



THE CITY OF EVANSTON

Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan

JANUARY 2026





Acknowledgments

Leadership Committee

- Audrey Thompson, Director, Parks and Recreation
- Edgar Cano, Public Works Agency Director
- Michael Callahan, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation
- Matt Poole, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation
- Lara Biggs, Capital Planning and Engineering Bureau Chief, Public Works Agency
- Noel Rodriguez, Public Services Bureau Chief
- Stephen Walker, Greenways Supervisor
- Stefanie Levine, Senior Project Manager, Parks and Facilities, Public Works Agency
- Emily Okallau, Public Services Coordinator, Public Works Agency

Consulting Team

- Agency Landscape + Planning (Prime)
- Resource Environmental Solutions, LLC (Ecology and Maintenance)
- Recreation Results (Recreation Programming)
- ETC Institute (Community Survey)

Thank you to the many residents who guided plan recommendations by participating in surveys, sending emails, attending public meetings, and participating in small plan discussions.



Table of Contents

Introduction	6
Plan Process	12
Existing Conditions	24
Strategic Plan	60
Implementation	96
Appendix	105



1



INTRODUCTION

The Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan will guide the City of Evanston's planning of parks, facilities, and open spaces for the next ten years. The plan is a joint effort between the Parks and Recreation Department and the Public Works Agency. This plan will provide the City with a critical tool to achieve its ambitious vision to be the most livable city in America.

Introduction

The **Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan** is a tool the City of Evanston Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Agency will use to guide their management practices, capital investment priorities, and overall strategy for the next ten years. The last comprehensive strategic plan for Evanston Parks & Recreation was completed in 2001. In 2016, it was amended by the Parks Scorecard, which assessed the nearly 100 publicly owned open spaces in Evanston, evaluated trends, and gathered community and stakeholder input to develop ratings and recommendations. In recent years, the Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Agency who jointly manage Evanston's open spaces, and the Parks and Recreation Board, which provides direction and advice on all parks, playgrounds, facilities and recreation planning, design, maintenance, and programs as ordained by City Code Section 7-9-1 et seq,

have identified the need for a more strategic approach to how investment and resources are prioritized.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Evanston's parks system, like many around the country, has seen a substantial increase in usage that existing maintenance practices struggle to keep up with. Many of Evanston's legacy parks have not been renovated in over 25 years: amidst rapidly evolving community needs and climate priorities, the City is looking to transform its Capital Improvement Program strategy for parks, recreation, and natural resources to better anticipate the future.

Evanston is a diverse and well connected city that is positioning itself as a leader on progressive issues. In 2019, Evanston became the first U.S. city to commit to reparations for housing discrimination. The City set serious



How to read this document

climate goals in the 2018 Climate Action Resilience Plan, including goals to “prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable while combating climate change.” Like its residents, Evanston’s open spaces are diverse. The City is blessed with unique landscapes, from its Lake Michigan shoreline, to the North Shore Channel, to a robust network of parks. Evanston aspires to be the “most livable city in America”; to do so, it must transform an under-performing public realm into one of its most important assets.

The Evanston Parks and Recreation Department, the Parks and Recreation Board, and Public Works Agency will use the plan that follows to:

- develop the parks and recreation system’s capital investment program (CIP)
- apply for grants
- prioritize investments in infrastructure and amenities
- develop programming based on community needs and trends
- develop new strategies for the maintenance and care of natural lands

The plan study area covers Evanston’s 266 acres of city green spaces, including all city parks, parks the City manages (but does not own), and all outdoor facilities in those spaces (like playgrounds and open air pavilions). Indoor facilities are not included in the plan. Within Evanston city limits are Ridgeville and Lighthouse park districts (and Skokie park district to the west), one County-owned park, and many school district properties. While not the focus of this study, the plan touches on these due to their critical relationship with Evanston’s parks and recreation system.

The Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan is a ten-year strategic framework for Evanston’s parks, programs, and natural lands. At its core are a vision and five overarching goals. Each goal is supported by strategies and actions that chart the course to achieve them. The components that make up the strategic framework are designed to be flexible in order to support strategic decision making for the next decade while adapting to the evolving needs of the City of Evanston, its staff, and the Evanston community.

In the Strategic Plan section of the document, actions are not listed in order of priority, however any actions that were identified by the Evanston community and the City of Evanston as important to implement are highlighted as priority actions. Those actions should be considered first as part of this plan’s implementation.

LIST OF PARKS IN EVANSTON

1) Ackerman		33) Fullerton	LPD	65) McCormick (north)	L
2) Alexander		34) Garden		66) McCulloch	
3) Baker		35) Gilbert		67) Megowen	
4) Bates	L	36) Grandmother		68) Merrick Rose Garden	
5) Beck	L	37) Grey		69) Monroe	
6) Bent		38) Grosse Point Lighthouse	LPD	70) Morris	
7) Brummel Park	R	39) Harbert-Payne	L	71) North East	LPD
8) Brummel Richmond		40) Harper		72) Oldberg	
9) Burnham Shores		41) Hinman		73) Patriots	
10) Butler	L	42) Hobart		74) Penny	
11) Cartwright		43) Howell		75) Perkins Woods	C
12) Centennial		44) Independence		76) Perry	
13) Chandler		45) Ingraham		77) Philbrick	
14) Channelside	S	46) James		78) Play Lot	R
15) Clark Square		47) Kamen East	R	79) Pooch	S
16) Clyde-Brummel		48) Kamen West	R	80) Porter	
17) Congregational		49) Kay Lee Tot Lot	R	81) Quinlan	
18) Crown		50) Kelly		82) Raymond	
19) Currey		51) Ladd Arboretum (left)	L	83) Reba	R
20) Dawes		52) Ladd Arboretum (right)	L	84) Ridgeville	R
21) Dobson/Brummel		53) Lake-Dodge		85) Sargent	
22) Eggleston	L	54) Larimer		86) Smith	
23) Eiden		55) Lawson		87) Snyder	
24) Elks	R	56) Leah Lomar		88) South Blvd	
25) Elks Play Lot	R	57) Leahy		89) Southwest	
26) Ellingwood		58) Leider	R	90) St. Paul	
27) Elliott		59) Levinson		91) Stockham	
28) Emerson Square		60) Lighthouse Landing		92) Tallmadge	
29) Firefighters's		61) Lovelace		93) Torgerson	
30) Fitzsimons		62) Lunt		94) Trahan	
31) Foster Field	L	63) Mason		95) Twiggs	
32) Fountain Square		64) McCormick (south)	L		

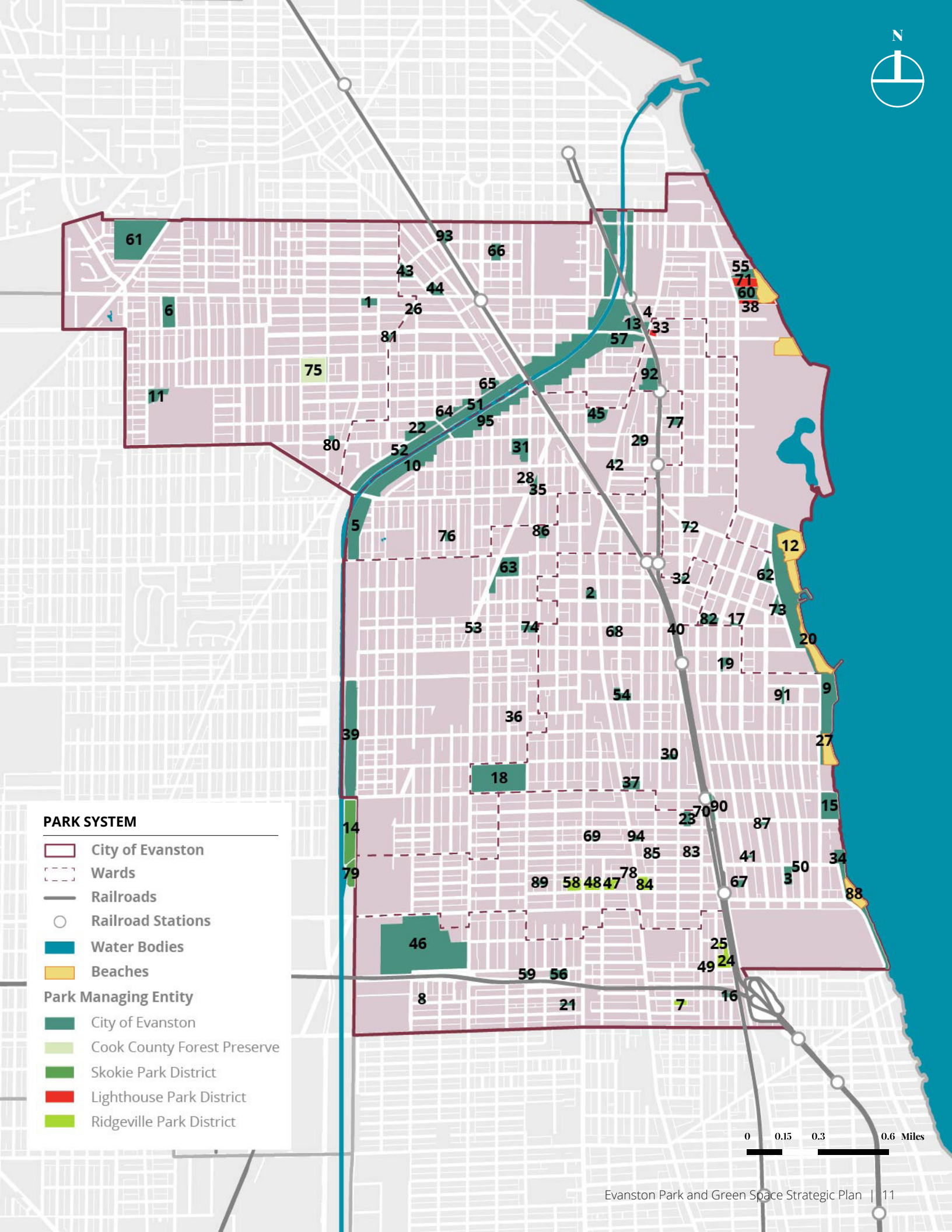
PARK OWNERSHIP IF NOT CITY OF EVANSTON

C	Cook County
S	Skokie
LPD	Lighthouse Park District
R	Ridgeville Park District
L	MWRDGC



PARK SYSTEM

- City of Evanston
- Wards
- Railroads
- Railroad Stations
- Water Bodies
- Beaches
- Park Managing Entity**
 - City of Evanston
 - Cook County Forest Preserve
 - Skokie Park District
 - Lighthouse Park District
 - Ridgeville Park District





2



PLAN PROCESS

The development of the Parks and Green Spaces Strategic Plan was completed over the course of 15 months. The process was a close collaboration between City staff, internal and external stakeholders, and the Evanston community, who were involved through a variety of methods, including open houses, a survey using random sampling, and virtual and on-site focus groups.



Project Timeline

Evanston Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan is the result of a 15-month collaborative process that engaged people from across the City, including residents, City staff, and visitors. Community engagement played a pivotal role in shaping the project timeline, ensuring that the needs of the community were actively sought and thoughtfully reflected throughout the planning effort.

The planning process unfolded across three distinct phases:

1 Set the stage

To explore Evanston's unique parks and green space system, the initial phase included a review of relevant previous planning studies, discussions with the staff leadership team, a community survey, and a public engagement plan.

2 Assess needs and values

In the second phase, the planning team gathered both qualitative and quantitative information to better understand the quality of existing parks and green spaces and access to those spaces from surrounding neighborhoods. The efforts included conducting a thorough inventory of parks and facilities, analyzing community and national trends, assessing community needs and level of service. The results of these analyses were informed and validated through public and staff review and comment.

3 Craft the plan and management briefs

Building on community input, the final phase established a vision, goals, and strategies for the plan. An implementation strategy and management briefs were created to identify priority projects and policy recommendations that address critical needs and goals identified through internal and external community input. Through thorough documentation, review processes, and approvals, these collective efforts culminated in the creation of the Evanston Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan.



2022

2023

2024

2025

SET THE STAGE

- Project Kickoff
- Prior Plan Review
- Park System Inventory
- Research and Analysis

ASSESS NEEDS AND VALUES

- Community Needs Survey
- Stakeholder Focus Groups
- Community Needs assessment
- Conditions Assessment
- Public Workshop #1

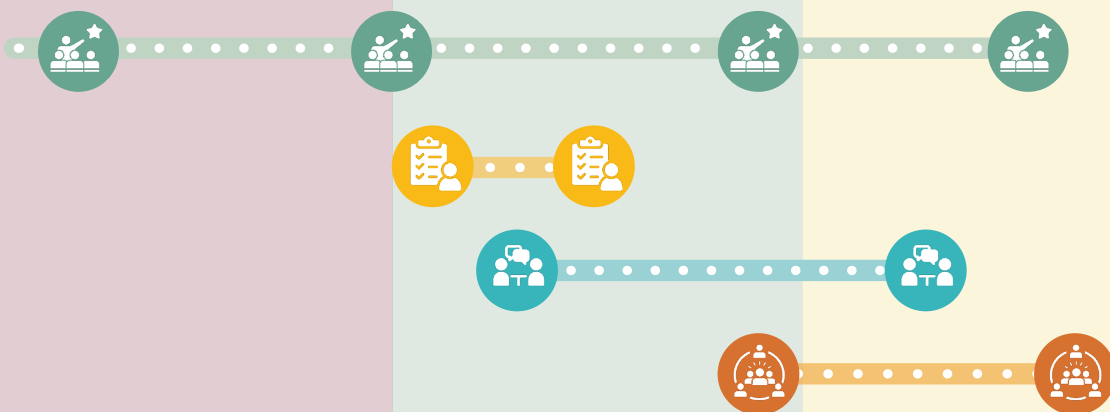
CRAFT THE PLAN + MANAGEMENT BRIEFS

- Vision and goals
- Implementation Workshop
- Draft Strategic Plan Report
- Management Briefs
- Public Workshop #2
- An implementation plan
- Management briefs for major restoration projects

DRAFT AND FINAL PLAN

- Draft Plan creation
- Draft Plan public review

FINAL PLAN APPROVALS AT THE BEGINNING OF 2026



5 Leadership Staff Meetings



469 Community Needs Survey Responses



18 Focus Group Meetings



3 Public Workshops

Community Engagement Process

The plan was developed with extensive community and City involvement at each of the three key project milestones described above. To ensure the planning effort received and reflected feedback from a broad range of perspectives, a variety of tactics were employed throughout the community engagement process. Those methods are described in more detail below:

Focus Group Meetings

Focus group meetings occurred during Spring 2023. These were a combination of virtual and in-person conversations with interest-based affinity groups. Topical experts at all levels served as great resources and provided insights to guide strategy and recommendation development on a wide range of specific issues. During the engagement process, a total of 18 focus group meetings took place, covering the following topics:

ON-SITE CONVERSATIONS

- Equity/access
- Donors
- Stewards
- Environmental
- Sports
- Art/culture
- Ridgeville Park District
- Outdoor maintenance/greenways
- Reservation system
- Facilities
- Recreation management
- Business district

VIRTUAL CONVERSATIONS

- Summer youth employees
- Seniors
- Summer Camp Kids and Teenage Counselors



Public Workshops

The public had multiple chances to contribute their insights and collectively shape the plan at various milestones during the development process. In August and October of 2023, the planning team organized two public workshops to enhance in-person engagement with the community. Residents were encouraged to engage in interactive games, such as mapping activities and comment boards, fostering opportunities for both open-ended and targeted feedback. In total, 150 participants actively attended the workshops, generating a wealth of 500 ideas and comments. This substantial input played a pivotal role in significantly shaping the development of the plan.

Community Needs Survey

The Community Needs Survey was a statistically valid survey, which means it was a randomly distributed survey large enough to accurately represent the population being surveyed in terms of race, age, gender, and

residence. The purpose of this survey was to gather feedback regarding park, facility, and program priorities, as well as identify barriers and unmet needs within the local community. The Community Needs Survey was distributed to a randomly selected sample of Evanston residents, and it was made available in both English and Spanish to ensure inclusion. In May 2023, a total of 469 surveys were gathered with a precision of at least +/- 4.5 at the 95% level of confidence. This approach provided an important dataset that mirrored the demographic composition of the entire city, providing a well-rounded perspective on various issues across the parks and green space system in Evanston.



18

focus group meetings

90+

participants



3

public workshops

150+

participants



3

months of survey

469

responses





Key Themes

A well-used and well-loved system

The parks and green space system in Evanston receive overall community support. According to the Community Needs Survey, 98% of residents having visited a park in the past year, surpassing the national average of 76%. This sentiment is consistently echoed in various conversations with the community, reflecting a deep appreciation for the system.

Uneven conditions and outdated facilities

Despite the City's rich offering of parks, the system grapples with issues of uneven quality and outdated amenities. Community members, expressing a shared concern, have emphasized the need for enhanced park infrastructure and focus on daily maintenance, making it a top priority. Survey respondents highlighted improving existing park infrastructure as the most crucial improvement, underscoring frequent mentions during focus group discussions and public workshops regarding outdated restrooms, water fountains, and pathways.



A desire for more natural experience

Natural experience are at a premium in a dense community like Evanston. The community survey, workshops, and focus group conversations all reinforced a consistent desire for more places to experience nature. Survey results indicate that naturalized landscapes, trees, and habitats rank high among residents' priorities. Beyond the survey, community members consistently express a yearning for additional places to enjoy naturalized landscapes, environmental programming, and spaces for natural play.

Water access and cooling facilities

With Lake Michigan to the east and the North Shore Channel running north-south through the City, it comes as no surprise that many conversations with residents focused on water and water access. Beaches and waterfront supporting facilities emerge as the number one priority for facility investment according to the community survey. Indoor and outdoor pools, along with aquatic programming, also rank high in the community's wishlist for enhanced recreational facilities.

Inclusion and access

Residents shared a variety of barriers that limited their participation in programs and park spaces. Chief among them was limited time and lack of awareness. Financial and physical constraints limit some residents' ability to engage with the City's parks and participate in programs. During focus group conversations with youth and senior residents, the community has expressed a shared desire for more inclusive programs and accessible facilities that cater to individuals of all ages and abilities, emphasizing the importance of diversity and accessibility in Evanston's park system.



Related Plans

The City and volunteer groups have crafted and deployed many management plans already. Evanston has been consistently working on different planning projects to ensure that it continues to meet community needs. The management plans included in this document build on that work and focus on the open spaces with significant existing or opportunities for significant naturalized landscape restoration and preservation.

This strategic plan was built upon the efforts of several planning projects:

2000: CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2000 and is currently undergoing an update that began in 2023. The City Comprehensive Plan includes recommendations to ensure City parks and recreation facilities are high quality and accessible to all residents. The plan also includes goals to increase the number of parks, but acknowledges the limited land available for new parks. The plan also recommends ongoing maintenance for lakefront parks, the canal, and recreational amenities.

2001: PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN

The Parks Plan proposed major renovations to the Robert Crown Center, construction of new basketball courts, renovation and irrigation of fields, and renovations to 14 park areas. The plan found significant maintenance issues with both indoor and outdoor facilities and proposed improvements throughout the system.

2007: LADD ARBORETUM MASTER PLAN

The Ladd Arboretum Master Plan was created to respond to deferred maintenance of the grounds and the building, policy and governance needs for the Arboretum and the need for standards for stewarding the Arboretum grounds.

2008: LAKEFRONT MASTER PLAN

To preserve and enhance the lakefront park system, the plan sought to address signs of overuse, environmental considerations, such as LEED ratings and “Dark Sky” lighting, and accessibility improvements. It emphasized creating a welcoming, visually accessible space along Lake Michigan.



Citywide & Regional Planning



Social & Environmental Resilience



Parks & Streets



Lakefront



Transportation

2014: BIKE PLAN UPDATE

Building on the City's efforts to upgrade and expand the cycling network to attract more riders in Evanston, the plan found that while the network had grown substantially since the previous plan in 2003, many corridors needed safety and comfort improvements. Recommendations were also made to enhance connectivity, especially to major destinations.

2016: PARKS SCORECARD

The Open Space Score Card for Evanston was prepared through an extensive survey of community priorities, demographic trends, and rigorous field inspections of public open spaces in 2016. Recommendations included addressing infrastructure and maintenance issues, developing signage standards, improving drinking fountains, enhancing restroom facilities, and addressing playground equipment deterioration.

2017: COMPLETE AND GREEN STREETS POLICY

Ranked among the best in the nation by Smart Growth America, Evanston Complete and Green Streets policy aims to enable safe and convenient movement across all transportation modes regardless of age or capability. The policy created an implementation framework to ensure the policy was incorporated into all new projects.

2019: CLIMATE ACTION AND RESILIENCE PLAN (CARP)

Evanston faces numerous environmental challenges such as intense storms, invasive species, and temperature increases. The CARP aims for carbon neutrality by 2050, 100% clean and renewable electricity by 2030, zero waste by 2050, and emphasizes both climate mitigation and resilience efforts. The goal of zero combined sewer overflows through increased green infrastructure mitigation is especially salient to this work.





2019: STREETLIGHT MASTER PLAN

The first streetlight study since 1979, the plan evaluated the 107 individual lighting systems that control approximately 6,000 lighting units throughout the City and made recommendations to establish more uniform standards, improve energy efficiency, and leverage smarter monitoring systems.



2019: STORMWATER MASTER PLAN

Completed in 2019, the plan assessed the City sewer system's performance and identified capital improvements. The study evaluated potential sewer surcharge risks during storm events, recommending stormwater management actions, including regulatory updates and public system enhancements. Proposed improvements would address localized flooding and underperforming sewers, emphasizing green infrastructure for resilience and environmental benefits. The plan also suggests expanding water level monitoring for enhanced data acquisition.



2020: THE NATURAL AREAS ORDINANCE

Ord. No. 78-O-20, § 1, adopted January 11, 2021, changed the title of Chapter 10 from "City parks" to "City parks and natural areas." Natural Areas as used in the Title are public lands that are managed to provide habitat or diverse, regionally native plant and animal communities and associated benefits for humans.



2022: EVANSTON ADA TRANSITION PLAN

A strategic initiative aimed at improving access for individuals with disabilities to City programs, services, parks, facilities, and public right-of-way. It focused on eliminating potential barriers that might hinder participation in the City's cultural and economic activities. The Plan sought to enhance accessibility and to instill a citywide culture of inclusivity by prioritizing ADA access.



2022: EVANSTON PROCESS FOR THE LOCAL ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS

EPLAN, the Evanston Project for the Local Assessment of Needs, was a five-year strategic initiative led by the City of Evanston Health and Human Services Department in collaboration with the Evanston Health Advisory Council. Engaging residents, community leaders, and health professionals, EPLAN identified and prioritized health concerns, resulting in a comprehensive plan with targeted interventions and community-driven strategies to enhance public health in Evanston.

2023: EVANSTON THRIVES

Aiming to chart a course to reviving Evanston's struggling commercial and retail districts, the final adopted plan revised the former downtown plan, including a form-based code pilot study, zoning recommendations, an updated real estate market analysis, and a limited parking utilization study.

ONGOING: EVANSTON SHORELINE REPAIRS

Focused on Evanston's lakefront, this comprehensive initiative aimed to implement long-term capital improvements along the City of Evanston-owned shoreline. Emergency Lakefront Stabilization work in 2020 addressed urgent erosion issues; the City is now in a preliminary design phase for immediate shoreline improvement at various lakefront parks.



*Evanston
Park and
Green
Space Plan*



3



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Evanston's existing parks system will need to evolve to meet the needs of its growing and diversifying population. To understand what exists today, the team conducted research in three parts and analyzed how well what exists is or is not meeting the needs of Evanston's current and future population. This included a detailed inventory and evaluation of existing parks and facilities (including peer comparison and population analysis), an ecological evaluation of existing habitat health (including analysis of the lakeshore), and a deep dive into recreation and programming offerings (including financial health and overall performance).

CITY HISTORY

The City of Evanston, nestled on the shores of Lake Michigan, boasts a rich history that has played a pivotal role in shaping its present character and culture. While the City of Evanston historically was characterized by the creation and cultivation of new parks, open spaces, and facilities, as the City has grown and costs of land become increasingly expensive, the evolution of new parks and green spaces has been replaced with reinvestment of existing parks and spaces.

Early Settlement and the Founding of

Evanston: Evanston was first settled in the 1830s, and it was officially incorporated as a town in 1863. Early residents recognized the importance of open spaces and began setting aside land for parks even in these early days.

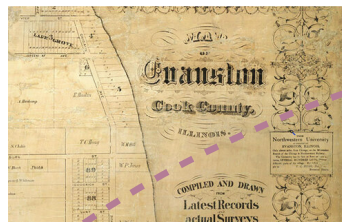
Early Parks and the Formation of the Park

Board: In the late 19th century, Evanston's leaders established several small parks, including Fountain Square and Davis Street Park. In 1894, the Evanston Park Board was officially created to oversee the development and maintenance of the town's parks.

Spaces for Gathering for Equality: The City has a rich tradition of fostering progressive ideals, particularly in relation to women's rights and the temperance movement. Notable figures like Frances Willard, a prominent leader in the women's suffrage movement, have left lasting legacies in Evanston. The City was a pioneer in the prohibition movement, becoming a dry community in 1858, preceding the national prohibition era. Various green spaces and parks within the City, such as Cornelia Lunt Park, Harbert-Payne Park, Butler Park, Reba Park, McCulloch Park, and Stockham Place Park, have been dedicated to commemorating the contributions of influential women.

1863

The city was incorporated after Northwestern opened its doors in 1855



1870s

Economic and population boom brought by the railroad



Early Days of Public Recreation: Evanston's beaches were not always considered desirable destinations: in the early 1900s, they were poorly maintained and suffered from relatively unrestrained waste dumping in Lake Michigan. Evanston's beaches, like many public places, were segregated and policed to restrict use and access by Evanston's growing black population. As the century went on, however, the waterfront was becoming increasingly accessible to white residents: new public facilities sprouted up, cleanup efforts began, and by 1912, "bathing beaches" were all the rage. Policing of access by race, however, became a defining factor of Evanston's waterfront. While not legally segregated,

"beach guards" were empowered to police who was and was not allowed on the beach: this de facto social enforcement (despite the lack of explicit segregation laws), intensified as the popularity of beach recreation grew. In the 1930s formal restrictions on beach access were passed that required residents to pay a fee to use city beaches.

Civil Rights and Desegregation: In the mid-20th century, Evanston, like many other communities, faced issues related to civil rights and integration. The park system played a role in addressing these challenges by providing spaces for community gatherings and events that promoted inclusion and diversity.

1890s

Pioneering city in women rights and prohibition movement



1900s

Lincoln Street Beach in 1936, around the time when the city started requiring beach tokens



1876

Fountain Square as one of the earliest parks in Evanston



Harbert-Payne Park named in honor of female activists

CITY HISTORY

Charles Gates Dawes and His Impact: One of the most significant figures in the history of Evanston's park system was Charles Gates Dawes, who served as the U.S. Vice President under Calvin Coolidge from 1925 to 1929. Dawes was a resident of Evanston and a strong advocate for parks and green spaces. He donated land and funds to create Dawes Park along the shores of Lake Michigan, which remains one of Evanston's most beautiful and prominent parks.

Expansion and Development: Over the years, Evanston continued to expand its park system, acquiring and developing new parkland. In 1935, the federal government decommissioned over 35 lighthouses throughout the country. Congress conveyed the Grosse Pointe Lighthouse grounds including the beach for public park purposes. The lighthouse itself was conveyed to Evanston by Act of Congress in 1941. Responsibility for the park went to the North East Park District and then to the City. To address the evolving recreational needs of residents in South Evanston, the Lighthouse Park District was formed in 1929, followed by the Ridgeville Park District in 1939.



1935

The federal government decommissioned over 35 lighthouses



1939

The Ridgeville Park District was formed

Modernization and Improvements: In recent decades, Evanston's park system has undergone some modernization efforts and improvements. Some parks have been renovated, and new amenities have been added to meet the changing needs and preferences of the community.

Sustainability and Conservation: Evanston has also placed a growing emphasis on sustainability and conservation within its park system. Initiatives include the planting of native species, the development of community gardens, and efforts to reduce the environmental impact of park facilities.

Recreation and Programming: The park system in Evanston provides a wide range of recreational opportunities for residents, including sports fields, playgrounds, tennis and pickleball courts, and cultural programs. Evanston's parks are often used for events, festivals, and community gatherings.

2018

Fleetwood-Jourdain Community Center renovation



2018

Fountain Square improvements



2020

Harbert-Payne Park improvements



2020

Completed in 2020, Robert Crown Community Center is Evanston's newest community center, offering a wide variety of recreation and programming

Stewardship of Open Space

The City of Evanston is dedicated to creating the most livable city in America. To realize this vision, many groups take stewardship of the variety of open spaces offered by Evanston. Here, we can see the roles these groups play.

City of Evanston

There are two main city departments that steward operations, management and maintenance of open spaces in Evanston.

Public Works Agency

The City of Evanston Public Works Agency is responsible for providing numerous services to Evanston community members. The Public Works Agency is made up of three bureaus (public services, capital planning and engineering, and water production) that focus on key areas within the City's operations. Under the public services bureau, the department is responsible for:

- the maintenance of City streets, alleys, and sidewalks; and
- forestry, refuse, recycling, and the maintenance of greenways and parks throughout the City

Parks and Recreation Department

The Parks and Recreation Department plays a critical role in creating opportunities to improve the overall quality of life for residents. The department is committed to enhancing the quality of life of all citizens by providing collaborative opportunities for the community to grow, learn, create and play. The department encompasses a number of open spaces like parks, playgrounds, facilities, beaches, an ice rink, and community gardens, all within the 7.8 square mile radius.



Parks and Recreation Board

According to the Evanston's municipal ordinance, the Parks and Recreation Board must:

- Perform the duties prescribed by 65 ILCS 5/11-91-1 et seq., as amended. Specifically, the Board must:
 1. Provide direction for the planning, design and maintenance of all playgrounds and recreational facilities owned and/or leased by the City of Evanston; and
 2. Provide direction for the development, supervision, and operation of all recreational programs and activities operated by the City of Evanston and/or its authorized affiliates
- Act in an advisory capacity to the City Council on the request for public place names, in accordance with the following standards:

1. The close association of the individual proposed with Evanston;
 2. A distinguished career in which high service has been rendered to or distinction brought to Evanston;
 3. A reasonable relationship between the importance of the place being named and the distinction of the person whose name it will bear;
 4. The condition imposed by the donor of lands or funds to be used in the public place; and
 5. No public place should be named after individuals deceased less than five (5) years except where a donation of land is made or an individual donor has contributed significantly for development of the public place
- Act in an advisory capacity to the City Council on the request to establish an honorary street name;
 - Create subcommittees, as necessary, in furtherance of the Board's purpose.

(Ord. No. 81-O-16, § 2, 7-25-2016, eff. 1-1-2017; Ord. No. 78-O-20, § 7, 1-11-2021)

City Council

The city council is focused on fostering development throughout the city. When it comes to open spaces, the council ensures that budgets are set for the operations and management of parks, playgrounds, other open spaces, and recreation centers. They also prioritize financial transparency, forecasting, and new revenue stream to ensure that the city can continue to maintain its inventory of open spaces.

Environment Board

According to the City of Evanston Municipal Ordinance, the role of the Environment Board is "to support Evanston's environmental goals of reducing and mitigating climate change impacts, increasing resource efficiency and protecting and restoring natural systems by investigating issues and developing recommendations for City Council, other Boards, Committees and Commissions and City Departments to meet Evanston's goals."

Volunteer Groups

Volunteers are very valuable in supporting the work done for the open spaces in Evanston. From conducting and managing special recreational events, to active involvement in helping fulfill programming needs, to maintaining the native landscape in natural areas in the city, volunteer groups are the backbone to successful open space management.



Community Snapshot

A Growing Population

Today, Evanston is a thriving community that serves as a home to 78,110 residents, according to the 2020 US Census. Demonstrating its unique beauty and strength, Evanston has witnessed nearly a 5% population growth over the last decade, equating to a total increase of 3,684 individuals. Anchored by Northwestern University, a top-tier academic institution, the City boasts a population of 16,000 full-time students.

As the community expands, it mirrors the national trend of increasing average age. Individuals of retirement age constituted 16.4% of the population in 2020, with this demographic continuing to grow. Simultaneously, teenagers and young children under 18 years old also contribute significantly to the community, comprising 19.1% of the population in 2020. This demographic diversity reflects Evanston's dynamic character and evolving population structure.

A Diversifying Community

Evanston, like many American cities, has a complex history tied to redlining that disproportionately impacted minority communities in certain neighborhoods. In recent decades, the City has seen efforts to actively address historical inequities and experienced a transformation. As part of this ongoing evolution, Evanston's population has become more diverse. According to 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, Evanston's population was approximately 61% white, 15% Black or African-American, 9% Asian, 11% multi-racial (two or more races), and about 4% identifying Native American or some other race. About 12% of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latino. This demographic distribution reflects a commitment to foster a more inclusive community and creating a city that embraces its diverse population.



5%

Population growth rate in the last decade



78,110

Population during US Census, 2020



16,000

Full-time students at Northwestern University

36.2

Median age

16.4%

of population 65 years and over

19.1%

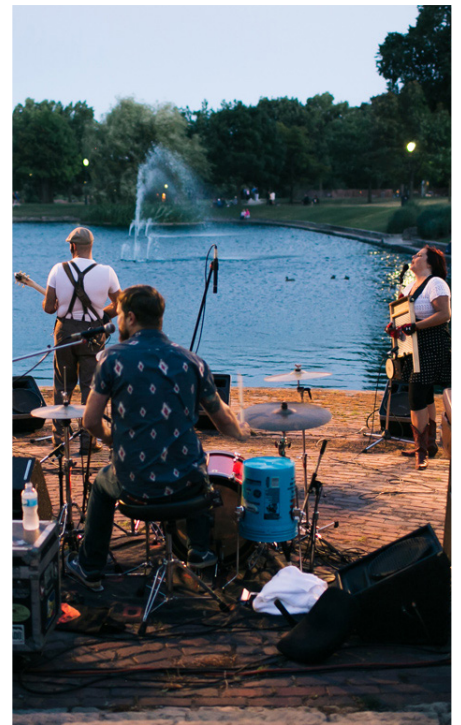
of population under 18 years

5.2%

population with a disability under age of 65 years

42%

of the population identify as people of color



PARKS AND FACILITIES



Dawes Park



Merrick Rose Garden



Penny Park



Elliot Park

It is critical to understand the existing network of Evanston's open spaces, including the condition of parks and facilities, in order to drive future planning. To develop a robust understanding and assessment of existing parks and facilities, the team conducted an on-the-ground inventory alongside Parks and Recreation staff over the course of three days in December 2022. A detailed review of all parks, trails, natural lands, lakefront areas, and sports and recreation facilities resulted in both a complete quantitative inventory and a full evaluation using both quantitative and qualitative criteria. The inventory included fields, amenities (like playgrounds, lighting, and bike paths), furnishings (such as benches, trash receptacles, and drinking fountains), accessibility, and wayfinding. While on site, the team assessed the condition of each item inventoried using the following measurement criteria:

- **Excellent:** Parks and facilities within the first quartile of useful life. These had no visible defects (material/equipment condition or surfaces condition) and appeared updated or relatively new.
- **Good:** Park and facilities within 25-50% of useful life. These showed only minor defects or visible wear (material/equipment condition and surfaces condition) and only those that do not affect use.



Lighthouse Beach



Fountain Square

- **Fair:** These were at 50-100% of useful life and had a greater number of minor defects and visible wear (material/equipment condition and surfaces condition). Use was still possible, but affected.
- **Poor:** These were beyond useful life; parks and facilities with this rating had visible major defects or significant repair needed, were a safety concern, or displayed other conditions that limit their use like non-ADA compliance.

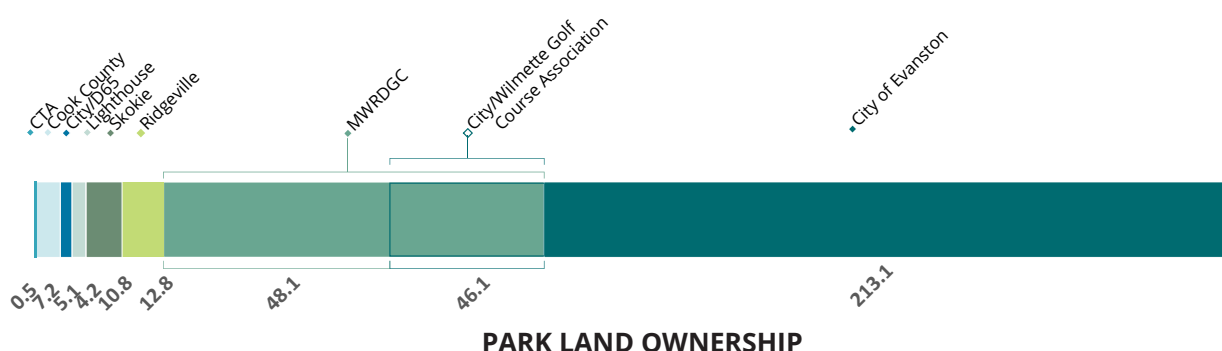
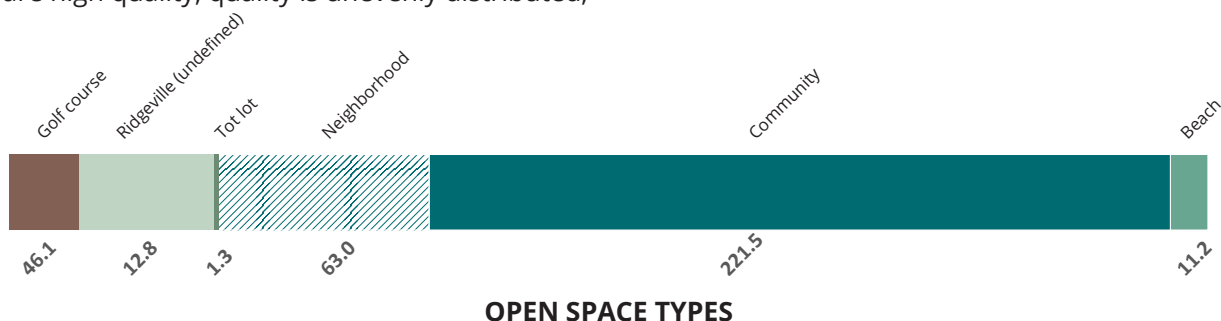
The rating for each element was determined by the lowest grade of any part. To ground truth our assessment of useful life and complete our condition analysis, the team gathered (where available) the installation or renovation year of all equipment, amenities, and facilities from the City of Evanston and determined useful life using the Illinois Department of Natural Resource's definitions for recreation facilities. ADA compliance was also evaluated based on the City's criteria and guidelines.

Evanston is a growing city with a vibrant and diverse population. The park system, spanning neighborhood and community parks, beaches, and community facilities, offers diverse recreational opportunities. While some facilities are high quality, quality is unevenly distributed,

and we found that two-thirds of facilities are in poor condition due to aging, highlighting the need for prioritized maintenance and increased funding for Evanston's relatively small Parks and Recreation team. An example is the Merrick Rose Garden, an award-winning park that experiences deterioration today.

Evanston residents enjoy a large portfolio of parks

Evanston has a community-centric park system, with the majority of its open space acreage serving at the community scale. Sixty three acres of open space are neighborhood parks, which are defined as featuring active recreation fields, facilities, natural areas, and playgrounds. Additionally, there are two hundred-twenty one acres designated for community parks, larger parks which offer active fields, natural areas, and diverse facilities in addition to specialized district uses and community facilities like a community center. Evanston provides 11.2 acres of beaches, 1.3 acres for tot lots, a forty-six acre golf course, and 12.8 acres of open space owned by Ridgeville, which are not officially defined with a park type designation, ensuring a varied and inclusive recreational landscape for its residents.



Multiple parks districts and jurisdictions create opportunity

This community-centric park system is sustained by various park owners, encompassing regional entities and park districts. The majority of parklands, totaling 213.1 acres, are under the ownership of the City of Evanston, but regional entities like the Metro Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC), Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), and Cook County hold a significant portion of parklands, particularly along the channel and including Perkins Woods. Contributing to the City of Evanston's ability to strategically meet community needs, different park districts within the City also provide assistance in the ownership, management, maintenance, and programming of this expansive network of parks. Situated in different areas within the city, these park districts own and manage varying portions of parklands, including Ridgeville, Lighthouse, and Skokie.

Almost all residents are within a 10-minute walk of a park

Examining Evanston through a geographical lens, the City takes pride in its well-distributed

and accessible park system. Nearly all residents enjoy the convenience of having a park within a 10-minute walk from their homes. According to the community survey, 98% of Evanston residents have visited one of the City's parks in the past year. This rate significantly surpasses the national average of 76%. The well-connected and accessible park system not only promotes physical activity and recreational opportunities but also fosters a sense of community, underscoring Evanston's efforts on the well-being and satisfaction of its residents.

98%

of survey respondents visited an Evanston park in the past year

5

acres of park in Evanston per 1000 residents, compared to 9 acres for peer median

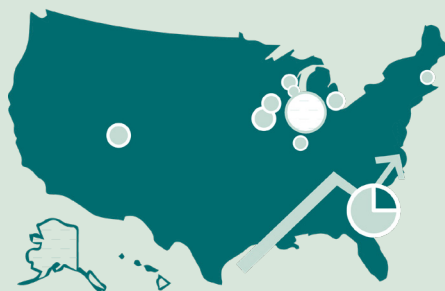
987

residents per park in Evanston, compared to 1,496 for peer median



Peer Cities List:

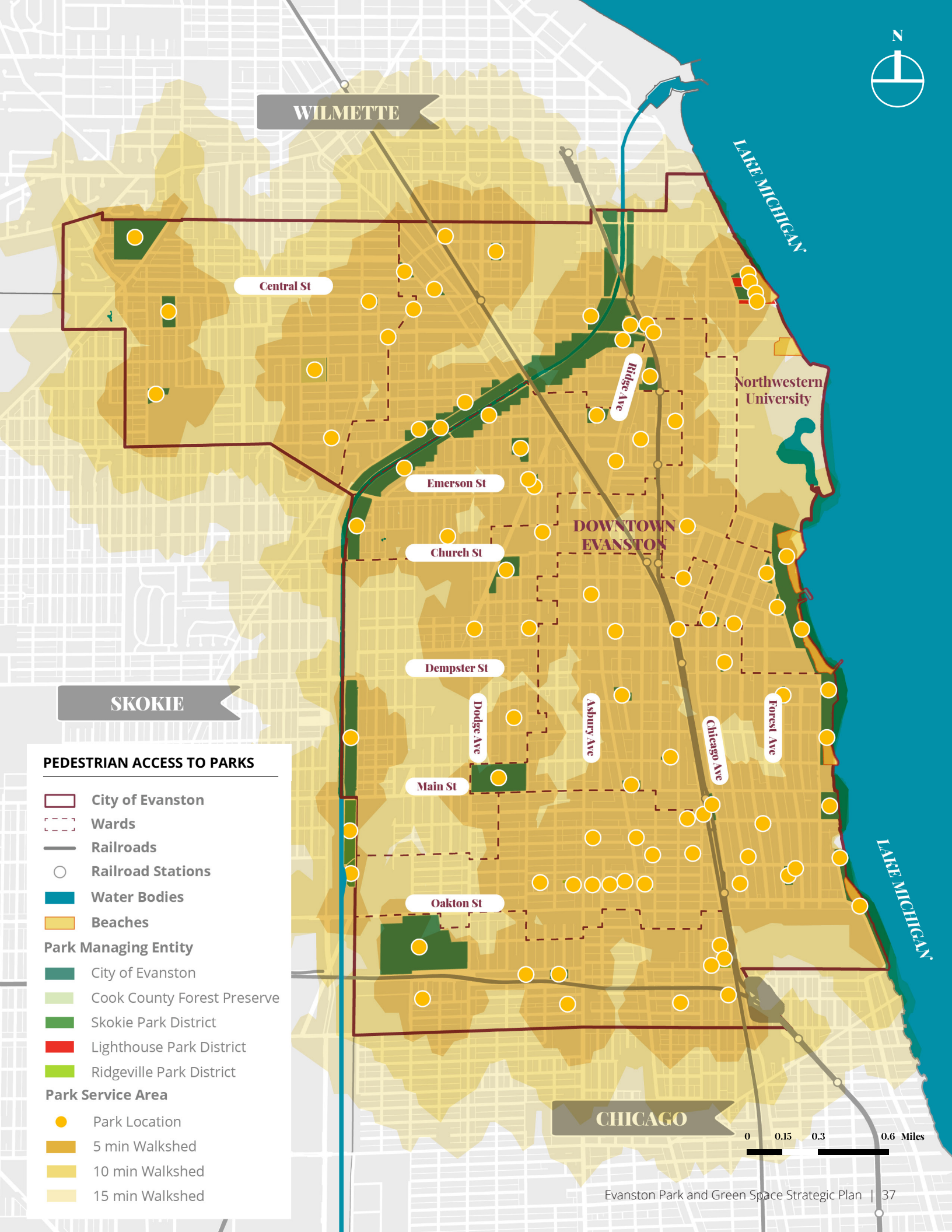
- Iowa City, IA
- Des Moines, IA
- Bloomington, IN
- Oak Park, IL
- Boulder, CO
- Champaign, IL
- Elgin, IL



- Buffalo Grove, IL
- Skokie, IL*
- Cambridge, MA**
- Ann Arbor, MI**

* 2014 data

** Did not report data to NRPA; no financial data available, but amenity data gathered separately



WILMETTE

Central St

LAKE MICHIGAN

Northwestern University

DOWNTOWN EVANSTON

Emerson St

Church St

Dempster St

SKOKIE

Dodge Ave

Ashbury Ave

Chicago Ave

Forest Ave

Main St

Oakton St

LAKE MICHIGAN

CHICAGO

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO PARKS

- City of Evanston
- Wards
- Railroads
- Railroad Stations
- Water Bodies
- Beaches
- Park Managing Entity
 - City of Evanston
 - Cook County Forest Preserve
 - Skokie Park District
 - Lighthouse Park District
 - Ridgeville Park District
- Park Service Area
 - Park Location
 - 5 min Walkshed
 - 10 min Walkshed
 - 15 min Walkshed

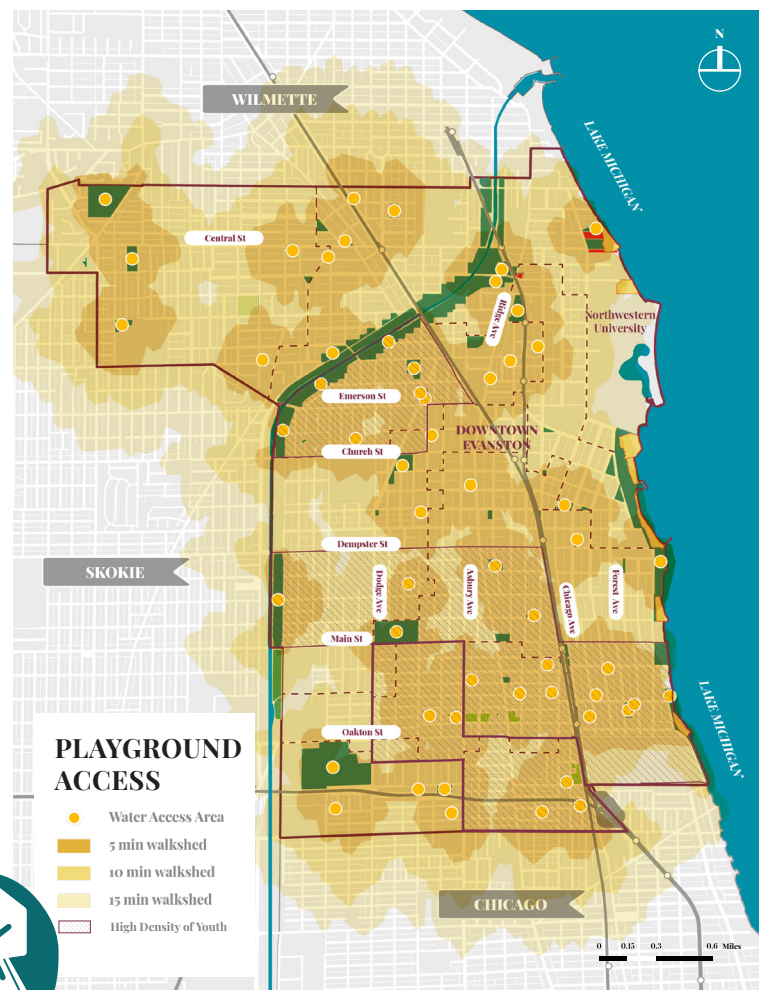
0 0.15 0.3 0.6 Miles

Parks are highly accessible, but there is insufficient acreage per resident

In peer comparisons, cities have on average one park per 2,300 residents. Evanston (including the Ridgeville, Lighthouse, and Skokie park districts) has one park for every 987 residents. While there is excellent accessibility to a park, the supply does not necessarily meet the community's growing needs. In terms of total acreage, Evanston has 5 acres of parkland per thousand residents, a little more than half that of the national average.

