

## Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Wally Bobkiewicz, City Manager  
Martin Lyons, Assistant City Manager  
Economic Development Staff

Subject: 2015 Third Quarter Report

Date: October 28, 2015

### Executive Summary

The summer months that make up the third quarter are typically a busy time for Evanston businesses, as construction and new business openings heat up, and 2015 was no exception, with **27 new businesses** opening between July 1 and September 30, including two new grocery stores.



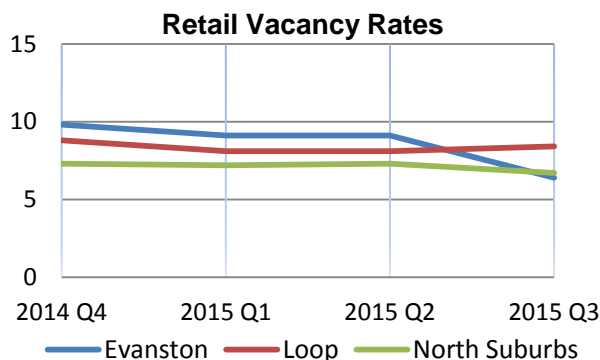
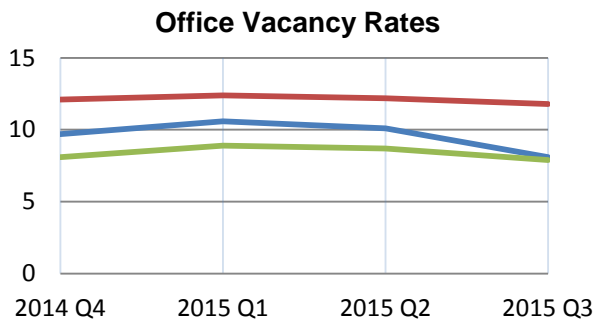
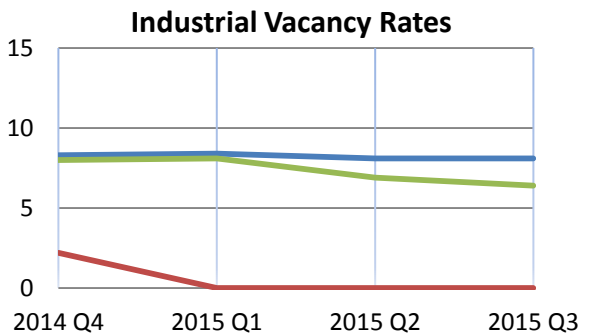
Evanston's restaurant scene continues to earn the attention of local and national press, including Time Out Chicago, Midwest Diner, and Chicago Magazine. In September, the ***New York Times*** also published a "Where to Eat and Drink in Evanston" feature as part of the paper's Travel section. Evanston restaurants also dominated ***Make it Better Magazine's*** annual "Best of the

**North Shore**" reader's poll, which saw 25 Evanston businesses take top honors in their respective categories.

Just in time for back-to-school season, Shanghai-based Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) named Northwestern University among the **world's top 25 universities for engineering and computer science**. Evanston also landed the **#24 spot on NerdWallet's list of the Most Educated Places in America**, and Niche.com named **Evanston #2 on its list of Best Places to Raise a Family in Illinois**.

## New Businesses

The highly-anticipated openings of **Valli Produce** and Evanston's third **Whole Foods** drew large crowds on back-to-back weeks in July, but the two were among **27 new businesses** opened between July 1 and September 30. In Evanston Plaza, Valli Produce was joined by a new **AT&T Store** and **Play it Again Sports**, which began purchasing secondhand sports equipment in September ahead of its October grand opening. Work is also currently underway on an expansion of **Dance Center Evanston**, which is expanding its footprint in Evanston Plaza. Evanston's restaurant scene continued its expansion with the openings **Kefi Greek Tavern**, **the Funky Monk**, and **La Principal**, which opened in the former Lupita's space on Main Street in late September. **Bake 425 Pizza** also opened this summer in a space left vacant by the closing of HomeMade Pizza Company on Chicago Avenue. In Downtown Evanston, two new office users opened their doors, including the **Midwest College of Oriental Medicine** and translation firm **Multilingual Connections**.



