments”.

Add: “Investigate ways to improve neighborhood walkable access to food and drugs”

p. 33 Increase Housing Diversity

First bullet point: “Encourage the development of a wide range . . . “

p. 34 – Land Use Approach – reference “Walkable Neighborhoods” These will be the most desired types of neighborhoods in the future.

p. 40 – Key Challenges & Opportunities –

revise last sentence of first paragraph: “this encourages . . . responsive to the community’s existing and evolving values and needs”

5th paragraph: To address these constraints, the Future Land Use Map and policies should encourage new development near transit nodes, certain major road corridors and existing or new mixed-use walkable neighborhoods in order to better connect people and places.

5th paragraph: These changes, combined with efforts to streamline the development review process that may include defined design templates or guidelines, should improve . . . evolve”.

p. 43 LU 1.3 add at end of sentence: ... Investors, while encouraging quality design.”

p.44 LU 3.4: “Evaluate proposed projects based on a cost benefit analysis that evaluates projects for their positive social and economic benefits with the least impact on the infrastructure and environment.”

p. 44 Section 7

Reference suggestions submitted by Jack Weiss related to an Urban Design Commission.

LU 7.1 – “Establish a Design Commission and processes it would implement to provide technical and design assistance . . .”

LU 7.3 – Develop Guidelines that may include massing / form-based models, design templates, and other documented guidelines that align with the vision and goals of the Plan. These could include defining features of neighborhoods, . . . efficiency”.

LU 9.5 Establish design examples of housing unit types that would be appropriate to implement in various neighborhoods. Under the purview of the UDC.

Chapter 7: Getting Around,

Policy No. 4 Add: “Provide walkway lighting at the downtown and similar neighborhood mixed-use areas”

Policy No. 11 Add: “Investigate ways to calm automobile traffic and reduce speeds by reducing lane widths, reducing poorly designed and located, visually distracting signage, increasing walkway projections at parallel parking locations, changing road textures.”

p. 58 Walking

Add: “Lighting of walkway surfaces, by utilizing light fixtures designated for that purpose alone. Needs to be improved throughout the city”

p. 60 Bicycling and Other ...

Add: “Investigate concentrated bicycle parking solutions using congregated racks that may utilize street parallel parking spaces. Consider amenities such as protective identifying canopies, air-pumps and lighting”

Add: “Remove individual bike parking racks that interfere with walkway usage, safety, or create a distracting visual appearance”.

p. 61 Parking

Add: “Re-evaluate all parking needs, referencing recent examples from similar cities and current developer’s data.”

p.61 Truck and Delivery .. .

Add: “Improve dedicated drop-off / delivery spaces so as not to impede traffic flow”

p. 63 Walking

Safety Concerns

Add: “Create obvious dedicated areas for walking that are free of obstructions or disconcerting changes in the walking surface. Add walkway dedicated lighting”.

p. 64 Shared Active Transportation

Add: “Employ concentrated bicycle parking at transit nodes utilizing congregate

racks that better hold and secure bicycles. Consider protective canopies, adding air-pumps, and possible lighting. Locate away from major circulation areas in to and out of the stations. Remove individual bike racks in these locations.”

“Consider Police on bicycles”

What are traffic rules for manual and motorized skateboards, motorized platforms with handle-bars, gyroscopes, etc.? Require lighting at night? Reflective clothing/ Helmets? Complete Streets require individual responsibility.

p. 64 Driving

Challenges with Speeding and Distracted Driving

Add: Investigate reducing actual or perceived drive lane widths (naturally reduces speeds) and eliminating visual pollution / signage that is unnecessarily distracting.

p. 64 Parking

Land Use . . .