The system offers diverse amenities, unevenly distributed

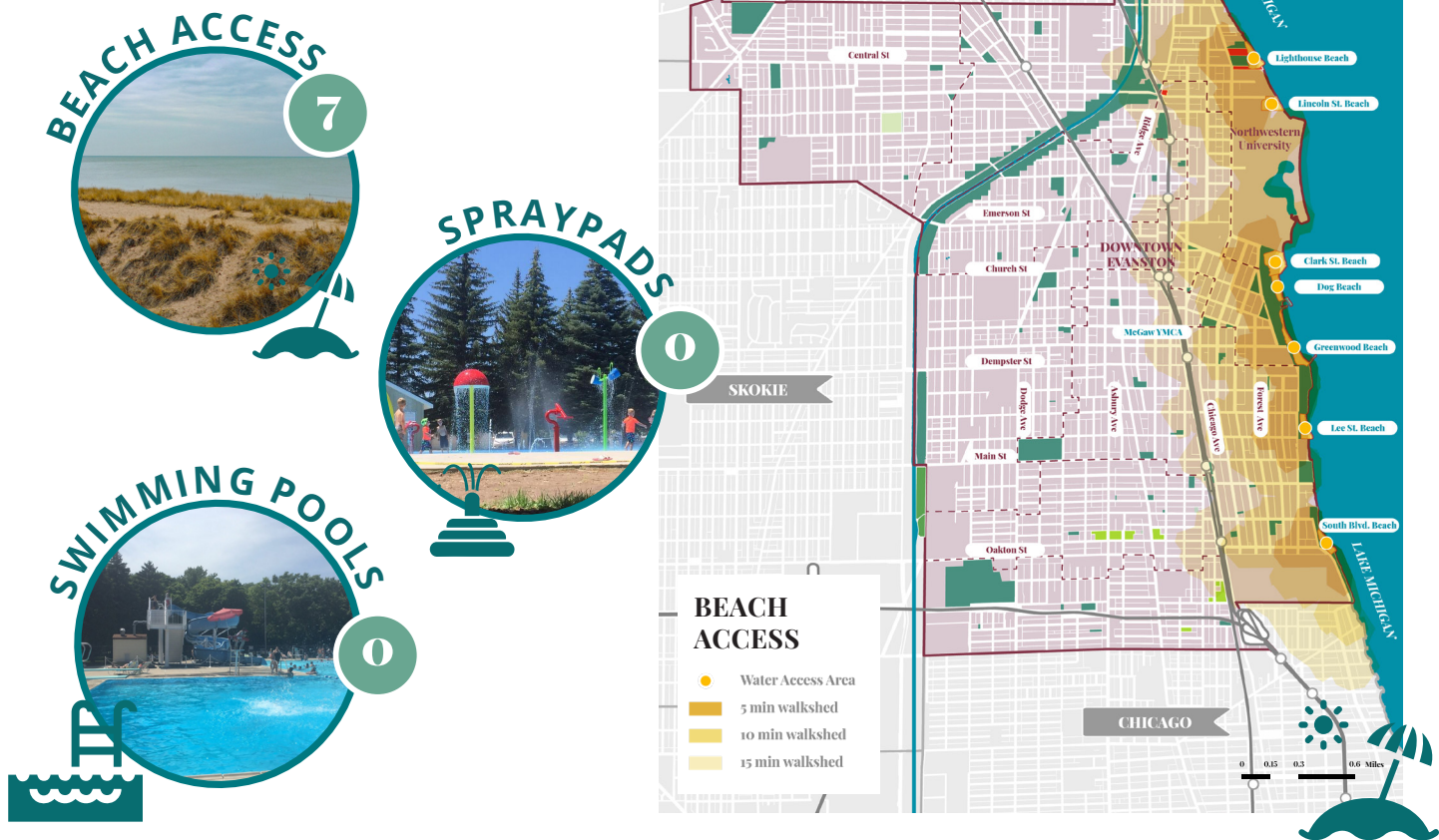
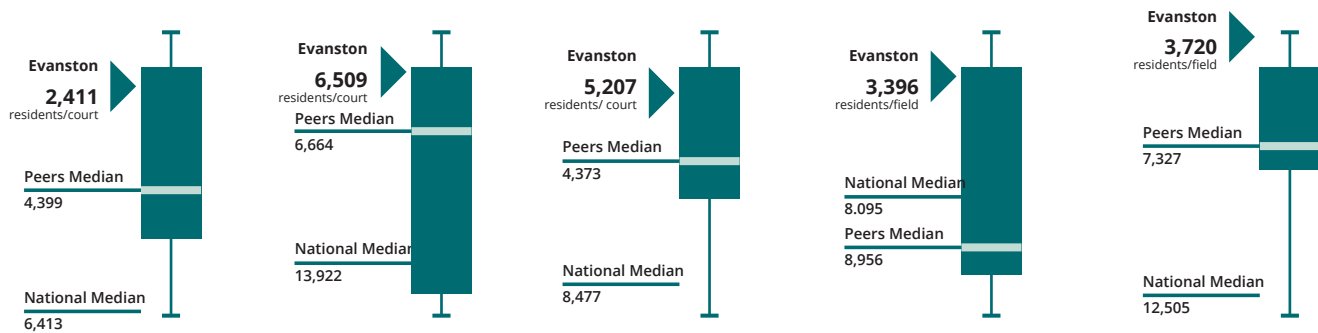
Amenity mix is determined by calculating the number of a certain amenity per thousand residents. Overall, Evanston offers a greater quantity of amenities than peer cities, but those amenities are not evenly distributed. In the North Central and Southeast areas of Evanston, residents have access to over six types of amenities within walking distance, including things like ice skating rinks, dog parks, and tennis courts. Conversely, residents in areas further inland along the Skokie border have much less variety.



EVANSTON INVENTORY



PEER CITY COMPARISON



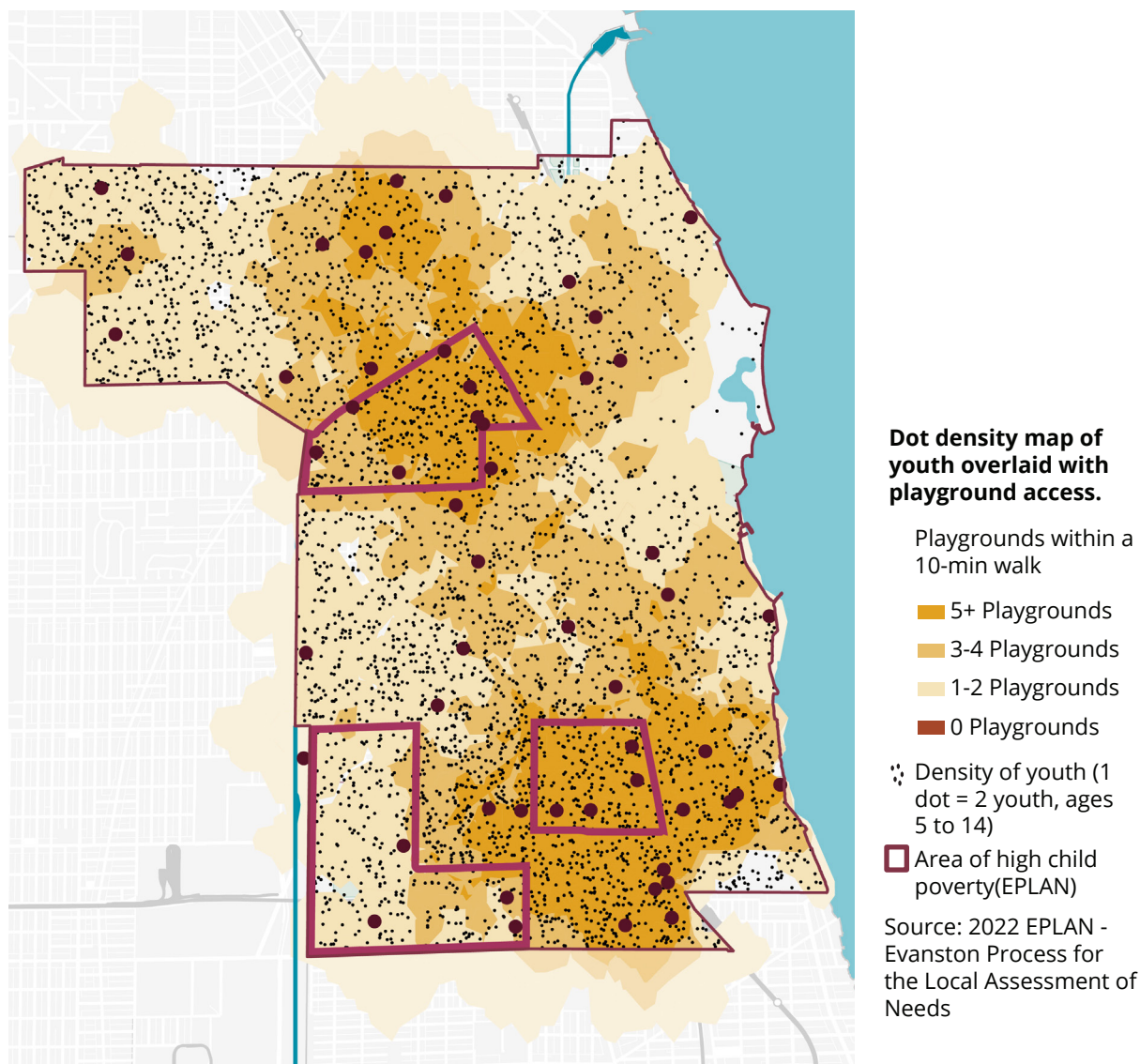
Community engagement indicates high unmet needs for water and nature experiences

Community engagement across multiple inputs indicated a consistently high desire and unmet need for increased water access, including pools and beaches. Increased tree canopy and nature experiences (like rain gardens and wildlife areas) also ranked high. Facilities like athletic fields, picnic areas, and playgrounds ranked lower in community priority, indicating there is either a lower interest or that needs are already being met in Evanston today.

Facilities need significant upgrades and maintenance

To better understand the condition of existing parks and facilities, a thorough conditions assessment of 154 park amenities was conducted, employing an integrative approach based on observed conditions during park inventory, the recommended lifecycle from Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Useful Life criteria, and ADA compliance outlined in the Evanston ADA Transition Plan.

Among 154 rated features based on our park inventory, overall about two thirds of facilities were rated poor or very poor, largely based

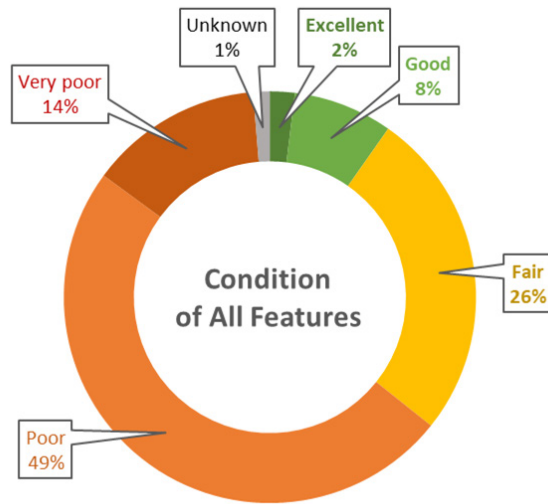


on ages that exceeded the recommended useful life. The current funding and maintenance levels are inadequate to replace a significant number of park amenities within recommended timeframes. Notably, numerous playgrounds, sports fields, and courts have surpassed their recommended lifespan. Playgrounds emerged as a distinct trend in the data since Evanston has substantially more

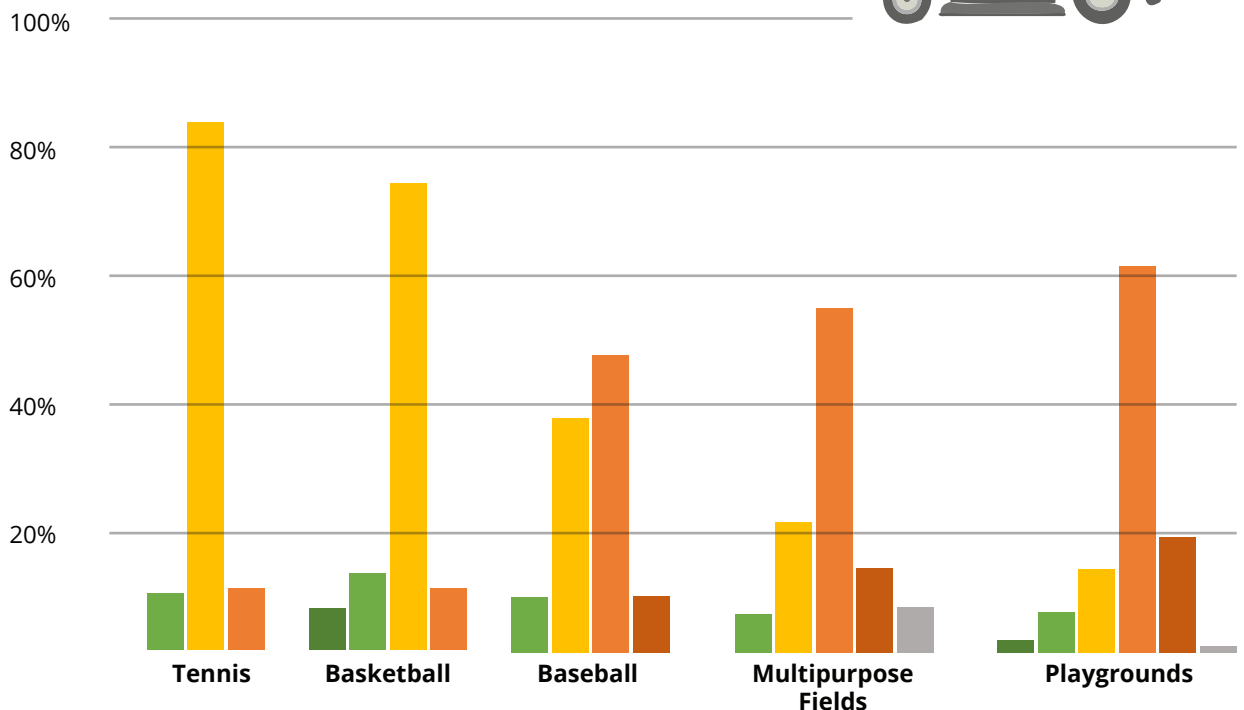
playgrounds than peers. While many residents have over four playgrounds within a 10-minute walk, a staggering 78% are currently in poor or very poor condition.

Understaffed teams maintain a large portfolio

Evanston has a dedicated but relatively small team overseeing its many parks and facilities, when compared to similar sized communities within the region and across the country as well as compared to historic hiring and retention trends within the City of Evanston itself. Despite a positive perception of parks' overall condition by 85% of survey respondents, the demand for upkeep is substantial. Daily maintenance emerges as the community's foremost priority during the survey.



Condition of All Assessed Features
Source: 2022 Inventory and Condition Assessment



Rating by Feature Type
Source: 2022 Inventory and Condition Assessment, Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

HABITAT & ENVIRONMENT

Cities are faced with a constant need to balance competing priorities, both in terms of budget outlays and use of public lands. In a mature city like Evanston, open space is at a premium. Typically, concerns like recreation, leisure, and stormwater infrastructure climb to the top of the priority list; naturalized areas, habitat, and greenspace fall to the bottom of the priority list and can remain under-funded for decades. In Evanston, there is competition between City departments for the limited funds that exist, resulting in a general lack of funding for the park system. The limited extent and low quality of naturalized landscapes and habitats reflects this lack of investment. Progress is seen at specific parks that are being restored by community volunteer groups, but these efforts typically lack a citywide vision and coherent goals for change. This section summarizes the current state of naturalized areas in the City of Evanston, including historical forces that impact current conditions and can help direct future goals.

- Existing naturalized areas in the City of Evanston are small and fragmented and/or linear, which increases the negative effects of encroachment by surrounding urbanization.
- Areas currently being managed for a diversity of native species, typically by community volunteer groups, have a higher ratio of native to invasive species than areas that are currently unmanaged.
- Additional investments are needed in staffing and training in maintenance of the City's naturalized landscapes.
- Prioritizing strategic expansion of naturalized landscapes in City parks is necessary for Evanston to significantly

- elevate the ecological quality and function of the City's naturalized landscapes.
- Evanston beaches can be divided into two general categories: wide and stable, with intact dunes anchored by native grasses, versus narrow and fluctuating, typically with hard armoring or other engineering solutions to prevent infrastructure damage and flooding.
- The City is engaged in planning (ending 2024) to improve the resilience and usability of several shoreline areas damaged by 2020 near-record lake levels.

Diverse Ecological Underpinnings

The roads and building pattern of Evanston were shaped by the vegetation that had existed for several thousand years and was mapped by government surveyors in the early 1800s. Chicago Road and Sheridan Avenue (north of the University) traced the eastern edge of a large north-south running wet prairie. Ridge Avenue and the Metra line follow the narrow, oak-studded beach ridge created by post-glacial Lake Chicago. The North Shore Channel was excavated through the center of a vast wet prairie-sedge meadow complex.

The natural vegetation of Evanston when the first European settlers arrived, as surveyed in the 1810-1840 period.



Human development followed the vegetation and landscape, which had been shaped by the recent geology laid down during glacial action ten thousand years before, and molded by the later dynamics of post-glacial lakes.

From the University southward, a series of three notable oak-covered ridges and intervening wet prairie swales paralleled the big lake. At the coast, wide sandy beaches formed at indentations in the lakeshore—embayments. On more exposed shores, a small, eroding escarpment may have existed, especially where an ancient beach ridge met the lake. Marshes, wet prairies and sedge meadows may have occupied shallow depressions behind the beaches and dunes, as suggested by the USGS Soil Survey. Given the practices of the Potawatomi, who had lived here for several hundred years at the time of the government survey, widespread aboriginal burning would have maintained the oak ridges in a fairly open condition—as a savanna or woodland with a sparse understory. Without regular burning—stopped in the mid-1800s by roads and fields—the savannas and woodlands became shadier, multi-layered forests in the span of a few decades.

The northwest section of Evanston, also on glacial Lake Chicago, was wooded in the early 1800s. The flat terrain and proximity to Lake Michigan promoted a shallow water table. A slight change in elevation produced noticeable changes in the vegetation. In some places the extensive sands of the former lake plain blended with silts and clay, enabling water to pond in slight depressions after snowmelt and big storms. This situation created “flatwoods”—a mosaic of slight rises and low points that support a diverse mix of upland and lowland plant life. The county-owned Perkins Woods is an example of a flatwoods on Wesley fine sandy loam, whose water table in spring is half a meter below the land surface.

Also in the northwest corner of Evanston was a small upland prairie, the only one mapped by the surveyors. Since the surveyors mapped only prairies that crossed section lines (which were a mile apart), they missed the many dry

and moist sand prairies that probably existed on and adjacent to the ridges. Lastly, a small “swamp” existed on either side of Maple Avenue, from Grove south to Main Street. A swamp, to the surveyor, would have been a noticeably wet area, likely with standing water and distinctly different from the adjacent wooded uplands.

A Lens into Evanston’s Natural History

Over time, natural areas in Evanston have been compressed and altered by urbanization. Very few “remnant” native plant communities still exist within the City. Existing plant assemblages are more correctly categorized as “naturalized areas” – they have been impacted by human development but were planted with native vegetation and managed at some point in time. However, well-managed naturalized areas have the potential to provide a range of ecosystem services, including habitat for native animals, stormwater management, erosion control, nutrient cycling, and human enjoyment. In order to set appropriate restoration goals for City naturalized areas, it is important for Evanston to understand the scope and condition of these naturalized areas as they exist currently.

HABITAT SURVEY

To prepare for the field assessment of existing naturalized areas, the City of Evanston provided a map of ecologically significant parcels and locations of smaller areas (“points”) where native species were planted. The parcels and points are considered “naturalized areas”; that is, places impacted by human development but planted with native vegetation and managed to some extent. These are shown in the map on the previous page.

Using methods described in the Appendix, RES assessed the areas of interest and the additional points in a desktop analysis for their likelihood to support native vegetation. These areas of interest were visited and representative geotagged photographs were taken of each location. RES also

collected vegetation data at locations where a recognizable plant community existed: vegetation structure by layer, species composition and abundance, and dominant species. See the Appendix for details.

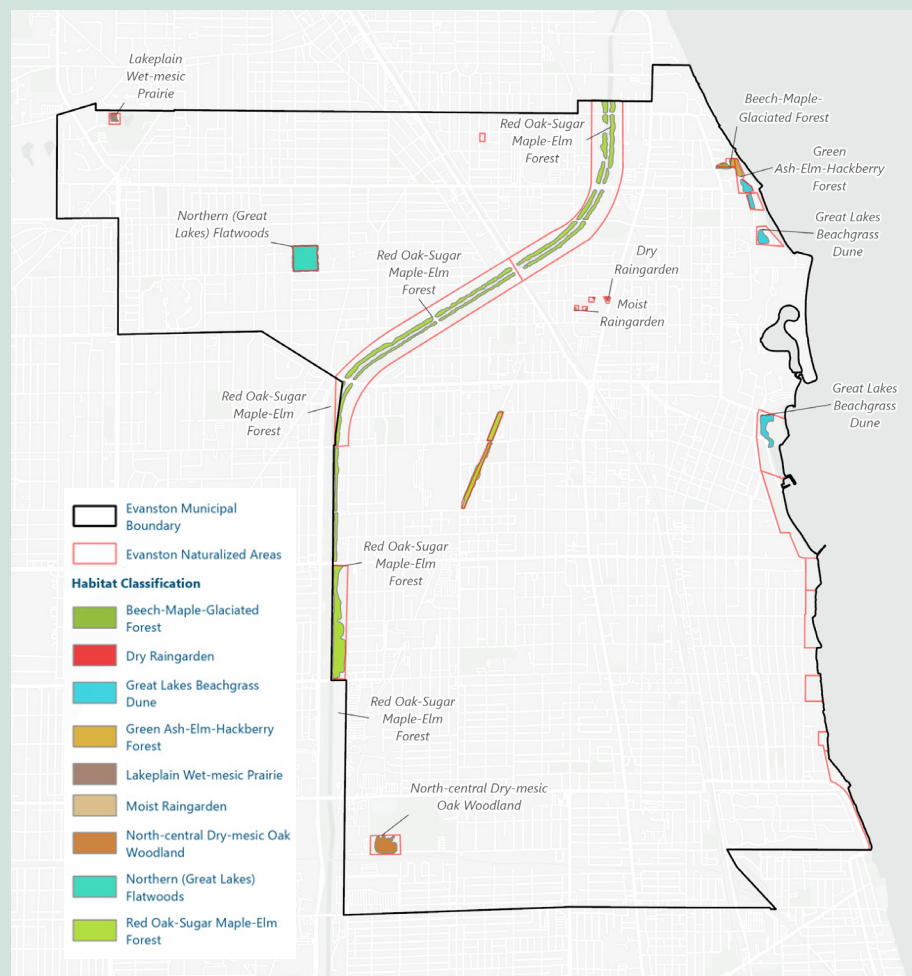
EXISTING HABITATS

RES ecologists identified seven different native plant communities (or habitat types) present in Evanston. These were not remnant historical communities, but naturalized assemblages that resemble recognized native plant communities in the region. Plant community locations are shown on the following page, which includes the wet and dry native plantings in Ingraham Park. The map also presents

the naturalized area polygons provided by the City prior to field inspections. In general, there is significant overlap between the areas identified independently by RES and those provided by the City. Many of the shoreline sections, however, are vegetated so sparsely that they do not qualify as a plant community. Additionally, most planted gardens contain native plants but lack the structure that is typical of a native plant community.

The naturalized plant communities in Evanston are summarized below. Full descriptions, taken from The Nature Conservancy's "Plant Communities of the Midwest," are in the Appendix.

Major Habitat Classifications of Evanston





Red oak/sugar maple/elm forest along North Shore Channel.



Beech/maple glaciated forest at Lawson Park (East).



Green ash/elm/hackberry forest at Lawson Park (West).

RED OAK/SUGAR MAPLE/ELM FOREST (MIDWESTERN MESIC OAK & OAK/MAPLE FORESTS)

Where: North Shore Channel, Ladd Arboretum, Mason Park Expansion

Oak stands are generally found on either mesic sites protected from fire or on drier slopes, where historically fires were more prevalent, but where current fire protection is creating mesic conditions. The canopy is variable but typically closed (>80% tree canopy cover). The major tree dominants are sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), and red oak (*Quercus rubra*). Current stands may be shifting from oak dominance to maple, basswood (*Tilia americana*), and elm dominance.

BEECH/MAPLE GLACIATED FOREST

Where: Lawson Park West

This community is found on flat to rolling topography (Braun 1950, Pell and Mack 1977). In the southern parts of its range, it is more likely to be found on steeper slopes than in the northern portion (Braun 1950). This community is characterized by a dense to moderately dense canopy of deciduous trees, a sparse shrub layer, and a moderately to well-developed herbaceous layer. The canopy and subcanopy greatly reduce the amount of light reaching the groundlayer vegetation. The canopy is composed primarily of sugar maple and American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*).

GREEN ASH/ELM/HACKBERRY FOREST

Where: Lawson Park East

Stands occur on upper floodplain terraces of rivers and streams and in upland ravine bottoms. The vegetation has an open to closed tree canopy that is dominated by green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), and American elm. There is often a shrub layer and grass and lowland plants in the groundlayer.

NORTH-CENTRAL DRY-MESIC OAK WOODLAND

Where: James Park

This system is common on rolling glacial moraines and outwash plains. The tree layer is composed predominantly of white oak (*Quercus alba*) and bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), with northern pin oak (*Quercus ellipsoidalis*) or black oak (*Quercus velutina*) more common on dry sites. This community may include portions of stands also described as brushland (Grimm 1984, MNNHP 1993) or barrens (Bowles and McBride 1994, White 1994). Shrub cover is usually high (30-50%) with some stands forming impenetrable thickets. Typical shrubs include hazelnut (*Corylus americana*) and stiff dogwood (*Cornus foemina*). This community may also include stands described as 'closed savanna' or 'closed woodland' (Swink

and Wilhelm 1994, Packard 1988). These stands experience low-intensity but moderately frequent fires that allow the establishment and growth to canopy size of moderately fire-tolerant tree saplings such as red oak and even black maple (*Acer nigrum*).

GREAT LAKES BEACHGRASS DUNE

Where: Clark Street Beach, Lighthouse Beach

Component plant communities vary from sparsely vegetated, active dunes to communities dominated by grasses, shrubs, and trees, depending on the degree of sand deposition, sand erosion, stabilization, and distance from the lake. Canopy cover is sparse and variable. Depositional areas, where Great Lakes beachgrass dunes are found, are dominated by American beachgrass (*Ammophila breviligulata*), and to a lesser extent by switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*). Evergreen shrubs such as Jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) occupy the ground layer in the savanna edge of dunes; elsewhere, deciduous shrubs are dominant, including red osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), common ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*) and sandbar willow (*Salix interior*).

LAKEPLAIN WET-MESIC PRAIRIE

Where: Lovelace Park

This community occurs on level sandy glacial outwash, sandy glacial lakeplains, and deposits of dune sand in silty/clayey glacial lakeplains. The vegetation of the natural area within Lovelace Park is dominated by tallgrass species typically 1-2 m high. Trees and shrubs are very rare. There is very little bare ground. Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), *Carex* species (including Bicknell's sedge (*Carex bicknellii*), Buxbaum's sedge (*Carex buxbaumii*), and woolly sedge (*Carex pellita* = *Carex lanuginosa*)), switchgrass, little bluestem, and Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) are the most abundant species.

HISTORIC WET-PRAIRIE

Where: Harbert-Payne Park

Harbert-Payne Park is a historic wet prairie. The North Shore Channel was constructed in the early 1900s and the surrounding soils are heavily impacted by excavation, other disturbances, and subsequent human use. Today, the canopy is fragmented due to dying trees and little forest succession is evident. The remaining area of Harbert-Payne Park is Woodland with Turf, which is not a naturalized community.



North-central Dry-mesic Oak Woodland at James Park.



Great Lakes beachgrass dune at Clark Street Beach.



Lakeplain wet-mesic prairie at Lovelace Park.

ECOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING OF NATURALIZED AREAS

The inventoried areas were categorized as ecologically functioning or less ecologically functioning, based on the dominant species (native or invasive) and current level of ecological management. A ratio of “Native to Non-Native” species was calculated for each area as a metric of quality, as summarized in the graph below.

The most ecologically functioning naturalized areas within the City of Evanston, based on a ratio of native to non-native species include:

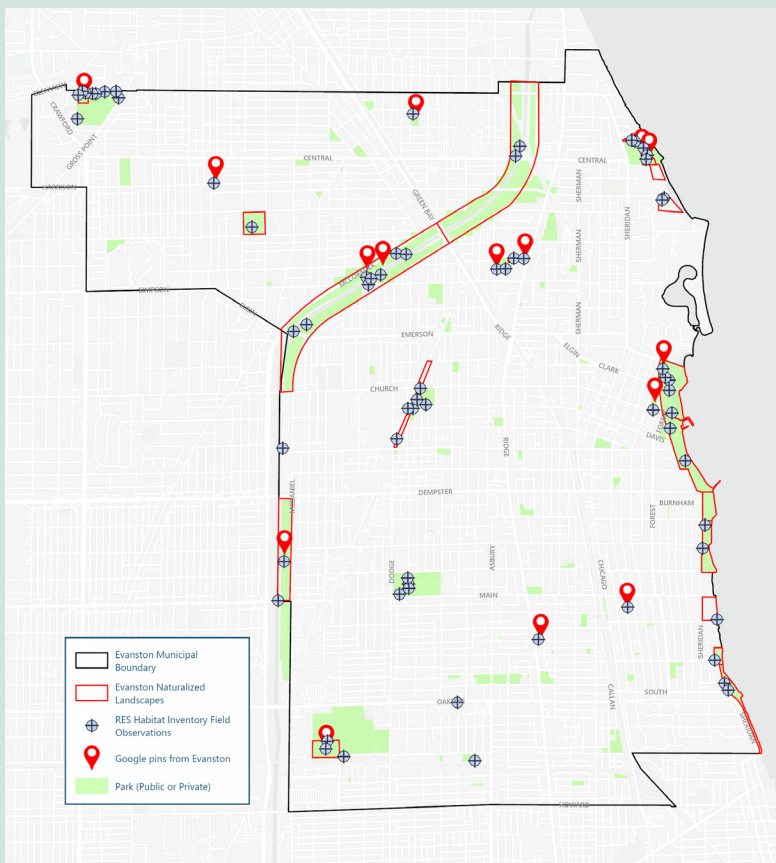
- Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary
- Lincoln Street Beach
- Ladd Arboretum (N)
- Lighthouse Beach
- Lovelace Park

Additionally, the rain garden located at Ingraham Park and the native garden at the northeast corner of the Civic Center building contain a high ratio of native to non-native species.

The less ecologically functioning naturalized areas within the City of Evanston, based on a ratio of native to non-native species currently include:

- North Shore Channel*
- Ladd Arboretum (S)
- Lawson Park (E & W)
- James Park
- Mason Park Expansion

In general, the most important predictor of high ecological functioning is active management. Ecologically functional means that a plant community is able to withstand



Field Assessment Sites and Data Points

disturbance without disintegrating, and recover from that disturbance through internal processes, like plant recolonization and growth. All of the sites denoted by green bars in the chart are actively managed, either by City staff or community volunteer groups. Some areas in the red section of the chart have received attention within the last five years, but RES would consider the management of these as inconsistent and incomplete (based on site observations).

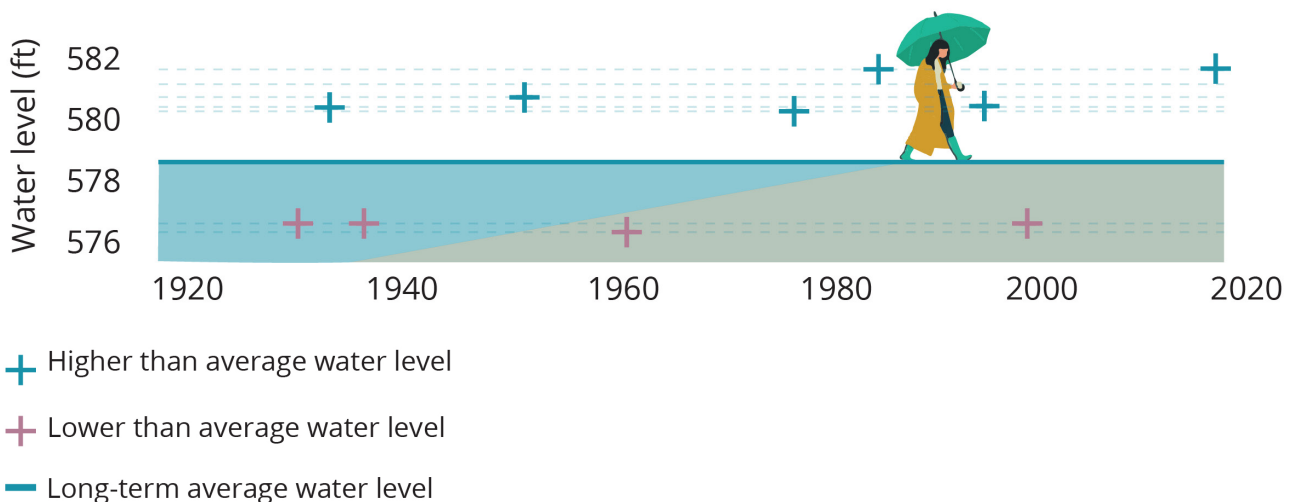
* Data was collected along representative sections of the North Shore Channel. Not every park was sampled.

An Ever-Changing Lakeshore

For over 100 years, Lake Michigan's water level has fluctuated with precipitation, temperature,

and ice cover, but sometimes stays high or low for years. For 20 years in the 1970s and 1980s it was above average, sometimes over three feet above average. For 15 years in the 2000s and early 2010s it was below average, sometimes up to three feet below average. This means lake levels can move up and down as much as six feet in the span of a decade or two. In 2020 the lake rose to 582.2 feet, almost reaching the October 1986 record of 582.35 feet. Noticeable low and high water periods usually last 3-5 years.

Human-built infrastructure and expectations, however, are grounded in an idea that nature does not change, and that what people build and program today will remain stable for decades. The history of structures collapsing into the lake, of boat moorings left high and dry, of harbors filling with sand, speak to the contrary. Moreover, natural



Lake Michigan (and the connected Lake Huron) is an average 579 feet above sea level. A 100-year record low occurred in 2012 and a record high in 1986. The lake level in 2020 very nearly reached the 1986 record high.

lakeshore processes of erosion and sediment deposition—mediated by beaches, dunes and marshes that maintain shoreline stability—are disrupted by jetties, fill, and dredging. The changes in temperature, precipitation and ice cover expected with climate change will add more uncertainty to human endeavors along Evanston’s lakeshore.

At a public meetings and in online commentary during 2022 and 2023, the City learned from residents that swimming and beaches were a top concern, with a preference for naturalized, vegetated shorelines that had low repair and maintenance needs and costs[1]. Stabilization and naturalization strategies were proposed for these shorelines, all of which experienced erosion and flooding in the 2020 high water year.

- Dog Beach at Centennial Park
- Greenwood Beach & Dempster Street Boat Launch

- Elliot Park & Lee Street Beach
- Clark Square
- Sheridan Road Revetment
- Lincoln Street

Naturalization strategies proposed and positively received by participants were a) toe slope revetments with natural vegetation; b) headlands jutting into the lake to trap and hold sand; and c) offshore reefs that protect beaches from storm waves in high water years. Where feasible, shoreline retreat with dune-beachgrass construction was also proposed.

Several beaches in Evanston continue to exist without human addition of external sand; they recover their width after high water periods when the lake level drops (see Appendix for details). These stable beaches have three traits in common: a wide sand deposit offshore, a wide expanse of beach when lake levels are average (579 feet), and a high dune armored



Clockwise from top left: The beaches from Lighthouse Landing to Northwestern University have all the ingredients for stable beaches: wide offshore sand deposit, wide beach, and tall dune with beachgrass.

This tall dune on private land next to Lighthouse Beach withstood the 2020-2021 high water due to a beachgrass covered dune. The roots of beachgrass are visible on the wave-cut face of the dune.



Although the height of the dune is short, the grass-covered dune at Clark Street Beach resisted wave erosion in the 2020-2021 high water period.

RES ecologists stand amidst tillering beachgrass and resprouting red-osier dogwood, plants that are rebuilding the dune here.

with beachgrass. The replenishing sand comes from the north, carried by longshore currents, and is deposited offshore at stable beaches. Waves and winter ice pile sand on the beach, and wind works it into dunes that are colonized by beachgrass, which traps the sand and tolerates burial.

Offshore sediment can be trapped, and beaches maintained, by jetties that slow longshore currents and cause sand to fall to the lake bottom, as well as by created headlands that hold sand in place between them. Jetties, however, can starve down-current beaches of sand. A sediment budget analysis is needed to demonstrate that whatever is proposed will work; the sand deposited offshore, washed up on the beach, and swept away by longshore currents will still leave excess sand banked offshore to replenish sand lost from the beach during high water periods.

The inventory identified these beaches with stable characteristics:

1. Lighthouse Landing/Private Beach
2. Lincoln Street Beach
3. Clark Street Beach Bird Sanctuary
4. Lee Street Beach
5. South Boulevard Beach

Where shoreline infrastructure and parkland suffered in the high water of 2020, the characteristics of stable beaches were generally lacking. Boat storage racks and foot traffic also prevent the development of stabilizing beachgrass dunes. It is also possible that parkland locations where flooding occurred were historically wet prairies and marshes that were filled to expand parkland acreage.

Clockwise from top left: The beach at Dawes Park is narrow and constrained by riprap, despite an offshore sand deposit.



Dempster Street beach around 1900. This area was probably marsh or wet prairie, perhaps with low dunes. It was filled with rubble, stumps, and other debris to create more parkland. (Photo retrieved by Dr. Jenny Thompson, Evanston History Center Archives)

Foot traffic, a walkway, and a boat storage area (for active recreation needs) limit the development of a beachgrass dune setup at Greenwood Street Beach.



Flooding at Elliot Park and similar settings during the 2020 high water year likely happened at locations that were marsh, wet prairie, or lake bottom in the mid-1800s. (Photo by Evanston City staff.)

RECREATION PROGRAMS

The Evanston Parks and Recreation Department offers over 2,875 fitness, sports, aquatics, environmental, and recreation classes and special events to the community each year. This section of the report reviews insights into the size, scope, and health of the Department's recreation programs. Information from this report, combined with other community stakeholder feedback, will help shape recommendations for operational improvement and future recreation program offerings.

- Evanston runs a wide variety of programs from facilities that are well distributed across the City. Overall enrollment in programs has been growing, and program areas are well aligned with the Department's overall mission and goals.
- Facility availability and lack of amenities like restrooms/shelter limit the ability to expand programs like aquatic programs and summer camp that are high community priorities.
- Although it is not uncommon for park and recreation organizations' program offerings to be weighted more towards youth audiences, there are opportunities to increase teen-specific and adult programs, especially adult fitness.
- The Department could prioritize nurturing new programs and consider refreshing or eliminating programs that are nearing the end of their life cycle.

This recreation program summary reflects information and data collected from a variety of sources. Sources analyzed include:

- Recreation Program Offering and Registration Data from the Department's recreation software¹
- Recreation Program Evaluations completed by Department staff
- Internal workshop and meetings with Department staff

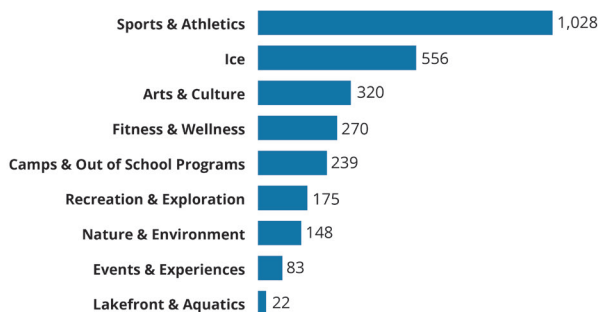
¹ It is important to note however, that this does not include other types of recreational activities and

programs facilitated by the Parks and Recreation Department, such as special events that do not require pre-registration or programs and leagues offered by sports affiliate groups that utilize a significant amount of green space managed by the City.

A Broad Range of Program Offerings

The Parks and Recreation Department offers a wide variety of recreation programs to its community, the majority falling under nine core program categories.

Data from the Department's recreation software was used to create a more detailed inventory of these classes offered over the course of a year. The chart below showcases the frequency in which classes were offered in 2022 across the different core program categories.



Program Offerings by Category

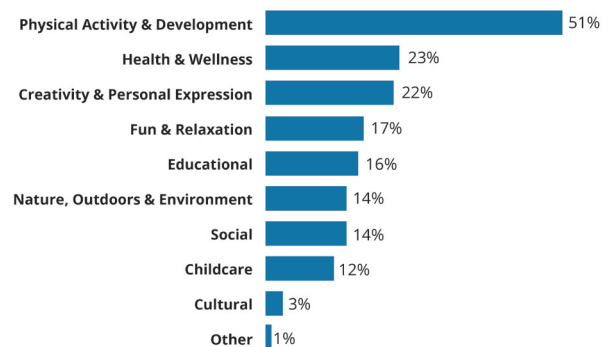
Source: Evanston Park & Recreation Department Recreation Software Data for 2022

While the Department offers a wide range of programs, without specialty recreation facilities such as a pool or golf course, some common recreation programs were absent from the list, most notably swimming lessons and a wider variety of adult fitness programs, and to a lesser extent, preschool, golf, and pet programs.

When combined, athletics, sports and ice programs made up 55% of the classes offered in 2022 by the Department.

RECREATION ACTIVITY BENEFITS

As part of internal staff evaluations, input was collected about the unique activities the Department offers. Staff were asked to share the primary and secondary benefits of each program based on their own analysis; staff had the opportunity to identify up to two benefits for each activity.



Based on staff evaluations, Department recreation programs provide a wide range of benefits to the public today.

Program Offerings by Benefit They Provide

Source: Evanston Park & Recreation Department Staff Program Assessments.

Unsurprisingly, with the bulk of classes offered by the Department being related to sports and ice programs, the top user benefits were "Physical Activity & Development" and "Health & Wellness."

It is a positive sign that "Creativity & Personal Expression," which is quite different from the other top two benefits and again highlights the rich variety of recreation activities offered by the Department.

Heavy Reliance on City Staff and Facilities to Run Programs

RECREATION CLASS LOCATIONS

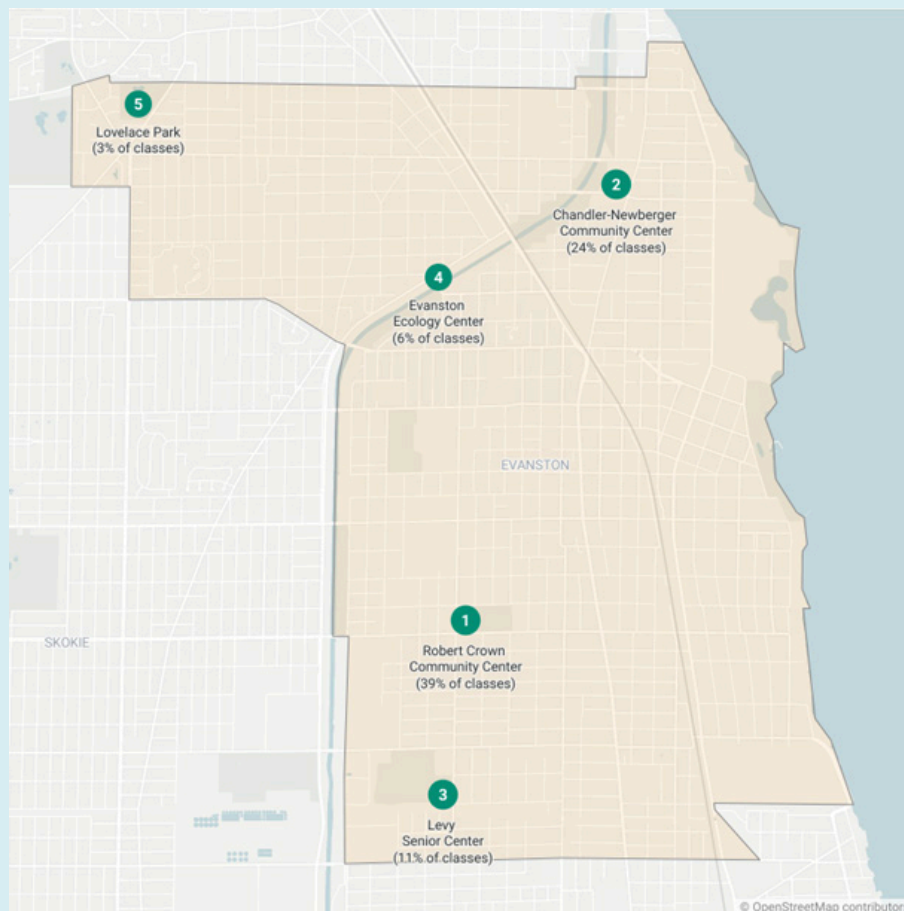
The Department relies heavily on its own facilities and parks to house recreation programs, with 94% of classes offered at a City-operated location.

While locations are well distributed throughout the City, most classes take place inside the City's recreation facilities (or their adjacent outside spaces). Nine percent take place within the City's parks and outdoor recreation spaces, with a small number utilizing schools, partner organizations, or other types of spaces.

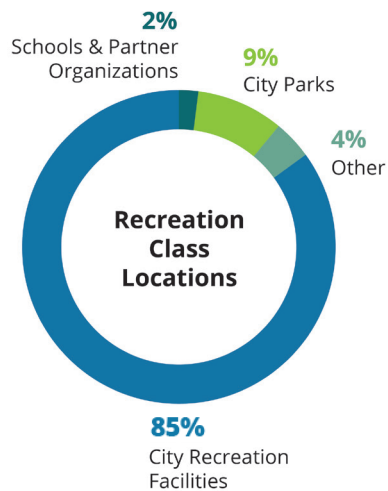
During discussions with Department staff,

interest in expanding recreation program offerings (especially for summer camps) by locating more programs in parks was shared, but ultimately, a lack of park amenities such as restroom access and places to shelter during inclement weather made that challenging.

The map below shows the top five locations for classes offered by the Department at city-owned parks and facilities. These locations are well distributed throughout the City, and for some common recreation programs offered at multiple facilities, this may result in good geographical access for many. However, it should be noted that some of these facilities offer programs for specific audiences, such as



Top five park and facility locations for classes offered by the Department



the Levy Senior Center. Access to programs at those facilities may still be a barrier to participation for some.

