

## **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TOP ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO CONSIDER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING**

- ❑ In planning, don't think about Evanston in isolation, but rather consider the broader metropolitan area and region.
- ❑ Also think globally - our business community is made up of businesses whose customers are in the immediate area and business whose customers are global (everywhere).

*Consider.* How will we attract and retain the necessary talent for these businesses in the future?

- ❑ Don't try to be everything to everyone – focus, prioritize, build on what we do best.
- ❑ Land use and how Evanston balances density with need to generate property taxes to support services and create affordable housing. Also, the way we make decisions about aesthetic considerations.
- ❑ Innovations in the delivery and financing of government and education services. This could range from selling sponsorships of public assets and the sale/leasing of public assets (i.e., Chicago Skyway) to seeking exemptions from unfunded mandates and the regionalization of pooling of services.
- ❑ Demographic changes in Evanston and how the community is preparing (or not) for those changes, particularly senior citizens.
- ❑ Governance in Evanston. Are the systems and procedures we have in place most effective to govern this complex community? I'm not talking so much about the city manager system as: the balance between staff responsibility, citizen input, and elected officials; timely decision-making; and oversight vs. independence.
- ❑ Workforce of the future. What are the likely quality jobs that will be attracted to Evanston? Can Evanston market its human capital and successfully attract and retain smart and talented people?

- Leadership development. Can the city's institutions connect people so the diverse network of talent is empowered to contribute and build leadership capacity?
- Marketing Evanston. The need for a coordinated strategy that involves many organizations and institutions to exploit Evanston's qualities and strengths. Special focus on arts/culture.
- Regional relationships. Pay attention to what is happening in the region that has a profound impact on Evanston, including: organizations such as Metropolis 2020, governmental entities like the RTA, state funding of education, and federal research \$.
- Transportation and other infrastructure. Can we get more employees and residents on to public transportation? Parking is, perhaps, more of a perception and information challenge than supply. How can we best utilize existing assets, amenity for businesses, visitors, and residents? The relationship between transportation corridors, housing, and jobs.
- Education/training. How can a diverse community like Evanston manage to create outcomes that will prepare young people for the jobs of tomorrow and higher education opportunities of today, given the current funding constraints?