Add:” Consider allowing building development above surface parking lots.”

p.65 Policies and Actions

Is there the potential for adding back a Yellow Line stop in south Evanston if it was part of a significant higher density TOD? Creates another walkable neighborhood in an area of Evanston that could use one.

p. 67 Chapter 7 Enhance Biking Infrastructure

Add: ”Encourage the deployment of centralized, congregate bicycle parking areas with amenities such as protective canopies, air-pumps, tools, lighting. Utilize abandoned street parking spaces if possible.”

p. 72 Chapter 8 Environment – Introduction

Policy 1 – Add: Evaluate whether existing storm-water systems are capable of handling the inevitable 100 year rain storms that will dump inches of water / hour over many hours.

p. 77

Add: ENV 7.6 – Recommend typical parkway treatments that improve resiliency, water management, diversity, etc. What plant species or ground treatments are most advised?

p. 85 Just because an item has reached the end of its estimated useful life, does not mean that it necessarily has. Triage. City budgets have seldom been established to properly maintain amenities that are often acquired by funds other than our city’s own. E.g. decorative stone walls and related plantings along Green-Bay Road.

p. 90 Chapter 10 – Housing

Policy 1 Statement “Increase housing supply and expand housing options, particularly for under served, more economically challenged demographics.”

Paragraph below spreadsheet

Prioritizing housing that supports walkable neighborhoods as well.

p. 91 first paragraph – “ Although . . . through selective increased density, . . . focused growth in certain centers and corridors, transit nodes, mixed-use walkable neighborhoods”

p.93 Increase the Housing supply – What quantitatively is estimated to be needed across various demographics? Articulate examples of the most underserved people.

p. 95 H 2.8

Add: “Urban Design Commission would be engaged in this process and subsequent reviews.”

Add H 3.5 “Investigate potential renovations to particular single-family housing types that owners might employ that would result in additional units they might rent, e.g. basement apartments, second floors, converted attics, rear additions, ADU’s, etc. Include realtors, developers, contractors and designers.”

p. 100

Add: Policy Statement No. 6 – Encourage walkable neighborhoods.

p. 108 Chapter 12: Economic Development

Policy Statement No. 8 – encourage the addition of small grocery stores in walkable neighborhoods. Provide tax incentives?

Page 112

Econ 2.3 – Investigate rent control or subsidies for local businesses that may necessitate being relocated into new mixed-use buildings.

Page 113

Econ 4.2 – include façade improvements, awnings, signage.

Econ 4.4 – Gateways should be sparingly employed. They are frequently distracting. It is better to employ funds to make the district more identifiable and appealing from an urban design standpoint. Make it memorable. Accentuate its unique or idiosyncratic nature.

Econ 4.6 Add; Such as façade improvements, reducing visual pollution of errant awnings, poor signage, better merchandising, better lighting.

Add: Econ 4.7 Murals should be employed selectively. Consider their employment more as pieces of artwork than wall paintings. Investigate their applications on large panels that are mounted to wall surfaces, like paintings in a gallery, vs. graffiti. This method also allows them to change locations, improving their exposure. In addition, it allows them to be created in an enclosed space protected from the weather. A “mural” just off of the public square in Woodstock IL has employed such a technique.

There is an additional, significant contributor to quality urban environments. Good signage. This is not addressed at all in the Comp Plan, at least not anywhere I can find. Evanston used to have a viable Signage Ordinance and a Sign Review Commission. Look at any high-quality mixed-use neighborhood in the NorthShore and there is an obvious attention to good signage and related graphics.

On individual buildings signage locations and awnings are standardized, respecting and highlighting the building's unique façade, reducing the visual pollution of each tenant attempting to grab attention from the other. Glazed storefronts that allow you to peer into the establishment or view the attractive window merchandising without obnoxious sale signage or taped on notices from a myriad of individuals. Street signage that is able to be properly deciphered at vehicle and walking speeds and does not proliferate your overall visual experience. Creative use of flag signs and sandwich boards.

We are spending extensive sums of federally granted money for Placemaking and creative lighting of railroad overpasses. Can some of this money be used to assist/require owners of retail/commercial buildings and bridges to improve their appearance? Or improve the appearance of the adjacent public walkway? There is no sense in identifying a place or district if it has such low design integrity that it is not worthy of your attention. And frequently these means of identification / branding create their own unattractive visually polluting objects. Ideally, the urban design and appearance of a place should impress upon you that you have arrived at some place special, vs. a big sign or gate telling you that you have.

My humble opinions

Thank you to the consultants, staff, the public and you, the LUC for your devotion to this task.

Dave Galloway