Recreation Class Locations

Source: Evanston Park & Recreation Department Recreation Software Data for 2022

RECREATION CLASS TIMING THROUGHOUT THE WEEK AND YEAR

Each season, the Department offered a balanced number of programs, although with an expected higher number in the summer months (June-August) as is typical for parks and recreation organizations. Additionally, registration for programs seemed equally balanced across the seasons, meaning that the Department will be better positioned to recover financially if any single season suffers due to continued bouts of poor weather or other conflicts that affect registration. For example, in 2022 the Department offered 32% of its classes in the summer months and received 31% of its overall registration for the year in those classes. Right now, each season reflects no more than 32% of the overall classes offered.

As was mentioned above, this data only reflects recreation programs where registration occurs, which would exclude some seasonal operations and large special events. Depending on the scale of these types of operations and offerings, the associated workload may reflect wider differences between seasons than the

data available for analysis revealed.

Programs offered by the Department were mainly scheduled in the mid-day, afternoon, and evening hours on weekdays, along with mid-day and early afternoon on Saturdays. This may result in barriers to participation amongst adults (and their households) who may be working or have other commitments during the daytime hours. In 2022, 27% of classes offered by the Department started between the hours of 10am-2pm.

LENGTH OF RECREATION CLASSES

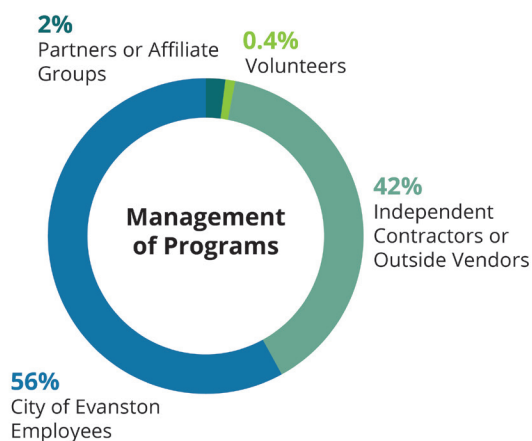
Recreation classes often vary in length due to several factors, including the time needed to instruct the specific activity, the scheduling needs of the participants, the attractiveness of the program to potential customers in terms of commitment level and pricing, as well as the park and recreation organization's facility and staff availability.

While programs offered by the Department demonstrated a good variety of program lengths, staff are still finding success in longer class lengths with over half of classes offered lasting at least six weeks. Those longer classes also accounted for nearly 50% of the Department's registrations for 2022 and included classes in many different program categories.

While the general assumption in the parks and recreation industry is that potential customers are looking for recreation opportunities that require less commitment (including shorter classes), this does not seem to be the case for the Department. However, if it is discovered that pricing or program length is a participation barrier for any specific target markets, this may be an area to evaluate, assuming shortening some classes could be done without negatively impacting the program experience. Half of the Department's class offerings and registration are for programs lasting longer than a month.

PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

Although Department staff are responsible for overseeing each program mentioned in



this report, park and recreation organizations can utilize a variety of approaches towards securing instructors and facilitators to produce the program experience for participants.

Management of Programs

Source: Evanston Park & Recreation Department Staff Program Assessments

At the City of Evanston, just over half of recreation programs are led by Department employees, with another 42% utilizing independent contractors or outside companies to lead much of the rest.

In addition to these two main approaches, there are also examples of the Department supporting or facilitating the offering of recreation services to the community through other avenues. For example, Department staff manage and permit sports fields and indoor facilities to affiliate groups, most notable being youth sports affiliates.

While Offerings Are Diverse, There Are Gaps

AGE GROUPS OFFERINGS

Although a variety of programs are offered for each customer group throughout the year, when taking a broad look at classes offered by category for each age group, some insights begin to emerge. For example, this confirms previously discussed data regarding the fact

that Sports & Athletics and Ice programs were the highest programmed categories. Additionally, it is noticeable that programs for youth also make up a large portion of the Department's program offerings.

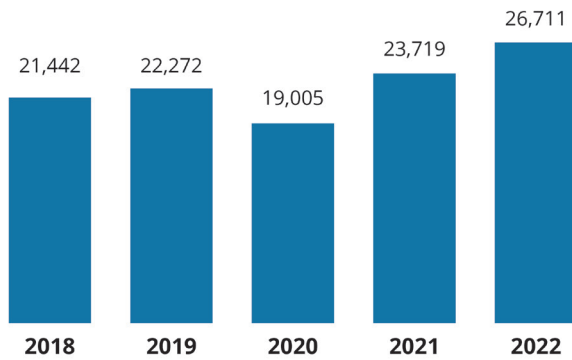
Adult programming exists in several areas, with fitness being the highest, although adults have the least amount of recreation classes offered for them (compared to other age groups). Additionally, while programs for teens are available, it is important to note that much of the programs offered for those age groups are instead programs for other age groups (youth and adults) which happen to overlap and allow teens to participate. However, as this age group has special interests and needs, they are likely not as well-served by programs also marketed for those other audiences.

In the areas where many recreation program options were available, such as with Sports & Athletics for youth, there was some noticeable duplication (or at least overlap) of recreation programs found during a review of Department recreation program brochures and the website.

For example, the Department offers four different classes featuring youth basketball instruction. Although some differences do exist between each of the programs, it also would be fairly easy to combine them all under one program description that included multiple sessions to accomplish the same result, but with less logistics and marketing needed (and likely also less confusion or overwhelm by potential customers reviewing their options).

PROGRAM REGISTRATION TRENDS

The Department reached a total enrollment in 2022 of 26,711 registrations, which was the highest registration total in the previous five years. Since emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, program enrollment has been increasing at a faster pace than before the pandemic. In 2022, registrations increased by



more than 12% over the previous year.

The Department's program enrollment has been on the rise since emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, and at a faster rate than before the pandemic.

Total Program Registrations by Year

Source: Evanston Park & Recreation Department Recreation Software Data for 2022

The Program Portfolio is Healthy Overall, but a Few Programs May be Misaligned

Although program registration and other operational metrics mentioned above can provide some insight into the current state of recreation programs offered by the Department, they alone do not tell the whole story. To capture a fuller picture, additional analysis of the health of the program portfolio (slate of programs offered) was conducted.

To complete this analysis, Department staff answered a series of questions about a random sample of recreation programs offered in the past year. These questions concerned current program performance,



City event on the Lakefront.



Facilities, like the Levy Senior Center, support a range of programs and volunteer efforts.



Recreation camps and summer programs.

operations, audience, and benefits as well as staff's perspective about each programs' future direction. Recreation Results then compiled and analyzed their responses to share insights about the health of the Department's recreation program portfolio.

PROGRAM OPERATIONAL AND SERVICE ALIGNMENT

Measuring the health of a recreation program portfolio can be difficult because park and recreation organizations are often tasked with meeting certain operational or business-related outcomes in addition to working to serve the community and meet their mission. Sometimes these two interests can even compete against each other. Using staff program assessment responses, Recreation Results evaluated programs from both a service/mission perspective as well as an operational/business perspective.

Each of the current program areas offered by the Department seem to be a good fit for the organization and are in alignment with overall operational and service goals. None of the categories performed well enough across all programs to be considered High Performers, but Early Childhood, Camps, and Events are close. On the opposite end, Visual & Performing Arts does show signs of its programs being low performers from an operational sense.

By taking a deeper look at individual program ratings, more variance is noted. Farewell Summer Mini Camp, the Community Garden Program, Citizenship in Society, and Winter Wonder Camp are some of the highest performing programs; these rate highest for being both a good fit with the Department's mission and operational goals, and if other pieces of the analysis also support the recommendation, are likely good candidates

for expansion.

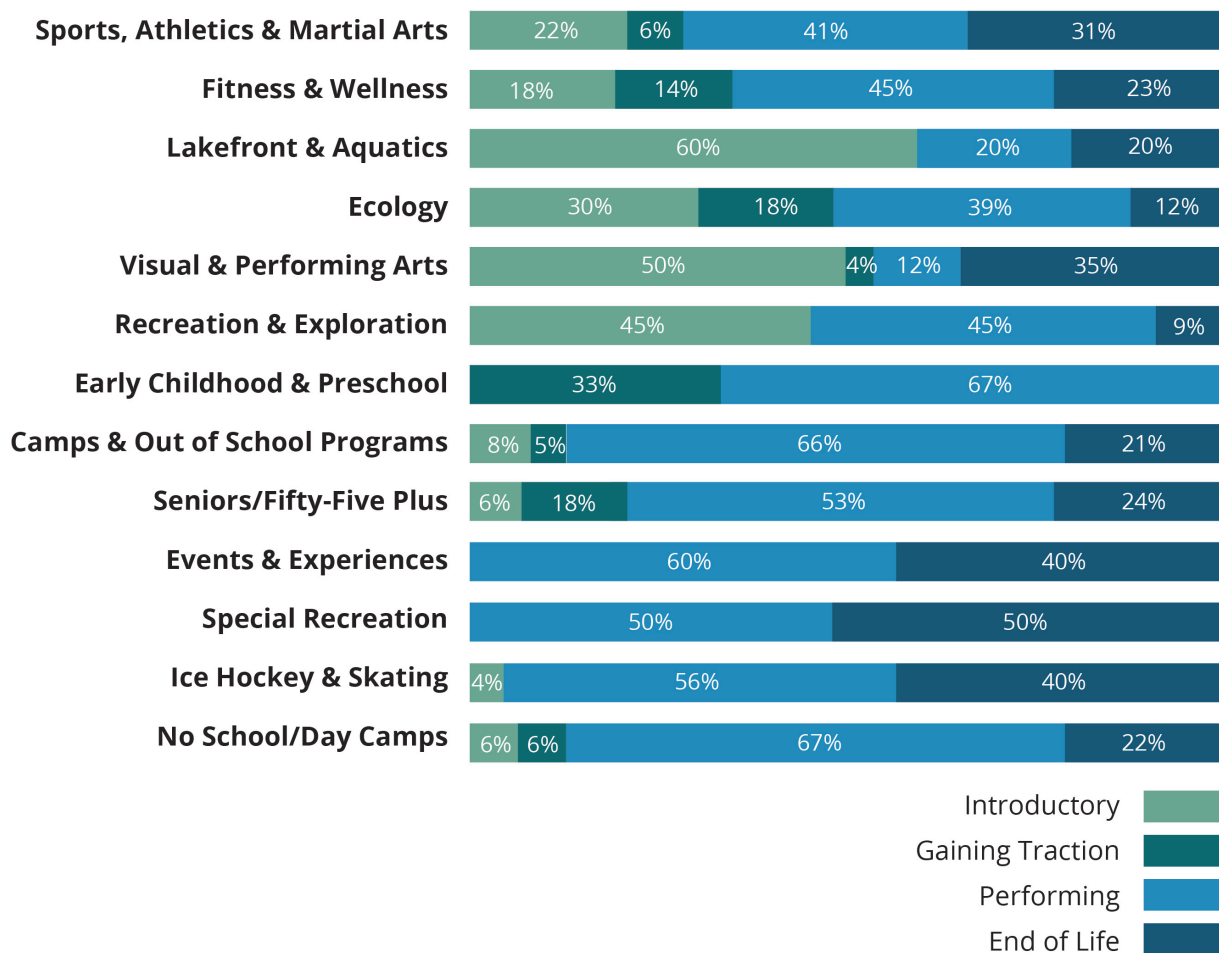
Boxing Basics for Youth, Boxing for Adults, Adult Expressive Drawing, Chinese Brushwork, Archery, and Art Through the Ages are the lowest performing programs. These are likely not (or are no longer) the best use of the Department's resources. Some, such as Boxing Basics for Youth and Adult Expressive Drawing rated high enough in the service alignment, that it may also be worth exploring finding partners or other ways to either lessen the workload in offering the programs or to boost its success.

More Than the Recommended Number of Programs Are in an End of Life Stage

Another avenue used to evaluate the overall health of the Department's overall program offerings is to understand where programs fall on the program life cycle, which begins when a program is first introduced and continues until it reaches the end of its life. By looking at programs from this angle, it can help guide shape recommendations about current program offerings and future program development strategies.

The Department has close to the recommended portion of programs in the initial two stages, indicating a fresh flow of new programs in the portfolio. Staff should continue to nurture those Introductory stage programs to ensure that more reach the Gaining Traction stage (and hopefully, eventually also Performing stage). Within the last two stages, the Department is holding on to more programs than ideal which have reached or are nearing their end of life. Evaluating those that received that rating to

Program Life Cycle Stages by Program Category



determine if they could be refreshed or if they should be eliminated would help increase the efficiency and effectiveness of staff's programming efforts.

Life Cycle Stages are defined using the graph shown above.

INTRODUCTION STAGE

Recreation programs falling into this stage are new or somewhat new recreation opportunities that are still working to gain a foothold. They require extra effort and attention to get off the ground and are not quite meeting participation or financial goals yet but still hold potential for success in this early stage.

GAINING TRACTION STAGE

Recreation programs falling into this stage are ones that have really picked up steam. They are the immediate successes or somewhat newer programs that are showing growth and may

soon become a consistently well-performing program.

PERFORMING

Recreation programs that have run long enough and successfully enough to be considered consistent performers fall into this stage. They no longer require the same amount of attention and effort as they did to meet participation and financial goals as they did when they were initially offered.

END OF LIFE

Recreation programs falling into this stage are ones with declining participation, or ones that now need extra attention to get back to the participation and financial performance that they once had. They need to be renewed in some way to get them back on track or otherwise, they are likely to die out.

4



STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic plan that follows lays out a ten-year vision composed of five overarching Goals developed in close collaboration with stakeholders and the public. Goals are supported by Strategies, each of which include recommended Actions to achieve them, including proposed improvements to parks, facilities, natural experiences, programming, and operations. Achieving the proposed goals requires close collaboration between the Department of Parks and Recreation and Public Works Agency along with internal and external partners.

Vision

The goals of this plan are to significantly enhance the quality of life for residents, contribute to the city's environmental sustainability, and ensure that the parks system remains vibrant and relevant for future generations. It reflects a citywide commitment to holistic community well-being, environmental stewardship, and proactive planning for the future and responds to the needs and desires of the many residents who participated in this planning process. The strategic plan includes five goals and 23 strategies, summarized here:

#1

**EQUITABLE
ACCESS**

#2

**NATURE
EXPERIENCES**

#3

**SUSTAINABLE
OPERATIONS**

#4

**WELCOMING
WATER ACCESS**

#5

ADAPTABILITY

EQUITABLE ACCESS

Ensuring that all residents of Evanston, regardless of their background or where they live in the city, have high-quality, safe access to parks and open spaces is important to the health and well-being of this unique community. This means not only evenly distributing these areas throughout the city but also designing and maintaining parks, plazas, beaches, and other outdoor public spaces to be inclusive and accessible to people of different ages, abilities, and interests. This goal outlines six strategies to ensure equitable access that promotes social justice and enhances the quality of life for everyone.

NATURE EXPERIENCES

Parks and open spaces provide invaluable opportunities for residents to connect with nature, which is essential for mental and physical well-being. In urban settings, these natural experiences can reduce stress, promote physical activity, and provide educational opportunities about local ecosystems and biodiversity. Building on prior city and volunteer-led work, this goal includes four strategies focused on increased stewardship, education, and investments in urban habitats and natural landscapes throughout the City.

SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS

The sustainability of parks is vital in terms of both environmental protection and long-term operational feasibility. This includes using clear standards and best practices in park maintenance, conserving water, promoting biodiversity, and implementing green infrastructure. It also means ensuring staff capacity is aligned with the expectations of the City to provide for valuable City spaces. This goal identifies four strategies that support the planning, design, and maintenance of Evanston's beloved places.

WELCOMING WATER ACCESS

Access to water can greatly enhance the recreational and aesthetic value of parks. In Evanston, which is along Lake Michigan and the North Shore Channel, ensuring that residents have access to water for activities like swimming and boating is important. Additionally, manufactured water access (like swimming pools or spraypads) can provide respite for community members on hot summer days and are of utmost importance to residents for future investment. This goal communicates four strategies to expand water access through City leadership and partnerships.

ADAPTABILITY

As Evanston grows and as the impacts of climate change become more pronounced, parks must be designed to be flexible and resilient. This means planning for changing demographics and recreational needs, as well as preparing for environmental challenges such as increased temperatures, extreme weather events, and changing precipitation patterns. The plan envisions five strategies to respond to changing community needs and climate impacts.

Goal #1: Equitable Access

A system that closes equity gaps by encouraging all to participate.

Ensuring that all residents of Evanston, regardless of their background or where they live in the city, have high-quality, safe access to parks and open spaces is important to the health and well-being of this unique community. This means not only evenly distributing these areas throughout the city but also designing and maintaining parks, open play and field spaces, plazas, beaches, and other outdoor public spaces to be inclusive and accessible to people of different ages, abilities, and interests. This goal outlines six strategies to ensure equitable access that promotes social justice and enhances the quality of life for everyone.

 1.1

Recalibrate the system by prioritizing access and reducing barriers for residents with the highest unserved need.

Limited strategic planning in previous years has allowed Evanston's parks and recreation facilities to grow haphazardly, with some areas overserved and others underserved. This stretches maintenance capacity at the department, creating lower quality facilities for all residents. The desire for better maintained facilities, especially bathrooms and indoor facilities at parks, was a consistent theme in public open houses.

In order to strategically balance and improve its portfolio of facilities and amenities, Evanston can work to better align physical investments with the City's priorities of equity and resilience while improving capacity to provide excellent services to all. This includes strategically prioritizing upgrades to parks with known accessibility barriers and focusing maintenance energy and improvements on facilities in neighborhoods with larger proportions of socially vulnerable populations. In well-served areas, such as neighborhoods with five or more playgrounds, the City can recalibrate the amenity mix to better balance the portfolio and mitigate excess maintenance costs. Barriers to programs must also be addressed: program participation support should be evaluated across offerings to ensure that offerings are accessible to those with the highest unserved need.

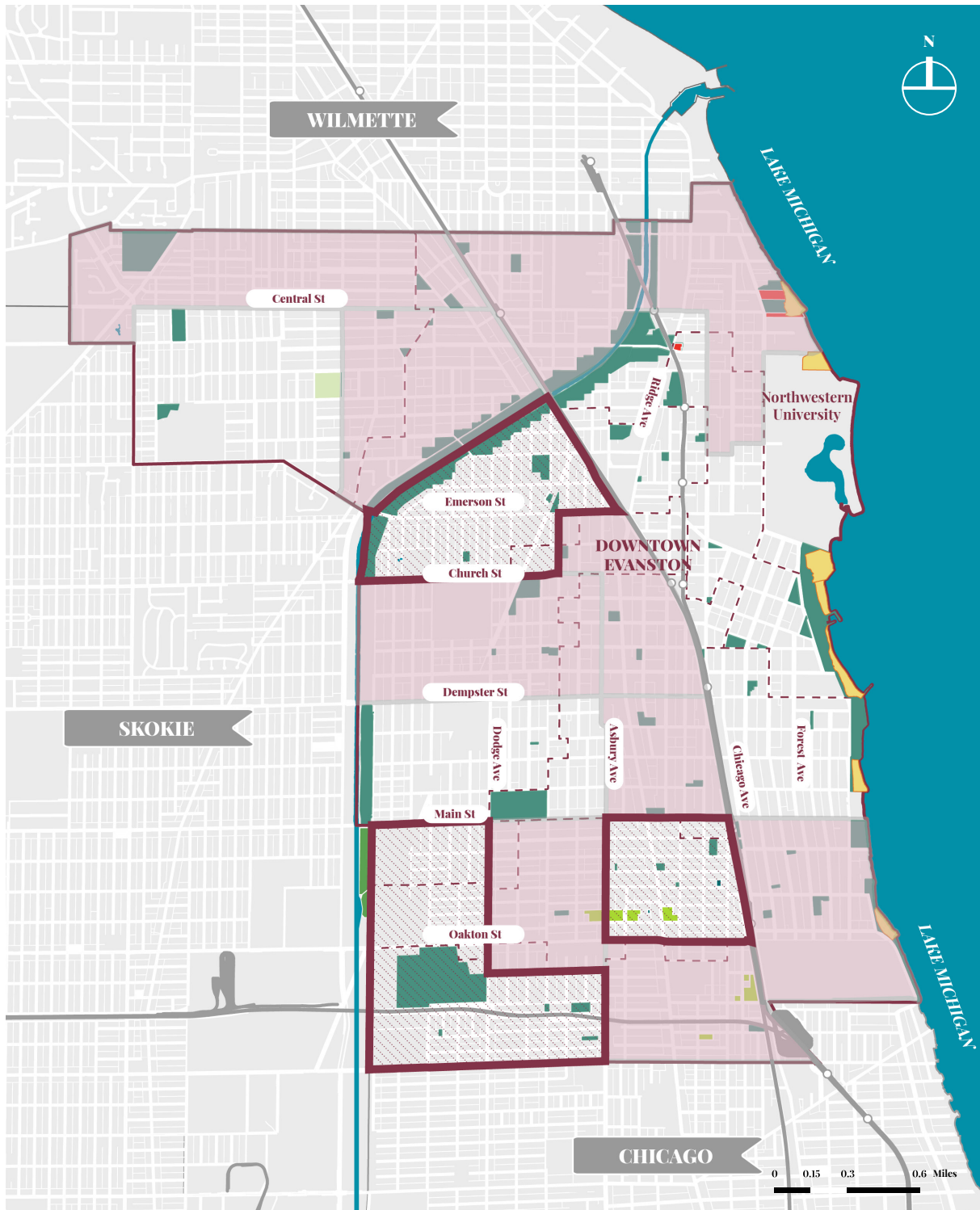
Actions

1.1.A

- At least annually, the Parks and Recreation Board and the Parks and Recreation Department should revisit schedule for maintenance of parks to increase daily care of parks in high-need areas. High-need areas are defined as areas that the 2020 census identifies as having higher prevalence of multi-family units and socially vulnerable populations (based on the Centers for Disease Control Social (CDC) Vulnerability Index (SVI)), where park use might be more valued.

1.1.B

- Prioritize park capital investments in high-need areas (higher prevalence of multi-family units, and vulnerable populations) where park use might be more valued, especially in areas with more park amenities beyond their recommended lifespan and lower diversity of park experiences
 - Renovate playgrounds identified as poor or very poor condition in high needs, sequencing investments geographically to provide walkable playground access across all high-need areas.
 - Consider park investments tied to City and developer-led affordable housing projects.



Priority Community Zones

Child Poverty Rate by Census Tract

Highest (above average, >19%)

Medium (4-8%)

Low(<4%)

Source: 2022 EPLAN - Evanston Process for the Local Assessment of Needs, 2020 US Census

- 1.1.C • At least over the next ten years, rebalance Evanston's portfolio of recreation amenities with sustainable replacement levels and funding so that replacement schedules are aligned with recommended recreation facility lifespans.
- 1.1.D • Develop an equity framework that identifies priority areas for capital improvements and maintenance of parks to support the implementation of this action.
- 1.1.E • Revisit current scholarship program to evaluate if current application methods and funding levels (50% of program fee) could be improved to increase accessibility (such as creating an online application form and moving to a sliding scale).
- 1.1.F • Support participation in programs that have high costs to participate beyond program fees (such as hockey by offering equipment packages for no/low cost for the length of the program/season).
- 1.1.G • Engage in habitat restoration to increase the equitable distribution of naturalized landscapes in the city.

1.2

Develop criteria to ensure programming meets Evanston's equity, inclusion, and accessibility goals.

The 2022 Evanston Process for the Local Assessment of Needs (EPLAN), created with the goal of improving public health by improving equity and resilience measures, identified the importance of ensuring that all residents have equitable opportunity to participate in community events and provide input in city decision making, regardless of age, language, or disability. This standard must be formalized for all public programs at the Parks and Recreation Department. Formalizing that commitment into both explicit Department standards that are integrated into regular program development and concrete metrics to evaluate progress towards achieving those standards will ensure that Evanston's broader equity goals become a reality for Evanston residents.

Actions

- 1.2.A • Establish standards or requirements for affiliates related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (if they do not already exist).
- 1.2.B • Establish metrics to measure progress in meeting the goals of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
- 1.2.C • Designate a "home" facility for special recreation programs suited for the needs of this community.

1.3

Invest in strategic marketing of programs to better reach underserved populations and broaden public awareness.

In a randomly selected survey, Evanston residents were asked what prevents them from participating in programs and special events offered by the city: 33% of respondents said they “don’t know what is offered.” Department staff feel that marketing is not specialized enough to reach target audiences effectively. In the survey, Asian respondents reported a lack of awareness more frequently than both Black and White respondents, while Black respondents more often reported that not feeling welcome was a major barrier. Strategic marketing to reach underserved populations who may not be hearing about programs is needed and will require investment to understand how to reach populations who are missed today. Similarly, prioritizing welcoming and inclusive marketing strategies, as well as investing in public communication about Evanston’s commitment to eliminating barriers to using programs, are critical steps to shifting those numbers.

Actions

- 1.3.A** • Develop a stand-alone website or more interactive built-in webpage for parks and recreation with mobile functionality.
- 1.3.B** • Invest in staffing to support a 50% to full time outreach and marketing coordinator.
- 1.3.C** • Further invest in and highlight e-newsletters and social media as key communication channels.
- 1.3.D** • Develop equity guidelines for program marketing and create a statement of inclusion that accompanies program materials to let residents know all are welcome.

1.4

Increase youth professional and leadership development opportunities through parks and recreation programs.

Teen programs emerged as an under-met need in Evanston by many households in a randomly sampled survey. In focus groups, many residents shared an interest in more mentorship and leadership opportunities for young people through involvement in Parks and Recreation. Today, the vast majority of the department’s leadership and employment opportunities for young people are concentrated in the summer. Additional opportunities for youth to engage and grow throughout the year can build on the existing infrastructure of summer youth programs for a more comprehensive youth development approach. Many residents expressed interest in engaging young people specifically in the management and care of Evanston’s parks and natural areas.

Offering opportunities to both learn about the stewardship of the natural environment and public leadership could leverage the Department's existing strengths to great effect. Towards the city's goal of ensuring that all city residents have equal opportunity to participate in city design making regardless of age, Evanston can replicate the success of peer cities in inviting young people to the table on the Parks and Recreation Board, whether through a separate youth council or youth representatives on the board itself. Young people can then guide the development of youth-centric programming and increased investment in youth leadership opportunities. This is also an opportunity to tie accountability and responsibility to all youth employment opportunities as part of staff training to ensure programs are beneficial to staff for which this might be their first job, and the communities benefiting from their engagement.

Actions

- 1.4.A** • Leverage Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP) into a more comprehensive year-round, multi-year internship program.
- 1.4.B** • Create a youth executive board for parks or engage a youth representative on the Evanston Parks and Recreation Board.
- 1.4.C** • Create an Evanston Township High School (ETHS) "friends of parks" to volunteer in maintenance and beautification projects.



The Evanston Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program participated in focused discussions with the plan team to identify opportunities for engaging youth in park planning and investments.

1.5

Provide recreation facilities and programs for all ages that meet the needs of youth, teens, and seniors.

In focus groups, older adults reported a desire for more indoor activities and spaces for seniors who are less physically able to participate in outdoor activities. Others expressed the need for more “youth-centric” park spaces and leadership and mentorship opportunities for young people. Expanding existing offerings can be a challenge for already under-resourced staff: to meet the diverse needs of residents while prioritizing equity and access, the department should focus on increasing partnership with existing arts, cultural, and sports organizations to build out new programs while balancing limited staff capacity. This will require improvements to how local organizations program city-owned spaces and facilities and investigation into barriers they face today. The lack of and poor quality of bathrooms is a major concern and was emphasized by teen counselors in focus groups. Staff reported that a lack of indoor facilities at parks is a regulatory barrier to increasing the number of spots available in summer camps, as bathrooms and storm shelters are required for on-site youth programming.

Actions

- 1.5.A** • Reduce barriers for local organizations to host diverse multi-generational programming .
- 1.5.B** • Create a public restroom task force with Evanston Libraries, School District 65 and 202, and other public facing departments and organizations to identify existing restroom availability, opportunities for future restroom investments, and policies related to restroom funding, operations, and management.



Research shows that Sports & Athletics for youth are a top community priority in Evanston.

1.6 Employ acquisition, partnership, and policy tools to expand public access to non-Evanston owned parks and green spaces.

While Evanston has more parks per resident than average compared to peers, it has almost half the amount of acres per resident. In a highly developed city like Evanston with little room to grow, closing that gap in parkland needs requires strategic and creative thinking. To meet the needs of residents, Evanston can consider three avenues: leveraging streets, squares, and the public right of way, partnering with other landowners like schools, and strategically planning to acquire new parkland in areas identified as a priority. In determining prioritization for increased parkland supply through any of the three methods, meeting the needs of the most unserved today should drive the department's approach. The 2022 Evanston Thrives Downtown Retail Plan identified a bottleneck with permit review and approval at the Department that may limit public private partnership in the activation of Downtown's streets and plazas. Some existing partnerships, like the management of Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) lands, are already effective at increasing public access to green and open space and should continue or be expanded.

Actions

- 1.6.A** • Consider partnership with Evanston's business districts to activate public space outside of parks, including street closures, parklets, and activation of public squares and plazas.
- 1.6.B** • Consider opportunities to strategically acquire new parkland that enhances connectivity and access, especially in underserved/high-need areas. This could include fee simple acquisition, easements, and/or partnerships with affordable housing developments.
- 1.6.C** • Formalize partnerships with District 65, and District 202 to encourage public access to school playgrounds and fields when schools are not in use.
- 1.6.D** • Continue collaboration with Ridgeville Park District, Skokie Park District, and Lighthouse Park District to support shared goals and recreation opportunities for Evanston residents.
- 1.6.E** • Continue to manage Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) lands and share proposed improvements to MWRD lands with the organization to understand roles and responsibilities with new investments.

Goal #2: Natural Experiences

A system that is ecologically resilient and gives residents more places to experience naturalized landscapes.

While natural systems and ecosystem function are limited to public parks and major waterways, Evanston continues to expand naturalized landscapes where those spaces can support a range of benefits to the city and residents, like runoff reduction, pollinator habitats, and urban heat island reduction. These naturalized landscapes can include rain gardens, vegetated swales, canal restoration, and more. These systems provide great ecological benefits; when they are properly designed they can offer considerable recreational and financial benefits as well. Building on prior city and volunteer-led work, the following strategies identify ways that the city can expand natural experiences through capital investments, programs, and policies.

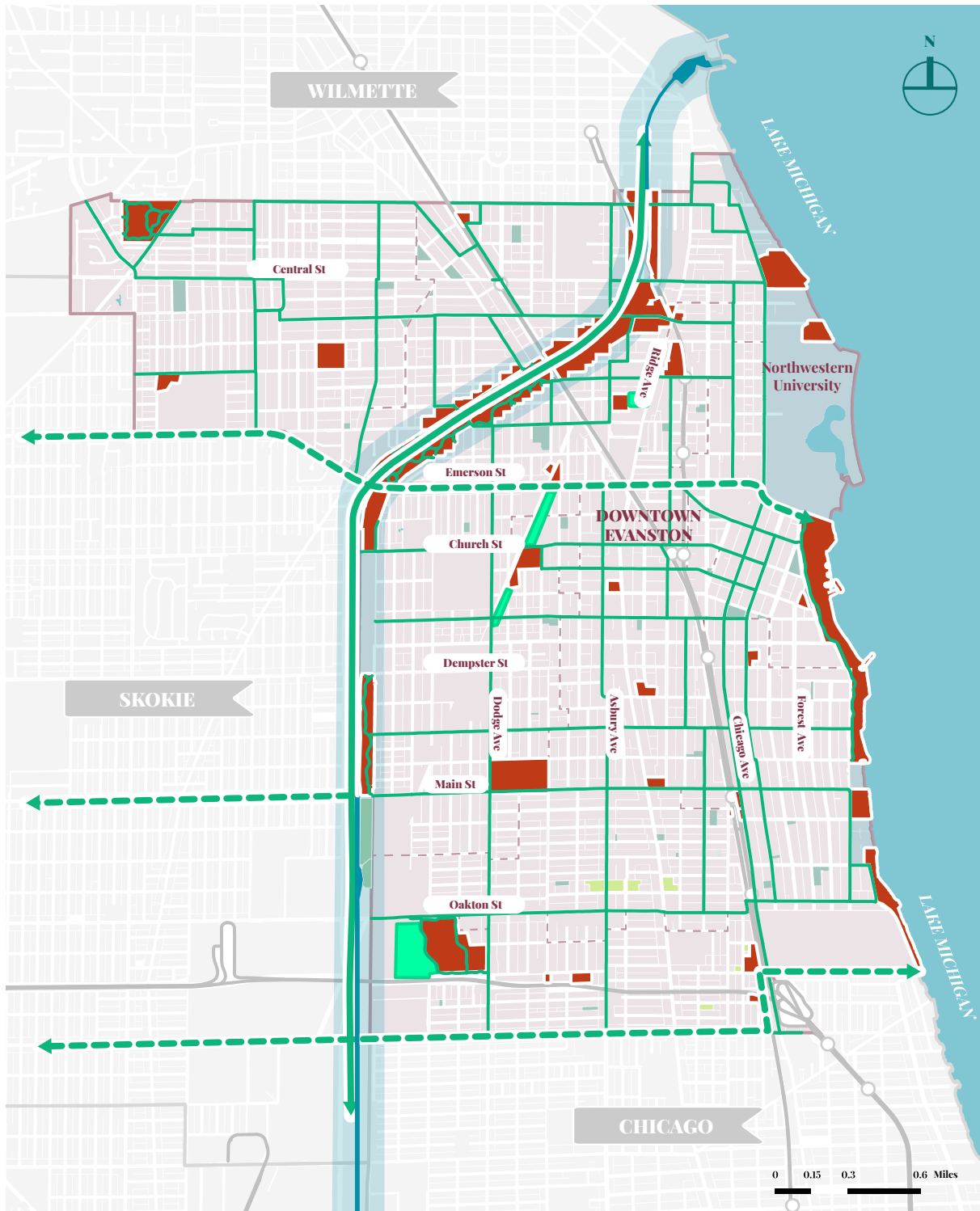
2.1

Enhance existing naturalized landscapes in a coordinated effort to improve the connectivity, quality, and resilience of the network.

There are many active organizations invested in habitat restoration and management in Evanston, and while some coordination between those stewards exists, there are opportunities to improve relationships across the city. Making this situation more challenging is insufficient staff resources to implement the current low level of natural resource management, much less an expanded, proactive plan. Moreover, the restoration and management of habitats at individual parks suffer from limited space and lack of visibility, which keeps them a low priority for funding and staffing. By implementing a unified vision and set of goals for naturalized areas using brief management plans, staff can better organize collaboration and deployment of City resources and better advocate for funding and staffing to implement the vision. This will allow the City to establish more diverse, efficiently managed naturalized areas that can withstand and recover from future inevitable changes in the environment and surrounding land uses.

Actions

- 2.1.A** • Deploy management briefs to guide and improve the protection, restoration, management, and monitoring of naturalized landscapes.
- 2.1.B** • Seek collaborative opportunities on public and adjacent private land to create a connected, more extensive system of naturalized landscapes over the next twenty years, with an emphasis on existing larger patches of vegetation.
- 2.1.C** • Identify locations where the conversion of turf to prairie can be accomplished in the next five years, with an emphasis on connection to existing natural areas and green stormwater management areas.
- 2.1.D** • Manage the North Shore Channel in separate ecological management units, each with a strategic direction, a desired outcome, a schedule, tasks, and partners/volunteers.
- 2.1.E** • In all City plantings, use native or locally adapted plant species where possible. This could include actions that :
 - Prioritize the growing of native flowers that bloom throughout the season to support pollinators.
 - Ensure that seeds are free of insecticides and that flowers are cultivated without pesticides, chemical fertilizers, or herbicides, which can harm pollinators.
 - Prioritize plants that serve as key resources for native endangered species, such as the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee.
 - Develop collaborative programs with landowners adjacent to public parks and provide support in planting native species from seed and plugs in both private lawns and city-owned parkways.



Proposed Framework for a Connected Green System

- Proposed Regional Bikeways
- Existing Bikeways
- Parks along Bikeways
- Potential Naturalized Areas

Source: Northwest Municipal Conference Multimodal Transportation Plan

The City should use the Framework for a Connected Green System to identify appropriate areas for expanding naturalized areas aligned with plan goals and community visions.

2.2

Use programs and technology to welcome everyone, make it easy to engage with natural areas, and raise the level of ecological knowledge in Evanston.

Results of a poll of Evanston residents conducted as part of this planning process revealed a desire for better outreach and messaging about City programs and resources. The current Parks and Recreation website does a good job of highlighting some aspects of the parks system, but the link for “List of Evanston Parks” opens up an Excel table instead of something more intuitive like an interactive map. According to a Pew Research Center study published in 2021, over 85% of Americans own a smartphone. When residents and visitors are looking for nature opportunities in Evanston, a searchable mobile interface would be a powerful tool to match people with nearby opportunities that meet their needs. Additionally, increased programming and educational outreach will help residents engage with natural spaces, raise awareness of City resources, and celebrate and promote the City’s investments.

Actions

2.2.A

- Highlight City-selected natural areas to the public, and produce and disseminate educational information for those areas.

2.2.B

- Increase the frequency and regularity of nature experiences for youth. The Nature Conservancy, in collaboration with researchers from Stanford University and the University of California, Santa Cruz, conducted a study which revealed that being close to nature enhances various educational outcomes. This research found that children benefit in terms of increased attentional capacity, better impulse control, and improved cognitive development. The study focused on the impact of green spaces near schools, considering other significant factors such as race and poverty. By analyzing standardized test scores of fifth graders from nearly 500 schools in California, it was discovered that the beneficial effects of proximity to nature were even more significant than the adverse effects of poverty.

2.2.C

- Make digital maps of naturalized landscapes available for publicly used mobile devices. Mobile accessible maps of natural spaces can serve as more than just navigation and awareness-focused aids; they are tools for education, conservation, and community engagement, promoting a harmonious and informed relationship between Evanston residents and the naturalized landscapes around them. Publicly accessible maps of natural spaces provide a range of benefits to residents, including:

Environmental Education: By sharing mapping completed management areas within the City, maps of naturalized landscapes can serve as educational tools, highlighting different types of landscapes, flora, and fauna.

Navigation and Accessibility: These maps make natural areas more accessible, offering detailed routes and trails. This is particularly helpful for hikers, bikers, and outdoor enthusiasts, allowing them to plan their routes effectively and safely.

Awareness Building and Accountability: Spotlighting stewardship partners and volunteers responsible for the management or maintenance of these spaces

enables the City to expand awareness of the existing nature-focused volunteer network and highlight volunteer success stories.

2.3 Effectively manage public volunteerism and partnerships to restore, manage, and monitor naturalized landscapes and habitat in alignment with the city's goals.

Volunteerism and partnerships provide an indirect revenue source via donated time to assist the City in the management, maintenance, and programming of City spaces and events. Volunteerism in Evanston is focused in particular on naturalized landscape stewardship. Establishing and publicizing explicit goals can better direct public time and avoid misalignment in public effort and Department success metrics.

Actions

- 2.3.A**
- Create a full-time volunteer coordinator staff position to oversee the volunteer program to restore naturalized areas in Evanston. The main responsibilities of this staff position will be to prepare annual work plans for areas under restoration, coordinate with volunteer stewards to organize restoration efforts, and direct volunteers to concrete work outcomes.

The volunteer coordinator will hold an annual meeting with the public and private entities who have a stake in the restoration and management of Evanston's naturalized areas. The volunteer coordinator will review the work completed in the previous year, present City priorities for the upcoming year, and seek input from stakeholders as part of the effort to protect, restore, manage, and monitor naturalized areas and habitats.

- 2.3.B**
- Identify restoration tasks that volunteers are safely and effectively able to perform.

- 2.3.C**
- Develop and implement a training program, led by the volunteer coordinator, to ensure that volunteers are correctly instructed how to safely perform tasks.

- 2.3.D**
- Develop a volunteer website to both communicate with volunteers and track volunteer training and activity.

Essential components of the site include a schedule of upcoming events, requirements to become a City-approved volunteer (including mandatory and supplemental trainings), notice of volunteer work needs for additional restoration areas, contact information for the volunteer coordinator, and formal volunteer agreements. Formal agreements for volunteers should clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of volunteers. Additional features could include an account login that would allow volunteers to track their activity, review their completed trainings, sign up for future events, complete workday release forms, and submit demographic information.

- 2.3.E**
- Hold quarterly meetings with volunteers and stewards to orient them to the tasks at each site that are scheduled for completion in the upcoming quarter. City staff is responsible for reviewing the management briefs and soliciting feedback from the volunteers to determine the list of tasks for each site.

At each quarterly meeting, the volunteer coordinator works with volunteers to develop a schedule of workdays and a list of materials and equipment needed in the upcoming quarter to execute the planned tasks. The workday schedule is then uploaded to the website (see 2.3.C) and advertised in City communications, and a detailed written summary report of quarterly meetings shall be shared with the PRB within 30 days. The schedule and list of materials and equipment is provided to City staff responsible for supporting volunteers so they can coordinate staff and resources appropriately. The volunteer coordinator will be available for any volunteer needs day of the event, and will coordinate with City staff to ensure that materials, equipment, and staff personnel are on site to manage volunteer work. While the City should determine the most appropriate method to identify on-site staff participation, considerations for appropriate engagement should take into account related job responsibilities to the volunteer work and frequency of participation in on-site volunteer activities, to ensure parity in staff engagement across the organization.

2.4 Build the internal capacity to implement effective natural resource management practices.

While both the Public Works Department and the Parks and Recreation Department are both facing several challenges related to staff growth and skillset misalignments, which impact the care of Evanston's parks, the need to build capacity is most acutely felt in the Greenways division of Public Works. Today, the division consists of a mix of gardeners and landscape laborers, with landscape laborers outnumbering gardeners. A significant issue is the lack of required skills among many staff members. To address this, the division has grouped employees together to manage tasks collectively, such as attending to all planter beds. However, this approach has encountered challenges. The prevalence of staff lacking specialized skills poses a significant challenge to the City's efficiency and effectiveness in maintaining the city's parks.

Actions

- 2.4.A** • Use management briefs as a tool to direct collaborative management of natural areas.
- 2.4.B** • Provide consistent, regular updates of staff time and task allocations via an online dashboard.
- 2.4.C** • Offer natural resource development opportunities to capital and maintenance staff.
- 2.4.D** • Grow Greenways staff to exceed pre-reorganization numbers and align with reinvestments in parks. Pre-reorganization staffing included 24 individuals for greenways and 6 dedicated recreation maintenance staff. Today, 18 staff maintain parks and greenways.
- 2.4.E** • Emphasize native plantings, management for stormwater retention and carbon sequestration, maximum benefit of urban canopy, etc.

Goal #3: Sustainable Operations

A system that is sustainable to operate, maintain, and renew.

The sustainability of parks is vital in terms of both environmental protection and long-term operational feasibility. This includes using clear standards and best practices in park maintenance, conserving water, promoting biodiversity, and implementing green infrastructure. It also means ensuring staff capacity is aligned with the expectations of the City to provide for valuable City spaces. This goal identifies four strategies that support the planning, design, and maintenance of Evanston's beloved places.

3.1

Increase efficiencies in administering recreation services through improved processes, programs, and technology.

Simplifying and streamlining administrative processes can significantly improve the efficiency of delivering recreation services. City staff, recreation partners, and residents shared frustrations with the existing RecTrac software, citing barriers to completing all transactions within the system. Facility reservation requests go through RecTrac, but require that the City respond to the request over the phone and then reservation payments must be made in person. The reservation is difficult to use for most residents, which often means many requests for space are made via email or by phone, further focusing staff capacity and attention away from other recreation program needs. The following actions identify ways for the City to provide quicker, more user-friendly services, while also reducing administrative costs and inefficiencies. Using the right recreation program and registration software is crucial in increasing efficiencies. This can include online registration systems, mobile apps for facility booking and program information, and digital platforms for feedback and communication.

Actions

3.1.A

- Evaluate current processes through the development of customer journey maps and/or internal process maps and evaluate opportunities to improve and streamline recreation service administration.

Defining customer interactions, needs, and feelings at each stage of their journey can help the Department pinpoint where hurdles, delays, and opportunities exist to improve the customer experience. These maps are often informed by customer feedback and other data related to customer visits, sales, and retention, as well as data about the length of time it takes to complete a service transaction or the time between steps in the process. The City of Evanston is effective at collecting and reviewing complaints, feedback, and suggestions. The City can also take advantage of software programs it already has access to, like RecTrac, to produce data to better understand service needs and opportunities.

3.1.B

- Streamline response times between internal service requests between various departments, including Public Works and the Parks and Recreation Department. Efforts towards improving internal customer service, such as response times, should occur simultaneously with efforts to enhance external customer service delivery.

3.1.C

- Develop criteria for excellent customer service to measure Department performance in this area. Develop the criteria based on customer research (see 3.1.A), going beyond output measures. Metrics may include Net Promoter Scores (NPS) collected via email, time to resolve customer issues, staff satisfaction, and retention and repurchase patterns. Criteria should be developed collaboratively between senior staff and revisited annually to ensure alignment with department goals.

- 3.1.D** • Explore opportunities for fuller use of the Department's recreation registration and facility management software (currently RecTrac) (and information stored within it) and to integrate it into the City's website. This may include utilizing functionality and features already available to the Department, but not being used, updating the customer search/shopping page design, as well shifting current Department practices to offer more online features and functionality to customers, such as allowing some facilities to be fully booked online.
- 3.1.E** • Annually, the Parks and Recreation Department and the PRB will evaluate current programs and policies related to athletic field, park, and facility permits for affiliate and community groups to make the criteria and processes utilized to manage these efforts more transparent and sustainable. While a current affiliate program exists, Department staff have expressed that the demand for space often outweighs the supply, and that prioritizing the permitting of those spaces is challenging. Possible areas of evaluation may include the potential establishment of priority levels within the Community Affiliate program, standards related to the amount of athletic field space that should remain unpermitted (and open to the public or to allow the fields to rest) as well as the sustainability of current affiliate scheduling and fee structures.

3.2 Conduct in-depth needs assessments among staff in order to properly match funding and staffing to short-term and long-term priorities.

A needs assessment is the process of identifying the gap between the desired performance and the current performance of employees. After identifying that gap, a needs assessment is a process in which to work collaboratively with staff to explore the root causes for under-performance and identify methods for reducing or eliminating the gap. A complete needs assessment also considers the consequences for ignoring the gaps. The most significant gaps that were identified in this process were related to organization capacity and efficiency and funding and capital improvement misalignments.

Actions

- 3.2.A** • When budgeting and planning for new capital investments, quantify long-term maintenance costs and identify strategies for funding.
- 3.2.B** • Work with Evanston City Council to create a dedicated fund/annual minimum budget allocation that is sufficient to sustain a high-quality park system.
- 3.2.C** • Conduct an internal process to develop clear job responsibilities between department to ensure there are no duplicative efforts or that needed work falls through the gaps. Document ownership and make that information easily available to all current and new employees.

3.3

Refine internal processes to enable effective management of parkland and natural resources among multiple departments.

Three separate departments within the City operate and maintain the City's many assets and spaces. The Parks and Recreation Department maintains restrooms, park facilities, and facility grounds. The Facilities and Fleet Management Division is within Administrative Services, and is responsible for city buildings including many of the buildings present in park spaces. Greenways is within the Public Works Agency and maintains parks, open spaces, and parking lots as well as the majority of the equipment within parks, like playgrounds. New and streamlined internal communication methods can benefit both existing and newly hired staff, especially as natural resource management capacity and responsibilities expand and evolve across departments.

Actions

- 3.3.A** • With the process proposed in Action 3.2.C, evaluate all existing and anticipated future maintenance needs and clearly define ownership and supporting roles between departments. This may require hard conversations about who is best suited to do the work (related to capacity, existing skillsets, and department priorities).
- 3.3.B** • Make it possible for departments to share and view calendars and activity schedules by park area to coordinate maintenance and avoid working at cross purposes.
- 3.3.C** • Schedule regular meetings with a clear agenda to share updates from various departments and leave space during the meeting for troubleshooting shared challenges and identifying collaboration opportunities.