### 2015 Q3 New Business Openings:

- Nielsen's Fine Laundry – 1920 Harrison St.
- Phora Group – 1123 Emerson St.
- KG International – 1326 Dodge Ave.
- Evanston Stitchworks – 1234 Sherman Ave.
- Cultivate Urban Rainforest – 704 Main St.
- Bake 425 – 1301 Chicago Ave.
- Bake 425 – 2122 Central St.
- Valli Produce – 1908 Dempster St.
- Whole Foods – 2748 Green Bay Rd.
- At&t – 1908 Dempster St.
- Multilingual Connections – 828 Davis St.
- Collage Café – 912 Sherman Ave.
- The Funky Monk – 618 Church St.
- Kefi Greek Tavern – 1014 Church St.
- Sprint – 1701 Sherman Ave.
- Play it Again Sports – 1908 Dempster St.
- Chicago Northside Storage – 2020 Greenwood St.
- Midwest College of Oriental Medicine – 1601 Sherman Ave
- Master Wireless Team – 331 Howard St
- Amanecer Breakfast Tacos - (mobile)
- La Principal – 704 Main St.
- Herbertte – 1309 Chicago Ave.
- Dragonfly (new location) – 1501 Chicago Ave.
- Grazia Studio & Boutique – 624 Grove St.
- DK Production Design - 1715 Church St.
- Hackstudio – 2510 Green Bay Rd.

## Construction & Revenue

Summer is always a busy time for new construction projects, particularly at Northwestern University, which pulled permits for **\$5.1 million** in new construction and facility renovations. An estimated total of **\$89.4 million** in construction projects throughout the city yielded over **\$1.5 million in permit fees**.

Work on the **Main + Chicago** mixed-use development was among the largest commercial construction permits issued during the third quarter of 2015. As work continued at Main + Chicago, the developers announced that two of the ground floor retail spaces in the building have been leased to **First Bank & Trust** and the first suburban location of **Goddess and the Baker**. The building is expected to be completed in summer 2016.

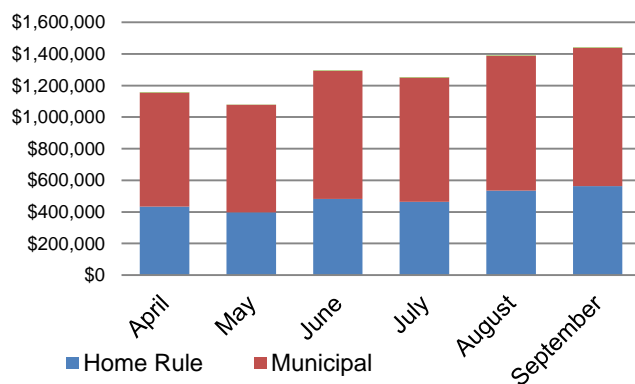


*Groundbreaking at Quad Indoor Sports.*

Work also began at **Quad Indoor Sports**, which is expected to open in December 2015 and will offer year-round fitness and sports programming on 4 indoor turf fields.

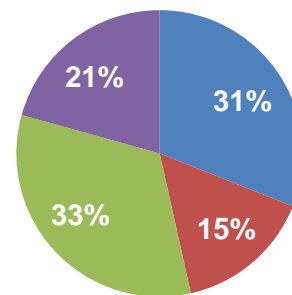
Sales tax disbursements from the State of Illinois grew throughout the third quarter. Increases in August and September sales tax revenue are likely due at least in part to the openings of Valli Produce and Whole Foods. Home Rule Sales Tax for July, August, and September of 2015 were also consistently higher than they were during the same period in 2014.

**2015 Sales Tax Disbursements**



**Q3 Construction Spending By Category**

■ Office ■ Food ■ Retail ■ Healthcare



## Workforce Development & Entrepreneurship

There were several exciting announcements and developments in entrepreneurship and workforce development during the summer months, offering new opportunities and programs. In September, **Sunshine Enterprises** came to Evanston to hold an info session for its Community Business Academy, which will begin offering classes in Evanston this fall. The 12-week program provides business training to new and aspiring entrepreneurs in underserved communities.



*The Garage “innovation incubator” space at Northwestern University.*

Northwestern University celebrated the opening of **The Garage**, an 11,000 square foot “innovation incubator” on the lakefront campus, naming Silicon Valley veteran Melissa Crouse director of the center, which will offer entrepreneurship and technology programming to Northwestern students. For younger would-be entrepreneurs, the recently-opened **Hackstudio** on Green Bay Road will offer space and a structured program to pursue projects of their own choosing.

**Curt’s Café** continued its expansion with the beginning of its **La Taqueria** dinner service, a collaboration with Innovasi chef John des Rosiers which will continue the restaurants’ job training mission by offering Mexican-themed dinner service at the Central Street restaurant. Meals will be prepared by graduates of the existing culinary training program at Curt’s Café.

Northwestern University celebrated the opening of **The Garage**, an 11,000 square foot “innovation

From July through September, the **NextChapter** program at the Evanston Public Library hosted **2 small business workshops**; one using research database ReferenceUSA and another on insurance. About 18 current or would-be entrepreneurs attended the two events.