3.4

Identify and establish standards related to park and facility maintenance, finishes, plant and tree selection, and capital improvements; and document and share these across departments to systematize and streamline efforts.

While residents expressed overwhelming support for the maintenance and care of their parks and facilities, residents also acknowledged that City facilities are tired and in need of upgrades or additional care to align with City expectations for high quality park experiences. Today, the Greenways and Facilities departments have been working to align their methods for maintenance needs across the system. The City should create and confirm a series of maintenance, design and material standards to ensure consistency in the safety and quality of park spaces for sustainable park use.

Standards can provide consistency and uniformity across different sites, enhancing user experience and managing public expectations. Aesthetic standards maintain parks' visual appeal and reinforce a recognizable brand. Ultimately, these standards are vital for creating public spaces that are safe, sustainable, visually appealing, inclusive, and beneficial for the community, while also ensuring operational efficiencies across departments.

Actions

- 3.4.A** • Create standards and best practices plan for facilities to include a confirmation of roles and responsibilities between different departments.
- 3.4.B** • To ensure the City is responsive to community health and safety first, the City should organize requests to respond to maintenance needs into levels of priority aligned with the following conditions:
 - *Tier 1 Priority: Park condition that poses an immediate life safety or property threat or failure (like a building failure or tree failure).*
 - *Tier 2 Priority: Park condition that presents a potential future emergency hazard (like a fire code issue).*
 - *Tier 3 Priority: Regular maintenance needs that preserve park conditions and ensure the longevity of park assets.*
 - *Tier 4 Priority: Requests for maintenance responses from the City Manager, Public Works Agency Director or Parks and Recreation Director.*



Management Brief Map for Lawson Park

Goal #4: Welcoming Water Access

**A system that
increases safe access
to water + waterfront
experiences for all**

Water is a central part of life in Evanston, and the top priority for access among residents. Beaches and waterfront access were ranked #1 in the statistically valid resident survey; indoor and outdoor pools were both in the top four. Evanston has fewer pools and splash pads than peer municipalities of a similar size today. As the climate changes and temperatures increase, access to water will become even more important to residents' safety and wellbeing.

Evanston's beachfront is a valuable resource to the community that is in many ways still shaped by a long history of exclusion by race and income. Today, geographic access to water remains uneven, with Evanston's few places to access water limited to the lakefront or private indoor pools in athletic facilities. Residents report barriers to accessing programs to learn to swim. Both perceptions and real risks of water safety issues create additional challenges to increasing the public's access to water experiences. Public perception of the North Shore Channel varies, and few regard it as swimmable, despite suitable water quality to support swimming. Expanding programming, activation, and views of the water can help improve perceptions of the North Shore Channel.

Evanston has the opportunity to meet the growing public need for water and waterfront experiences with a strategic focus on equitable access that addresses past harms.

Case Study

A 2018 study in the Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism found overlap between perceptions of water quality in Utah and participation in outdoor recreation. By improving recreation opportunities through free programming, and increased waterfront access, Evanston can improve perceptions of water quality while furthering equitable access to water recreation.

4.1

Invest in new offerings to meet community desires for swimming opportunities, splash pads, and waterfront views.

As temperatures rise, investment in water resources will become a question not only of recreation, but public health. Today, gaps in water access are concentrated in land-locked areas of Evanston around Central Street in the North and between the canal and railroad south of Downtown. Interest in waterfront access among residents hinges not only on a desire to get in the water, but a desire to see and experience it (for example along the channel). While partnerships can fill some of these gaps, developing new amenities that allow residents to take in the beauty of water, swim, and cool off, will be critical. While interest in pools is high today, splash pads generally require less capital investment and produce less risk of drowning, avoiding the additional cost of lifeguards.

Action:

- 4.1.A • Develop lakefront amenities that balance the protection of the lakefront from damage during storms and high water and enhance user experiences and habitat to address public perceptions of lakefront exclusivity.
- 4.1.B • Develop partnerships with area organizations to expand access to indoor pools for year-round resident and visitor use.
- 4.1.C • Make splash pad investments to parks with high reinvestment needs that are in areas with lower tree canopy.
- 4.1.D • Repair Fountain Square's water feature or commit to developing programming for it as a flexible space in other ways.

4.2

Better connect the community to the lakefront through a greater mix of programs and amenities.

Across all races and incomes, residents agree that beaches and waterfront access are a top priority. At a 2022 public meeting regarding the stabilization of the lakefront, which has been consistently plagued with erosion issues, residents expressed a preference for naturalized shorelines that could also address environmental risk. Merging public interest in naturalized landscapes with public desire for increased access to the waterfront could create new opportunities for Evanston. Programming and activation done in partnership with community-based organizations is critical to undoing historic inequity in access to the lakefront so that all residents feel welcome.

Action:

- 4.2.A • Develop the infrastructure needed (such as improved lakefront field houses) to invest in more on-water and water-adjacent programs.

- 4.2.B • Make ADA improvements to lakefront facilities.
- 4.2.C • Expand lakefront community events and arts & cultural activities in collaboration with community-based organizations and the Office of Economic Development.
- 4.2.D • Expand lakefront nature-based programming.
- 4.2.E • Create cross-town shuttles to transport people from inaccessible neighborhoods to the beach during the summer and cool centers during heat emergencies.

4.3 Invest in the North Shore Channel as a critical resource for high-quality habitat and recreation.

The North Shore Channel is one of the least ecologically functioning naturalized areas in the city and has a particularly high percentage of non-native species. Open space within a mature city like Evanston is at a premium: the North Shore Channel is an underutilized amenity that could start to meet the community's dual needs of increased natural habitat and recreational amenities. To do so, the City must invest in stormwater management plans that maintain and improve water quality, especially during and after storms. The geographic location of the channel relative to the city offers a unique opportunity to better connect inland residents, who may have a harder time accessing the lakefront, with water recreation and views. By combining increased waterside amenities that create clear views of the water with public communication efforts that emphasize the channel's potential, the North Shore Channel could become a beloved "water trail" that expands access to water in Evanston.

Action:

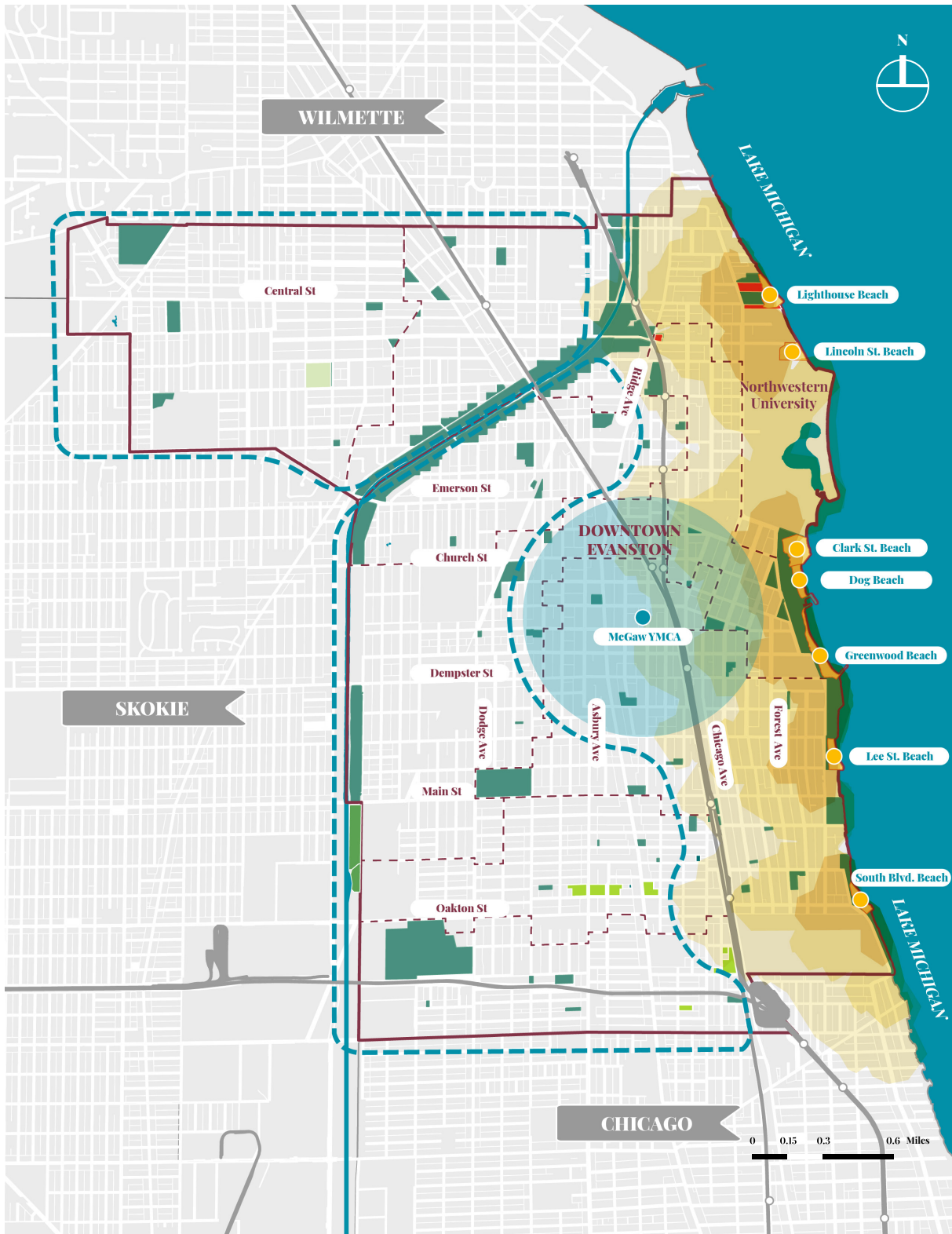
- 4.3.A • Implement management briefs for vegetation management to address invasives and poor soil.
- 4.3.B • Implement best practices to reduce pollutant loading in storm sewers including phosphorus, bacteria and chlorides.
- 4.3.C • Increase waterside access and/or views of the channel by identifying locations to clear views and create publicly accessible amenities.
- 4.3.D • Publicize efforts to invest in the channel to educate the public about its potential and start to improve public perception of its recreation and habitat potential.
- 4.3.E • Increase public access to the water by human-powered watercraft (such as canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards) consistent with proposals by prior planning efforts. Utilizing the North Shore Channel will similarly address demands on the Dempster Street Sailing and Launch Facility which faces long vessel storage waitlists and launch use.



From the 1917 Plan of Evanston, with Bridge Street in the foreground and Lake Michigan in the distance. Source: Plan of Evanston(1917)



The North Shore Canal today. Source: City of Evanston



Existing Beach Access and Indoor Pool Access

- 5-minute walk
- 10-minute walk
- 15-minute walk
- YMCA School partnership pool
- Walkable Swim Access Opportunity Zone

4.4

Broaden access to swimming programs, especially learn-to-swim programs.

Hiring seasonal lifeguards is a consistent challenge for municipalities and Evanston is no exception: increasing youth swim programs can serve as a pipeline into lifeguard training for Evanston youth. Today, the City closes beaches in August at the end of the public season. Even when swimming is not permitted, many residents continue to do so, highlighting the importance of easily accessible learn-to-swim and water safety programs. Some offerings already exist today: EvanstonSwims!, in partnership with the YMCA, offers free swimming lessons for Evanston school district students. This and other partnerships should be expanded to include offerings at additional facilities.

Action:

- 4.4.A • Leverage partnerships with like-minded organizations to broaden the aquatic program and facility offerings.
- 4.4.B • Develop low or no-cost swim lessons that encourage more youth to swim, educate youth about water safety, and support future needs for lifeguards.

Cost Benefits of Pools vs. Splash Pads

Generally, the investment of a splash pad is less than a swimming pool, with less risk for drowning, negating the need for fencing, signage, and lifeguards as costs to consider



Goal #5: Adaptability

A system that readily responds to rapidly changing climate needs and recreation trends

From changes in climate, to evolving community demographics and new national recreation trends, parks and green spaces face many shifting pressures. Adaptability is a key consideration for Evanston's parks, programs, and green space to ensure they can continue to meet community needs even as conditions change. This goal focuses specifically on strategies to increase Evanston's adaptability to 1) rising temperatures, 2) changing precipitation patterns, and 3) evolving recreation programming interests due to national trends and local demographic changes. The outcomes of implementing these strategies include enhanced user comfort, greater support for health and wellness, and increased efficiency. These strategies also contribute to accomplishing the vision of Evanston's Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP), including enhancing urban canopy and green space, incorporating green infrastructure, and planning for extreme heat. The final strategy included in goal 5 below addresses how this plan as a whole can remain relevant by providing a framework for updating recommendations.

5.1

Create cooler parks that provide relief from heat and that contribute to cooler surroundings by mitigating the urban heat island effect.

Average summer temperature has risen by 1.4°F in the area since 1970, and climate projections anticipate this trend will continue, with an increasing frequency and intensity of heatwaves. By mid-century, the EPA projects that the region could experience ten to fifteen more days over 95°F. Urban heat islands create disproportionate experiences on hot days. The urban heat island effect describes how less green areas magnify localized temperatures. On hot days, areas with more pavement and buildings, less tree canopy, and fewer parks, feel even hotter than the city's average temperature. Areas of hotter or cooler experiences can often be traced back to a neighborhood's history. Studies have shown, for example, that areas that were formerly redlined experience hotter temperatures today than non-redlined areas. Improving heat resilience is an important equity issue.

Evanston's parks and public works teams can play a two-part role in heat resilience: 1) heat relief: provide spaces to cool off on hot days and 2) long-term heat mitigation: support long-term cooler communities through increased tree canopy and green space. Importantly, while parks and green spaces can play a significant role in heat resilience, it's also a topic that suggests the importance of cross-departmental collaborations. While these strategies are beyond the scope of this plan, the City could consider complimentary tools like planning/zoning, development review, communication campaigns, and partnerships to support growing cooler communities and providing relief during heat waves.

Actions:

- 5.1.A** • Increase the tree canopy quality and extent in parks and rights-of-way in alignment with CARP goals, balancing the needs of recreational programming and broader natural resources goals. When determining planting locations and species, consider the user experience of park-goers (ie. creating shaded picnic areas and cooling pathways).
- 5.1.B** • Focus tree planting efforts on public land in high risk areas (areas with less tree canopy and higher vulnerability residents) in order to get historically disinvested neighborhoods up to par with high income areas.
- 5.1.C** • Prioritize maintenance of water features, including splash pads and pools, to prepare for more frequent hot days. (See related strategies in Goal #3)
- 5.1.D** • Provide cooling and warming resources in community centers and pavilions, prioritizing locations that serve high numbers of youth and older adults.

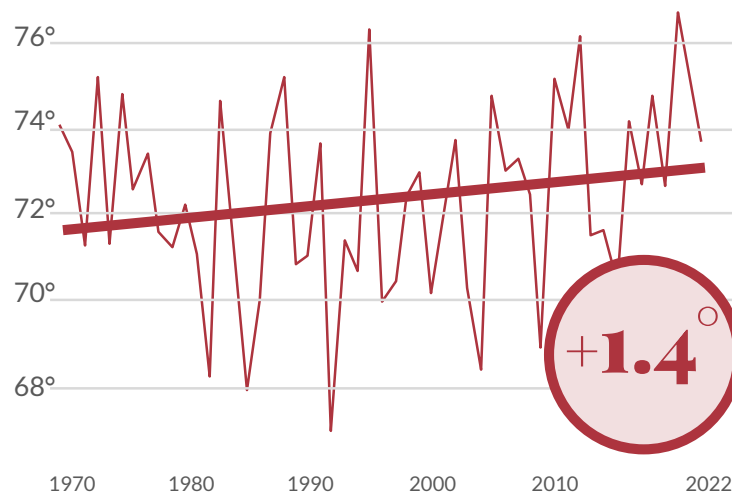
5.2

Expand training and operational strategies to protect park users and staff health on days with dangerously high and low temperatures or especially poor air quality.

Extreme weather can be more than just an inconvenience. Heat can pose significant health risks, especially for community members who spend more time outdoors, are younger or older, or have certain types of health conditions like diabetes or heart disease that make them more susceptible to adverse health impacts in extreme weather. Heat is the top cause of weather-related deaths in the US, more than hurricanes, cold weather, floods, and other weather events. Increasing wildfires pose a different kind of threat; in 2023, Evanston closed its beaches for multiple days as the Air Quality Index (AQI) reached 250. To keep park users and staff safe on all high-risk days, the City can expand its existing heat emergency policies to include guidelines for other risks and to ensure that affiliates and partners operating on city-owned land or in city-owned facilities are well informed and supported in doing the same.

Actions

- 5.2.A** • Train staff to recognize symptoms of illness related to extreme weather events, including symptoms related to extreme heat and cold and respiratory issues caused by poor air quality. Prioritize training for staff who work with older adults and youth as well as outdoor maintenance employees.
- 5.2.B** • Develop operational plans for high-heat days, including, for example, more frequent breaks, shade, and water for outdoor workers.
- 5.2.C** • Develop operational plans for low air quality days or integrate air quality considerations into heat-related operational plans.
- 5.2.D** • Ensure that sports affiliate groups commit to city policies regarding play during high-heat days, including any special considerations for play on artificial turf.



The average summer temperature in the region has risen by 1.4 degrees Fahrenheit since 1970

5.3

Aligned with the goals of the City’s Stormwater Master Plan, increase the capacity of parks and other lands to retain stormwater and prevent flooding through green infrastructure practices, naturalization of shorelines and lands, underground storage in suitable places, planning for long-term maintenance, and coordinating with the Water/Sewer Division to provide stormwater storage in the park system where opportunities align.

The coming decades are also projected to bring changing precipitation patterns, including more intense rainfall events. Evanston parks and green space can act as sponges, with green infrastructure and other stormwater strategies that help to absorb some of this rainfall before it enters the city’s stormwater infrastructure network. The downstream effects of reducing runoff include cleaner water in receiving water bodies. In public workshops, increased green infrastructure was one of the most popular overall strategies proposed to the public.

Actions

- 5.3.A** • Treat runoff from the 2-year storm before it enters the open waters and lowlands of parks, the North Shore Channel, and Lake Michigan.
- 5.3.B** • Hold and infiltrate up to the 2-year storm volume in open waters and lowlands of parks, with minimal rise in water levels.
- 5.3.C** • Identify locations and plan 20-year implementation of beach and dune restoration along the lakeshore.
- 5.3.D** • Direct native plantings by volunteers that result in durable, weed-resistant vegetation, in tandem with a long-term management plan carried out by a named team of volunteers.

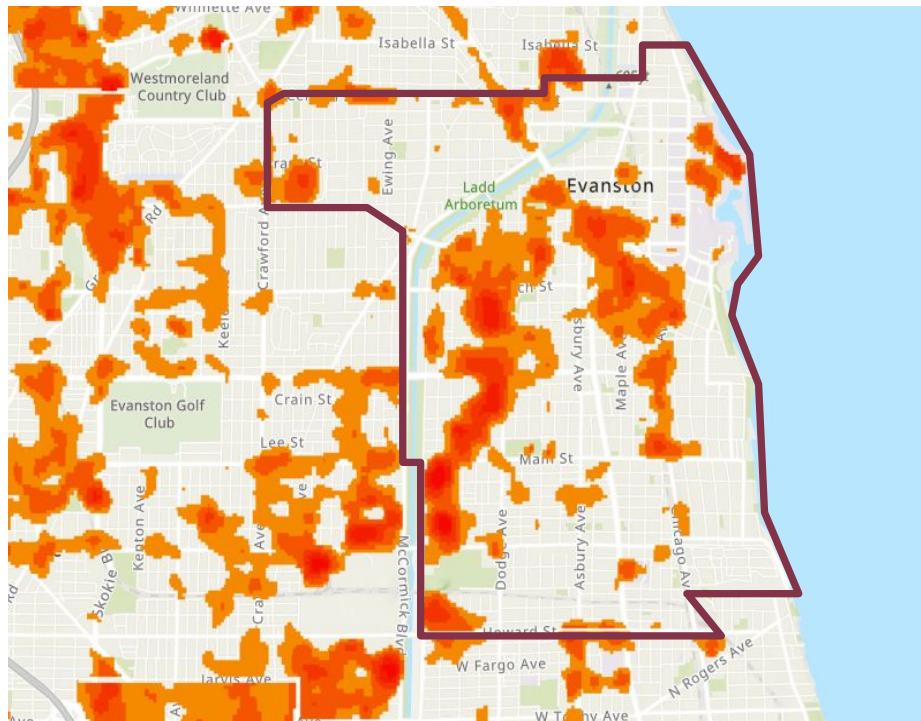
5.4

Support the expansion of recreation programs taking place outdoors, including summer day camps, with necessary facility upgrades and additions, such as restrooms, outdoor classrooms, open-air classrooms (with walls that can be opened or closed), and indoor spaces to accommodate participants during times of extreme heat or inclement weather.

The COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the importance of flexibility with park facilities. When indoor spaces were closed, park systems with more flexible outdoor facilities could continue to offer programs more easily. The following strategies support increased flexibility across outdoor spaces to allow for expanded programs.

Actions

- 5.4.A** • Prioritize the maintenance and improvement of field houses.
- 5.4.B** • Identify priority locations of existing facilities that can be leveraged for additional outdoor programming and increase maintenance investment in those locations.
- 5.4.C** • Pilot increased outdoor programming with low-cost, flexible solutions.
- 5.4.D** • Provide transportation to outdoor programming with alternative rain locations.
- 5.4.E** • Leverage partnerships with community-based organizations to utilize their available outdoor spaces for programming or indoor facility space as alternate rain or inclement weather locations.



Balance outdoor programming investments with accessible indoor spaces, especially in neighborhoods with a high urban heat island effect. (shown in red)

 5.5**Create a plan for updating the Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan, including frequency of updates, process, and internal roles.**

Over the next five to ten years and beyond, Evanston's park, recreation, and green space needs will continue to evolve. Changing community demographics, evolving climate projections, and new recreation trends will bring new needs for Evanston's parks. The following strategies outline a suggested schedule for revisiting the recommendations of this plan and updating them to ensure future investments will remain relevant to current community needs.

Actions

- 5.5.A** • Communicate a schedule to update the plan every 10 years, including it in budget and staff planning and targeting a request for proposals (RFP) process 2 years prior.
- 5.5.B** • Update management briefs every five years.
- 5.5.C** • Review plan and implementation strategy annually in conjunction with budget development.
- 5.5.D** • Review plan annually in conjunction with any current and new plans relevant to this plan.

5



IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter provides an implementation matrix, which is a framework for implementing the strategies described in the prior chapter. By implementing these strategies, Evanston parks can further support equitable access, nature experiences, sustainable operations, welcoming water access, and adaptability.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

This table summarizes the strategies and actions described in the previous chapter. It identifies the strategy, timeframes, and high priority actions and is organized by each goal.

EQUITABLE ACCESS

★ High Priority Actions

Strategy Number	Timeline	Strategy	Actions
1.1	Ongoing	Recalibrate the system by prioritizing access and reducing barriers for residents with the highest unserved need.	★ 1.1.A: At least annually, the Parks and Recreation Board and the Parks and Recreation Department should revisit schedule for maintenance of parks to increase daily care of parks in high-need areas. High-need areas are defined as areas that the 2020 census identifies as having higher prevalence of multi-family units and socially vulnerable populations (based on the Centers for Disease Control Social (CDC) Vulnerability Index (SVI)), where park use might be more valued. ★ 1.1.B: Prioritize park capital investments in high-need areas (higher prevalence of multi-family units, low income residents, and/or communities of color) where park use might be more valued, especially in areas with more park amenities beyond their recommended lifespan and lower diversity of park experiences. ★ 1.1.C: Over time, rebalance Evanston's portfolio of recreation amenities with sustainable replacement levels and funding so that replacement schedules are aligned with recommended recreation facility lifespans. 1.1.D: Develop an equity framework that identifies priority areas for capital improvements and maintenance of parks to support the implementation of this action. 1.1.E: Revisit current scholarship program to evaluate if current application methods and funding levels (50% of program fee) could be improved to increase accessibility (such as creating an online application form and moving to a sliding scale). 1.1.F: Support participation in programs that have high costs to participate beyond program fees (such as hockey) by offering equipment packages for no/low cost for the length of the program/season. 1.1.G: Engage in habitat restoration to increase the equitable distribution of naturalized landscapes in the city.
1.2	Near-term	Develop criteria to ensure programming meets Evanston's equity, inclusion, and accessibility goals.	1.2.A: Establish standards or requirements for affiliates related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (if they do not already exist). 1.2.B: Establish metrics to measure progress in meeting the goals of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. 1.2.C: Designate a "home" facility for special recreation programs suited for the needs of this community.

Strategy Number	Timeline	Strategy	Actions
1.3	Ongoing	Invest in strategic marketing of programs to better reach underserved populations and broaden public awareness.	1.3.A: Develop a stand-alone website or more interactive built-in webpage for parks and recreation with mobile functionality. 1.3.B: Invest in staffing to support a 50% to full time outreach and marketing coordinator. 1.3.C: Further invest in and highlight e-newsletters and social media as key communication channels. 1.3.D: Develop equity guidelines for program marketing and create a statement of inclusion that accompanies program materials to let residents know all are welcome.
1.4	Near-term	Increase youth professional and leadership development opportunities through parks and recreation programs.	1.4.A: Leverage Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program (MSYEP) into a more comprehensive year-round, multi-year internship program. 1.4.B: Create a youth executive board for parks or engage a youth representative on the Evanston Parks and Recreation Board. 1.4.C: Create an Evanston Township High School (ETHS) "friends of parks" to volunteer in maintenance and beautification projects.
1.5	Ongoing	Provide recreation facilities and programs for all ages that meet the needs of youth, teens, and seniors.	1.5.A: Reduce barriers for local organizations to host diverse multi-generational programming. 1.5.B: Create a public restroom task force with Evanston Libraries, School District 65 and 202, and other public facing departments and organizations to identify existing restroom availability, opportunities for future restroom investments, and policies related to restroom funding, operations, and management.
1.6	Long-term	Employ acquisition, partnership, and policy tools to expand public access to non-Evanston owned parks and green spaces.	1.6.A: Consider partnership with Evanston's business districts to activate public space outside of parks, including street closures, parklets, and activation of public plazas. 1.6.B: Consider opportunities to strategically acquire new parkland that enhances connectivity and access, especially in underserved/high-need areas. This could include fee simple acquisition, easements, and/or partnerships with affordable housing developments. 1.6.C: Formalize partnerships with District 65, and District 202 to encourage public access to school playgrounds and fields when schools are not in use. 1.6.D: Continue collaboration with Ridgeville Park District, Skokie Park District, and Lighthouse Park District to support shared goals and recreation opportunities for Evanston residents. 1.6.E: Continue to manage Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) lands and share proposed improvements to MWRD lands with the organization to understand roles and responsibilities with new investments.

NATURE EXPERIENCES



High Priority Actions

Strategy Number	Timeline	Strategy	Actions
2.1	Ongoing	Enhance existing naturalized landscapes in a coordinated effort to improve the connectivity, quality, and resilience of the network.	2.1.A: Deploy management briefs to guide and improve the protection, restoration, management, and monitoring of naturalized landscapes. 2.1.B: Seek collaborative opportunities on public and adjacent private land to create a connected, more extensive system of naturalized landscapes over the next twenty years, with an emphasis on existing larger patches of vegetation. 2.1.C: Identify locations where the conversion of turf to prairie can be accomplished in the next five years, with an emphasis on connection to existing natural areas and green stormwater management areas. 2.1.D: Manage the North Shore Channel in separate ecological management units, each with a strategic direction, a desired outcome, a schedule, tasks, and partners/ volunteers. 2.1.E: In all City plantings, use native or locally adapted plant species where possible.
2.2	Ongoing	Use programs and technology to welcome everyone, make it easy to engage with natural areas, and raise the level of ecological knowledge in Evanston.	2.2.A: Highlight City-selected natural areas to the public, and produce and disseminate educational information for those areas. ★ 2.2.B: Increase the frequency and regularity of nature experiences for youth. 2.2.C: Make digital maps of naturalized landscapes available for publicly used mobile devices.
2.3	Near-term	Effectively manage public volunteerism and partnerships to restore, manage, and monitor naturalized landscapes and habitat in alignment with the city's goals.	★ 2.3.A: Create a full-time volunteer coordinator staff position to oversee the volunteer program to restore naturalized areas in Evanston. 2.3.B: Identify restoration tasks that volunteers are safely and effectively able to perform. 2.3.C: Develop and implement a training program, led by the volunteer coordinator, to ensure that volunteers are correctly instructed how to safely perform tasks. 2.3.D: Develop a volunteer website to both communicate with volunteers and track volunteer training and activity. 2.3.E: Hold quarterly meetings with volunteers and stewards to orient them to the tasks at each site that are scheduled for completion in the upcoming quarter.
2.4	Near-term	Build the internal capacity to implement effective natural resource management practices.	2.4.A: Use management briefs as a tool to direct collaborative management of natural areas. 2.4.B: Provide consistent, regular updates of staff time and task allocations via an online dashboard. ★ 2.4.C: Offer natural resource management training stipends to capital and maintenance staff. 2.4.D: Grow the number of Greenways staff to exceed pre-reorganization numbers. 2.4.E: Emphasize native plantings, management for stormwater retention and carbon sequestration, maximum benefit of urban canopy, etc.

SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS



High Priority Actions

Strategy Number	Timeline	Strategy	Actions
3.1	Near-term	Increase efficiencies in administering recreation services through improved processes, programs, and technology.	★ 3.1.A: Evaluate current processes through the development of customer journey maps and/or internal process maps and evaluate opportunities to improve and streamline recreation service administration. 3.1.B: Streamline response times between internal service requests between various departments, including Public Works and the Parks and Recreation Department. 3.1.C: Develop criteria for excellent customer service to measure Department performance in this area. 3.1.D: Explore opportunities for fuller use of the Department's recreation registration and facility management software (currently RecTrac) (and information stored within it) and to integrate it into the City's website. 3.1.E: Annually, evaluate current programs and policies related to athletic field, park, and facility permits for affiliate and community groups to make the criteria and processes utilized to manage these efforts more transparent and sustainable.
3.2	Near-term	Conduct in-depth needs assessments among staff in order to properly match funding and staffing to short-term and long-term priorities.	★ 3.2.A: When budgeting and planning for new capital investments, quantify long-term maintenance costs and identify strategies for funding. ★ 3.2.B: Work with Evanston City Council to create a dedicated fund/annual minimum budget allocation that is sufficient to sustain a high-quality park system. 3.2.C: Conduct an internal process to develop clear job responsibilities between department to ensure there are no duplicative efforts or that needed work falls through the gaps.
3.3	Ongoing	Refine internal processes to enable effective management of parkland and natural resources among multiple departments.	3.3.A: Evaluate all existing and anticipated future maintenance needs and clearly define ownership and supporting roles between departments. 3.3.B: Make it possible for departments to share and view calendars and activity schedules by park area to coordinate maintenance and avoid working at cross purposes. 3.3.C: Schedule regular meetings with a clear agenda to share updates from various departments and leave space during the meeting for troubleshooting shared challenges and identifying collaboration opportunities.
3.4	Long-term	Identify and establish standards related to park and facility maintenance, finishes, plant and tree selection, and capital improvements; and document and share these across departments to systematize and streamline efforts.	3.4.A: Create a standards and best practices plan for facilities to include a confirmation of roles and responsibilities between different departments ★ 3.4.B: To ensure the City is responsive to community health and safety first, the City should organize requests to respond to maintenance needs into levels of priority

WELCOMING WATER ACCESS

★ High Priority Actions

Strategy Number	Timeline	Strategy	Actions
4.1	Near-term	Invest in new offerings to meet community desires for swimming opportunities, splash pads, and waterfront views.	★ 4.1.A: Develop lakefront amenities that increase access to waterfront views and address public perceptions of lakefront exclusivity. ★ 4.1.B: Develop partnerships with area organizations to expand access to indoor pools for year-round resident and visitor use. ★ 4.1.C: Make splash pad investments to parks with high reinvestment needs that are in areas with lower tree canopy. 4.1.D: Repair Fountain Square's water feature or commit to developing programming for it as a flexible space in other ways.
4.2	Ongoing	Better connect the community to the lakefront through a greater mix of programs and amenities.	4.2.A: Develop the infrastructure needed (such as additional lakefront field houses) to invest in more on-water and water-adjacent programs. 4.2.B: Make ADA improvements to lakefront facilities. ★ 4.2.C: Expand lakefront community events and arts & cultural activities in collaboration with community-based organizations and the Office of Economic Development. ★ 4.2.D: Expand lakefront nature-based programming. 4.2.E: Create cross-town shuttles to transport people from inaccessible neighborhoods to the beach during the summer and cool centers during heat emergencies.
4.3	Long-term	Invest in the North Shore Channel as a critical resource for high-quality habitat and recreation.	4.3.A: Implement management briefs for vegetation management to address invasives and poor soil. 4.3.B: Implement best practices to reduce pollutant loading in storm sewers including phosphorus, bacteria and chlorides. 4.3.C: Increase waterside access and/or views of the channel by identifying locations to clear views and create publicly accessible amenities. 4.3.D: Publicize efforts to invest in the channel to educate the public about its potential and start to improve public perception of its recreation and habitat potential. 4.3.E: Increase public access to the water by human-powered watercraft (such as canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards) consistent with proposals by prior planning efforts.
4.4	Near-term	Broaden access to swimming programs, especially learn-to-swim programs.	4.4.A: Leverage partnerships with like-minded organizations to broaden the aquatic program and facility offerings. ★ 4.4.B: Develop low or no-cost swim lessons that encourage more youth to swim, educate youth about water safety, and support future needs for lifeguards.

ADAPTABILITY



High Priority Actions

Strategy Number	Timeline	Strategy	Actions
5.1	Ongoing	Create cooler parks that provide relief from heat and that contribute to cooler surroundings by mitigating the urban heat island effect.	5.1.A: Increase the tree canopy quality and extent in parks and rights-of-way by aligning with CARP goals, while not compromising other natural resource goals. ★ 5.1.B: Focus tree planting efforts on public land in high risk areas (areas with less tree canopy and higher vulnerability residents) in order to get historically disinvested neighborhoods up to par with high income areas. 5.1.C: Prioritize maintenance of water features, including splash pads and pools, to prepare for more frequent hot days. (See related strategies in Goal #3) ★ 5.1.D: Provide cooling and warming resources in community centers and pavilions, prioritizing locations that serve high numbers of youth and older adults.
5.2	Near-term	Expand training and operational strategies to protect park users and staff health on days with dangerously high and low temperatures or especially poor air quality.	5.2.A: Train staff to recognize symptoms of heat-related illnesses, especially staff who work with older adults, youth, and outdoor maintenance employees. 5.2.B: Develop operational plans for high-heat days, including, for example, more frequent breaks, shade, and water for outdoor workers. 5.2.C: Develop operational plans for low air quality days or integrate air quality considerations into heat-related operational plans. 5.2.D: Ensure that sports affiliate groups commit to city policies regarding play during high-heat days, including any special considerations for play on artificial turf.
5.3	Long-term	Increase the capacity of parks and other lands to retain stormwater and prevent flooding through green infrastructure practices, naturalization of shorelines and lands, underground storage in suitable places, and planning for long-term maintenance.	5.3.A: Treat runoff from the 2-year storm before it enters the open waters and lowlands of parks, the North Shore Channel, and Lake Michigan. 5.3.B: Hold and infiltrate up to the 2-year storm volume in open waters and lowlands of parks, with minimal rise in water levels. 5.3.C: Identify locations and plan 20-year implementation of beach and foredune restoration along the lakeshore. 5.3.D: Direct native plantings by volunteers that result in durable, weed-resistant vegetation, in tandem with a long-term management plan carried out by a named team of volunteers.

Strategy Number	Timeline	Strategy	Actions
5.4	Ongoing	Support the expansion of recreation programs taking place outdoors, including summer day camps, with necessary facility upgrades and additions, and indoor spaces to accommodate participants during times of extreme heat or inclement weather.	5.4.A: Prioritize the maintenance and improvement of field houses. ★ 5.4.B: Identify priority locations of existing facilities that can be leveraged for additional outdoor programming and increase maintenance investment in those locations. 5.4.C: Pilot increased outdoor programming with low-cost, flexible solutions. 5.4.D: Provide transportation to outdoor programming with alternative rain locations. 5.4.E: Leverage partnerships with community-based organizations to utilize their available outdoor spaces for programming or indoor facility space as alternate rain or inclement weather locations.
5.5	Ongoing	Create a plan for updating the Parks and Green Space Strategic Plan, including frequency of updates, process, and internal roles.	5.5.A: Communicate a schedule to update the plan every 10 years, including it in budget and staff planning and targeting an RFP process 2 years prior. 5.5.B: Update management briefs every five years. 5.5.C: Review plan and implementation strategy annually in conjunction with budget development. 5.5.D: Review plan annually in conjunction with any current and new plans relevant to this plan.

Potential Roadmap for Long-term Strategies

For the long-term strategies, here are potential roadmaps that provide a sequence for implementing actions.

NO.	STRATEGY	ROADMAP
1.6	Employ acquisition, partnership, and policy tools to expand public access to non-Evanston owned parks and green spaces.	
3.4	Identify and establish standards related to park and facility maintenance, finishes, plant and tree selection, and capital improvements; and document and share these across departments to systematize and streamline efforts.	
4.3	Invest in the North Shore Channel as a critical resource for high-quality habitat and recreation.	
5.3	Increase the capacity of parks and other lands to retain stormwater and prevent flooding through green infrastructure practices, naturalization of shorelines and lands, underground storage in suitable places, and planning for long-term maintenance.	



APPENDICES

Management Briefs

Statistically Valid Survey Report

LIGHTHOUSE BEACH / LAWSON PARK / LINCOLN STREET END

IDENTIFIERS & BASIC INFORMATION

Primary Habitat Type(s): Dune, Forest/Woodland, Woodland w/ Turf **Naturalized Landscape Acres (Current):** 2.7
Desired Habitat Type(s): Dune, Forest/Woodland, Savanna **Naturalized Landscape Acres (Future):** 2.9
Primary Activity: Enhancement

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Site History: Lighthouse Beach and Lincoln Street End are historical Lake Michigan shoreline. Lawson Park is historical timber forest, but it is unknown if any of the existing trees are pre-settlement remnants. Soils are heavily impacted by human activity.

Existing Vegetation Type (Size): Dune (1.8 ac); Forest/Woodland (0.9 ac); Woodland with Turf (0.2 ac)

Current Condition (Dec 2022): Lighthouse Beach is a restored dune community. Existing dune vegetation is primarily native and the dune is ecologically stable. Visitor activity has fragmented the dune vegetation with many walking paths. Weedy trees exist along the backdune. Lawson Park is primarily turf/park (not a naturalized landscape), but the project area is Forest/Woodland with a mature canopy and an understory that is shaded out by non-native brush. Understory vegetation is primarily non-native or absent. Lincoln Street End consists of woodland with turf but is scheduled to become a savanna during a shoreline stabilization project.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT ISSUES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Issues

Dune

- Dune community has somewhat low species diversity.
- Visitors have fragmented the vegetation with many walking paths.
- Weedy trees are colonizing the back dune.

Forest/Woodland

- Dense non-native brush, primarily common buckthorn and non-native honeysuckles.
- Shading has reduced understory plant cover, leading to bare soil and erosion on slopes.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Woodland with Turf

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.

Goals

Dune

- Maintain restored dune and preserve previous efforts.
- Increase native diversity, especially dune forbs.
- Plant native herbaceous vegetation and shrubs to close several walking paths and divert visitors to fewer large paths.
- Provide protection or barrier to direct foot traffic.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Forest/Woodland

- Remove non-native brush and install native Forest/Woodland herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Prune planted Norway maples to increase sunlight to the understory.
- Thin non-native planted trees over time.
- Remove targeted trees. Renew or maintain canopy by planting native Forest/Woodland trees, target is 50-80% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Woodland with Turf

- Transition turf to appropriate naturalized understory of native Savanna herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Renew canopy by planting appropriate native Savanna trees to replace existing canopy cover over time. Target is 10-50% tree canopy cover for Savanna.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Strategies

Dune

- Plant native Dune forbs and shrubs to fill in smaller paths and increase diversity (water weekly in the first year to increase survival).
- Remove non-native and weedy native trees and shrubs.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant shrubs and plugs as needed.
- Protect and delineate foot traffic with fencing/rope and signage.

Forest/Woodland

- Remove non-native and targeted trees and shrubs. Prune planted trees to increase light to understory.
- Install native Forest/Woodland seed mix and shrubs.
- Install native Forest/Woodland herbaceous plugs as needed to increase understory diversity.
- Assess canopy and plant native Forest/Woodland trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees, shrubs, and plugs as needed.

Woodland with Turf

- Remove turf and install appropriate native Savanna seed mix and shrubs.
- Assess canopy and plant native Savanna trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

At this site, adjacent properties managed by others could benefit from the actions described in this management brief. The City is encouraged to partner with others to improve the condition of those adjacent properties in order to elevate the overall quality of the environment at this location.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT TASKS, TIMEFRAME, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS, AND EFFORT

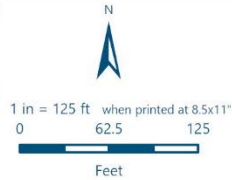
Restoration/Management Task	Timeframe	Indicator of Success	Acres	Hours*
<i>Dune</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	1.8	75
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	1.8	75
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	1.8	30
Seeding (Dune)	Year 1	≥ 50% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	1.8	10
Planting Woody Species (Dune)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs	1.8	35
Planting Herbaceous Species (Dune)	Year 1	≥ 50% survival after 3 yrs; ≥ 4 planted species present	1.8	15
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	1.8	5
<i>Forest/Woodland</i>				
Tree Removal	Year 1	All target trees removed	0.9	125
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	0.9	50
Tree Pruning	Year 1	Decrease Norway maple shading by 50%	0.9	15
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	0.9	75
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	0.9	20
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	0.9	15
Seeding (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	0.9	8
Planting Herbaceous Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 50% survival after 3 yrs; ≥ 6 planted species present	0.9	8
Planting Woody Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 50-80% cover	0.9	20
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	0.9	4
<i>Woodland with Turf^</i>				
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	0.2	8
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	0.2	2
Total Hours:				595

*The Opinion of Probable Effort represents the number of person-hours, or effort, needed to complete a task. It assumes that staff are trained to perform the task and have access to appropriate equipment. Woody removal effort includes piling cut material on site but not disposal by burning, chipping, or hauling away. The effort needed each year to maintain the site in good condition after restoration is estimated using the hours in the Understory Weed Management and Monitoring tasks.

^Initial restoration tasks are currently scheduled to be completed as part of another project, but monitoring and maintenance will still be required.



Figure 1a
Lawson Park-Lighthouse Beach
City of Evanston
 87.6758°W 42.0648°N



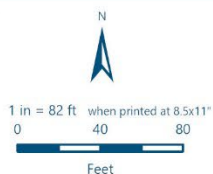
Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.
 Data Source: XXXX
 Spatial Reference: NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet





Figure 1b
Lincoln Street Beach

City of Evanston
87.6738°W 42.0615°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.
Data Source: XXXX
Spatial Reference:
NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



LOVELACE PARK

IDENTIFIERS & BASIC INFORMATION

Primary Habitat Type(s): Woodland with Turf, Prairie

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Current): 0.7

Desired Habitat Type(s): Forest/Woodland, Savanna, Prairie

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Future): 6.1

Primary Activity: Enhancement, Conversion

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Site History: Lovelace Park is historical timber forest but none of the original habitat remains. The soils are heavily impacted by human use, including previous use as a quarry and subsequent use as a landfill.

Existing Vegetation Type (Size): Woodland with Turf (5.4 ac); Prairie (0.7 ac)

Current Condition (Dec 2022): The majority of the park is Turf or Woodland with Turf (not a naturalized landscape). The planted Prairie in the northwest corner, installed in 2022, has native species present but also has some invasion from Kentucky bluegrass and other typical weed field species. North of the pond, a small area of Woodland with Turf has a planted garden that is primarily native species.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT ISSUES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Issues

Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Prairie

- Small section of naturalized landscape is vulnerable to weed pressure.
- Lack of management has allowed weeds to establish and spread.

Goals

Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)

- Transition turf to appropriate naturalized understory of native Forest/Woodland herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Remove targeted trees. Renew or maintain canopy by planting native Forest/Woodland trees, target is 50-80% tree canopy cover.
- Maintain access around the path for maintenance vehicles where appropriate
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)

- Transition turf to native Savanna understory, including herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Renew canopy by planting native Savanna trees to replace existing cover over time. Target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Maintain access around the path for maintenance vehicles where appropriate
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Prairie

- Manage weeds, preserve existing native vegetation, and increase species diversity over time.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Strategies

Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)

- Remove non-native and targeted trees and shrubs

- Remove turf and install native seed mix and shrubs for Forest/Woodland.
- Assess canopy and plant native Forest/Woodland trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)

- Remove turf and install native Savanna seed mix and shrubs.
- Assess canopy and plant native Savanna trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

Prairie

- Control non-native herbaceous vegetation.
 - Increase native species diversity over time by planting native Prairie seed mix.
 - Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings.
-

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT TASKS, TIMEFRAME, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS, AND EFFORT

Restoration/Management Task	Timeframe	Indicator of Success	Acres	Hours*
<i>Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	5.1	100
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	5.1	20
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	5.1	55
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	5.1	60
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	5.1	12
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of area burned ≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	5.1	70
Seeding (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	5.1	20
Planting Woody Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 50-80% cover	5.1	150
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	5.1	5
<i>Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	1.1	20
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	1.1	15
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	1.1	15
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	1.1	5
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of area burned ≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	1.1	15
Seeding (Savanna)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	1.1	7
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	1.1	30
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	1.1	3
<i>Prairie</i>				
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	0.7	20
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	0.7	6
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	0.7	10
Seeding (Prairie)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	0.7	5
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	0.7	2
			Total Hours:	645

* The Opinion of Probable Effort represents the number of person-hours, or effort, needed to complete a task. It assumes that staff are trained to perform the task and have access to appropriate equipment. Woody removal effort includes piling cut material on site but not disposal by burning, chipping, or hauling away. The effort needed each year to maintain the site in good condition after restoration is estimated using the hours in the Understory Weed Management and Monitoring tasks.

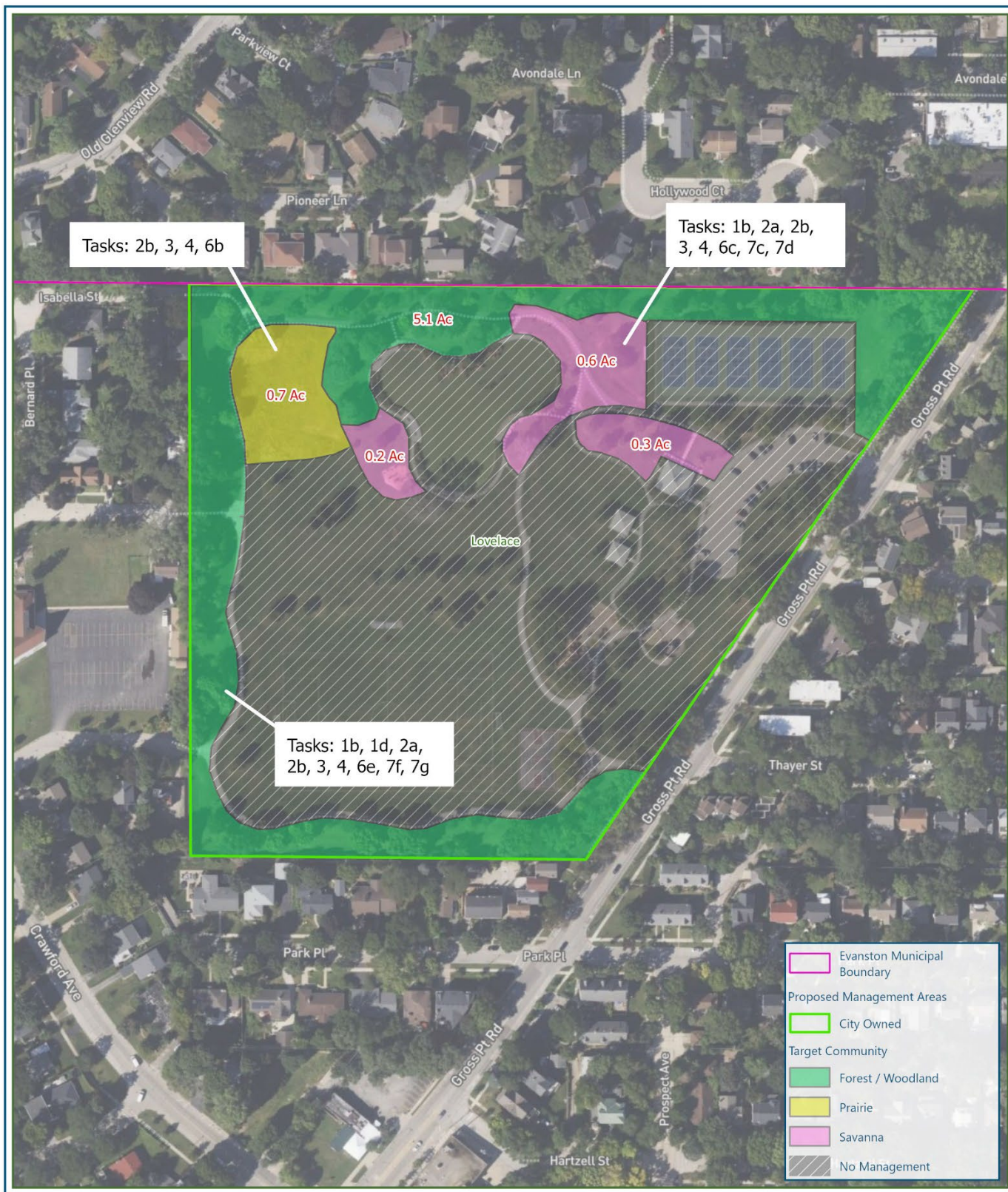
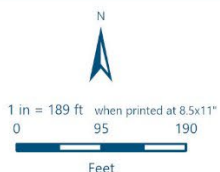


Figure 2
Lovelace Park

City of Evanston
87.7264°W 42.0678°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.
Data Source: XXXX
Spatial Reference:
NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



Cartographer: cburke | POC: XXXX | Path: R:\ResGIS\Projects\IL\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan\PRO\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan.aprx | Layout: Fig 2 Lovelace

FULLERTON PARK / MCCORMICK PARK

IDENTIFIERS & BASIC INFORMATION

Primary Habitat Type(s): Woodland with Turf

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Current): 0.0

Desired Habitat Type(s): Forest/Woodland, Savanna

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Future): 2.0

Primary Activity: Conversion

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Site History: Fullerton Park and Bates Park are historical timber forest. The soils have been heavily impacted by human use, including constructing the berm for the railroad.

Existing Vegetation Type (Size): Woodland with Turf (2.0 ac) – 1.5 ac McCormick, 0.5 ac Fullerton

Current Condition (Dec 2022): Fullerton Park and McCormick Park are currently Woodland with Turf (not a naturalized landscape). Fullerton Park has a more closed canopy, while McCormick Park generally has a more open canopy.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT ISSUES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Issues

Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Goals

Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)

- Areas should be managed towards Forest/Woodland.
- Transition turf to appropriate naturalized understory of native Forest/Woodland herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Remove targeted trees. Renew or maintain canopy by planting native Forest/Woodland trees, target is 50-80% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)

- Areas to be managed towards Savanna.
- Transition turf to appropriate naturalized understory of native Savanna herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Renew canopy by planting appropriate native Savanna trees to replace existing canopy cover over time, target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Strategies

Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)

- Remove non-native and targeted trees and shrubs.
- Remove turf and install native seed mix and shrubs for Forest/Woodland.
- Assess canopy and plant native Forest/Woodland trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees, shrubs, and plugs as needed.

Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)

- Remove turf and install native seed mix and shrubs for Savanna.
- Assess canopy and plant native Savanna trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT TASKS, TIMEFRAME, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS, AND EFFORT

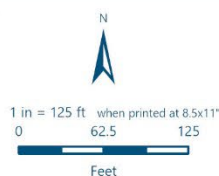
Restoration/Management Task	Timeframe	Indicator of Success	Acres	Hours
<i>Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)</i>				
Tree Removal	Year 1	All target trees removed	0.5	20
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	0.5	20
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	0.5	10
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	0.5	12
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	0.5	12
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	0.5	4
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of area burned	0.5	10
Planting Herbaceous Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 50% survival after 3 yrs; ≥ 6 planted species present	0.5	4
Seeding (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	0.5	5
Planting Woody Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 50-80% cover	0.5	12
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	0.5	2
<i>Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	1.5	25
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	1.5	20
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	1.5	20
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	1.5	6
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	1.5	20
Seeding (Savanna)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	1.5	5
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	1.5	45
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	1.5	3
Total Hours:				255

* The Opinion of Probable Effort represents the number of person-hours, or effort, needed to complete a task. It assumes that staff are trained to perform the task and have access to appropriate equipment. Woody removal effort includes piling cut material on site but not disposal by burning, chipping, or hauling away. The effort needed each year to maintain the site in good condition after restoration is estimated using the hours in the Understory Weed Management and Monitoring tasks.



Figure 3
Fullerton Park - McCormick Park

City of Evanston
87.6844°W 42.062°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.

Data Source: XXXX

Spatial Reference:
NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



LADD ARBORETUM

IDENTIFIERS & BASIC INFORMATION

Primary Habitat Type(s): Forest/Woodland, Woodland w/ Turf

Desired Habitat Type(s): Forest/Woodland, Savanna

Primary Activity: Enhancement, Conversion

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Current): 4.5

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Future): 15.9

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Site History: The Ladd Arboretum is historical wet prairie. The North Shore Channel was constructed in the early 1900s and the surrounding soils are heavily impacted by excavation, other disturbances, and subsequent human use.

Existing Vegetation Type (Size): Forest/Woodland (4.5 ac); Woodland with Turf (11.4 ac)

Current Condition (Dec 2022): The majority of the north side of the channel is currently managed by the Friends of the Ladd Arboretum. They have been removing non-native brush and installing native understory and shrubs in the Forest/Woodland and the result is one of the highest quality naturalized landscapes in the City of Evanston. The tree canopy is relatively intact but there is little canopy regeneration. There is also a section of Forest/Woodland along the channel slope. The Forest/Woodland has dense non-native brush that shades the understory. The channel slopes are eroding due to bare soil that results from the deep shade. The canopy is fragmented due to dying trees and little forest succession is evident. Some sections of the Ladd Arboretum are Woodland with Turf, which is not a naturalized landscape.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT ISSUES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Issues

Forest/Woodland

- The tree canopy is mature or dying and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Dense non-native brush, primarily common buckthorn and non-native honeysuckles.
- The tree canopy is mature or dying and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.
- Shading has reduced understory plant cover, leading to bare soil and erosion on slopes.

Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Goals

Forest/Woodland

- Support Friends of the Ladd Arboretum as they continue to remove non-native brush and install native Forest/Woodland herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Remove targeted trees. Renew or maintain canopy by planting native Forest/Woodland trees, target is 50-80% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Transition to native Savanna understory, including herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Renew canopy by planting native Savanna trees to replace existing canopy over time. Target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)

- Transition turf to appropriate naturalized understory of native Forest/Woodland herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Remove targeted trees. Renew or maintain canopy by planting native Forest/Woodland trees, target is 50-80% tree canopy cover.
- Maintain access around the path for maintenance vehicles where appropriate.
- Maintain access to canal fence line.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)

- Transition turf to native Savanna understory, including herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Renew canopy by planting native Savanna trees to replace existing cover over time. Target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Maintain access around the path for maintenance vehicles where appropriate.
- Maintain access to canal fence line.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Strategies

Forest/Woodland

- Remove targeted or hazard trees and shrubs.
- Install native Forest/Woodland seed mix and shrubs.
- Assess canopy and plant native Forest/Woodland trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees, shrubs, and plugs as needed.

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Remove targeted or hazard trees and shrubs.
- Install native seed mix and shrubs for Savanna, including the Channel Slope seed mix.
- Assess canopy and plant native Savanna trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees, shrubs, and plugs as needed.

Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)

- Remove turf and install native seed mix and shrubs for Forest/Woodland.
- Assess canopy and plant native Forest/Woodland trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)

- Remove turf and install native Savanna seed mix and shrubs.
- Assess canopy and plant native Savanna trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT TASKS, TIMEFRAME, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS, AND EFFORT

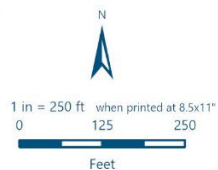
Restoration/Management Task	Timeframe	Indicator of Success	Acres	Hours*
<i>Forest/Woodland</i>				
Tree Removal	Year 1	All target trees removed	1.6	75
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	1.6	50
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	1.6	30
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	1.6	25
Seeding (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	1.6	15
Planting Herbaceous Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 50% survival after 3 yrs; ≥ 6 planted species present	1.6	15
Planting Woody Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 50-80% cover	1.6	40
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	1.6	5
<i>Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)</i>				
Tree Removal	Year 1	All target trees removed	2.9	500
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	2.9	250
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	2.9	50
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	2.9	45
Erosion Control	Year 1	Few signs of microerosion evident (microrills and pillars, surface rocks, washes, soil plumes and deltas)	2.9	125
Seeding (Channel Slope)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	2.9	25
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	2.9	100
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	2.9	5
<i>Woodland with Turf (to Forest/Woodland)</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	7.4	150
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	7.4	85
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	7.4	90
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	7.4	18
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	7.4	105
Seeding (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	7.4	30
Planting Woody Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	7.4	225
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	7.4	7
<i>Woodland with Turf (to Savanna)</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	4.0	50
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	4.0	45
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	4.0	50
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	4.0	10
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	4.0	55
Seeding (Savanna)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	4.0	15
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	4.0	115
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	4.0	5
			Total Hours:	2,410

* The Opinion of Probable Effort represents the number of person-hours, or effort, needed to complete a task. It assumes that staff are trained to perform the task and have access to appropriate equipment. Woody removal effort includes piling cut material on site but not disposal by burning, chipping, or hauling away. The effort needed each year to maintain the site in good condition after restoration is estimated using the hours in the Understory Weed Management and Monitoring tasks.



Figure 4a
Ladd Arboretum N

City of Evanston
87.6979°W 42.0578°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.

Data Source: XXXX

Spatial Reference:
NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet

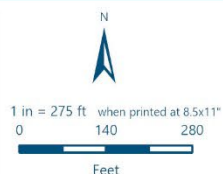


Cartographer: cburke | POC: XXXX | Path: R:\Resgis\Projects\IL\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan\PROJ\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan.aprx | Layout: Fig 4a Ladd Arb



Figure 4b
Ladd Arboretum S

City of Evanston
87.7051°W 42.0545°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.

Data Source: XXXX

Spatial Reference:
NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



TWIGGS PARK / BUTLER PARK

IDENTIFIERS & BASIC INFORMATION

Primary Habitat Type(s): Forest/Woodland, Woodland with Turf

Desired Habitat Type(s): Savanna

Primary Activity: Conversion

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Current): 3.0

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Future): 7.5

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Site History: Twiggs Park and Butler Park are historical wet prairie. The North Shore Channel was constructed in the early 1900s and the surrounding soils are heavily impacted by excavation, other disturbances, and subsequent human use.

Existing Vegetation Type (Size): Forest/Woodland (3.0 ac); Woodland with Turf (4.5 ac)

Current Condition (Dec 2022): The majority of Twiggs Park and Butler Park is currently Woodland with Turf (not a naturalized landscape). Along the North Shore Channel, the Forest/Woodland has dense non-native brush that shades the understory. The channel slopes are eroding due to bare soil that results from the deep shade. The canopy is fragmented due to dying trees and little forest succession is evident.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT ISSUES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Issues

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Dense non-native brush, primarily common buckthorn and non-native honeysuckles.
- The tree canopy is mature or dying and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.
- Shading has reduced understory plant cover, leading to bare soil and erosion on slopes.

Woodland with Turf

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Goals

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Channel slope areas should be managed towards Savanna, with the goal of establishing dense native groundcover to reduce erosion. Target is to see few signs of microerosion on slopes.
- Remove targeted trees. Renew or maintain canopy by planting native Savanna trees, target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Woodland with Turf

- Transition turf to a naturalized Savanna understory of native herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Renew canopy by planting native Savanna trees to replace existing canopy cover over time. Target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Maintain access around the path for maintenance vehicles where appropriate.
- Maintain access to canal fence line.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Strategies

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Remove non-native, targeted trees and shrubs.
- Install seed mix and shrubs for savanna, including the Channel Slope seed mix.
- Assess canopy and plant trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees, shrubs, and plugs as needed.

Woodland with Turf

- Remove turf and install native Savanna seed mix and shrubs.
- Assess canopy and plant trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees, shrubs, and plugs as needed.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT TASKS, TIMEFRAME, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS, AND EFFORT

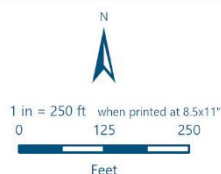
Restoration/Management Task	Timeframe	Indicator of Success	Acres	Hours
<i>Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)</i>				
Tree Removal	Year 1	All target trees removed	3.0	500
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	3.0	250
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	3.0	50
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	3.0	45
Erosion Control	Year 1	Few signs of microerosion evident (microrills and pillars, surface rocks, washes, soil plumes and deltas)	3.0	125
Seeding (Channel Slope)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	3.0	25
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	3.0	100
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	3.0	6
<i>Woodland with Turf</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	4.5	50
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	4.5	50
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	4.5	55
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	4.5	12
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	4.5	60
Seeding (Savanna)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	4.5	15
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	4.5	125
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	4.5	7
Total Hours:				1,475

* The Opinion of Probable Effort represents the number of person-hours, or effort, needed to complete a task. It assumes that staff are trained to perform the task and have access to appropriate equipment. Woody removal effort includes piling cut material on site but not disposal by burning, chipping, or hauling away. The effort needed each year to maintain the site in good condition after restoration is estimated using the hours in the Understory Weed Management and Monitoring tasks.



Figure 5a
Twiggs-Butler

City of Evanston
87.6974°W 42.0574°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.

Data Source: XXXX

Spatial Reference:
NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



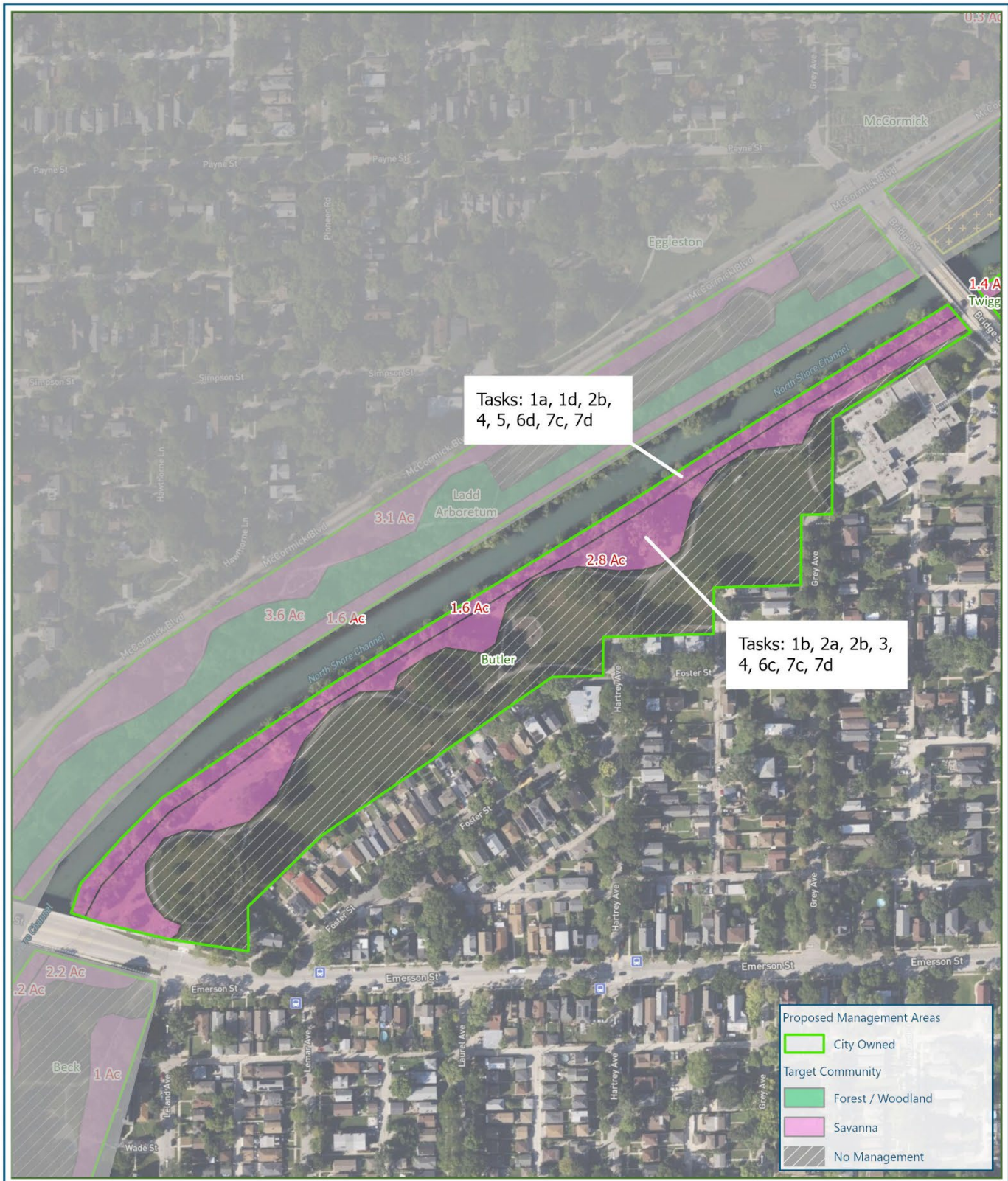
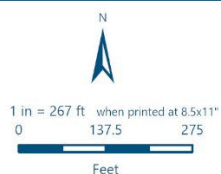


Figure 5b
Twiggs-Butler

City of Evanston
87.7044°W 42.0542°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.
Data Source: XXXX
Spatial Reference: NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



BECK PARK

IDENTIFIERS & BASIC INFORMATION

Primary Habitat Type(s): Forest/Woodland, Woodland with Turf
Desired Habitat Type(s): Savanna
Primary Activity: Enhancement, Conversion

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Current): 1.2
Naturalized Landscape Acres (Future): 4.4

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Site History: Beck Park is historical wet prairie. The North Shore Channel was constructed in the early 1900s and the surrounding soils are heavily impacted by excavation, other disturbances, and subsequent human use.

Existing Vegetation Type (Size): Forest/Woodland (1.2 ac); Woodland with Turf (3.2 ac)

Current Condition (Dec 2022): The majority of Beck Park is currently Woodland with Turf (not a naturalized landscape). Along the North Shore Channel, the Forest/Woodland has dense non-native brush that shades the understory. The channel slopes are eroding due to bare soil that results from the deep shade. The canopy is fragmented due to dying trees and little forest succession is evident.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT ISSUES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Issues

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Dense non-native brush, primarily common buckthorn and non-native honeysuckles.
- The tree canopy is mature or dying and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.
- Shading has reduced understory plant cover, leading to bare soil and erosion on slopes.

Woodland with Turf

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Goals

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Channel slopes should be managed towards Savanna, with the goal of establishing dense native groundcover to reduce erosion. Target is to see few signs of microerosion on slopes.
- Remove targeted trees. Renew or maintain canopy by planting native Savanna trees, target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Woodland with Turf

- Transition turf to appropriate naturalized understory of native Savanna herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Renew canopy by planting appropriate native Savanna trees to replace existing canopy cover over time. Target is 10-50% tree canopy cover for Savanna.
- Maintain access around the path for maintenance vehicles where appropriate.
- Maintain access to canal fence line.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Strategies

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Remove non-native and targeted trees and shrubs.
- Install native seed mix and shrubs for Savanna, including the Channel Slope seed mix.
- Assess canopy and plant native Savanna trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

Woodland with Turf

- Remove turf and install appropriate native Savanna seed mix and shrubs, depending on location.
- Assess canopy and plant native Savanna trees, depending on location, to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT TASKS, TIMEFRAME, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS, AND EFFORT

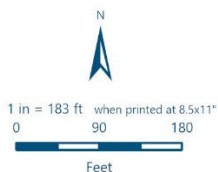
Restoration/Management Task	Timeframe	Indicator of Success	Acres	Hours
<i>Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)</i>				
Tree Removal	Year 1	All target trees removed	1.2	200
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	1.2	100
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	1.2	20
Erosion Control	Year 1	Few signs of microerosion evident (microrills and pillars, surface rocks, washes, soil plumes and deltas)	1.2	50
Seeding (Channel Slope)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	1.2	10
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	1.2	40
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	1.2	2
<i>Woodland with Turf</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	3.2	40
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	3.2	35
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	3.2	35
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	3.2	8
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	3.2	40
Seeding (Savanna)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	3.2	10
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	3.2	85
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	3.2	5
Total Hours:				680

* The Opinion of Probable Effort represents the number of person-hours, or effort, needed to complete a task. It assumes that staff are trained to perform the task and have access to appropriate equipment. Woody removal effort includes piling cut material on site but not disposal by burning, chipping, or hauling away. The effort needed each year to maintain the site in good condition after restoration is estimated using the hours in the Understory Weed Management and Monitoring tasks.



Figure 6
Beck Park

City of Evanston
87.7083°W 42.05°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.
Data Source: XXXX
Spatial Reference:
NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



Cartographer: cburke | POC: XXXX | Path: R:\Resgis\Projects\LL\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan\PRO\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan.aprx | Layout: Fig 6 Beck

HARBERT-PAYNE PARK

IDENTIFIERS & BASIC INFORMATION

Primary Habitat Type(s): Forest/Woodland, Woodland with Turf

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Current): 6.4

Desired Habitat Type(s): Forest/Woodland, Savanna

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Future): 8.8

Primary Activity: Enhancement, Conversion

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Site History: Harbert-Payne Park is a historic wet prairie. The North Shore Channel was constructed in the early 1900s and the surrounding soils are heavily impacted by excavation, other disturbances, and subsequent human use.

Existing Vegetation Type (Size): Forest/Woodland (6.4 ac), Woodland with Turf (2.4 ac)

Current Condition (Dec 2022): Approximately one-third of Forest/Woodland (between Greenleaf St. and Lee St.) is currently managed by volunteers who have removed non-native brush and installed native shrubs and (apparently) native herbaceous vegetation. In addition, the volunteers have installed and maintained woodchipped trails. In the non-managed areas, dense non-native brush shades out the understory and bare soil is common. In both areas, the canopy is fragmented due to dying trees and little forest succession is evident. The remaining area of Harbert-Payne Park is Woodland with Turf, which is not a naturalized community.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT ISSUES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Issues

Forest/Woodland

- The currently unmanaged areas are dense with non-native brush, primarily common buckthorn and non-native honeysuckles.
- The tree canopy is mature or dying and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.
- In the currently unmanaged areas, shading has reduced understory plant cover, leading to bare soil and erosion on slopes.

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Dense non-native brush, primarily common buckthorn and non-native honeysuckles.
- The tree canopy is mature or dying and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.
- Shading has reduced understory plant cover, leading to bare soil and erosion on slopes.

Woodland with Turf

- The understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Goals

Forest/Woodland

- Support volunteer efforts to clear non-native brush and install native Forest/Woodland shrubs and herbaceous vegetation.
- Renew canopy by planting native Forest/Woodland trees, target is 50-80% tree canopy cover.
- Channel slopes should be managed towards Forest/Woodland, with the goal of establishing dense native groundcover to reduce erosion. Target is to see few signs of microerosion on slopes.
- Maintain/surround overlook with turf.
- Maintain access around the path for maintenance vehicles where appropriate.
- Maintain access to canal fence line.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Transition to native Savanna understory, including herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Renew canopy by planting native Savanna trees to replace existing canopy over time. Target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Woodland with Turf

- Transition turf to appropriate naturalized understory of native Forest/Woodland herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Remove targeted trees. Renew or maintain canopy by planting native Forest/Woodland trees, target is 50-80% tree canopy cover.
- Maintain access around the path for maintenance vehicles where appropriate.
- Maintain turf around overlook.
- Maintain access to canal fence line.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Strategies

Forest/Woodland

- Remove non-native and targeted trees and shrubs.
- Install seed mix and shrubs for Forest/Woodland, including the Channel Slope mix.
- Assess canopy and plant trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees, shrubs, and plugs as needed.

Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)

- Remove non-native and targeted trees and shrubs.
- Install native seed mix and shrubs for Savanna, including the Channel Slope seed mix.
- Assess canopy and plant native Savanna trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees, shrubs, and plugs as needed.

Woodland with Turf

- Remove turf and install native seed mix and shrubs for Forest/Woodland.
 - Assess canopy and plant native Forest/Woodland trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
 - Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.
-

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT TASKS, TIMEFRAME, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS, AND EFFORT

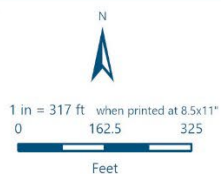
Restoration/Management Task	Timeframe	Indicator of Success	Acres	Hours
<i>Forest/Woodland</i>				
Tree Removal	Year 1	All target trees removed	4.7	200
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	4.7	50
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	4.7	250
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	4.7	90
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	4.7	75
Seeding (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	4.7	45
Planting Herbaceous Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 50% survival after 3 yrs; ≥ 6 planted species present	4.7	45
Planting Woody Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 50-80% cover	4.7	120
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	4.7	5
<i>Forest/Woodland (Channel Slope)</i>				
Tree Removal	Year 1	All target trees removed	1.7	300
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	1.7	170
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	1.7	30
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	1.7	25
Erosion Control	Year 1	Few signs of microerosion evident (microrills and pillars, surface rocks, washes, soil plumes and deltas)	1.7	85
Seeding (Channel Slope)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	1.7	15
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	1.7	60
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	1.7	5
<i>Woodland with Turf</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	2.4	50
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	2.4	30
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	2.4	30
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	2.4	6
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of focal area burned (burn half of an area at any one time)	2.4	35
Seeding (Forest/Woodland)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	2.4	10
Planting Woody Species (Forest/Woodland)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 50-80% cover	2.4	75
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	2.4	4
Total Hours:				1,810

* The Opinion of Probable Effort represents the number of person-hours, or effort, needed to complete a task. It assumes that staff are trained to perform the task and have access to appropriate equipment. Woody removal effort includes piling cut material on site but not disposal by burning, chipping, or hauling away. The effort needed each year to maintain the site in good condition after restoration is estimated using the hours in the Understory Weed Management and Monitoring tasks.



Figure 7
Harbert Park

City of Evanston
87.709°W 42.0373°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.
Data Source: XXXX
Spatial Reference:
NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



Cartographer: cburke | POC: XXXX | Path: R:\ResGIS\Projects\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan\PRO\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan.aprx | Layout: Fig 7 Harbert

JAMES PARK

IDENTIFIERS & BASIC INFORMATION

Primary Habitat Type(s): Forest/Woodland, Shrubland, Turf/Weeds

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Current): 3.3

Desired Habitat Type(s): Savanna, Prairie

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Future): 3.9

Primary Activity: Enhancement, Conversion

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Site History: James Park is historical wet prairie. The project area is a covered landfill with disturbed soils.

Existing Vegetation Type (Size): Forest/Woodland (2.3 ac); Shrubland (1.0 ac); Turf/Weeds (0.6 ac)

Current Condition (Dec 2022): The restoration area at James Park is a re-naturalized landfill. The Forest/Woodland area is shaded out by mature buckthorn and native canopy is lacking. The understory is sparse and bare ground is common. The shrubland area was likely a planted prairie that has been invaded by woody brush over time. The main sledding path on the north face is a mix of weedy vegetation and bare soil with obvious signs of erosion.

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT ISSUES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Issues

Forest/Woodland

- Dense cover of tall common buckthorn shades the understory.
- The tree canopy is mostly planted pines and mature cottonwoods. Native canopy cover is low.
- Buckthorn shading has impacted the understory; bare ground is common.

Shrubland

- Shrubs are primarily staghorn sumac and some common buckthorn from Forest/Woodland. Fire suppression has led to aggressive woody growth; small trees are common.
- Understory is primarily non-native or weedy native species.

Turf/Weeds

- Main sledding hill consists of non-native and weedy native herbaceous species and bare dirt with obvious erosion. The side slopes are mowed turf grass, which provides no ecological benefit.

Goals

Forest/Woodland

- Manage towards Savanna.
- Remove non-native brush, primarily common buckthorn.
- Transition to a naturalized Savanna understory of native herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Plant native Savanna trees to replace existing canopy cover over time, target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Shrubland

- Manage towards Savanna.
- Remove adventive woody species.
- Transition to a naturalized Savanna understory of native herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Plant native Savanna trees to create canopy over time, target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Turf/Weeds

- Manage weedy slope to Prairie, convert turf grass to Prairie.
- Reduce erosion in areas of bare soil.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Strategies

Forest/Woodland

- Remove non-native and targeted trees and shrubs.
- Install native savanna seed mix, shrubs, and trees.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

Shrubland

- Remove non-native and targeted trees and shrubs.
- Remove non-native herbaceous vegetation.
- Install savanna seed mix, shrubs, and trees.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

Turf/Weeds

- Convert weeds to native Prairie grasses and forbs. Install erosion control while natives establish.
 - Remove turf and install Prairie seed mix.
 - Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings.
-

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT TASKS, TIMEFRAME, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS, AND EFFORT

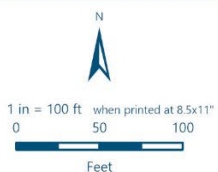
Restoration/Management Task	Timeframe	Indicator of Success	Acres	Hours
<i>Forest/Woodland</i>				
Tree Removal	Year 1	All target trees removed	2.3	50
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	2.3	50
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	2.3	200
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	2.3	45
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	2.3	8
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of area burned	2.3	35
Seeding (Savanna)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	2.3	25
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	2.3	60
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	2.3	5
<i>Shrubland</i>				
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	1.0	80
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	1.0	20
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	1.0	5
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of area burned	1.0	15
Seeding (Savanna)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	1.0	10
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	1.0	25
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	1.0	4
<i>Turf/Weeds</i>				
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	0.6	15
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	0.6	20
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	0.6	6
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of area burned	0.6	10
Erosion Control	Year 1	Few signs of microerosion evident (microrills and pillars, surface rocks, washes, soil plumes and deltas)	0.6	35
Seeding (Prairie)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	0.6	5
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	0.6	2
			Total Hours:	730

* The Opinion of Probable Effort represents the number of person-hours, or effort, needed to complete a task. It assumes that staff are trained to perform the task and have access to appropriate equipment. Woody removal effort includes piling cut material on site but not disposal by burning, chipping, or hauling away. The effort needed each year to maintain the site in good condition after restoration is estimated using the hours in the Understory Weed Management and Monitoring tasks.



Figure 8
James Park

City of Evanston
87.7053°W 42.0236°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.

Data Source: XXXX

Spatial Reference: NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



Cartographer: cburke | POC: XXXX | Path: R:\Resgis\Projects\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan\PRO\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan.aprx | Layout: Fig 8 James Park

CLARK STREET BEACH / LUNT PARK / CENTENNIAL PARK

IDENTIFIERS & BASIC INFORMATION

Primary Habitat Type(s): Dune, Woodland with Turf

Desired Habitat Type(s): Dune, Savanna

Primary Activity: Enhancement, Conversion

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Current): 1.8

Naturalized Landscape Acres (Future): 8.4

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Site History: Clark Street Beach is historical Lake Michigan shoreline. Lunt and Centennial Parks are historical timber forests and some of the existing oaks may be pre-settlement remnants. Soils are heavily impacted by human activity.

Existing Vegetation Type (Size): Dune (1.8 ac); Woodland with Turf (6.6 ac)

Current Condition (Dec 2022): Clark Street Beach is a restored dune community. Volunteers have been performing restoration activities including installing native grasses and forbs and planting native shrubs. Weedy trees exist along the backdune/adjacent to Centennial Park. Lunt and Centennial Parks are mowed turf with planted trees (not a naturalized landscape).

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT ISSUES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Issues

Dune

- Dune community has somewhat low species diversity.
- Planted shrubs are not always appropriate for this Dune community.
- Weedy trees are colonizing the back dune.
- Sand deposition can encroach on programming space.

Woodland with Turf (Lunt and Centennial)

- Understory is mowed turf, which provides minimal ecological benefits.
- The tree canopy is mature and there are few successional trees to replace or fill canopy.

Goals

Dune

- Maintain restored Dune and preserve previous efforts.
- Increase native diversity, especially dune forbs.
- Preserve and bolster native shrub community in the mid-dune and backdune.
- Revegetate dune areas impacted by installation of dog beach access path.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Woodland with Turf (Lunt and Centennial)

- Transition turf to a naturalized Savanna understory of native herbaceous vegetation and shrubs.
- Protect sight lines for adjacent neighbors.
- Plant native Savanna trees, including hybrid oak from Lunt Park, to replace existing canopy cover over time; target is 10-50% tree canopy cover.
- Maintain access around the path for maintenance vehicles where appropriate.
- Support Parks and Recreation programming and educational activities.

Strategies

Dune

- Remove non-native and targeted trees and shrubs. Ensure planted shrubs are appropriate native Dune species.
- Increase native herbaceous diversity with Dune seeding and planting.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant shrubs and plugs as needed.

Woodland with Turf (Lunt and Centennial)

- Remove turf and install Savanna seed mix and shrubs except at picnic grove areas.
- Assess canopy and plant Savanna trees to fill existing and anticipated canopy gaps.
- Monitor existing vegetation and make management adjustments based on annual findings. Replant trees and shrubs as needed.

At this site, cyclical changes in lake level affect natural processes of plant succession and foredune erosion. In low water years the beachgrass-foredune system migrates onto the beach, and in high water years, the beachgrass-foredune system is pushed inland by waves and ice. To maintain enough space for recreation, the foredune must be managed. This can be done by mimicking the foredune erosion of high water years and removing the advancing edge of the foredune. The location of the foredune edge can be monitored by mapping with GPS each year. Grading would be triggered when the foredune edge moves lakeward beyond the high water edge of the foredune. The excess sand can be piled on the foredune to raise its elevation or trucked away for placement at another beach. The graded slope of the foredune should be the angle of repose for sand (30-35 degrees) or 1:1.5 (rise:run).

RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT TASKS, TIMEFRAME, INDICATORS OF SUCCESS, AND EFFORT

Restoration/Management Task	Timeframe	Indicator of Success	Acres	Hours
<i>Dune</i>				
Brush Removal	Year 1	≤ 5% cover target species	1.8	60
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	1.8	30
Seeding (Dune)	Year 1	≥ 50% seeded native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	1.8	10
Planting Woody Species (Dune)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs	1.8	30
Planting Herbaceous Species (Dune)	Year 1	≥ 50% survival after 3 yrs; ≥ 4 planted species present	1.8	15
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	1.8	2
<i>Woodland with Turf</i>				
Tree Thinning	Year 4+	All target trees removed	6.6	75
Turf Removal	Year 1	≥ 95% of turf killed	6.6	80
Understory Weed Management	Year 1	≤ 5% cover non-native species	6.6	75
Mowing	Year 4+	Vegetation between 4" and 8" tall	6.6	18
Prescribed Burning	Year 4+	≥ 80% of area burned	6.6	90
Seeding (Savanna)	Year 1	≥ 75% seeding native cover after 3 yrs; 50% of seeded species present and well distributed	6.6	25
Planting Woody Species (Savanna)	Year 4+	≥ 75% survival after 3 yrs; tree canopy between 10-50% cover	6.6	185
Monitoring	Year 1	Adaptive management recommendations in annual report	6.6	5
			Total Hours:	700

* The Opinion of Probable Effort represents the number of person-hours, or effort, needed to complete a task. It assumes that staff are trained to perform the task and have access to appropriate equipment. Woody removal effort includes piling cut material on site but not disposal by burning, chipping, or hauling away. The effort needed each year to maintain the site in good condition after restoration is estimated using the hours in the Understory Weed Management and Monitoring tasks.

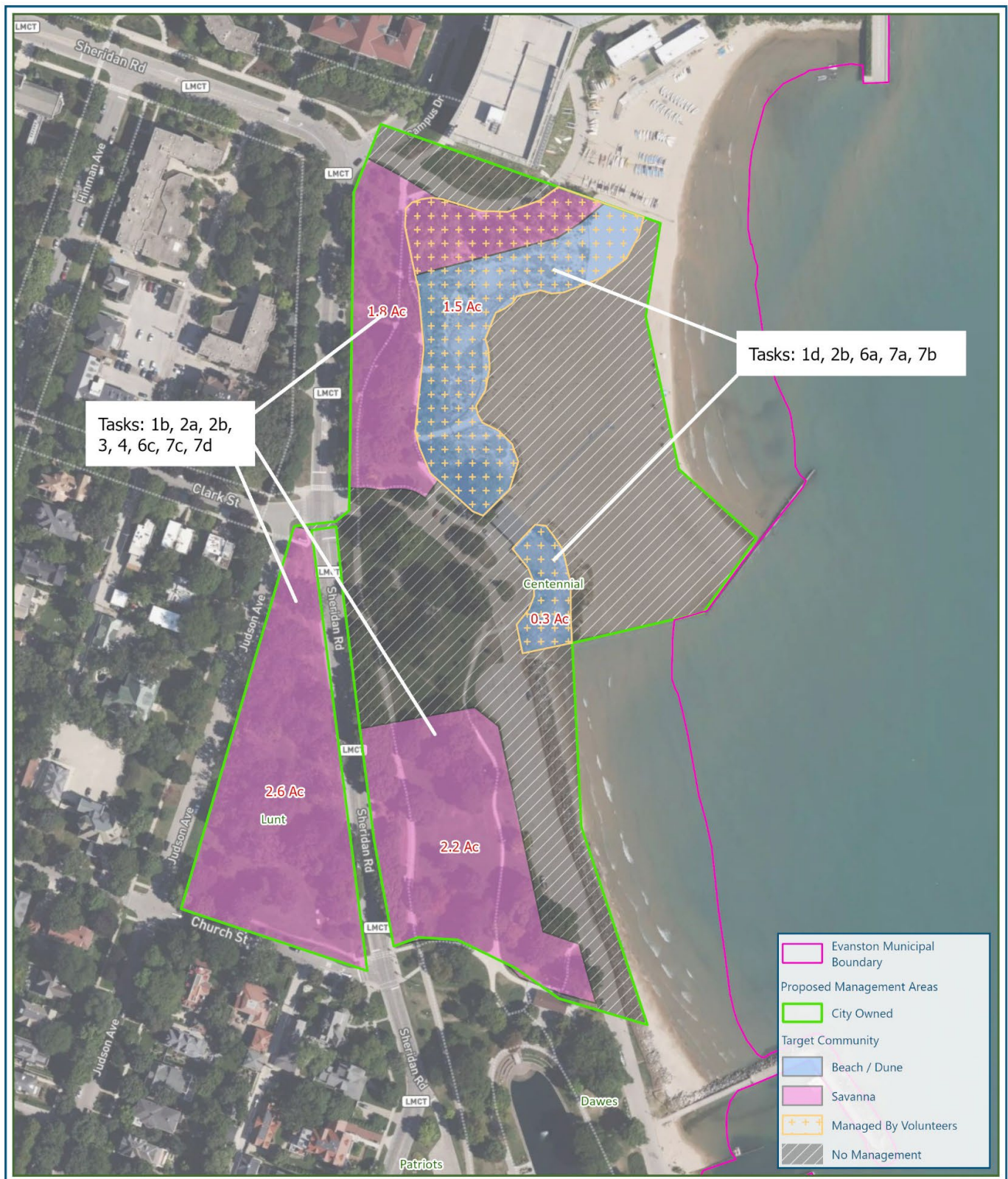
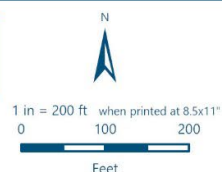


Figure 9
Clark Street Beach

City of Evanston
87.6734°W 42.0482°N



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.
Data Source: XXXX
Spatial Reference: NAD 1983 StatePlane Illinois East FIPS 1201 Feet



Cartographer: cburke | POC: XXXX | Path: R:\Resgis\Projects\IL\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan\PROJ\107890_Evanston Parks and Green Space Plan.aprx | Layout: Fig 9 Clark Beach

APPENDIX A. TASK RUBRIC FOR MAPS

Category 1: Woody Plant Removal

- 1a. Tree removal. Remove non-native and hazard trees. Treat cut stumps with herbicide.
- 1b. Tree thinning. Remove established non-native and weedy/hazardous native trees over time. Treat cut stumps with herbicide.
- 1c. Tree pruning. Remove tree branches to increase light to understory.
- 1d. Brush removal. Remove all non-native woody vines, all non-native shrubs, and non-native and weedy native trees under 4" DBH. Treat cut stumps with herbicide.

Category 2: Herbaceous Plant Removal*

- 2a. Turf removal. Kill existing turf grasses with two or more broadcast applications of non-specific herbicide. Alternately, cover area to be converted with black plastic tarp until turf grasses die.
- 2b. Understory weed management. Treat all herbaceous invasive species and invasive woody resprouts and seedlings. Spot herbicide application is preferred. Spot mowing/hand pulling can be used for small populations. Mowing is recommended to treat annual weeds when or before flowering to prevent seed maturation.

Category 3: Mowing

- 3. Annual mowing. Mow entire prairie with flail-type mower in years without a prescribed burn to reduce thatch buildup and create favorable growing conditions for shorter/slower-growing native species. Mow in spring before the start of the growing season or in fall after the last flowering plants set seed. Every third year, mow in mid-summer after spring-blooming plants set seed.

Category 4: Prescribed Burning

- 4. Prescribed burning. Burn standing vegetation every 3-4 years to reduce thatch buildup and create favorable growing conditions for fire-adapted native species.

Category 5: Erosion Control

- 5. Erosion control. Install 2-3 rows of sediment logs parallel to channel (top of slope, mid-slope, bottom of slope) to prevent soil runoff following tree and shrub removal.

Category 6: Seeding

- 6a. Install Dune seed mix. Install seed mix by drill-seeding or broadcast seeding with raking.
- 6b. Install Prairie seed mix. Install seed mix by drill-seeding or broadcast seeding with raking. If needed or desired, overseed after each prescribed burn to increase species diversity.
- 6c. Install Savanna seed mix. Install seed mix by drill-seeding or broadcast seeding with raking. If needed or desired, overseed after each prescribed burn to increase species diversity.

**All herbicides must follow city resolution 20-R-10 Pest Control and Pesticide Reduction Policy or any updated resolution pertaining to the reduction of pesticides*

6d. Install Channel Slope seed mix. Install seed mix by hydroseeding if possible or broadcast seeding with raking and coir log installation. If feasible, install erosion control blanket after broadcast seeding to keep seed in place.

6e. Install Forest/Woodland seed mix. Install seed mix by drill-seeding or broadcast seeding with raking.

Category 7: Planting

7a. Install Dune herbaceous plugs. Install American beachgrass at base of the foredune. Install dune forbs in groups of multiple species(pods), with like species planted in small clusters of 3-5 individuals, to re-vegetate unwanted paths and discourage further use. Water forb pods weekly during entire first growing season, unless at least ¼ inch of rain or more occurs that week.

7b. Install Dune shrubs. Install dune shrubs with like species planted in small clusters of 3-5 individuals to block unwanted paths and discourage further use.

7c. Install Savanna shrubs. At year 4 or after savanna seed mix is well established, install savanna shrubs in pods to provide habitat and structure.

7d. Install Savanna trees. Install savanna trees as needed to maintain savanna structure.

7e. Install Forest/Woodland herbaceous plugs. At year 4 or after forest/woodland seed mix is well established, install forest/woodland forbs in pods to increase diversity, habitat, and aesthetic appeal.

7f. Install Forest/Woodland shrubs. At year 4 or after forest/woodland seed mix is well established, install forest/woodland shrubs in pods to provide habitat and structure.

7g. Install Forest/Woodland trees. At year 4 or after forest/woodland seed mix is well established, install forest/woodland trees as needed to maintain forest/woodland structure.

APPENDIX B. PROPOSED SEED MIXES

Goals for each type of managed area are laid out in the management briefs. The species mixes below are designed to help achieve the goals of each managed area, as explained in the management briefs. The overarching goal of all restoration work is to establish a stable vegetation structure and native species composition that will persist and predictably change under the appropriate management regime, despite long term changes in climate, land use, and the people involved in managing a site.

Each mix was designed to establish a matrix of dominant native plants typical of the target plant community in each managed area. The species mixes also contain native forbs (non-grassy flowering plants) to support pollinators and provide food for animals that eat seeds and fruits. The species mixes were also designed to work in a broad range of soil moisture and shade conditions, to ensure that some species will always establish, assuming weed control is diligently maintained in the first 3-5 years after seeding. After the vegetation structure and a native matrix for a target plant community are firmly established, specific habitat elements can be added to favor target birds, mammals, insects, or other desired species. Targeting individual animal species, however, is secondary to getting each plant community on an ecologically positive trajectory by focusing first on vegetation structure and establishing native species dominance and composition.

Table B-1. Forest/Woodland Seed Mix

Scientific Name	Common Name	Oz/Acre	Lbs/Acre	% by Wt	Seeds/Sq Ft
<i>Ageratina altissima</i>	White snakeroot	1.00	0.06	0.7	3.4
<i>Bromus pubescens</i>	Hairy woodland brome	3.00	0.19	2.1	0.5
<i>Carex blanda</i>	Common woodland sedge	2.00	0.13	1.4	0.6
<i>Carex molesta</i>	Troublesome sedge	2.00	0.13	1.4	1.1
<i>Carex sprengei</i>	Sprengel's sedge	2.00	0.13	1.4	0.5
<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	Fox sedge	1.50	0.09	1.0	3.4
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada wild rye	44.00	2.75	30.6	5.3
<i>Elymus hirtellus</i>	Bottlebrush grass	4.00	0.25	2.8	0.7
<i>Elymus villosus</i>	Silky wild rye	6.00	0.38	4.2	0.8
<i>Elymus virginicus</i>	Virginia wild rye	56.00	3.50	38.9	5.4
<i>Festuca subverticillata</i>	Nodding fescue	1.00	0.06	0.7	0.5
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Common rush	0.25	0.02	0.2	5.7
<i>Juncus tenuis</i>	Path rush	0.25	0.02	0.2	5.7
<i>Muhlenbergia mexicana</i>	Leafy satin grass	1.00	0.06	0.7	4.0
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem	16.00	1.00	11.1	5.5
<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Golden alexanders	4.00	0.25	2.8	1.0
Total		144.00	9.00		44.2

Potentially weedy species: White snakeroot

Table B-2. Savanna Seed Mix

Scientific Name	Common Name	Oz/Acre	Lbs/Acre	% by Wt	Seeds/Sq Ft
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	Side-oats grama	32.00	2.00	18.2	4.4
<i>Bromus kalmii</i>	Arctic brome	6.00	0.38	3.4	1.1
<i>Carex brevior</i>	Short beak sedge	2.00	0.13	1.1	1.3
<i>Carex molesta</i>	Troublesome sedge	2.00	0.13	1.1	1.1
<i>Carex sprengei</i>	Sprengell's sedge	2.00	0.13	1.1	0.5
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada wild rye	36.00	2.25	20.5	4.3
<i>Elymus virginicus</i>	Virginia wild rye	46.00	2.88	26.1	4.4
<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	Junegrass	1.00	0.06	0.6	4.6
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem	14.00	0.88	8.0	4.8
<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	Prairie dropseed	3.00	0.19	1.7	1.1
Total Graminoids		144.00	9.00	81.8	27.7
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	0.25	0.02	0.1	1.0
<i>Ageratina altissima</i>	White snakeroot	0.35	0.02	0.2	1.2
<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	Red columbine	1.25	0.08	0.7	1.1
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common milkweed	4.50	0.28	2.6	0.4
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	Purple prairie clover	3.00	0.19	1.7	1.2
<i>Drymocallis arguta</i>	Prairie cinquefoil	0.25	0.02	0.1	1.3
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Common ox-eye	10.00	0.63	5.7	0.8
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild bergamot	0.80	0.05	0.5	1.3
<i>Oligoneuron rigidum</i>	Stiff goldenrod	1.50	0.09	0.9	1.4
<i>Penstemon pallidus</i>	Pale beardtongue	0.35	0.02	0.2	1.4
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	1.50	0.09	0.9	3.2
<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>	Old field goldenrod	0.20	0.01	0.1	1.4
<i>Solidago speciosa</i>	Showy goldenrod	0.60	0.04	0.3	1.3
<i>Symphyotrichum ericoides</i>	Heath aster	0.30	0.02	0.2	1.4
<i>Symphyotrichum oolentangiense</i>	Sky-blue aster	0.70	0.04	0.4	1.3
<i>Symphyotrichum urophyllum</i>	Arrowleaf aster	0.45	0.03	0.3	1.4
<i>Verbena stricta</i>	Hoary vervain	2.00	0.13	1.1	1.3
<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Golden alexanders	4.00	0.25	2.3	1.0
Total Forbs		32.00	2.00	18.2	23.5
Total		176.00	11.00		51.2

Potentially weedy species: Yarrow, White snakeroot

Table B-3. Prairie Seed Mix

Scientific Name	Common Name	Oz/Acre	Lbs/Acre	% by Wt	Seeds/Sq Ft
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	Sideoats grama	34.00	2.13	21.8	4.7
<i>Bromus kalmii</i>	Arctic brome	6.00	0.38	3.8	1.1
<i>Carex brevior</i>	Short beak sedge	2.50	0.16	1.6	1.7
<i>Carex molesta</i>	Troublesome sedge	2.50	0.16	1.6	1.4
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada wild rye	40.00	2.50	25.6	4.8
<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	Junegrass	1.00	0.06	0.6	4.6
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switchgrass	6.00	0.38	3.8	1.9
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem	14.00	0.88	9.0	4.8
<i>Sporobolus compositus</i>	Tall dropseed	7.00	0.44	4.5	4.8
<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	Prairie dropseed	3.00	0.19	1.9	1.1
Total Graminoids		116.00	7.25	74.4	30.9
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	0.25	0.02	0.2	1.0
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common milkweed	3.75	0.23	2.4	0.4
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterfly milkweed	2.00	0.13	1.3	0.2
<i>Astragalus canadensis</i>	Canada milk vetch	2.50	0.16	1.6	1.0
<i>Dalea candida</i>	White prairie clover	1.50	0.09	1.0	0.7
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	Purple prairie clover	2.50	0.16	1.6	1.0
<i>Desmodium canadense</i>	Canada tick trefoil	4.00	0.25	2.6	0.5
<i>Drymocallis arguta</i>	Tall cinquefoil	0.25	0.02	0.2	1.3
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Common ox-eye	9.00	0.56	5.8	0.7
<i>Liatris aspera</i>	Rough blazing star	1.25	0.08	0.8	0.5
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild bergamot	0.75	0.05	0.5	1.2
<i>Oligoneuron rigidum</i>	Stiff goldenrod	1.25	0.08	0.8	1.2
<i>Penstemon pallidus</i>	Pale beardtongue	0.30	0.02	0.2	1.2
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Yellow coneflower	1.75	0.11	1.1	1.2
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	1.50	0.09	1.0	3.2
<i>Sisyrinchium campestre</i>	Blue-eyed grass	0.50	0.03	0.3	0.5
<i>Solidago speciosa</i>	Showy goldenrod	0.65	0.04	0.4	1.4
<i>Symphyotrichum ericoides</i>	Heath aster	0.30	0.02	0.2	1.4
<i>Symphyotrichum laeve</i>	Smooth blue aster	1.00	0.06	0.6	1.3
<i>Verbena stricta</i>	Hoary vervain	2.00	0.13	1.3	1.3
<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Golden alexanders	3.00	0.19	1.9	0.8
Total Forbs		40.00	2.50	25.6	21.8
Total		156.00	9.75		52.8

Potentially weedy species: Yarrow

Table B-4. Channel Slope Seed Mix

Scientific Name	Common Name	Oz/Acre	Lbs/Acre	% by Wt	Seeds/Sq Ft
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	Sideoats grama	34.00	2.13	18.1	4.7
<i>Carex brevior</i>	Short beak sedge	2.00	0.13	1.1	1.3
<i>Carex molesta</i>	Troublesome sedge	1.75	0.11	0.9	1.0
<i>Carex sprengelii</i>	Sprengel's sedge	2.00	0.13	1.1	0.5
<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	Fox sedge	2.00	0.13	1.1	4.6
<i>Cinna arundinacea</i>	Sweet wood reed	1.00	0.06	0.5	1.3
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada wild rye	40.00	2.50	21.3	4.8
<i>Elymus riparius</i>	Riverbank wild rye	24.00	1.50	12.8	1.6
<i>Elymus villosus</i>	Silky wild rye	6.00	0.38	3.2	0.8
<i>Elymus virginicus</i>	Virginia wild rye	50.00	3.13	26.6	4.8
<i>Glyceria striata</i>	Fowl manna grass	1.25	0.08	0.7	4.6
<i>Juncus dudleyi</i>	Dudley's rush	0.10	0.01	0.1	7.3
<i>Juncus interior</i>	Inland rush	0.10	0.01	0.1	6.4
<i>Juncus tenuis</i>	Path rush	0.25	0.02	0.1	5.7
<i>Muhlenbergia mexicana</i>	Leafy satin grass	1.05	0.07	0.6	4.2
<i>Poa palustris</i>	Fowl bluegrass	1.50	0.09	0.8	4.5
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem	13.00	0.81	6.9	4.5
<i>Sporobolus compositus</i>	Composite dropseed	8.00	0.50	4.3	5.5
Total		188.00	11.75		68.1

Table B-5. Dune Seed Mix

Scientific Name	Common Name	Oz/Acre	Lbs/Acre	% by Wt	Seeds/Sq Ft
<i>Calamovilfa longifolia</i>	Sand reed grass	3.00	0.19	2.6	1.2
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada wild rye	65.00	4.06	56.0	7.8
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switchgrass	24.00	1.50	20.7	7.7
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem	24.00	1.50	20.7	8.3
Total		116.00	7.25		24.9

APPENDIX C. PROPOSED PLANTING LISTS

Herbaceous species proposed for planting include typical native species for the target plant communities that are difficult to establish from seed. Woody species proposed for planting include typical native species that provide essential structure for the target plant communities. As described in Appendix B, these species are intended to establish a matrix of dominant native plants, as well as support pollinators and provide food for animals that eat seeds and fruits.

Table C-1. Forest/Woodland Forbs

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Form	Place in Habitat
<i>Anemone cylindrica</i>	Thimbleweed	Oak forest	Forb	Less common, dry woods
<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	Wild columbine	Oak forest	Forb	Common, woods
<i>Eutrochium purpureum</i>	Sweet Joe Pye weed	Oak forest	Forb	Common, open woods
<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	Wild geranium	Oak forest	Forb	Common, woods
<i>Helianthus strumosus</i>	Woodland sunflower	Oak forest	Forb	Common, open woods
<i>Rudbeckia triloba</i>	Brown-eyed Susan	Oak forest	Forb	Common, moist woods
<i>Thalictrum dioicum</i>	Early meadow rue	Oak forest	Forb	Common, woods
<i>Thalictrum thalictroides</i>	Rue anemone	Oak forest	Forb	Common, woods
<i>Triosteum perfoliatum</i>	Late horse gentian	Oak forest	Forb	Less common, dry woods
<i>Viola pubescens</i>	Downy yellow violet	Oak forest	Forb	Common, dry woods
<i>Viola sororia</i>	Common violet	Oak forest	Forb	Common, woods

Table C-2. Forest/Woodland Shrubs

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Form	Place in Habitat
<i>Cornus alternifolia</i>	Pagoda dogwood	Oak forest	Tall shrub	Less common, in understory
<i>Corylus americana</i>	American hazelnut	Oak forest	Tall shrub	Common
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Witch-hazel	Oak forest	Tall shrub	Less common; flowers in fall/winter
<i>Prunus americanus</i>	American plum	Oak forest	Tall shrub	Less common, early flowering
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Choke cherry	Oak forest	Tall shrub	Common, early flowering
<i>Rubus ideaus</i> var. <i>strigosus</i>	Wild red raspberry	Oak forest	Short shrub	Common, excellent berries

Table C-3. Forest/Woodland Trees

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Form	Place in Habitat
<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	Downy serviceberry	Oak forest	Short tree	Common, early spring flowering shrub
<i>Carya cordiformis</i>	Bitternut hickory	Oak forest	Tall tree	Common in canopy
<i>Carya ovata</i>	Shagbark hickory	Oak forest	Tall tree	Common in canopy
<i>Gymnocladus dioicus</i>	Kentucky coffeetree	Oak forest	Tall tree	Less common in canopy
<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	Ironwood	Oak forest	Short tree	Common in understory; leaves persist over winter
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black cherry	Oak forest	Tall tree	Common in canopy, early successional species
<i>Quercus alba</i>	White oak	Oak forest	Tall tree	Dominant in canopy
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Red oak	Oak forest	Tall tree	Dominant in canopy
<i>Quercus velutina</i>	Black oak	Oak forest	Tall tree	Common in canopy
<i>Sassafras albidum</i>	Sassafras	Oak forest	Short tree	Common in understory, especially forest edges
<i>Tilia americana</i>	American basswood	Oak forest	Tall tree	Less common in canopy

Table C-4. Savanna Shrubs

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Form	Place in Habitat
<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	Leadplant	Oak savanna	Short shrub	Common
<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	New Jersey tea	Oak savanna	Short shrub	Common
<i>Corylus americana</i>	American hazelnut	Oak savanna	Tall shrub	Abundant, forms thickets
<i>Rosa carolina</i>	Pasture rose	Oak savanna	Short shrub	Common
<i>Prunus americanus</i>	American plum	Oak savanna	Tall shrub	Less common, earliest flowering shrub, forms thickets
<i>Salix humilis</i>	Prairie willow	Oak savanna	Short shrub	Common

Table C-5. Savanna Trees

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Form	Place in Habitat
<i>Quercus alba</i>	White oak	Oak savanna	Tall tree	Common
<i>Quercus ellipsoidalis</i>	Northern pin oak	Oak savanna	Tall tree	Common
<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Bur oak	Oak savanna	Tall tree	Common
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Red oak	Oak savanna	Tall tree	Common
<i>Quercus x</i>	Hybrid oak	Oak savanna	Tall tree	From Lunt Park

Table C-6. Dune Grass

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Form	Place in Habitat
<i>Ammophila breviligulata</i>	American beachgrass	Dune	Grass	Abundant, foredune

Table C-7. Dune Forbs

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Form	Place in Habitat
<i>Artemisia campestris</i>	Common wormwood	Dune	Forb	Abundant, foredune
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common milkweed	Dune	Forb	Common, backdune
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Sand coreopsis	Dune	Forb	Relatively common, backdune
<i>Lathyrus japonicus</i>	Beach pea	Dune	Forb	Less common, excellent for bees, foredune
<i>Maianthemum stellatum</i>	Starry false Solomon's seal	Dune	Forb	Relatively common, backdune
<i>Monarda punctata</i>	Horse mint	Dune	Forb	Relatively common, foredune
<i>Solidago simplex</i>	Gillman's goldenrod	Dune	Forb	Relative common, foredune

Table C-8. Dune Shrubs

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Form	Place in Habitat
<i>Artemisia campestris</i>	Beach wormwood	Dune	Short shrub	Relatively common, foredune
<i>Cornus sericea</i>	Red osier dogwood	Dune	Short shrub	Relatively common, foredune
<i>Dasiphora fruticosa</i>	Shrubby cinquefoil	Dune	Short shrub	Less common, backdune
<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>	Ninebark	Dune	Short shrub	Relatively common, backdune
<i>Prunus pumila</i>	Sand cherry	Dune	Short shrub	Relatively common, backdune

APPENDIX D. REMOVALS

Table D-1. Invasive Planted/Adventive Tree Species to Remove or Prune

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comment
<i>Acer ginnala</i>	Amur maple	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway maple	Invades forests; prune only
<i>Morus alba</i>	White mulberry	Invades savannas, floodplain forests
<i>Populus alba</i>	White poplar	Spreads from planted trees
<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	Callery pear	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Black locust	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Ulmus pumila</i>	Siberian elm	Invades grasslands, savannas

Table D-2. Invasive Planted/Adventive Shrub Species to Remove

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comment
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	Japanese barberry	Invades forests
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	Oriental bittersweet	Invades dunes, grasslands, savannas
<i>Eleagnus umbellata</i>	Autumn olive	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	Winged euonymus	Invades grasslands, savannas, forests
<i>Frangula alnus</i>	Glossy buckthorn	Invades herbaceous wetlands, wet forests
<i>Lonicera mackii</i>	Amur bush honeysuckle	Invades grasslands, savannas, forests
<i>Lonicera morrowii</i>	Morrow's honeysuckle	Invades grasslands, savannas, forests
<i>Lonicera tatarica</i>	Tartarian honeysuckle	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	Common buckthorn	Invades savannas, forests
<i>Rosa multiflora</i>	Multiflora rose	Invades grasslands, savannas

Table D-3. Invasive Planted/Adventive Herbaceous Species to Remove

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comment
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Garlic mustard	Declines in competition with native plants
<i>Arctium minus</i>	Common burdock	Invades grassland and savanna plantings
<i>Bromus inermis</i>	Smooth brome grass	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk thistle	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	Spotted knapweed	Invades dunes, grasslands, savannas
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Canada thistle	Invades herbaceous wetlands, wet grasslands
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull thistle	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Conium maculatum</i>	Poison hemlock	Invades grasslands, herbaceous wetlands
<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Common teasel	Invades dunes, grasslands, savannas
<i>Euphorbia esula</i>	Leafy spurge	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Ficaria verna</i>	Lesser celandine	Invades moist forests
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Creeping Charlie	Invades grassland and savanna plantings
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Dame's rocket	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Birdsfoot trefoil	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Purple loosestrife	Invades herbaceous wetlands, wet grasslands
<i>Melilotus alba</i>	White sweet clover	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>	Yellow sweet clover	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>	Wild parsnip	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	Reed canary grass	Invades herbaceous wetlands, wet grasslands
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Giant reed	Invades herbaceous wetlands, wet grasslands
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Kentucky bluegrass	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Reynoutria cuspidatum</i>	Japanese knotweed	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Curly dock	Invades grassland and savanna plantings
<i>Securigera varia</i>	Crown vetch	Invades grasslands, savannas
<i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>	Common tansy	Invades dunes, grasslands, savannas
<i>Typha angustifolia</i>	Narrow-leaf cattail	Invades herbaceous wetlands, wet grasslands
<i>Typha x glauca</i>	Hybrid cattail	Invades herbaceous wetlands, wet grasslands
<i>Vinca minor</i>	Lesser periwinkle	Invades forests

APPENDIX E. INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Annual weeds include all unwanted herbaceous species that grow for a single year, set seed, and die. The goal when treating annual weeds is to prevent seed production, either by reducing/eliminating flowering or removing flowers before seed set. Biennial weeds include all unwanted herbaceous species that grow for two years. In the first year, as much biomass as possible is produced in order to store energy in roots. In the second year, the stored energy is used to produce seed. Biennial plants can be treated effectively in either year of growth. Perennial weeds include all unwanted herbaceous and woody species that persist for multiple years after germination. Management strategies for common weeds in the City of Evanston are included below.

MANUAL REMOVAL

Table E-1. Management Strategies for Invasive Species Removal

Life History Strategy	Typical Species	Management Strategy
Annual Weed	Giant ragweed, Horseweed	Prevent flowering by mechanical removal using spot-mowing or hand-pulling. Bag and remove material if plant is in flower or seed is maturing.
Biennial Weed	Burdock, Dame's rocket, Garlic mustard, Yellow sweet clover	In the first year of growth, mechanically remove plant or treat with herbicide to kill roots. In the second year, treat the same as annual weeds (above).
Perennial Weed	Buckthorn, Canada thistle, Cattails (non-native), Reed canary grass	Cut or spot-mow to prevent seed production. Herbicide treatment is usually required to eliminate perennial plants, but repeat cutting can be used for many woody species. Small areas of turf can be managed by covering with black plastic.

HERBICIDE

Table E-2. Potential Invasive and Nuisance Woody Species and Common Herbicides

Woody Species	Herbicide*	Application Window
Boxelder (<i>Acer negundo</i>)	triclopyr	Apr 15 – June 15
Winged euonymus (<i>Euonymus alatus</i>)	triclopyr	Apr 15 – June 15, Oct 1 – Nov 1
Asian bush honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera</i> spp.)	glyphosate	Apr 15 – June 15, Oct 1 – Nov 1
White mulberry (<i>Morus alba</i>)	triclopyr	Apr 15 – June 15
Common buckthorn (<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>)	triclopyr	Apr 15 – June 15, Oct 1 – Nov 1
Multiflora rose (<i>Rosa multiflora</i>)	triclopyr	Apr 15 – June 15
Brambles (<i>Rubus</i> spp.)	triclopyr	Apr 15 – June 15
Sandbar willow (<i>Salix interior</i>)	triclopyr	Apr 15 – June 15
Siberian elm (<i>Ulmus pumila</i>)	triclopyr	Apr 15 – June 15, Oct 1 – Nov 1
Wayfaring tree (<i>Viburnum lantana</i>)	triclopyr	Apr 15 – June 15, Oct 1 – Nov 1

Herbicide	Trade Names	
Glyphosate	Aqua Neat, Rodeo, Roundup	
Triclopyr	Element 3A, Garlon 3A	

* All herbicide application must be completed by an Illinois licensed applicator.

* All herbicide application shall follow label directions for the target species and site conditions.

* All herbicides/pesticides should follow City ordinances.

Table E-3. Potential Invasive and Nuisance Herbaceous Species and Common Herbicides

Herbaceous Species	Herbicide*	Application Window
Garlic mustard (<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>)	triclopyr	Mar 1 – June 1
Giant ragweed (<i>Ambrosia trifida</i>)	2-4, D	May 1 – Aug 1
Lesser burdock (<i>Arctium minus</i>)	2-4, D or aminopyralid	Apr 1 – June 1 or Oct 1 – Nov 1
Poison hemlock (<i>Conium maculatum</i>)	2-4, D or triclopyr	Apr 1 – July 15
Common teasel (<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>)	2-4, D or aminopyralid	May 1 – July 1
Horseweed (<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>)	2-4, D	Apr 1 – June 15
Ground ivy (<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>)	triclopyr	Mar 1 – June 1
Dame's rocket (<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>)	triclopyr	Mar 1 – June 1
Purple loosestrife (<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>)	triclopyr	June 1 – Aug 1
Sweet clover (<i>Melilotus</i> spp.)	2-4, D or aminopyralid	May 1 – June 15
Reed canary grass (<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>)	glyphosate	Apr 1 – June 15 or Oct 1 – Nov 1
Common reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>)	imazapyr	June 15 – Sept 15
Kentucky bluegrass (<i>Poa pratensis</i>)	glyphosate	June 15 – Sept 15
Narrow-leaf cattail (<i>Typha angustifolia</i>)	glyphosate or imazapyr	June 15 – Sept 1
Herbicide	Trade Names	
2-4, D	Generic	
Aminopyralid	Milestone	
Glyphosate	Aqua Neat, Rodeo, Roundup	
Imazapyr	Habitat, Polaris	
Triclopyr	Element 3A, Garlon 3A	

* All herbicide application must be completed by an Illinois licensed applicator.

* All herbicide application shall follow label directions for the target species and site conditions.

* All herbicides/pesticides should follow City ordinances.

Evanston Park Amenities

Object ID	Park ID	Owner	Park Name	Baseball Based on numbers of infields	Basketball Partial Courts (based on numbers of hoops)	Multipurpose field	Tennis	Pickleball	Playground Age 2-5 Age 5-12	Dog Park	Adventure play	Ice skating rink
656	1	Ackerman		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
688	2	Alexander		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
716	3	Baker		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
660	88	LGTHSE		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
679	5	MWRDGC		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
655	6	Beck		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
655	7	RDGVLE		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
733	7	RDGVLE	Brummel Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
732	8	Brummel Richmond		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
696	9	Brummel Richmond		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
673	10	MWRDGC	Burnham Shores	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
735	89	Butler		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
666	11	Canal Shores		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
681	12	Cartwright		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
659	13	Centennial		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
736	91	SKOKIE	Chandler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
704	14	Channelside		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
731	15	Clark Square		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
691	16	Clyde-Brummel		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
702	17	Congregational		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
695	18	Crown		2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
687	19	Currey		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
734	20	Dawes		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
664	21	CNTY	Dobson/Brummel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
671	22	MWRDGC	Dwight Perkins Woods	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
706	23	Egleston		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
727	25	RDGVLE	Elden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
726	24	RDGVLE	Elks	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
658	26	Elks Play Lot		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
700	27	Ellingwood		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
740	93	Elliott		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
675	28	Emerson Square		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
701	29	Fireman's		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
676	30	City/d65	Fitzsimons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
686	31	Foster		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
661	32	LGTHSE	Fountain Square	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
711	33	Fullerton		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
678	34	Garden		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
738	92	Gilbert		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
703	35	Grandmother		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
657	36	Grey		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
697	37	MWRDGC	Grose Point Lighthouse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
694	38	Harbert-Payne		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
714	39	Harper		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
677	40	Hinnin		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
650	41	Hobart		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
653	42	Howell		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
669	43	Independence		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
725	44	Ingraham		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
720	4	RDGVLE	James	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
722	45	RDGVLE	Kamen East	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
728	64	RDGVLE	Kamen West	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
672	48	MWRDGC	Kay Lee Tot Lot	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
717	47	Kelly		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
739	94	Ladd Arboretum		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
698	49	Lake-Dodge		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
651	50	Larimer		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
729	53	Lawson		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
662	51	Leah Lomar		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
719	46	RDGVLE	Leahy	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
654	52	Leider		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
647	55	Lighthouse Landing		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
647	55	Lovelace		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

[illegible]

Evanston Park Types

CONTROLLING ENTITY	PARK_NAME	Park Name	City PCP Prescribed Park Type	Agency/Proposed Park	P	LOCATION	SHAPE_Area	Area-acre
City of Evanston	Lighthouse	Lighthouse Landing Beach	Beach	Neighborhood	City	2603 Sheridan Road	239315.2618	5.5
City of Evanston	South Boulevard	South Blvd Beach	Beach	Neighborhood	City	Lakefront, Sheridan Sq S to city limits	247910.1347	5.7
City of Evanston	Fountain Square	Fountain Square	Community	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Davis, Sherman and Orrington	8632.291022	0.2
City of Evanston	Merrick	Merrick Rose Garden	Community	Special Park	City	Lake and Oak	23253.2896	0.5
City of Evanston	Lunt	Lunt	Community	Neighborhood	City	Church and Judson	70431.901	1.6
City of Evanston	Tallmadge	Tallmadge	Community	Community	City	E of Ridge, W of CTA between Noyes and Colfax	193705.2175	4.4
City of Evanston	Clark Square	Clark Square	Community	Neighborhood	City	Kedzie and Sheridan	214319.1768	4.9
City of Evanston	Burnham	Burnham Shores	Community	Neighborhood	City	Lakefront between Dempster and Hamilton	220515.4806	5.1
City of Evanston	Mason	Mason	Community	Neighborhood	City	Church and Florence	220623.4915	5.1
City of Evanston	Elliott	Elliott	Community	Neighborhood	City	Lakefront between Hamilton and Lee	322489.7213	7.4
City of Evanston	Dawes	Dawes	Community	Community	City	Lakefront between Dempster and Church	677616.592	15.6
City of Evanston	Crown	Robert Crown	Community	Community	City	Main and Dodge	703560.3267	16.2
City of Evanston	Lovelace	Lovelace	Community	Community	City	Gross Point and Isabella	778036.1592	17.9
City of Evanston	Centennial	Centennial	Community	Community	City	Lakefront between Church and University Pl.	83088.5563	18.4
City of Evanston	James	James	Community	Community	City	Oakton and Dodge	1955007.513	44.9
City of Evanston	Morris	Morris	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Washington and Custer	2264.940751	0.1
City of Evanston	Harper	Harper	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Lake and Sherman	3096.8706	0.1
City of Evanston	Sargent	Sargent	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Reba and Elmwood	3705.287325	0.1
City of Evanston	Ellingwood	Ellingwood	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Harrison and Pioneer	5797.417294	0.1
City of Evanston	Lake-Dodge	Lake-Dodge	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Lake and Dodge	9190.5402	0.2
City of Evanston	Congregational	Congregational	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Lake and Judson	9630.679688	0.2
City of Evanston	Emerson Square	Emerson Square	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	S of Foster on Ashland	11283.22844	0.3
City of Evanston	Snyder	Snyder	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Judson and Kedzie	11328.9546	0.3
City of Evanston	Porter	Porter	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Simpson and Bennett	14754.0496	0.3
City of Evanston	Oldberg	Oldberg	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Elgin, Sherman and Clark	15472.92	0.4
City of Evanston	Quinlan	Quinlan	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Lincoln and Pioneer	17831.5358	0.4
City of Evanston	Stockham	Stockham	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Hamilton and Michigan	18289.87827	0.4
City of Evanston	Dobson-Brummel	Dobson-Brummel	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	E of Ashland between Dobson and Brummel	20141.0584	0.5
City of Evanston	Trahan	Trahan	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Ridge and Monroe	20802.1321	0.5
City of Evanston	Firemen's	Firemen's	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Simpson and Maple	23008.66926	0.5
City of Evanston	Perry	Perry	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	1741 Hovland Ct.	23893.4634	0.5
City of Evanston	Southwest	Southwest	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Seward and Wesley	24660.5878	0.6
City of Evanston	Megowen	Megowen	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	South Blvd and Hinman	25100.7712	0.6
City of Evanston	Philbrick	Philbrick	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Garfield and Sherman	28479.2822	0.7
City of Evanston	Clyde & Brummel	Clyde-Brummel	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Brummel and Clyde	28566.53839	0.7
City of Evanston	Fitzsimons	Fitzsimons	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Lee and Elmwood	30553.04859	0.7
City of Evanston	Gilbert	Gilbert	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Emerson and Ashland	32508.11448	0.7
City of Evanston	Curry	Curry	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Hinman and Dempster	35618.1306	0.8
City of Evanston	Smith	Smith	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Ashland and Lyons	40000.0456	0.9
City of Evanston	Torgerson	Torgerson	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Jenks and Poplar	43954.98655	1.0
City of Evanston	Alexander	Alexander	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Ridge and Grove	45181.1897	1.0
City of Evanston	Penny	Penny	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Lake and Ashland	46764.3258	1.1
City of Evanston	Elden	Elden	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Sherman and Custer	48685.4284	1.1
City of Evanston	Patriots	Patriots	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Davis and Sheridan	49257.10383	1.1
City of Evanston	Howell	Howell	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Hartzell and Walnut	52108.4616	1.2
City of Evanston	Ackerman	Ackerman	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Central and McDaniel	54112.40054	1.2
City of Evanston	Baker	Baker	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Keeney and Forest	61002.3494	1.4
City of Evanston	Independence	Independence	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Central and Stewart	61318.89	1.4
City of Evanston	Grey	Grey	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Main and Ridge	66630.04816	1.5
City of Evanston	Lomar	Leah Lomar	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Mulford and Wesley	69922.61225	1.6
City of Evanston	Larimer	Larimer	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Crain and Oak	70661.13251	1.6
City of Evanston	McCulloch	McCulloch	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	S of Jenks between Broadway and Eastwood	74218.76461	1.7
City of Evanston	Garden	Garden	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Lakefront N of Sheridan Sq.	75791.43571	1.7
City of Evanston	Raymond	Raymond	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Lake and Chicago	77121.165	1.8
City of Evanston	Cartwright	Cartwright	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Grant and Prospect	90999.31424	2.1
City of Evanston	Lawson	Lawson	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Sheridan and Clinton Pl.	92234.76397	2.1
City of Evanston	Chandler	Chandler	Neighborhood	Community	City	Lincoln to CTA	112772.7478	2.6
City of Evanston	Ingraham	Ingraham	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	E of Asbury from Simpson to Leonard Pl.	120379.0869	2.8
City of Evanston	Bent	Bent	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Central and Cowper	179706.1565	4.1
City of Evanston	Leahy	Leahy	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	City	Lincoln and Ridge	195396.6496	4.5
City of Evanston	Monroe	Monroe	Tot Lot	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	1200 Monroe	3724.2152	0.1
City of Evanston	Grandmother	Grandmother	Tot Lot	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	1125 Dewey Avenue	5551.838744	0.1
City of Evanston	Hobart	Hobart	Tot Lot	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Ridge and Foster	6077.5866	0.1
City of Evanston	Brummel-Richmond	Brummel Richmond	Tot Lot	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Brummel and Richmond	7129.8848	0.2
City of Evanston	Hinman	Hinman	Tot Lot	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	641 Hinman Avenue	8573.242507	0.2
City of Evanston	Levinson	Levinson	Tot Lot	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Mulford and Florence	11826.7312	0.3
City of Evanston	Kelly	Kelly	Tot Lot	Tot Lot/Mini Park	City	Keeney and Michigan	14242.3162	0.3
Lighthouse Park District	Grosse Point Lighthouse	Grosse Point Lighthouse	Community	Special Park	City	2535 Sheridan Road	80011.3524	1.8

City of Evanston	Foster	Neighborhood	Community	City/D65	Foster and Ashland	151719.3219	3.5
Cook County Forest Preserve	Perkins	Community	Neighborhood	Cook County Forest Preserve	Grant and Ewing	311488.9855	7.2
City of Evanston	St. Paul	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	CTA	West side of Chicago between Main and Kedzie	21294.57615	0.5
Evanston / Wilmette Golf Course	Canal Shores	Neighborhood	Special Park	Evanston / Wilmette Golf Course	Both sides of canal from Green Bay Road north into Wilmette	2010223.322	46.1
City of Evanston	Bates	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	Lighthouse	NW corner of Lincoln and Ridge	11648.79304	0.3
City of Evanston	Fullerton	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Lighthouse	NE corner of Lincoln and Ridge	24794.44752	0.6
Lighthouse Park District	North East	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Lighthouse	Sheridan and Clinton Pl.	146792.8406	3.4
City of Evanston	Beck	Community	Linear Park	MWRDGC	E of Canal from Lyons to Emerson	395468.6254	9.1
City of Evanston	Twiggs	Community	Linear Park	MWRDGC	S of Canal between Simpson and Payne	430455.4812	9.9
City of Evanston	Butler	Community	Linear Park	MWRDGC	E of Canal from Emerson to Bridge	494738.3303	11.4
City of Evanston	Harbert-Payne	Community	Linear Park	MWRDGC	E of canal between Main and Dempster	614701.4061	14.1
City of Evanston	Ladd Arboretum	Community	Special Park	MWRDGC	SE of McCormick from Emerson to Grant	772336.9716	17.7
City of Evanston	McCormick	Community	Neighborhood	MWRDGC	Hawthorne to Hartrey and Bridge to Grant	114643.0717	2.6
City of Evanston	Eggleston	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	MWRDGC	N of McCormick between Bridge and Hartrey	127361.4904	2.9
Play Lot	Play Lot	Neighborhood	Tot Lot/Mini Park	Ridgeville	Middle of block between Barton, Ridge, South and Seward	4330.1928	0.1
Ridgeville Park District	Reba	Community	Tot Lot/Mini Park	Ridgeville	Reba and Custer	14674.52266	0.3
Ridgeville Park District	Kay Lee	Community	Tot Lot/Mini Park	Ridgeville	Callan and Mulford	16650.1722	0.4
Ridgeville Park District	Elks Play Lot	Community	Tot Lot/Mini Park	Ridgeville	N of Alley N Mulford, E of Callan	18766.1126	0.4
Ridgeville Park District	Brummel	Community	Neighborhood	Ridgeville	S of Brummel E to Elmwood	37960.59304	0.9
Ridgeville Park District	Kamen East	Community	Neighborhood	Ridgeville	South Blvd and Barton	66142.55602	1.5
Ridgeville Park District	Ridgeville	Community	Neighborhood	Ridgeville	South and Ridge	84394.432	1.9
Ridgeville Park District	Kamen West	Community	Neighborhood	Ridgeville	South Blvd and E of Asbury	86170.113	2.0
Ridgeville Park District	Leider	Community	Neighborhood	Ridgeville	South Blvd and W of Asbury	90997.46002	2.1
Ridgeville Park District	Elks	Community	Neighborhood	Ridgeville	Mulford and Callan	116955.329	2.7
Skokie Park District	Channelside	Community	Neighborhood	Skokie	E of canal between Oakton and Main	359891.128	8.3
Skokie Park District	Pooch	Community	Neighborhood	Skokie	E of canal between Oakton and Main	111401.2004	2.6

Evanston Parks Condition Assessment Results

Methodology

Observed
Condition

Recommended
Lifecycle

ADA
compliance -
Transition Plan

Scale:
Recreation amenity

Scale:
Recreation amenity

Scale:
Park

Overall condition = Lowest condition

Applied at the summary-level

If lifespan data unavailable (this was the case for ~6% or 9 amenities), then used observed condition

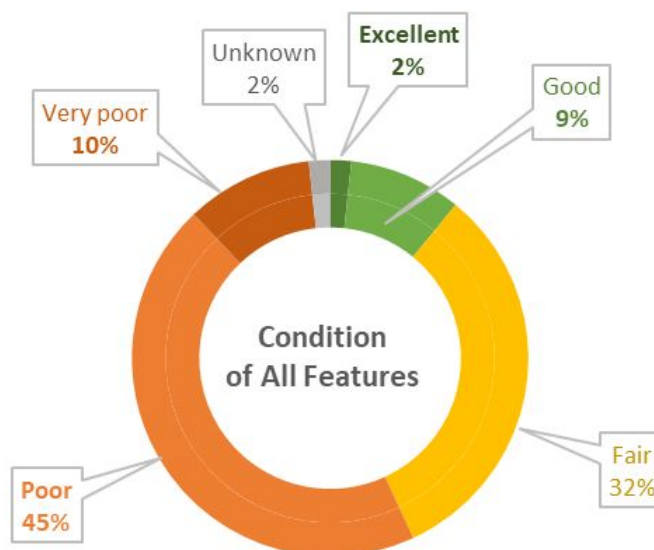
Updated methodology notes

- If no data about installation year available, then overall rating based on observed condition only
- ADA applied at park-level only
- “Very poor” - applied if useful life >150%

Condition of all Features

174 features rated

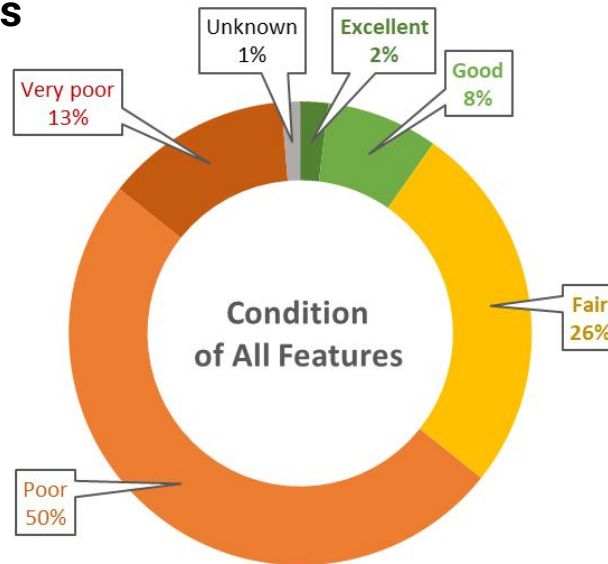
This currently includes all ownership types



Condition of all Features

154 features rated

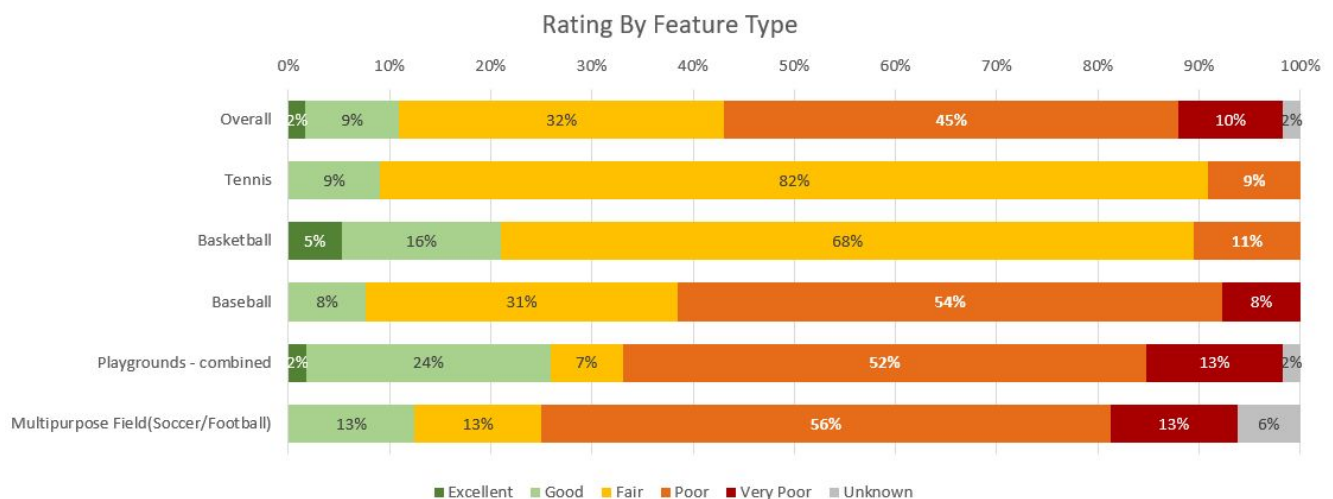
Evanston only



Rating By Feature Type

On average, **Tennis and Basketball** are in **better** condition, while **Baseball, Playgrounds, and Multipurpose Fields** are in much **greater need of renewal**

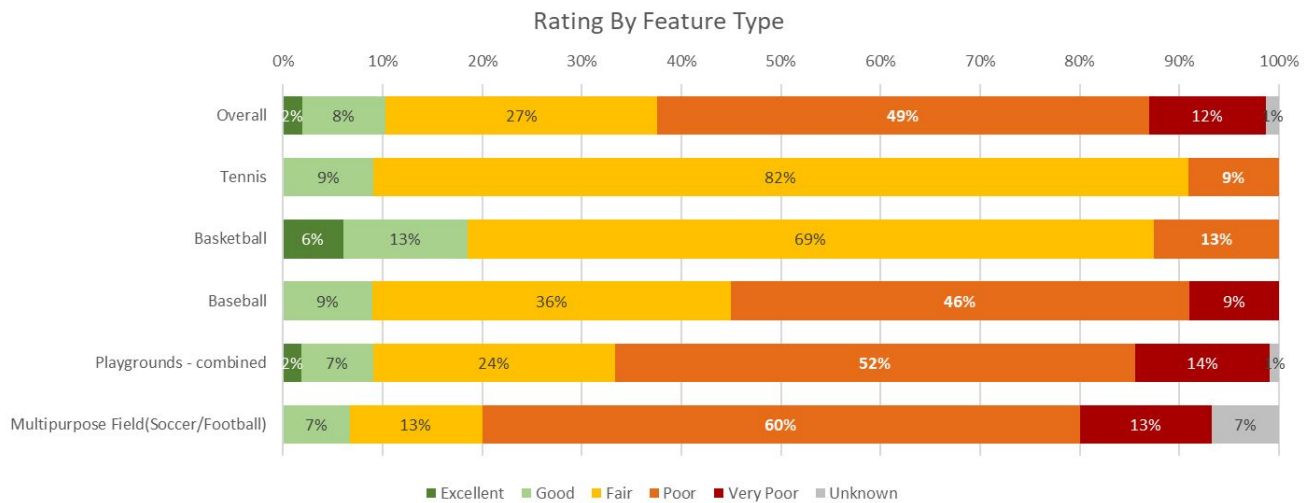
All ownership types



Rating By Feature Type

Evanston only

On average, **Tennis and Basketball** are in **better** condition, while **Baseball, Playgrounds, and Multipurpose Fields** are in much **greater need of renewal**



ADA Challenges

37% of parks with features assessed in the condition assessment are listed in the Evanston ADA transition plan as **non-compliant**

Park-level results

Parks with highest number of features in poor or very poor condition

Non-compliant ADA park

Park Name	% of features in poor or very poor condition	Count of features in poor or very poor condition
Butler	100%	4
Larimer	80%	4
Leahy	80%	4
Tallmadge	80%	4
Mason	67%	4
Fitzsimons	80%	4
Bent	60%	3
Cartwright	60%	3
Lovelace	60%	3
Foster	50%	3
Porter	100%	3
Twiggs	60%	3

Park-level results

Parks with high number or % of features in poor or very poor condition

Non-compliant ADA park

Park Name	% of features in poor or very poor condition	Count of features in poor or very poor condition
Beck	100%	2
Chandler	100%	2
Eiden	100%	2
Independence	100%	2
Raymond	100%	2
Ackerman	67%	2
Burnham Shores	67%	2
Eggleston	67%	2
James	33%	2
Alexander	100%	2
Clyde-Brummel	100%	2
Dobson/Brummel	100%	2

Park-level results

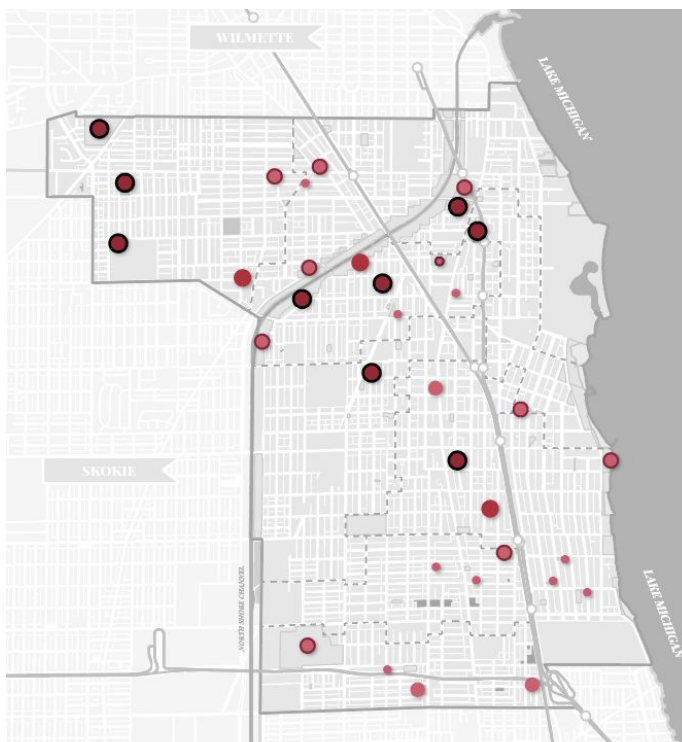
Parks with one feature in poor or very poor condition

Non-compliant ADA park

Park Name	% of features in poor or very poor condition	Count of features in poor or very poor condition
Ingraham	100%	1
Hinman	100%	1
Hobart	100%	1
Levinson	100%	1
Monroe	100%	1
Sargent	100%	1
Ellingwood	50%	1
Gilbert	50%	1
Kelly	50%	1
Snyder	50%	1

Parks with Poor Amenities

- 3-4 amenities in poor/very poor and ADA non-compliant
- 3-4 amenities in poor/very poor
- 2 amenities in poor/very poor and ADA non-compliant
- 2 amenities in poor/very poor
- ADA non-compliant and 1 feature poor/very poor
- 1 feature poor/very poor



Better Condition Parks

Parks with no features in poor or very poor condition

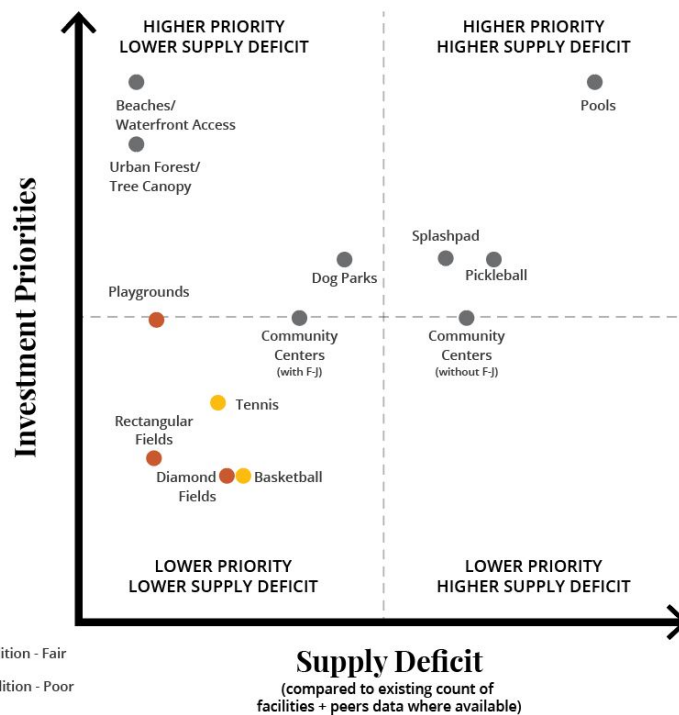
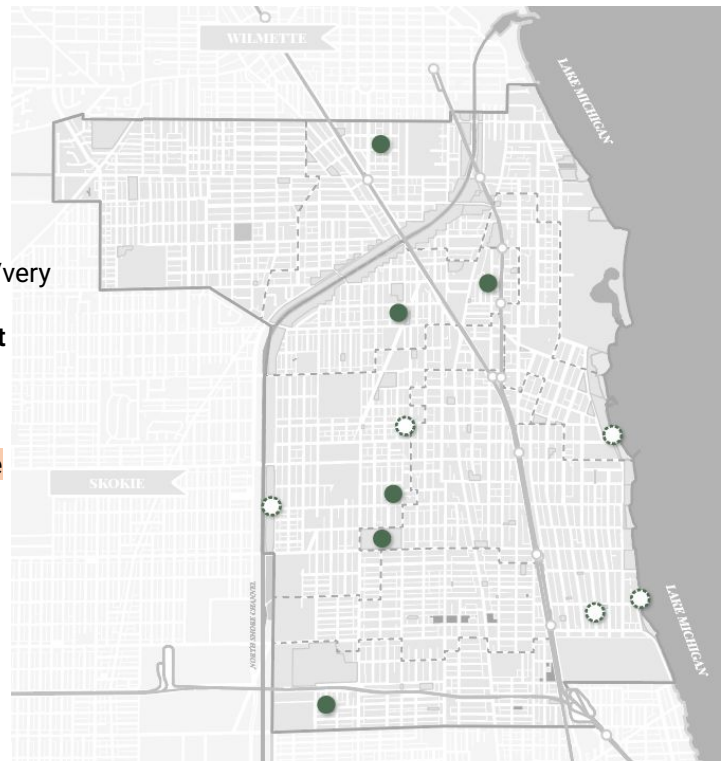
- Brummel Richmond
- Emerson Square
- Firemen's
- Grandmother
- McCulloch
- Robert Crown

No features in poor/very poor condition, but

ADA Non-Compliant

- Baker
- Dawes
- Garden
- Harbert-Payne
- Penny

- No poor/very poor features
- No poor/very poor features, but ADA non-compliant



Child Poverty³⁶

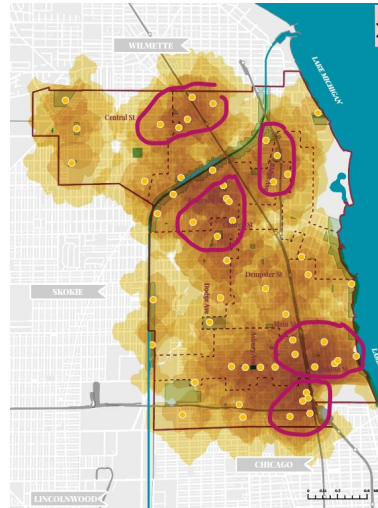
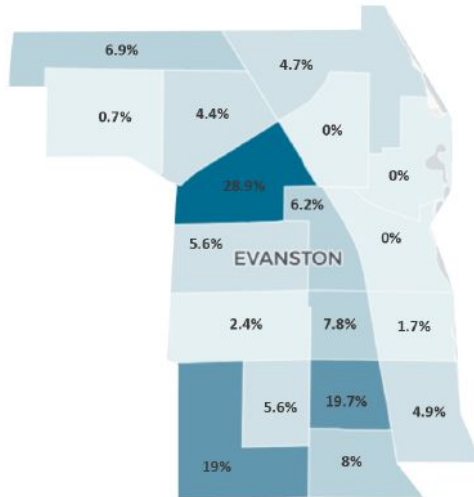
Percentage of Evanston Children Living in Poverty (2018)

Evanston Average: 8.7%

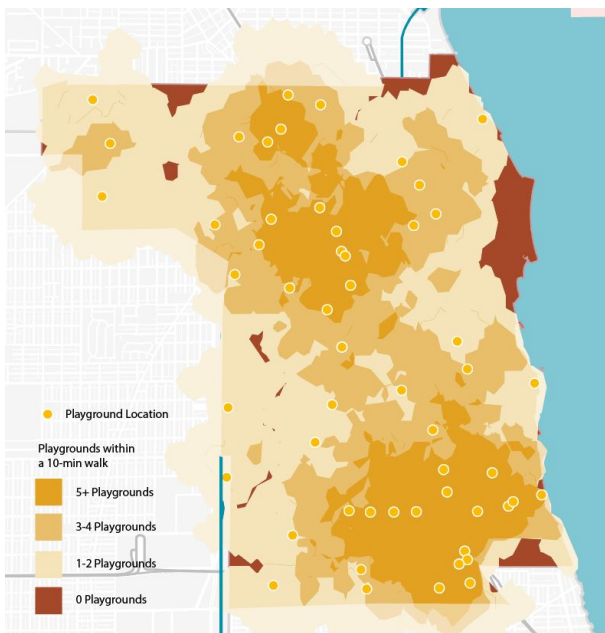
Neighborhood Range: 0%- 28.9%

US Average: 19.5%³⁷

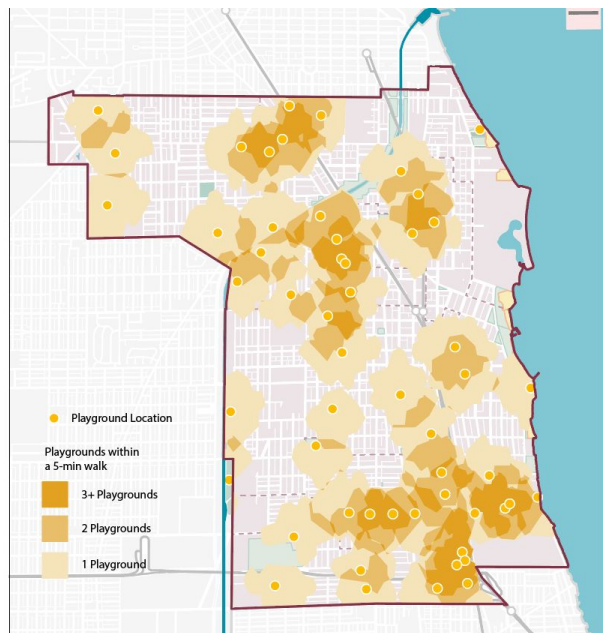
Key Finding: In historically redlined census tract 8092, child poverty is over 200% higher than the city average.

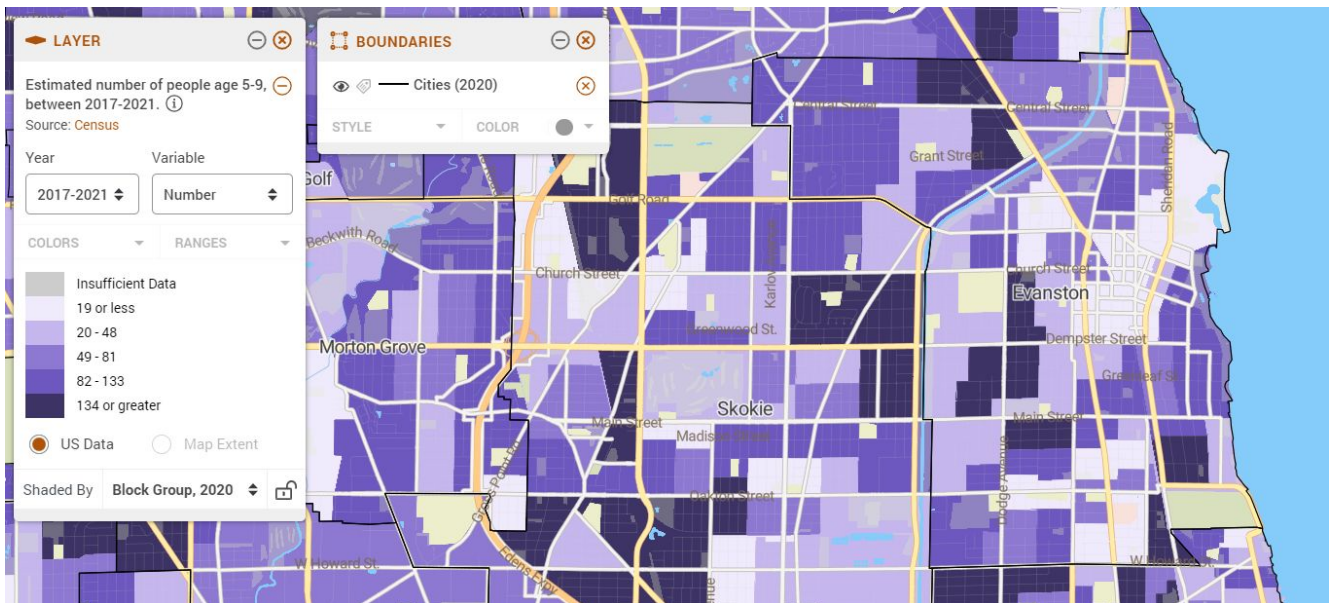
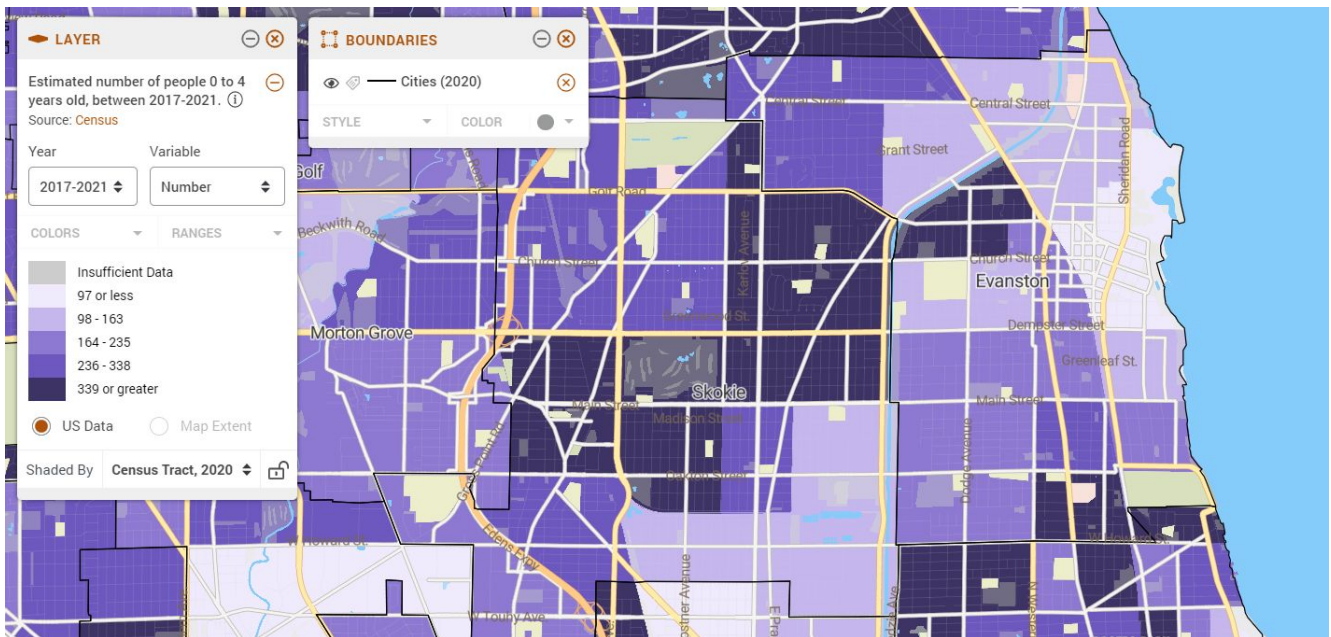


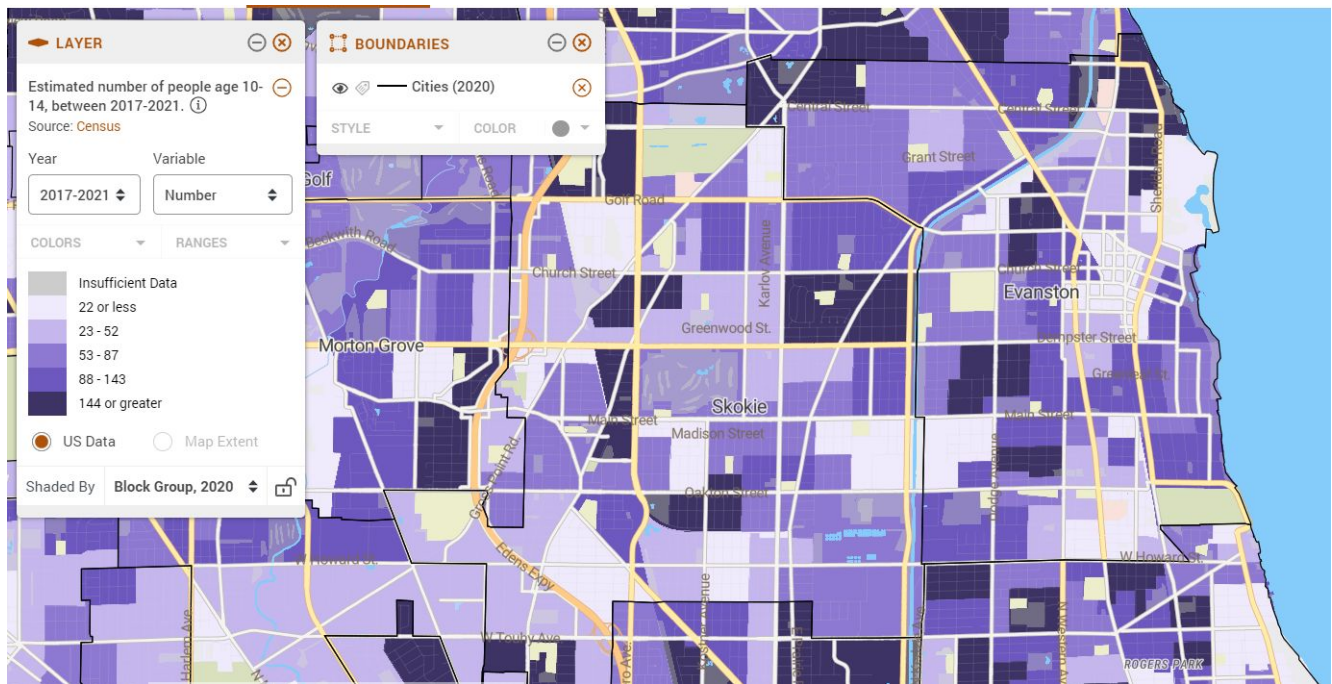
Playgrounds within a 10-min walk



Playgrounds within a 5-min walk









Fundamentals of Funding for Local Parks and Greenspace

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
Local and State Funding for Parks	6
Major Federal Funding Sources.....	112
Partnerships and Philanthropy.....	19
Conclusion	201
References.....	212

About Trust for Public Land

Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national nonprofit that works to connect everyone to the benefits and joys of the outdoors. As a leader in equitable access to the outdoors, TPL works with communities to create parks and protect public land where they are needed most. This report was prepared in partnership between TPL's *10-Minute Walk*® Program, Conservation Finance, and Federal Affairs.

The *10-Minute Walk* Program, a Trust for Public Land (TPL) award-winning national program, is engaging city leaders to close the park equity divide so that every resident has access to a quality park or greenspace within a *10-minute walk* of home.

Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance program serves as a trusted advisor to state and local governments and community leaders on how to design, pass, and implement ballot and legislative measures to fund parks and conservation. Since 1996 we've helped pass 650 measures – 83 percent of those we've worked on – that generated \$93 billion for parks.

Trust for Public Land's Federal Affairs team works in our nation's capital to provide resources and guidance about federal land conservation policy and funding to an array of interested parties, including Congress, the White House, federal agency staff, local and state land trust activists and government officials, and other conservation groups.

Acknowledgments

This report was made possible with generous support from The JPB Foundation.

Executive Summary



© Allen Beauchamp / Trails and Open Space Coalition

Parks play an essential role in helping communities thrive. When people have access to a high-quality park close-to-home, they experience improved mental health, physical health, and social well-being. But, parks departments across the country face financial challenges that make it difficult to ensure that everyone has access to a high-quality park. For instance, one study found that following the great recession, spending on parks and recreation decreased 21% from 2008 - 2013.¹

While parks have waxed and waned on political agendas, demand hasn't gone down. In fact, we've seen the need for parks as critical civic infrastructure increase, prompted in part by the COVID-19 pandemic. City leaders and parks practitioners are being asked to do more for parks with less. But, they may not always know where to go for funding.

Trust for Public Land's *10-Minute Walk*® Program has compiled this report to share common funding mechanisms available for city parks. This report is not intended to be encyclopedic, but rather to outline a wide range of frequently-used funding tools. The table below shares 21 common funding mechanisms for parks, along with a high-level summary of what they can fund.

Funding Mechanism	Capital Costs	Maintenance	Pre-Development ¹	Activations and Programming
LOCAL AND STATE SOURCES FOR PARK FUNDING				
Municipal bonds	✓			
Property taxes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sales and use taxes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Real estate transfer tax	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parkland dedication ordinance	✓		✓	
Developer impact fees	✓		✓	
Business Improvement District	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parks District	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lottery funds	✓	✓	✓	✓
MAJOR FEDERAL SOURCES				
NPS ORLP	✓			
DOT RAISE	✓		✓	
NEA Our Town			✓	✓
EPA Brownfields Program	✓		✓	
DOT Transportation Alternatives	✓		✓	
USFS Urban and Community Forestry		✓	✓	✓
EPA Environmental Justice Programs	✓	✓	✓	✓
DOT Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program	✓		✓	
NPS LCWF Stateside Assistance Program	✓			
HUD Community Development Block Grants	✓		✓	
PARTNERSHIPS AND PHILANTHROPY				
Park conservancy or foundation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Philanthropies	✓	✓	✓	✓

¹ Planning, design, and community engagement.

Local and State Funding for Parks

Cities generally fund their municipal operations, including their park systems, through the collection of property and sales taxes which are designated as part of a city's "general fund." A city's general fund is often the most flexible source for spending on parks and it can support capital costs, operations and maintenance, predevelopment, as well as activation and programming. One challenge many cities face is weighing how to allocate general fund dollars towards parks versus the many other spending priorities of a city.

However, there are several ways that cities can generate funds specifically for parks, including ballot measures for conservation finance, developer exactions, and local districts.

Since 1996, Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance team has helped pass nearly 650 ballot measures creating \$93 billion in funding for parks, land conservation, and climate change mitigation, of which over 351 local city or county ballots have generated over \$33 billion in funding for parks and open space. The most common ballot measures passed are for bonds, property taxes, and sales taxes. Each of these mechanisms can be designed to ensure that the funding generated specifically supports a city's parks system. These have been passed in communities of all geographies, sizes, politics, and priorities.

Developer exactions – including parkland dedication ordinances and developer impact fees – are requirements that cities establish as a way to balance development with other city priorities. Developer exactions may be used as a way to create new parks that will serve a development's residents, or to fund other parks within the city that will be accessed by new residents.

In some cities, specialized local districts like Business Improvement Districts or Parks Districts are established to manage local parks. These districts can have the independent authority to generate revenue via taxes, levies, bonds, and private funding.

In addition to funds originating at the city level, some states are exploring funding mechanisms for city parks. Funding from lottery proceeds, bonds, sales tax, and real estate transfer tax are common examples. State taxes on cannabis and sporting goods are also emerging as common funding mechanisms being explored for city parks.

MUNICIPAL BONDS

What it is: A bond is debt issued by a government, territory, or one of its agencies. It is generally used to finance capital projects such as parks, roads, schools, and other public infrastructure or facilities. Bonds are a voter-approved ballot measure that are typically paid for by property owners. Bonds that fund local parks can be issued at the city, county, and state level.

What it funds: Bonds are an effective mechanism for obtaining funds for large-scale capital projects – particularly when funding is needed up-front and all at once. Bonds cannot be used for operations and maintenance.

Scale of funding provided: The scale of funding provided by bonds can range widely, depending on a wide-range of factors including how cities, counties, and states are rated by external bond evaluation organizations. In 2022, TPL helped two municipal governments to develop and pass bond ballot measures - an \$85 million park bond which was passed by the voters of Salt Lake City, UT with 71 percent support and a \$15 million bond in Fort Worth, TX that was approved with 57 percent voter support.

Requirements and restrictions: There are generally no restrictions at the state-wide level that prevent cities and counties from issuing bonds. Most municipal bonds require voter approval.

PROPERTY TAXES

What it is: A property tax or millage is a levy on the value of a property. The tax is levied by the governing authority of the jurisdiction in which the property is located, and multiple jurisdictions may tax the same property. Property taxes fund a variety of public services, including and beyond parks.

What it funds: Property taxes can be used for a wide range of purposes, from land acquisition to capital improvements to operations and maintenance.

Scale of funding provided: The scale of funding provided by property taxes can range widely based on the tax rate levied as well as the value and number of properties being taxed. In 2022, TPL helped nine municipal governments develop property tax ballot measures, and seven of the measures passed. These measures supported by TPL in 2022 included a 1.5 percent tax increase in Worcester, MA for open space, recreation, historical preservation and affordable housing. The funding helps establish the Community Preservation Act in Massachusetts' second largest city.

Requirements and restrictions: Many states have strict limits or caps on the property taxes that can be levied in local jurisdictions. Property tax increases are often voter-approved, but this varies by state.

SALES AND USE TAXES

What it is: A sales tax is paid to a governing authority by a consumer for the purchase of certain goods and services. Sales taxes generally allow a seller to collect the tax from a consumer at the point of purchase. When a tax on goods or services is paid to a governing body directly by a consumer, it is usually called a use tax. Certain goods, such as prescriptions or groceries, are often exempted from these taxes. Sales taxes run the risk of being considered regressive, especially if prescriptions, groceries, or other essential items are included in the tax. Sales taxes can fund a wide range of public services, including parks. Sales taxes that fund local parks can be issued at the local or state level.

What it funds: Sales taxes can be used for a wide range of purposes, from land acquisition to capital improvements to operations and maintenance.

Scale of funding provided: The scale of funding provided by a sales tax can range widely based on the tax rate levied, the goods or services being taxed, and the tax base. In April 2023, TPL supported Colorado Springs, CO as voters overwhelmingly approved a 20-year extension of the existing 0.1% Trails and Open Space (TOPS) sales tax. The measure was approved with 78% support and is expected to generate \$240 million for open space, parks, and trails. The TOPS tax was first approved by voters in 1997.

Requirements and restrictions: In some states, there is enabling legislation required by the state in order for local jurisdictions to levy sales taxes. In these states, there are restrictions governing how or whether sales taxes can be implemented on a local level. There is a wide range of how sales taxes can be implemented, including by ballot measure.

REAL ESTATE TRANSFER TAX

What it is: Real estate transfer taxes are a tax or fee on the transfer of a property's title or deed. The tax is a one-time cost that is typically calculated as a percentage of a property's total sale price. Real estate transfer taxes can fund a variety of public services, including parks, and they can be levied at the state or local level.

What it funds: Real estate transfer taxes can be used for a wide range of purposes from land acquisition to capital improvements to operations and maintenance.

Scale of funding provided: The scale of funding provided by a real estate transfer tax can range widely based on the tax rate levied, the value of properties being transferred within a jurisdiction, and the number of properties being transferred. TPL's Conservation Finance team has helped pass four local real estate transfer taxes that have helped to generate over \$31 million in funding for parks.

Requirements and restrictions: The implementation process of a real estate transfer tax varies from state to state. There is a wide range of how real estate transfer taxes can be implemented, including by ballot measure. In some states, there are restrictions governing how or whether a real estate transfer tax can be implemented at the local level.

PARKLAND DEDICATION ORDINANCE

What it is: A Parkland Dedication Ordinance is a city policy, often enacted through the zoning code or subdivision regulations, that requires a developer to donate land and/or funding for parks. There is a wide range of approaches for how Parkland Dedication Ordinances can be structured, and different approaches can be mixed together. For some cities, the developer is only required to donate land, which the city then improves. In other cities, developers can be credited for building a publicly accessible park. Cities may also offer a "fee-in-lieu of land" option in which a one-time fee is required instead of a land donation. A growing trend is to require both a donation of land as well as a fee to ensure the city is funded to develop that land.

What it funds: When a Parkland Dedication Ordinance only requires a donation of land, no funding is provided to the city. If a fee-in-lieu of land is required, that funding can be used by the city to either develop a new park or improve an existing park that will serve the development's residents.

Scale of funding provided: The scale of funding provided by Parkland Dedication Ordinances ranges depending on how the city's ordinance is structured, as well as the amount of development within a city. Generally, when a fee-in-lieu of land is required, that fee is assessed based on the density of a new development. Parkland Dedication Ordinances may be criticized when they are structured so that the funds raised are outpaced by the cost of land, resulting in an inability by the city to purchase parkland.

Requirements and restrictions: Parkland dedication ordinances can be enacted by cities. There are requirements for an ordinance to define geographic proximity of the dedicated land (or fee expenditure) to the new development, how the new parkland affects current levels of service, and how fees are spent.

DEVELOPER IMPACT FEES

What it is: An impact fee is a fee required of developers to offset the cost of city infrastructure that will need to be built in order to serve that new development. Impact fees are often used to fund traditional infrastructure projects, like roads and sewers. But some cities also use impact fees as a way to fund parks that will be needed by the development's residents.

What it funds: Similar to funds raised through Parkland Dedication Ordinances, impact fees can only be used for park development or capital improvement.

Scale of funding provided: Similar to Parkland Dedication Ordinances, the funding raised by impact fees is dependent on the fee levied by the city, as well as the amount of development in a city.

Requirements and restrictions: Impact fees require enabling legislation at the state level in some states. There is a high-degree of specificity governing how impact fees can – and cannot – be used.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

What it is: A business improvement district (BID) is a defined geographic location within which businesses are required to pay an additional tax or levy to fund projects within the BID's boundaries. While BIDs are often funded primarily through the tax or levy, they can also draw on other public and private funding. BIDs are generally operated by a non-profit organization with full-time staff and a board of directors.

What it funds: BIDs fund a wide range of activities that support the needs of business owners in a given area from enhanced cleaning to conducting advocacy for members to conducting capital projects. For parks, BIDs may fund areas from the initial capital investment to develop a park to ongoing operations and maintenance to programming.

Scale of funding provided: Funding provided by BIDs ranges widely based on the tax or levy required by businesses within the BID, the number of businesses contributed the tax or levy, and its ability to fundraise additional revenue. New York City, which has the largest number of BIDs in the country,² has BIDs with tax or levy revenue as low as \$75,000³ a year and as high as \$20 million a year.⁴

Requirements and restrictions: BIDs are often a standalone non-profit organization that must be staffed, have a board of directors, and formalized by-laws. Establishing a BID typically requires authorization from the city and support among business owners within its proposed boundaries. There are varying requirements from state-to-state that may govern the implementation of a BID, including enabling legislation. Approximately 40 states have legislation governing BIDs.⁵

PARKS DISTRICT

What it is: A parks district is an autonomous organization that manages parks (and sometimes other civic assets) within a defined geographic location. Park districts are generally funded either by a property tax or by general obligation bonds.

What it funds: Parks districts can fund and lead all aspects of park management from pre-development to development to programming to ongoing operations and maintenance.

Scale of funding provided: Funding provided by parks districts ranges widely based on the tax or levy required of property owners within its geographic bounds, as well as its ability to fundraise through bonds. One of the largest parks districts in the country, the Chicago Park District, had a budget of \$510.9 million for 2022, funded primarily by property taxes.

Requirements and restrictions: There are varying requirements from state-to-state that may govern the establishment of a parks district. Once established, a parks district generally is managed by full-time staff and its work is often overseen by a park board.

STATE LOTTERY FUNDS

What it is: In areas with a state lottery, a portion of the revenue can be allocated towards supporting public goods – including parks.

What it funds: The specific funding allocation from lotteries varies from state-by-state. One of the most prominent lotteries that funds environmental protection is the Colorado lottery. In Colorado, 40% of the lottery's profits fund the Conservation Trust Fund, which specifically supports local governments.⁶ Funding from the Conservation Trust Fund can be used for park land acquisition, capital improvement, and maintenance. In 2021, the Conservation Trust Fund distributed over \$70 million to local communities across the state.⁷

Scale of funding provided: The scale of funding provided by lotteries ranges widely based on lottery revenue as well as requirements for how that revenue must be disbursed. For example, Minnesota's state legislation requires that the lottery provide no less than 40% of its net proceeds towards the state's environmental and natural resources trust fund through 2025. The trust fund then receives and evaluates a number of proposals for how that funding can be used. A reauthorization of the use of lottery funds for conservation is on the ballot in Minnesota for 2024. If approved, a portion of lottery revenue would continue to be dedicated towards conservation until 2050.

Requirements and restrictions: Rules governing a state lottery – including how its revenue is distributed – are generally made at the state-level and codified in state legislation. For example, both Colorado and Minnesota have specific legislation requirements around the usage of lottery revenue. In Colorado, the breakdown of how lottery revenue is spent was decided via a ballot measure.

Major Federal Funding Sources

The past decade has seen an unprecedented level of investment in parks and recreation from the Great American Outdoors Act, which created a permanent source of funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act, which are expected to infuse billions of dollars into city parks across the country. Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) program is the only federal grant that is specifically designed to support the acquisition and development of city parks. But, other federal programs – including and beyond those listed below – can fund parks as part of a city's broader transportation, climate, and cultural infrastructure.

NPS OUTDOOR RECREATION LEGACY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (ORLP)

What it is: The ORLP Program is the most significant federal grant for city parks, and it is specifically focused on increasing access to outdoor recreation in economically disadvantaged areas with a park equity gap. ORLP is administered by the National Park Service and funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. It is an annual grant that was established in 2014. Since its inception, ORLP has provided over \$100 million dollars to fund nearly 100 projects in cities across the country.

What it funds: ORLP funds both land acquisition and the development and renovation of a wide range of types of parks and outdoor recreation facilities.

Scale of funding provided: The 2022 round of the ORLP program was funded at \$192 million. Grants made to applicants can range from \$300,000 to \$10 million. The funds that the federal government provides through ORLP must be matched at a 1:1 ratio by non-federal sources.⁸

Requirements and restrictions: ORLP is the most significant grant funding the development of local parks and the program is carefully designed to ensure specific criteria are met by applicants, including:

- **Applicant:** The applicant for ORLP must be a state's lead agency for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Local communities can submit their proposals to their state's lead agency for consideration and inclusion in the national competition.
- **Who is served:** ORLP projects must serve the needs of an economically disadvantaged area that is located in a park desert (e.g., lacks walkable, publicly accessible, parks).
- **Strategic alignment:** The proposed project must meet or align with at least one recreation goal of the State's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).

DOT Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)

What it is: RAISE is a federal grant program – previously known as BUILD and TIGER – administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). The program was initiated as part of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. While primarily focused on transportation, some groups have secured RAISE funding for city trails and greenways. For example, in fiscal year 2021, the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission received over \$17 million to complete 20 miles of construction for the Marquette Greenway – a 60-mile multi-use path that cuts through nine municipalities along Lake Michigan.⁹

What it funds: In fiscal year 2023, RAISE funds were allocated for both capital and planning projects. There are a wide range of eligible projects. Within the capital category, “intermodal projects” are likely the most relevant for parks practitioners. Nearly all of the eligible project types within the planning categories could be relevant for city parks.

Scale of funding provided: Since its inception (including its iterations as BUILD and TIGER), RAISE has provided over \$12.3 billion in funding.¹⁰ \$1.5 billion was allocated for 2023. The funding is split, with half going to projects in rural areas and half going to projects in urban areas. The minimum grant award is \$5 million in urban areas and \$1 million in rural areas. In either case, grants cannot exceed \$25 million.

Requirements and restrictions: RAISE is a major federal grant program. The program is designed with highly-specific requirements to ensure specific criteria are met by applicants. There are restrictions on cost sharing, and federal funding for a project cannot exceed 80% of the total project cost except in limited scenarios.

NEA OUR TOWN

What it is: Our Town is a grant funded by the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) that supports arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects that represent the distinct character and quality of their communities. Cities across the country have tapped into Our Town to use creative placemaking to elevate and showcase their community's arts and culture.

What it funds: Through project-based funding, the Our Town program supports activities that integrate arts, culture, and design into local efforts that strengthen communities. Our Town projects advance local economic, physical, or social outcomes in communities, ultimately laying the groundwork for systems change and centering equity. Within the context of parks, Our Town projects are often used for community programming as well as arts and cultural installations. For example, in Wenatchee, Washington, an Our Town grant funded a health and cultural event for an under-served community in a local park. In Bozeman, Montana, Our Town funded arts and cultural installations and programming in Story Mill Community Park.

Scale of funding provided: Our Town grants range from \$25,000 to \$150,000. Grants require a 1:1 match from non-federal sources.

Requirements and restrictions: In addition to the match requirement, Our Town requires a demonstrated partnership between a nonprofit organization and a local government organization, one of which must be a cultural organization. The highest-ranking local government official must submit a letter of support. Our Town grants cannot fund more than 50% of the total project cost.

EPA BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM

What it is: The EPA's Brownfields program is a suite of grants and technical assistance that support re-use of brownfields across the country. The program was established in 1995. Since then, it has supported the clean-up of over 2,400 sites and has made nearly 150,000 acres available for re-use.¹¹ The Bipartisan Infrastructure law is injecting an additional \$1.5 billion of investment into the program.¹²

What it funds: The Brownfields program provides a wide range of grants, loans, and technical assistance for cities to help revitalize brownfields, including:

- Assessment grants that fund inventorying of brownfields, along with planning activities – including community engagement
- Revolving loan funds that provide support for brownfield clean-ups
- Cleanup grants that fund remediation activities at brownfield sites
- Multipurpose grants that fund a range of assessment and clean-up activities within a specific geographic area that has one or more brownfield
- Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities (TAB) provides support to a third-party organization who can help communities within their region to understand brownfield assessment and clean-up

There are a variety of ways to tap into these programs to promote parks and greenspace. For example, the cities of Ranson and Charles Town, West Virginia, have received multiple grants from the brownfield program to rehabilitate a 1.5 mile strip of brownfields connecting the cities. Part of the rehabilitation has included the development of parks and green space.¹³

Scale of funding provided: Each of the grants within the Brownfields Program has its own range of funding available.

- Assessment grants: Up to \$2 million
- Revolving loan fund: Up to \$1 million
- Brownfield clean-up grants: Up to \$2 million
- Multi-purpose grants: Up to \$800,000

Requirements and restrictions: Each of the grants and technical assistance opportunities within the Brownfields program come with its own set of requirements and restrictions. Restrictions and requirements generally govern

who can apply for a grant, the window of time within which a grant must be spent, match requirements, and the activities allowed under a grant.

DOT TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)

What it is: TAP is a federal grant program that funds small-scale, multi-modal transportation projects. States are allocated funding for TAP from the federal government, and are then responsible for administering those funds. There are different requirements for how funds are awarded based on the population of the area in which the funding would be allocated.

What it funds: TAP funds a wide range of transportation-focused projects, including development of multi-modal recreational trails, construction of scenic viewing points, and safe routes to schools projects. In fiscal year 2020, TAP supported nearly 2,000 projects: over 1,000 pedestrian and bicycle trails, 925 recreational trails, 14 historic preservation projects, and seven environmental and wildlife projects.¹⁴ Funding is available for construction, design, and planning.

Scale of funding provided: TAP funding is set-aside from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program. In fiscal year 2022, TAP was funded at \$1.38 billion dollars, and it's budgeted to increase to \$1.49 billion by fiscal year 2026.¹⁵ Funding for TAP projects flows through block grants to states and is calculated as 10% of the state's allocation for the Surface Transportation Block Grant.¹⁶

Requirements and restrictions: Funding for TAP projects is awarded through competitive processes at the state level, and the process varies from state to state. Areas with a population greater than 200,000 apply for funds through their metropolitan planning organization while populations under 200,000 apply through their state Department of Transportation. There are a limited number of entities that are eligible to receive TAP funding, including local governments, nonprofits, and metropolitan planning organizations. Projects require a 20% match of funds for a project.¹⁷

USFS URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM

What it is: The US Forest Service's Urban & Community Forestry Program (UCFP) is a technical, financial, and educational assistance program. The intent of the program is to deliver nature-based solutions for communities to ensure an equitable and resilient tree canopy in urban spaces where more than 84% of Americans live. Through the Inflation Reduction Act, the program has established a competitive grant process to fund projects that reflect the work of the UCFP.

What it funds: UCFP funds investments at the local, regional, state, or even national level that increase equitable access to urban tree canopy and the associated health, environmental and economic benefits in disadvantaged communities. Projects may seek to broaden community engagement in local urban forest planning, and/or

improve community and urban forest resilience to climate change, pests, and storm events through best management and maintenance practices.

Scale of funding provided: Urban and Community Forestry grants range from \$100,000 - \$50,000,000. Grants require a 1:1 match from non-federal sources. Match may be waived for proposals delivering 100% of the funding/program benefits to disadvantaged communities.

Requirements and restrictions: The scope of eligible entities and land types is very broad under the UCFP, but may not fund projects on federally-owned lands.

EPA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS

What it is: EPA created two new environmental justice programs in 2023 with an additional program set to be announced the summer of 2023. The EJ Collaborative Problem Solving (EJCPS) and Government to Government (EJG2G) programs announced in January, provide financial assistance to eligible organizations or government entities working to address local environmental or public health issues in their communities. The Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grants will invest a historic sum of \$3 billion in communities when announced later in 2023.

What it funds: Environmental justice programs center community involvement and partnership in all project work. Proposals must demonstrate this commitment to partnership and to transforming the environmental and public health of overburdened and underserved communities. Eligible activities include research, community planning and/or public education activities as well as site-based interventions like green infrastructure projects. Eligibility is broad so long as it contributes to program goals. Differences between the EJCPS and EJG2G projects are primarily matters of scale rather than type.

Scale of funding provided: EJCPS funds up to \$500,000 for qualifying projects while EJG2G funds up to \$1,000,000.

Requirements and restrictions: There are not cost share or matching requirements for either program. EJCPS does require the use of the [EPA's EJ Collaborative Problem Solving model](#) and a logic model illustrating how activities lead to outcomes. EJG2G recipients must also use a logic model and demonstrate an official partnership with a local community-based organization.

DOT RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS PROGRAM

What it is: This Department of Transportation program aims to fund projects that advance community-centered connection transportation projects, with a priority for projects that benefit disadvantaged communities, by improving access to daily needs such as jobs, education, health care, food, nature and recreation; fostering equitable development and restoration; and reconnecting communities by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity, including to mobility, access, or economic development.. In FY 2022, six Capital Construction Grants and 39 Planning Grants were awarded in the first cycle of the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program.

What it funds: The RCN Program provides funding for three types of grants:

Community Planning Grants will award RCP and/or NAE funding for planning activities for future construction projects and allow for innovative community planning to address localized transportation challenges.

Capital Construction Grants will award projects that remove, retrofit, mitigate, or replace an existing eligible dividing transportation facility with a new facility that reconnects communities; mitigates a burdening transportation facility that is a source of air pollution, noise, stormwater, heat, or other burdens; or implement a strategy to reduce environmental harm and/or improve access through transportation improvements.

Regional Partnerships Challenge Grants will award projects led by two or more eligible applicants to address a persistent regional challenge related to equitable access and mobility. Eligible activities for Regional Partnerships Challenge Grants are the same as those listed under Capital Construction and Community Planning Grants but must have a regional focus, and clearly demonstrate regional coordination and leveraging of local, State, and Federal resources and policies.

Scale of funding provided: RCN Planning Grants provide as much as \$50,000,000. The upward range of Capital Grants are flexible within the total funding allotments. Of the three grant types, the Community Planning Grants and the Regional Partnerships Challenge grants require at least 20% of the total project cost to come from non-federal sources. The Capital Construction Grants funded by the IRA Neighborhood Access and Equity program also requires 20% of the total project cost to be matched by non-federal sources.

Requirements and restrictions: In addition to the non-federal cost share requirement, Reconnecting Communities-funded Capital Grants are limited to covering 50% of the total project cost. An additional 30% may come from other federal sources with a 20% non-federal match.

LWCF STATESIDE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

What it is: The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is the largest source of federal money for park, wildlife, and open space land acquisition. No less than 40% of LWCF dollars are given to, and administered by, states as matching grants for park development and land acquisition projects. LWCF funding for states or “stateside” has supported the purchase and protection of 3 million acres of recreation lands and over 29,000 projects to develop basic recreation facilities in every U.S. State and territory.

What it funds: The stateside program can assist in acquiring, preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to outdoor recreation resources. These mechanisms can apply broadly to open space, parks, trails, wildlife lands and other lands and facilities desirable for outdoor recreation.

Scale of funding provided: LWCF Stateside grants vary widely in size from state to state. From multi-million-dollar land acquisition projects to a \$50,000 park rehabilitation. All LWCF grants require a 1:1 match from non-federal sources.

Requirements and restrictions: In addition to the match requirement, for parks and recreation facilities that receive LWCF funds, the government entity that owns the site must commit to maintaining these sites for the purpose of public outdoor recreation in perpetuity.

HUD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)

What it is: The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Beginning in 1974, the CDBG program is one of the longest continuously run programs at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to 1209 general units of local government and states.

What it funds: Through CDBG, activities must meet one of three national objectives: 1) benefits low- and moderate income individuals, 2) aids in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight, or 3) addresses an urgent need that poses a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community which occurred within the last 18 months and for which other funding is not available. These requirements allow for flexible application of CDBG funds to local projects by state or local agencies. The program has been used widely for park and trail rehabilitation and development where these facilities are a priority at the local level.

Scale of funding provided: Award amounts through CDBG are highly variable from states to cities to municipal governments. The program is currently funded at \$3.3 billion annually. Grants do not require non-federal match.

Requirements and restrictions: CDBG is one of the most flexible sources of federal funding available, and is one of the only federal sources, authorized by its enabling legislation, that allows it to be used as non-federal match for other programs.

Partnerships and Philanthropy

Partnerships and philanthropy enable a city to support parks through non-governmental organizations. These external groups can fund parks operations and maintenance, programming, and capital improvement. Beyond funding, they can also provide full-time staff to deliver park services. While there are a wide range of models that exist, some of the most common are parks conservancies or foundations. The work of these organizations can be funded by private philanthropies. Private philanthropies can also play a larger role in improving park systems.

PARK CONSERVANCY OR FOUNDATION

What it is: A park conservancy or foundation is a non-profit organization that can fundraise and generate revenue to support a wide range of park activities. Conservancies and foundations are generally professionally-staffed organizations that have a formal operating agreement with the city.

What it funds: Conservancies and foundations fund a wide range of park activities from planning to capital improvements to programming to operations and maintenance. Limitations on what a conservancy or foundation can fund are primarily restricted by the organization's bylaws and its operating agreement with the city. Conservancies and foundations can be set up to support a single park, a limited number of parks, or an entire park system.

Scale of funding provided: Funding for a parks conservancy or foundation is only limited by an organization's scope and fundraising ability. In Birmingham, Alabama, the Railroad Park Foundation expended \$1.5 million in 2020. Central Park Conservancy in New York City – the largest of Trust for Public Land's ParkScore cities – spent over \$73 million in the same year.

Requirements and restrictions: There are a wide range of approaches for how to organize a park conservancy or foundation. When conservancies or foundations are structured as not-for-profit organizations (as they typically are), they are subject to all local, state, and federal requirements of non-profits. These requirements vary by city and state.

PRIVATE PHILANTHROPIES

What it is: Private philanthropies play an essential role in supporting the work of parks departments across the country. Philanthropies can play an important and catalytic role in bringing dollars to park development and improvement projects, as well as targeted, system-wide investments in specific cities. Philanthropies are not-for-profit organizations across the country that can fund a wide range of projects, including parks. Funds can be awarded either directly to a city or to a not-for-profit partner.

What it funds: Support of parks varies based on an individual philanthropy's focus. Frequently funded projects include development or improvement of specific parks, funding collective impact or coalition-building for parks, or funding creative place-making interventions for parks.

Scale of funding provided: The scale of funding provided by national philanthropies ranges widely based on a philanthropic program goals and overall investment in parks. For large, national philanthropies, projects can reach hundreds of millions of dollars in investment.

Requirements and restrictions: Different philanthropic organizations have different requirements of grant applicants. In general, for large-scale grants there may be requirements surrounding matching funds, a demonstration of partnership with community organizations, and deep due diligence conducted by the funder.

Conclusion



© Andy Richter

Across the country, there is an unprecedented level of investment in parks and recreation. But, gaps remain – particularly for funding park operations and maintenance. The lack of available funding for maintenance can widen the park equity gap by making parks less safe, usable, and attractive, and it contributes to an estimated \$60 billion backlog of deferred maintenance among local parks agencies across the country.¹⁸

Trust for Public Land's *10-Minute Walk*® Program is leading research into what other innovative models of funding are available for cities – particularly for under-supported needs like maintenance, community engagement, and programming. To learn more about any of the options outlined in this report and what model might be right for your city, contact the *10-Minute Walk* Program at 10minutewalk@tpl.org.

References

- ¹ Pitas, Nick, Barrett, Austin, Mowen, Andrew, and Roth, Kevin. "Local Park and Recreation Agency Financing and Employment Trends – A National Perspective." 2017 NRPA Congress.
- ² "Business Improvement Districts." U.S. Department of Transportation. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ipd/fact_sheets/value_cap_bid.aspx
- ³ "BID Directory." NYC Small Business Services. <https://www.nyc.gov/site/sbs/neighborhoods/bid-directory.page?bid=35>
- ⁴ "BID Directory." NYC Small Business Services. <https://www.nyc.gov/site/sbs/neighborhoods/bid-directory.page?bid=32>
- ⁵ Unger, Abraham. "Business improvement districts in the United States: Private government and public consequences." *Urban Affairs*. 2019. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07352166.2018.1547550?journalCode=uja20>
- ⁶ "Colorado Lottery Funding." Colorado Lottery. <https://www.coloradolottery.com/giving-back/funding/>
- ⁷ "Conservation Trust Fund." Colorado Department of Local Affairs. <https://cdola.colorado.gov/funding-programs/conservation-trust-fund-ctf>
- ⁸ "ORLP Program Grant Application Toolkit." Trust for Public Land. <https://www.tpl.org/resource/orlp-grant-toolkit>
- ⁹ "Raise Grants." US Department of Transportation. https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-02/RaiseGrants_Capital%20Fact%20Sheets.pdf#page=28&zoom=100,0,0
- ¹⁰ "Raise Grants." US Department of Transportation. https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2022-09/RAISE%202022%20Award%20Fact%20Sheets_1.pdf
- ¹¹ "Brownfields Program Accomplishments and Benefits." US EPA. <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-program-accomplishments-and-benefits>
- ¹² "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law." US EPA. <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/bipartisan-infrastructure-law-historic-investment-brownfields>
- ¹³ "Brownfields Success Story." US EPA. https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-09/documents/epa_oblr_successstory_ranson_v7_508.pdf
- ¹⁴ "Transportation Alternatives Annual Report." US DOT. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/annual_reports/
- ¹⁵ "Transportation Alternatives." US DOT. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/
- ¹⁶ "Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Guidance." US DOT. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/ta_guidance_2022.pdf
- ¹⁷ "Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Guidance." US DOT. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/guidance/ta_guidance_2022.pdf
- ¹⁸ Roth, Kevin. "How Strained Budgets Led to Maintenance Deferrals and Capital Project Delays." *Parks & Recreation*. 2021. <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2021/february/how-strained-budgets-led-to-maintenance-deferrals-and-capital-project-delays/>



Trust for Public Land is a national nonprofit that works to connect everyone to the benefits and joys of the outdoors.

[tpl.org](https://www.tpl.org)

National Park Service Deferred Maintenance: Overview and Issues

July 25, 2024

Congressional Research Service

<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

R48136

CRS REPORT
Prepared for Members and
Committees of Congress



R48136

July 25, 2024

Laura B. Comay
Specialist in Natural
Resources Policy

National Park Service Deferred Maintenance: Overview and Issues

The National Park Service (NPS) has a multibillion-dollar backlog of *deferred maintenance*—maintenance that was not performed as scheduled or as needed and was put off to a future time. NPS’s deferred maintenance, also known as *deferred maintenance and repairs* or the *maintenance backlog*, was estimated for FY2023 at \$23.263 billion. Other federal land management agencies also have deferred maintenance, but NPS’s backlog is the largest and has drawn the most congressional attention.

During the past decade (FY2014-FY2023), NPS deferred maintenance grew by \$11.769 billion (+102%) in nominal dollars and \$6.430 billion (+38%) in inflation-adjusted dollars. Many factors might contribute to the growth or reduction of deferred maintenance, including the aging of NPS assets, availability of funding for maintenance activities, acquisition of new assets, agency management of the backlog, completion of individual projects, changes in construction and related costs, and alterations in the methods used to estimate deferred maintenance. NPS reported that a 60% nominal-dollar increase in the backlog between FY2020 and FY2021 was due in part to changes in how the agency estimates deferred maintenance. NPS’s deferred maintenance is distributed unevenly among states and territories, with California, Wyoming, the District of Columbia, and Virginia having the largest amounts. The amounts also vary among individual park units. Among the various types of assets that NPS maintains, deferred maintenance is highest for the agency’s buildings and paved roads.

Sources of funding to address NPS deferred maintenance have included discretionary appropriations, allocations from the Department of Transportation, park entrance and concessions fees, and donations, among others. Often it is not possible to determine the total amount of funding from these sources that NPS has allocated each year to address deferred maintenance, because NPS does not aggregate these amounts in its budget reporting. In 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA; P.L. 116-152) provided a major new source of mandatory funding to address deferred maintenance of NPS and other federal land management agencies. The GAOA’s National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF) receives up to \$1.900 billion annually for five years (FY2021-FY2025) based on federal energy development revenues, with 70% of the funds—up to \$1.330 billion annually—going to NPS.

Congressional attention in the 118th Congress has focused on NPS’s use of the LRF funding provided under the GAOA, including the agency’s project selection priorities, the funds’ impact in addressing the backlog, the reasons for changes in NPS’s deferred maintenance estimates, and the possibility of reauthorizing deposits to the LRF beyond FY2025. Separately from the LRF, Congress also has debated the sufficiency of ongoing annual appropriations for NPS deferred maintenance, as well as appropriations for preventive maintenance that could keep assets from deteriorating to the point that deferred maintenance is accrued. Some in Congress also have expressed interest in potential actions to reduce the backlog without additional funding, such as through public-private partnerships or disposal of unneeded assets.

Contents

General Background.....	1
What Is Deferred Maintenance?.....	1
NPS’s Deferred Maintenance Backlog.....	2
NPS Deferred Maintenance by State and Park.....	5
Estimating NPS Deferred Maintenance.....	7
Funding for NPS Deferred Maintenance.....	10
The Legacy Restoration Fund.....	10
Annual Appropriations for NPS Deferred Maintenance.....	11
Transportation Funding from the Highway Trust Fund.....	12
Park Entrance and Recreation Fees.....	13
Concessions Franchise Fees.....	14
Other NPS Funding for Deferred Maintenance.....	14
Issues for Congress.....	15

Figures

Figure 1. NPS Deferred Maintenance Estimates, FY2014-FY2023.....	3
--	---

Tables

Table 1. National Park Service (NPS) Deferred Maintenance Estimates, FY2023.....	2
Table 2. NPS Deferred Maintenance Estimates, FY2014-FY2023.....	3
Table 3. States and Territories with the Highest NPS Deferred Maintenance, FY2023.....	5
Table 4. NPS Units with the Highest Deferred Maintenance, FY2023.....	6

Contacts

Author Information.....	19
-------------------------	----

The National Park Service’s (NPS’s) backlog of *deferred maintenance* (DM)—maintenance that was not performed as scheduled or as needed—is of ongoing interest to Congress. The agency estimated its DM needs for FY2023 at \$23.263 billion.¹ Although other federal land management agencies also have DM backlogs, NPS’s backlog is the largest. Because unmet maintenance needs may damage park resources, adversely affect visitors’ enjoyment of the parks, and jeopardize safety, NPS DM has been a topic of concern for Congress and for nonfederal stakeholders. Potential issues for Congress include, among others, how to weigh NPS’s maintenance needs against other financial demands within and outside the agency, how to prioritize limited DM funding among multiple parks and types of infrastructure, and how to ensure that NPS is efficiently and successfully managing funds to reduce the backlog. This report provides an overview and discussion of issues related to NPS DM. The report begins with general background and then contains more detailed sections on estimates of NPS DM, agency funding to address DM, and issues under consideration in the 118th Congress.

General Background

What Is Deferred Maintenance?

The Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) defines *deferred maintenance and repairs* (DM&R) as “maintenance and repairs that were not performed when they should have been or were scheduled to be and which are put off or delayed for a future period.”² Federal agencies and Members of Congress also refer to DM&R as *deferred maintenance* (DM, the term used in this report) or as the *maintenance backlog*.³ The term DM encompasses both maintenance and repair needs.

As suggested by the above definition, DM does not include *all* maintenance and repairs, only those that were not accomplished when scheduled or needed and were put off to a future time. Another type of maintenance is *cyclic maintenance*—that is, maintenance performed at regular intervals to prevent asset deterioration, such as to replace a roof or upgrade an electrical system at a scheduled or needed time.⁴ Although NPS considers cyclic maintenance separately from DM for

¹ National Park Service (NPS), “Infrastructure: By the Numbers,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/deferred-maintenance.htm>. NPS’s estimates of its own deferred maintenance (DM) typically have differed from estimates of NPS DM made by the Department of the Interior (DOI) for annual departmental financial reports. This discrepancy occurs primarily because NPS’s estimates include certain concessioner-owned and -operated assets, as well as other assets that are not owned by NPS but for which NPS has maintenance responsibility. DOI’s estimates exclude assets in these categories. For the DM estimates used in DOI financial reports (for NPS and other agencies), see CRS Report R43997, *Deferred Maintenance of Federal Land Management Agencies: FY2013-FY2022 Estimates and Issues*, by Carol Hardy Vincent. DOI’s estimate of NPS DM for FY2023 was not available as of this report’s publication.

² Financial Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB), *Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards 42: Deferred Maintenance and Repairs: Amending Statements of Federal Financial Accounting Standards 6, 14, 29 and 32*, April 25, 2012, p. 5, as contained in FASAB, *FASAB Handbook of Federal Accounting Standards and Other Pronouncements, as Amended, as of June 30, 2022*, https://files.fasab.gov/pdf/files/2022_%20FASAB_%20Handbook.pdf. The FASAB is a federal advisory committee that develops accounting standards for U.S. government agencies.

³ Historically, NPS referred to its deferred maintenance and repair needs as DM rather than DM&R. In FY2022, NPS changed its terminology to DM&R to accord with the term used by the FASAB. DOI Office of Inspector General (OIG), *The National Park Service Faces Challenges in Managing Its Deferred Maintenance*, September 2023, pp. 5 (footnote 7) and 33, https://www.doi.gov/sites/default/files/2021-migration/Final%20Evaluation%20Report_NPS%20Deferred%20Maintenance_Public.pdf; hereinafter cited as “DOI OIG September 2023 report.”

⁴ The Government Accountability Office (GAO) defines *cyclic maintenance* as “significant, regularly occurring (continued...)”

budgeting purposes, NPS has emphasized the importance of cyclic maintenance for preventing accrual of DM.⁵ NPS also performs routine, day-to-day maintenance as part of its *facility operations* activities; such activities include, for example, mowing and weeding landscapes and trails, conducting custodial and janitorial functions, and removing litter.⁶

NPS's Deferred Maintenance Backlog

NPS estimated its total DM for FY2023 (the most recent year available) at \$23.263 billion (Table 1).⁷ Although all four major federal land management agencies—NPS, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the U.S. Forest Service (FS)—have DM backlogs, NPS's backlog is the largest. For FY2022, the most recent year for which comparable data are available for all four agencies, NPS's DM was nearly 3 times that reported by FS, more than 4 times that reported by BLM, and more than 10 times that reported by FWS.⁸ One factor in the difference may be that NPS has more infrastructure assets (over 70,000 assets) than the other land management agencies.⁹ DM for the four agencies and agency asset comparisons are discussed further in CRS Report R43997, *Deferred Maintenance of Federal Land Management Agencies: FY2013-FY2022 Estimates and Issues*.

Table 1. National Park Service (NPS) Deferred Maintenance Estimates, FY2023
(\$ in billions)

Asset Category	FY2023 DM Estimate
Paved Roads	\$7.358
Buildings	\$6.186
Water Systems	\$1.563
Trails	\$0.954
Wastewater Systems	\$0.877
Unpaved Roads	\$0.758
Housing	\$0.472
Campgrounds	\$0.160

maintenance projects designed to prevent assets from degrading to the point that they need to be repaired.” GAO, *National Park Service: Process Exists for Prioritizing Asset Maintenance Decisions, But Evaluation Could Improve Efforts*, GAO-17-136, January 2017, p. 11, <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-136>; hereinafter cited as “GAO January 2017 report.”

⁵ See NPS, *Budget Justifications and Performance Information, Fiscal Year 2025*, p. ONPS-70. NPS's budget justifications for multiple years are available at <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/budget.htm>. In this report, NPS budget justifications will hereinafter be cited by fiscal year, such as “NPS FY2025 budget justification.”

⁶ NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. ONPS-64.

⁷ NPS, “Infrastructure: By the Numbers,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/deferred-maintenance.htm>. For additional information, see footnote 1.

⁸ For more information, see CRS Report R43997, *Deferred Maintenance of Federal Land Management Agencies: FY2013-FY2022 Estimates and Issues*, by Carol Hardy Vincent. For consistency of comparison, these calculations are based on DOI's estimates of NPS DM for its departmental financial reports, as opposed to NPS's independent estimates; see footnote 1 for more information.

⁹ NPS, “Infrastructure: By the Numbers,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/deferred-maintenance.htm>. NPS defines an *asset* as “real property that the National Park Service tracks and manages as a distinct, identifiable entity. These entities may be physical structures or groupings of structures; landscapes; or other tangible properties that have a specific service or function, such as a road, historic structure, campground, or sewage treatment plant” (NPS, “Identifying & Reporting Deferred Maintenance: Reports by State,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/identifying-reporting-deferred-maintenance.htm#states>).

All Others	\$4.935
Total	\$23.263

Sources: NPS, *Budget Justifications and Performance Information, Fiscal Year 2025*, p. SpecEx-2; and NPS, “Infrastructure: By the Numbers,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/deferred-maintenance.htm>.

Notes: DM = deferred maintenance. Totals may not sum precisely due to rounding. “Paved Roads” includes paved roadways, bridges, and tunnels. “All Others” includes utility systems, dams, constructed waterways, marinas, aviation systems, railroads, ships, monuments, fortifications, towers, interpretive media, and amphitheaters. Separately, NPS’s FY2025 budget justification contains an alternate method of asset categorization, created by the Department of the Interior (DOI) for common reporting across DOI bureaus. For a breakdown according to this alternate categorization method, see p. SpecEx-2 of the budget justification.

NPS’s DM estimates have increased over the past decade (FY2014-FY2023) in both nominal and inflation-adjusted dollars. **Figure 1** and **Table 2** show a growth in NPS DM of \$11.769 billion (+102%) in nominal dollars and \$6.430 billion (+38%) in inflation-adjusted dollars over the decade. In particular, NPS’s DM estimate rose by 60% in nominal dollars (51% in inflation-adjusted dollars) in a single year (FY2020-FY2021), which NPS attributed in part to changes in its methods for estimating DM (see discussion below, “Estimating NPS Deferred Maintenance”).

Figure 1. NPS Deferred Maintenance Estimates, FY2014-FY2023

(\$ in billions)

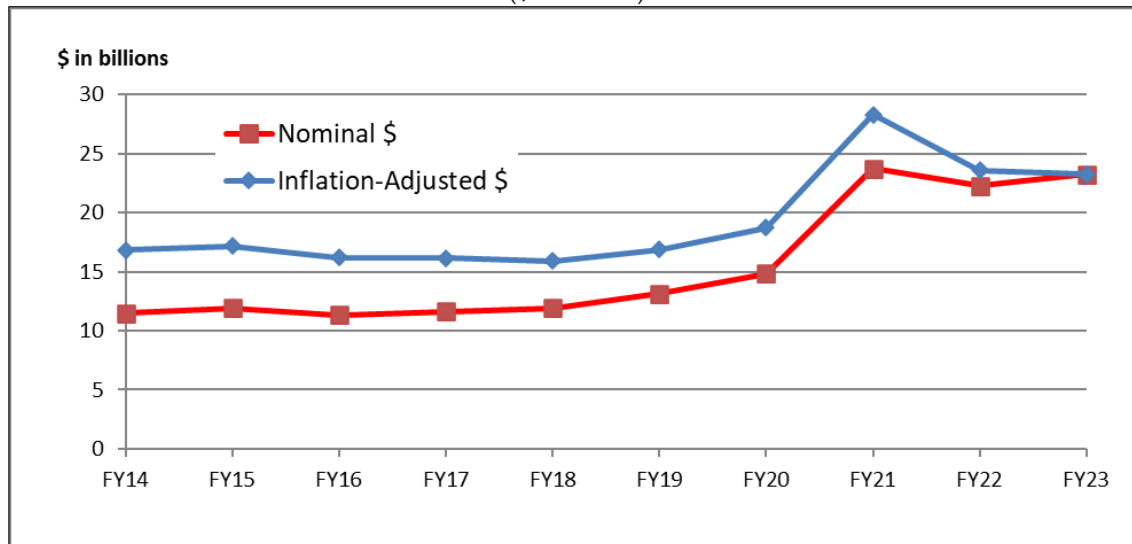


Table 2. NPS Deferred Maintenance Estimates, FY2014-FY2023

(\$ in billions)

	Nominal \$	Inflation-Adjusted \$
FY2014	11.493	16.832
FY2015	11.927	17.186
FY2016	11.332	16.183
FY2017	11.607	16.152
FY2018	11.920	15.927
FY2019	13.131	16.885
FY2020	14.851	18.707
FY2021	23.745	28.314
FY2022	22.288	23.592

	Nominal \$	Inflation-Adjusted \$
FY2023	23.263	23.263
Change, FY2014-FY2023	+11.769	+6.430

Sources for Figure 1 and Table 2: Nominal-dollar estimate for FY2014 was calculated by CRS based on ranges provided to CRS by the DOI Office of Budget. Nominal-dollar estimates for FY2015-FY2018 were archived by CRS from the NPS website. Nominal-dollar estimates for FY2019-FY2022 are from CRS communication with NPS Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs, July 27, 2023. Nominal dollar estimate for FY2023 is from NPS, “Infrastructure: By the Numbers,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/deferred-maintenance.htm>. See additional information in footnote 1. Adjustments for inflation (shown in 2023 dollars) use the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Table 3.9.4, “Price Indexes for Government Consumption Expenditures and Gross Investment,” for nondefense structures, annual indexes, <https://apps.bea.gov/itable/?reqid=19&step=2&isuri=1&categories=survey>.

Multiple factors may contribute to growth or reduction of NPS DM. One key driver of growth in NPS maintenance needs has been the increasing age of agency infrastructure. Many NPS assets—such as visitor centers, roads, and other assets—were constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s or as part of NPS’s Mission 66 infrastructure initiative in the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁰ As these structures have reached or exceeded the end of their anticipated life spans, unfunded costs of repair or replacement have contributed to the DM backlog. Further, agency officials point out that as time goes by and needed repairs are not made, the rate at which such assets deteriorate is accelerated and can result in “a spiraling burden.”¹¹

A related key factor is the amount of funding available to NPS to address DM. The sources and amounts of agency funding for DM have fluctuated over time and are discussed in greater detail below, in the section on “Funding for NPS Deferred Maintenance.” In addition to funding for DM specifically, funding for routine and cyclic maintenance can affect DM, if a lack of available funds results in scheduled maintenance being deferred.

Some observers have expressed concern that growth in NPS DM may be at least partly due to inefficiencies in the agency’s asset management strategies and/or the implementation of these strategies. NPS has taken steps over the past decade to improve its asset management systems and strategies. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Department of the Interior’s (DOI’s) Office of Inspector General (OIG) have recommended further improvements.¹² Some aspects of NPS management of the DM backlog are discussed further in the report sections below.

Another issue is that the methods used by NPS to estimate DM have changed over time. NPS’s methods are discussed in the section on “Estimating NPS Deferred Maintenance.” In particular, NPS attributed a large jump in estimated DM between FY2020 and FY2021 partly to changes in its estimation methods, and additional changes have been implemented in other years. Also, NPS has worked to build and maintain a complete and accurate data set during the past decade.¹³ What

¹⁰ The Civilian Conservation Corps was a 1930s program established by President Franklin Roosevelt to create jobs and enhance the nation’s natural resources. Under the Mission 66 program, Congress appropriated roughly \$1 billion over a decade for NPS infrastructure improvements, leading up to NPS’s 50th anniversary in 1966.

¹¹ NPS Park Facility Management Division, “Deferred Maintenance Backlog,” September 24, 2014. See also DOI OIG September 2023 report, p. 3: “Deferring maintenance may result in significantly higher maintenance and operating costs or, in some cases, premature asset replacement”; and GAO, *Deferred Maintenance: Agencies Generally Followed Leading Practices in Selections but Faced Challenges*, GAO-24-106495, January 2024, p. 1, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106495> (hereinafter cited as “GAO January 2024 report”): “We have also previously found that deferring or delaying maintenance can diminish the quality of an asset and, in the long term, can shorten the life and value of an asset. Deferred maintenance may also result in significantly higher maintenance and repair costs.”

¹² See, for example, DOI OIG September 2023 report, and GAO January 2017 report.

¹³ For example, during the past decade, NPS was completing baseline assessments of the maintenance needs of its non-industry-standard assets (NPS FY2017 budget justification, pp. ONPS-Ops&Maint-7 to ONPS-Ops&Maint-8), and in (continued...)

portion of the overall change in NPS DM over the decade may be attributable to changes in methodology or data completeness, rather than to other factors, remains unclear.

From year to year, the completion of individual projects, changes in construction and repair costs, and similar factors play a role in the growth or reduction of NPS DM. The DM amounts reported by NPS for each fiscal year represent a snapshot of the backlog on the applicable date. The amount of DM changes frequently as NPS managers and staff complete or cancel maintenance work, recalculate costs, and record new maintenance and repair needs.

NPS Deferred Maintenance by State and Park

NPS reports DM estimates by state and territory, as well as by individual park, on its website.¹⁴ The 20 states and territories with the highest FY2023 DM are shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3. States and Territories with the Highest NPS Deferred Maintenance, FY2023

(\$ in billions)	
State/Territory	NPS DM Estimate, FY2023
California	4.439
Wyoming	1.787
Washington, DC	1.639
Virginia	1.423
Arizona	1.338
New York	1.301
Washington (state)	0.821
Maryland	0.689
Pennsylvania	0.683
Nevada	0.615
North Carolina	0.602
New Jersey	0.568
Colorado	0.558
Florida	0.542
Massachusetts	0.535
Mississippi	0.529
Texas	0.460
Utah	0.454
Hawaii	0.437
Tennessee	0.403

Source: CRS, using data from NPS, “Infrastructure: By the Numbers,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/deferred-maintenance.htm>. DM = deferred maintenance.

FY2014, NPS reported unpaved roads for the first time as part of its DM estimate (CRS communication with DOI, February 27, 2015). The DOI OIG September 2023 report raised additional issues related to overall data accuracy in NPS’s records (DOI OIG September 2023 report, pp. 14-16).

¹⁴ NPS, “Infrastructure: By the Numbers,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/deferred-maintenance.htm>. In this report, the term *states and territories* is inclusive of Washington, DC.

The states and territories with the highest NPS DM are not necessarily those with the most park acreage. For example, Alaska contains almost two-thirds of the total acreage in the National Park System but accounts for less than 1% of the agency's DM backlog. Instead, the amount, type, and condition of infrastructure in the NPS units, along with other factors, combine to determine the NPS DM in each state or territory. For example, paved roads are a major component of NPS DM, and the states and territories with NPS-administered parkways—the George Washington Memorial Parkway (Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, DC), the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (Maryland), the Suitland Parkway (Maryland and DC), the Natchez Trace Parkway (mainly in Mississippi and Tennessee), the Blue Ridge Parkway (North Carolina and Virginia), and the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Memorial Parkway (Wyoming)—are all among the 20 states and territories with the highest DM.¹⁵

Table 4 shows the 20 individual park units with the highest amounts of DM. Various factors may contribute to the relatively high DM estimates for these park units as compared with others. For example, some units, such as Yellowstone National Park and Grand Canyon National Park, are older parks whose infrastructure was largely built in the mid-20th century. Some units, such as Gateway National Recreation Area, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and the National Mall and Memorial Parks, are located in or near urban areas and may contain more developed infrastructure than some more remotely located parks. The costs of labor and materials to execute DM projects also may be higher in these urban areas. Three of the units with the highest estimated DM are national parkways, consistent with the relatively high portion of NPS's overall DM that is related to road needs.

Table 4. NPS Units with the Highest Deferred Maintenance, FY2023

(\$ in billions)

Park Unit	State/Territory	NPS DM Estimate, FY2023
Yellowstone National Park	ID, MT, WY	1.494 ^a
Yosemite National Park	CA	1.275
National Mall and Memorial Parks	DC	0.968 ^b
Gateway National Recreation Area	NJ, NY	0.964 ^c
Grand Canyon National Park	AZ	0.823
George Washington Memorial Parkway	DC, MD, VA	0.680 ^d
Natchez Trace Parkway	AL, MS, TN	0.641 ^e
San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park	CA	0.597
Lake Mead National Recreation Area	AZ, NV	0.587 ^f
Golden Gate National Recreation Area	CA	0.540
Blue Ridge Parkway	NC, VA	0.449 ^g
Death Valley National Park	CA, NV	0.416 ^h
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park	DC, MD, WV	0.400 ⁱ
Statue of Liberty National Monument	NY	0.396
Point Reyes National Seashore	CA	0.305

¹⁵ However, Wyoming's total is due mainly to DM for Yellowstone National Park (\$1.440 billion) rather than DM for the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Memorial Parkway (\$17 million), which has significantly lower DM than most of the other parkways.

Park Unit	State/Territory	NPS DM Estimate, FY2023
Mount Rainier National Park	WA	0.290
Olympic National Park	WA	0.289
Grand Teton National Park	WY	0.287
Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park	CA	0.272
Boston National Historical Park	MA	0.271

Source: CRS, using data from NPS, “Infrastructure: By the Numbers,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/deferred-maintenance.htm>.

- a. DM for Yellowstone National Park consists of less than \$1 million in Idaho, \$53 million in Montana, and \$1.440 billion in Wyoming.
- b. The National Mall and Memorial Parks include 14 individual memorials, monuments, and other park units (e.g., Vietnam Veterans Memorial).
- c. DM for Gateway National Recreation Area consists of \$351 million in New Jersey and \$613 million in New York.
- d. DM for the George Washington Memorial Parkway (which also includes Arlington House; Clara Barton National Historic Site; LBJ Memorial Grove on the Potomac; Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail; and Theodore Roosevelt Island) consists of \$78 million in the District of Columbia, \$80 million in Maryland, and \$522 million in Virginia.
- e. DM for the Natchez Trace Parkway (which also includes Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail and Tupelo National Battlefield) consists of \$20 million in Alabama, \$483 million in Mississippi, and \$138 million in Tennessee.
- f. DM for Lake Mead National Recreation Area is attributed entirely to Nevada, although a portion of the unit is in Arizona.
- g. DM for the Blue Ridge Parkway consists of \$294 million in North Carolina and \$156 million in Virginia.
- h. DM for Death Valley National Park is attributed entirely to California, although a portion of the unit is in Nevada.
- i. DM for the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park consists of \$57 million in the District of Columbia and \$343 million in Maryland. (No DM for the unit is attributed to West Virginia.)
- j. Includes Ellis Island.

Estimating NPS Deferred Maintenance

NPS estimates the DM needs of park assets through a multi-step process. Park staff record data about the condition of individual assets in a software system, which generates estimates of each asset’s maintenance and repair needs.¹⁶ Over the years, NPS has evolved its methods for estimating DM.¹⁷ The changes have included, among others, redefining the set of assets for which DM is tracked and changing the inputs and formulas that generate financial estimates of DM needs. NPS has stated that such changes aim to create more reliable DM estimates over time, bring estimation methods into line with industry standards, and create consistency across agencies in how DM needs are calculated.¹⁸ In a September 2023 report, the DOI OIG found that despite

¹⁶ For more information on NPS’s process, see DOI OIG September 2023 report, pp. 7-9. NPS has used its Facility Management Software System both to estimate DM and to prioritize and track DM projects. Two primary factors in the prioritization are an asset’s condition (measured through a *facility condition index* rating) and its importance to the NPS missions of resource preservation and visitor use (measured through an *asset priority index* rating).

¹⁷ Other federal land management agencies also have evolved their methods of calculating DM. For a discussion of methodological changes over time for multiple agencies, including NPS, see CRS Report R43997, *Deferred Maintenance of Federal Land Management Agencies: FY2013-FY2022 Estimates and Issues*, by Carol Hardy Vincent, section on “Methodologies Used by Agencies.”

¹⁸ See, for example, NPS, “Infrastructure: Frequently Asked Questions” (question on “Why did the National Park Service maintenance backlog double since 2018?”), <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/faqs.htm>.

changes to date, the data in NPS’s software system remain “inaccurate and unreliable ... cast[ing] doubt on the NPS’ deferred maintenance estimates—possibly underestimating the figures in some cases and overestimating in others.”¹⁹

Over the past few years, several methodological changes in particular have affected the agency’s DM estimates. According to NPS and the DOI OIG, such changes include the following:

- Starting with its DM estimates for FY2021, NPS changed its DM cost estimating formula by adding a “blanket” 35% markup to DM for non-transportation assets.²⁰ NPS stated that this markup was equivalent to a markup used by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in estimating DM needs for NPS transportation assets (e.g., park roads) and that the markup thus created “consistency” between transportation and non-transportation assets.²¹ Similar to FHWA’s markup, NPS’s markup is intended to reflect costs of compliance, design, construction management, and project management, which were not accounted for in earlier estimates.²²
- Starting with its DM estimates for FY2022, NPS changed its process for calculating many park assets’ DM needs. NPS had previously calculated DM for its assets based on the estimated costs from open DM work orders at the end of each fiscal year. As of FY2022, NPS shifted to a method based on its visual condition assessments of assets, which are considered in conjunction with the current replacement value for an asset.²³ NPS stated that the condition assessment method is “an accepted industry standard” that will provide “a more comprehensive, consistent, and timely identification of condition deficiencies and estimate of the NPS portfolio repair needs.”²⁴ NPS stated that the new process is being rolled out gradually and will be fully implemented in FY2024.²⁵
- Starting with its DM estimates for FY2023, NPS changed the set of assets for which it tracks and reports DM.²⁶ Prior to this time, NPS tracked a set of

¹⁹ DOI OIG September 2023 report, p. 1. NPS is taking several steps in response to the DOI OIG report, as discussed in the OIG report.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 41.

²¹ See NPS responses to the DOI OIG’s draft of the September 2023 report, in *ibid.*, pp. 41, 45, 56. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) works with NPS (and other land management agencies) to estimate and address DM for certain transportation-related assets.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 41. More specifically, the 35% markup breaks down to 5% for compliance, 17% for design, 8% for construction management, and 5% for project management.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 11, 24, 33. Using this “parametric condition assessment” method, NPS makes visual assessments of various aspects of an asset (e.g., for a trail, the plants and trees along the trail, the trail surface, constructed trail features such as steps or bridges, etc.) and scores them on a scale of 0 to 9 based on their condition (e.g., score of 9 for “great condition,” score of 1 for “poor condition,” or score of 0 if the aspect is not applicable). NPS then uses a “parametric scoring tool” to convert the condition scores to DM estimates. The visual assessments are to be performed annually, with a “comprehensive review” every five years.

²⁴ NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. SpecEx-1.

²⁵ DOI OIG September 2023 report, pp. 2, 5. NPS is using condition assessments for industry-standard assets, while using the older work order method for concessioner-occupied assets and non-industry standard assets, and using assessments made by FHWA for paved roads, parking areas, bridges, and tunnels (NPS FY2024 budget justification, p. SpecEx-1).

²⁶ Information in this paragraph is from NPS’s FY2025 budget justification; CRS communication with the NPS Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs on August 1, 2023, and April 17, 2024; and previous NPS Asset Inventory Summaries archived by CRS from the NPS website.

approximately 75,000 assets to produce its DM estimates.²⁷ However, NPS reported on somewhat different groupings of NPS assets to two other entities—the FASAB, for annual DOI agency financial reports, and the General Services Administration (GSA), for its Federal Real Property Profile (FRPP)—owing to specific reporting requirements for these two entities.²⁸ Starting with its reporting of FY2023 DM, NPS has aligned its base asset portfolio with the portfolio reported to the GSA for the FRPP. As a result, NPS now reports a portfolio of approximately 72,000 assets (rather than the 75,000 assets used earlier).²⁹

- For DM estimates in FY2023, NPS incorporated a new “road model update” from FHWA to estimate DM for NPS transportation assets. NPS stated that the new financial model “cumulatively account[s] for general inflation from recent years” and is responsible for a 36% increase in estimated DM for NPS paved roads between FY2022 and FY2023.³⁰

It can be difficult to determine to what extent methodological changes such as these have been responsible for variations in NPS’s estimated DM over the years. The DOI OIG found that of the approximately \$8.8 billion increase in NPS DM between FY2020 and FY2021, approximately \$3.7 billion was attributable to the new 35% markup for non-transportation assets.³¹ NPS stated that other factors in the FY2020-FY2021 increase included insufficient funding for annual maintenance needs (thus creating more DM) and increased construction and maintenance costs due to inflation.³²

In other cases, such as with the shift to estimating DM through condition assessments rather than work orders, the effects of the change on DM estimates are unclear, especially since the shift is not yet fully implemented. The DOI OIG found that this shift could potentially increase the accuracy of NPS’s DM estimates, in that the OIG had found data gaps and inaccuracies in the work order data that NPS was using prior to the shift. However, since the OIG did not assess the new method’s accuracy and since that method is not yet fully implemented, the OIG concluded that concerns about the accuracy of NPS’s DM estimates remain.³³ Also unclear are the impacts, if any, of the FY2023 change in the portfolio of assets NPS tracks, as compared with the set of assets tracked in FY2022 and previous years. To the extent that NPS is tracking DM for fewer assets than it previously did, this could have the effect of lowering estimated DM compared with earlier years.

In general, the DOI OIG found that NPS “does not have a monitoring mechanism to ensure the accuracy and completeness of its ... data” and that “without reliable data, the NPS cannot make informed decisions on how to manage its deferred maintenance, improve program effectiveness and accountability, and potentially enhance decision making.”³⁴ However, the OIG noted steps

²⁷ These assets were reported in NPS’s Real Property Inventory Report (previously called the Asset Inventory Summary).

²⁸ See DOI, “Agency Financial Reports,” at <https://www.doi.gov/pfm/afr>; and General Services Administration (GSA), “Federal Real Property Profile Management System,” at <https://www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/policy/real-property-policy-division-overview/asset-management/federal-real-property-profile-frpp>. The reporting parameters for these two entities are distinct from each other, and both differ from the prior NPS Real Property Inventory Report. Also see footnote 1.

²⁹ NPS FY2025 budget justification, pp. SpecEx-1 to SpecEx-2; and NPS FY2024 budget justification, p. SpecEx-2.

³⁰ NPS FY2025 budget justification, pp. SpecEx-1 to SpecEx-2.

³¹ DOI OIG September 2023 report., p. 6.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 50.

³³ DOI OIG September 2023 report, p. 54.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

NPS has taken to improve data quality and monitoring, such as directing park staff to rectify data anomalies and to annually review the accuracy of condition assessment scoring.³⁵

Funding for NPS Deferred Maintenance

NPS has used discretionary appropriations, allocations from the Department of Transportation, park entrance and recreation fees, donations, and other funding sources to address the DM backlog. Often it is not possible to determine the total amount of funding from these sources that NPS has allocated each year to address DM, because NPS does not specifically aggregate these amounts in its budget reporting.³⁶ Beginning in FY2021, NPS received a notable increase in its financial resources to address DM with the establishment of the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (Legacy Restoration Fund, or LRF; 54 U.S.C. §§200401-200402), a five-year fund for DM of multiple land management agencies.

The Legacy Restoration Fund

In 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) established the LRF to address DM of five agencies (NPS, FS, BLM, FWS, and the Bureau of Indian Education).³⁷ The fund receives annual deposits over five years (FY2021-FY2025) of amounts equal to 50% of all federal energy development revenues—from oil, gas, coal, or renewable energy—that are credited in the preceding fiscal year as miscellaneous receipts to the Treasury, up to a cap of \$1.900 billion annually. NPS receives a 70% share, with the remainder going to the other agencies at specified percentages. To date (FY2021-FY2024), the LRF has received the maximum allowable deposit of \$1.900 billion each year, with 70% of this total (\$1.330 billion annually) going to NPS. If the maximum also were deposited in FY2025, NPS would receive approximately \$6.650 billion for DM over the fund's lifetime.

The GAOA contains provisions for allocating LRF funding to individual DM projects. The GAOA directs the President to submit lists of projects to be addressed with LRF funds in agencies' annual budget submissions to Congress.³⁸ Congress, in appropriations acts, may accept the President's proposals or may provide alternate allocations (while adhering to the overall funding percentages defined for each agency).³⁹ To date, appropriators have generally, but not always, allocated the NPS funds as proposed by NPS.⁴⁰

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 23-24.

³⁶ Although it is not possible to determine amounts allocated specifically to NPS DM, GAO has estimated amounts allocated for *all* NPS infrastructure management, from sources other than the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF), for FY2018-FY2022 (GAO January 2024 report, p. 7). These estimates include funding for all types of maintenance (DM, cyclic maintenance, and day-to-day maintenance activities) as well as for activities that go beyond maintenance, such as infrastructure modernization. GAO estimated that during FY2018-FY2022, NPS's annual non-LRF funding for all types of infrastructure management ranged from \$1.701 billion to \$2.008 billion.

³⁷ For more information, see CRS In Focus IF11636, *The Great American Outdoors Act (P.L. 116-152)*, by Carol Hardy Vincent, Laura B. Comay, and Bill Heniff Jr.

³⁸ 54 U.S.C. §200402(h). For the first year of the fund (FY2021), the President was directed to submit a project list within 90 days of the GAOA's enactment (54 U.S.C. §200402(g)).

³⁹ 54 U.S.C. §200402(i)(1).

⁴⁰ For FY2021, Congress allocated the funding as proposed by NPS. For FY2022, Congress allocated funding at NPS's requested levels for 33 of 36 proposed projects, did not include funding for 2 proposed projects, and funded 1 project at less than requested, while providing funding for an LRF contingency fund that had not been in the request. The agency can use the contingency fund for unforeseen expenses associated with project execution. For FY2023, Congress allocated funding at NPS's requested levels for 24 of 27 proposed projects, did not include funding for 3 proposed (continued...)

The GAOA requires that NPS and other agencies use the LRF funding for “priority deferred maintenance projects,” and that at least 65% of each agency’s monies over the term of the fund be used for non-transportation projects.⁴¹ DOI and NPS have developed additional selection criteria for GAOA projects.⁴² The DOI-wide criteria prioritize projects that address a significant amount of DM, maximize return on investment, and safeguard staff and visitors.⁴³ Within NPS, a committee of “senior managers” makes the project selections and considers additional criteria including the business case for the investment and the timeliness of obligation.⁴⁴ The committee also considers the extent to which projects address critical assets at risk of failure; have critical life, health, safety, or environmental impacts; address accessibility needs; involve demolition or disposal of unneeded facilities; and have a relatively high percentage of net construction costs that address DM.⁴⁵ Finally, NPS has in some years prioritized “large-scale projects” for LRF funding, since the LRF may be the only source with sufficient funds to complete these projects, whereas smaller-scale projects could be addressed through other, smaller funding sources.⁴⁶ Some stakeholders have suggested that additional or different criteria should be considered when selecting projects, as discussed below under “Issues for Congress.” In early 2024, GAO examined the land management agencies’ processes for selecting LRF projects and found that the agencies, including NPS, “generally followed leading practices for managing deferred maintenance in their processes for selecting projects for LRF funding.”⁴⁷

Annual Appropriations for NPS Deferred Maintenance

Outside of the LRF, much of the funding used to address NPS DM has come from annual appropriations, primarily through the agency’s Repair and Rehabilitation program and the Line-Item Construction program. Both of these programs fund DM along with other construction and maintenance activities, such as upgrades for accessibility, capital improvements, and work to address structural fire needs.⁴⁸ For this reason, it is unclear how much funding under these programs each year has gone directly to address the DM backlog.

- The **Repair and Rehabilitation (R&R)** program, within NPS’s Operation of the National Park System (ONPS) budget account,⁴⁹ focuses on complex,

projects, and provided more than requested for the contingency fund. Appropriators also funded, as community project funding/congressionally directed spending, one additional DM project in FY2023 (at Ozark National Scenic Riverways) that was not in the NPS proposal. For FY2024, Congress allocated funding for all NPS’s proposed projects at requested levels while also providing more than requested for the contingency fund.

⁴¹ 54 U.S.C. §200402(e).

⁴² For a detailed discussion of both DOI’s and NPS’s criteria for project selection, see GAO January 2024 report, pp. 15-21.

⁴³ NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. LRF-2.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. LRF-3.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ See, for example, NPS FY2024 budget justification, p. LRF-3; and NPS FY2023 budget justification, p. LRF-2. NPS did not include this criterion in its FY2025 budget justification.

⁴⁷ GAO January 2024 report, p. 19. The “leading practices” identified in the report were derived from the National Research Council. The strategies include establishing clear objectives and setting priorities among the outcomes to be achieved, establishing performance goals and measures, identifying primary delivery methods, aligning property portfolios with mission needs and disposing of unneeded assets, identifying risks posed by lack of timely investment, and identifying mission-critical and mission-supportive assets (pp. 19-21).

⁴⁸ CRS communication with NPS Offices of Budget, Commercial Services, and Park Facility Management, May 25, 2017.

⁴⁹ Specifically, “Repair and Rehabilitation” is a budget line item within the “Facility Maintenance” program component (continued...)

nonrecurring repair needs in cases where preventive maintenance is no longer sufficient to maintain the facility's condition.⁵⁰ R&R funds are used for projects with anticipated costs of less than \$2 million each. These projects may include both DM and other types of maintenance.⁵¹ The FY2024 appropriation for R&R in P.L. 118-42 was \$111.0 million.

- The ***Line-Item Construction*** program, in NPS's Construction account, provides funding for projects that repair, replace, or improve high-priority assets.⁵² This funding is used for projects expected to cost \$2 million or more.⁵³ NPS prioritizes projects based on "monetary and nonmonetary benefits, return on investment, and overall risk."⁵⁴ As with the R&R program, the projects may include both DM and other types of construction or maintenance work.⁵⁵ The FY2024 appropriation in P.L. 118-42 for Line-Item Construction was \$80.6 million.
- Portions of ***other NPS discretionary budget activities and accounts*** also are sometimes used for DM. These include various programs within the ONPS and Construction accounts as well as NPS's Centennial Challenge account (discussed below under "Other NPS Funding for Deferred Maintenance").

Combined annual appropriations for Repair and Rehabilitation and Line-Item Construction—the two primary sources of annual appropriations for NPS DM—have declined since the LRF funding became available. Comparing FY2020 combined funding for the two programs (prior to establishment of the LRF) with FY2024 combined funding, the appropriations decreased by 54% in nominal dollars.⁵⁶

Transportation Funding from the Highway Trust Fund

Like other federal land management agencies, NPS receives mandatory appropriations from the Highway Trust Fund to address transportation needs, including transportation-related DM.⁵⁷ As with discretionary appropriations, NPS uses these funds for both DM and other work on transportation assets (e.g., preventive maintenance), and does not record the portion of funding that is used specifically to address DM.⁵⁸

of the "Facility Operations and Maintenance" budget activity, which in turn lies within the Operation of the National Park System (ONPS) account. See NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. ONPS-69.

⁵⁰ NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. ONPS-67.

⁵¹ For example, NPS estimated that over the FY2012-FY2017 period, a range from 49% to 83% of Repair and Rehabilitation program funds were specifically targeted to DM, as opposed to other types of maintenance. CRS communication with NPS Park Facility Management Division, May 5, 2020; and CRS communication with NPS Offices of Budget, Commercial Services, and Park Facility Management, May 25, 2017.

⁵² NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. CONST-7. This budget activity also supports construction of new facilities "when supported by an approved planning document, economic analysis, and business case" (p. CONST-9).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. ONPS-67.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. CONST-9.

⁵⁵ For example, NPS estimated that over the FY2012-FY2017 period, annual Line-Item Construction funds used specifically for DM ranged from a low of 59% to a high of 87%. CRS communication with NPS Park Facility Management Division, May 5, 2020; and CRS communication with NPS Offices of Budget, Commercial Services, and Park Facility Management, May 25, 2017.

⁵⁶ The combined funding was \$418.9 million in FY2020 and \$191.58 million in FY2024.

⁵⁷ For information on the Highway Trust Fund, see CRS Report R47573, *Funding and Financing Highways and Public Transportation Under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)*, by Robert S. Kirk and William J. Mallett.

⁵⁸ Under the Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP; 23 U.S.C. §203), allowable uses of the funding include, (continued...)

Funds are provided to NPS by FHWA, primarily through the Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP), which was most recently reauthorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).⁵⁹ Under the IIJA, NPS's annual FLTP allocation grows from \$332.4 million in FY2022 to \$360.0 million in FY2026; the FY2024 amount is \$346.2 million. Through related federal highway programs in the IIJA, such as the Federal Lands Access Program and others, NPS could receive additional funding.⁶⁰

In FY2023 (the most recent year reported), the federal highway programs funded more than half of NPS's spending on transportation maintenance and improvements.⁶¹ NPS has noted, however, that these are often complicated, high-cost projects requiring greater investments than can be supported by the available funding from the FLTP and related programs.⁶² NPS has stated that the cost of such "megaprojects" can range from \$25 million to nearly \$1 billion, with the costs of some individual projects exceeding the entirety of NPS's FLTP allocation for a given year.⁶³ Mandatory appropriations from the LRF—the GAOA's DM fund—also may be used on transportation projects, although the GAOA funding for transportation projects is capped at no more than 35% of NPS's total LRF allotment over the five-year life of the fund.⁶⁴

Park Entrance and Recreation Fees

Park entrance and recreation fees collected under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act may be used for DM, among other purposes.⁶⁵ The fees are available for use without further appropriation, and most are retained at the collecting parks.⁶⁶ Fee collections may be used for purposes benefiting visitors, including facility maintenance and repair, interpretation and visitor services, law enforcement, and others. NPS policies require parks to obligate at least 55% of the

among others, transportation planning, program administration, research, preventive maintenance, engineering, rehabilitation, restoration, construction, and reconstruction of federal lands transportation facilities.

⁵⁹ Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), P.L. 117-58, §11101.

⁶⁰ The Federal Lands Access Program (23 U.S.C. §204) funds planning, maintenance, and repair activities on roads and other transportation facilities that are on, are adjacent to, or provide access to federal lands. Other programs include the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Program (P.L. 117-58, §11127). For more information, see Federal Highway Administration, Office of Federal Lands Highway, "Programs," at <https://flh.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/>.

⁶¹ NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. FLTP-2. The remaining transportation improvements were funded through sources such as NPS discretionary appropriations in the ONPS account, the LRF, and transportation fees collected under authority at 54 U.S.C. §101531.

⁶² See, for example, NPS, "Mega Projects: Transportation Needs Beyond the Capacity of the Core Program," archived from the web on April 16, 2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220416031908/https://www.nps.gov/subjects/transportation/megaprojects.htm>.

⁶³ Ibid., and fact sheets for individual projects (e.g., Memorial Bridge, archived from the web on April 27, 2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210427075629/https://www.nps.gov/articles/memorial-bridge-repair-and-reconstruction.htm>; and Colonial Parkway, archived from the web on March 2, 2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20210302233541/https://www.nps.gov/articles/colonial-parkway.htm>).

⁶⁴ 54 U.S.C. §200402(e)(2).

⁶⁵ Federal Lands Recreation and Enhancement Act (FLREA; 16 U.S.C. §§6801-6814). For more information, see CRS In Focus IF10151, *Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act: Overview and Issues*, by Carol Hardy Vincent.

⁶⁶ In most cases, at least 80% of the revenue collected is retained and used at the site where it was generated. The remaining collections are placed in a central fund that can be used throughout the park system. Some parks retain 100% of the fee collections, and parks could retain as low as 60% if the collected revenue exceeded "the reasonable needs of the unit" for that fiscal year (16 U.S.C. §6806(c)(1)(B)).

collections to “deferred and preventive facility maintenance projects.”⁶⁷ NPS estimates entrance and recreation fee collections of \$365.5 million for FY2024.⁶⁸

Concessions Franchise Fees

NPS collects concessions franchise fees from park concessioners that provide services such as lodging and dining at park units. The fees, collected under the National Park Service Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998, are typically set as a percentage of a concessioner’s gross receipts.⁶⁹ The fees are available for use without further appropriation and are mainly retained at the collecting parks.⁷⁰ They may be used to reduce DM (with priority given to concessions-related DM),⁷¹ and they also may be used for other NPS concessions-related activities, such as contract development and payment of leasehold surrender interest (an amount owed to concessioners that have invested in improvements to NPS infrastructure).⁷² In its FY2025 budget justification, NPS estimates concessions fee collections of \$156.1 million for FY2024.⁷³

Other NPS Funding for Deferred Maintenance

The National Park Service Centennial Act (Centennial Act) established the NPS *Centennial Challenge Fund*.⁷⁴ The fund provides a federal match to private-sector donations for NPS projects and programs that “further the mission of the Service and ... enhance the visitor experience in System units.”⁷⁵ The fund receives both discretionary appropriations and offsetting collections made up of certain amounts from sales of entrance passes to seniors.⁷⁶ In selecting projects and programs to receive the funding, the Secretary of the Interior is to prioritize DM, physical improvements to visitor service facilities, and trail maintenance.⁷⁷ The FY2024 appropriation for the Centennial Challenge Fund in P.L. 118-42 was \$12.0 million, and NPS estimates that senior pass sales will provide an additional \$7.5 million for the fund in FY2024.⁷⁸

The Centennial Act also established the NPS *Second Century Endowment* and directed that the endowment receive revenues from senior pass sales totaling \$10 million annually.⁷⁹ In addition, the endowment is authorized to receive gifts, devises, and bequests from donors. The funds may be used for projects approved by the Secretary of the Interior that further the mission and purposes of NPS, including projects on the maintenance backlog. For FY2023 (the most recent

⁶⁷ NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. RecFee-2.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. Rec Fee-1. The total includes fees collected under FLREA and the Deed-Restricted Parks Fee Program, which covers three parks prohibited by deed restrictions from collecting entrance fees.

⁶⁹ NPS Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998, 54 U.S.C. §§101911 et seq.; see especially §101917.

⁷⁰ The collecting unit retains 80% of the fees, and the remainder are placed in a special account to support activities throughout the park system (54 U.S.C. §101917(c)).

⁷¹ CRS communication with NPS Offices of Budget, Commercial Services, and Park Facility Management, May 25, 2017.

⁷² NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. OPA-2.

⁷³ Ibid., p. OPA-1. The amount includes both concessions franchise fees and an earlier type of fee used in some older concessions contracts (“concessions improvement accounts”).

⁷⁴ National Park Service Centennial Act, P.L. 114-289.

⁷⁵ 54 U.S.C. §103501(c).

⁷⁶ Specifically, any amounts collected in excess of \$10 million from NPS sales of age-discounted National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes for seniors are to be deposited into the Centennial Challenge Fund as offsetting collections (54 U.S.C. §103501(b)).

⁷⁷ 54 U.S.C. §103502(a)(3).

⁷⁸ NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. CCF-1.

⁷⁹ 54 U.S.C. §101121.

year available), the National Park Foundation, which administers the endowment, reported spending \$2.3 million from the endowment on unspecified projects.⁸⁰

Other NPS mandatory appropriations also have been partially used for DM. These include donations, monies collected under the Park Building Lease and Maintenance Fund, transportation fees collected under the Transportation Systems Fund, and rents and payroll deductions for the use and occupancy of government quarters, among others. NPS estimated varying amounts for these mandatory appropriations for FY2024.⁸¹ Congress also has provided additional mandatory appropriations for NPS DM on some occasions. For instance, P.L. 117-169, commonly known as the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, provided a one-time appropriation of \$200 million for “priority” NPS DM projects.⁸²

Issues for Congress

In the 118th Congress, debate about NPS DM has focused on the agency’s use of the LRF funding provided under the GAOA, including NPS’s project selection priorities, the funds’ impact in addressing the backlog, and the possibility of reauthorizing the LRF deposits for additional years. Under the current authorization, FY2025 is the final year of LRF funding. Some Members of Congress and other stakeholders advocate for extending the deposits to support progress by NPS and other land management agencies in addressing their maintenance backlogs, whereas others feel that limited federal funding should be directed toward other priorities.

Some question whether the LRF has been an effective tool for NPS, given that the NPS backlog has grown rather than shrunk since FY2020 (**Figure 1**). NPS emphasizes that despite factors leading to growth in the DM estimates—changes in DM estimation methods, inflation in the costs to execute projects, and new maintenance needs—the LRF is playing a major role in addressing the backlog. NPS has stated that, once its LRF-funded projects are completed (which may take multiple years), the FY2024 projects will collectively address approximately \$1.25 billion in DM, the FY2023 projects will address approximately \$1.19 billion, and the FY2022 projects will address approximately \$0.84 billion, with the proposed projects for FY2025 anticipated to address \$0.94 billion if fully funded.⁸³ (Similar estimates for the FY2021 projects were not published in NPS budget justifications.) GAO has stated that another positive impact of the LRF is that it has “fostered a cultural change [at the land management agencies] toward maintaining better data on deferred maintenance.”⁸⁴ Nonetheless, GAO still noted issues with unclear

⁸⁰ National Park Foundation, *Financial Statements for the Years Ended September 30, 2023 and 2022*, p. 32, <https://annualreport.nationalparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/National-Park-Foundation-FY2023-Audited-Financial-Statements.pdf>.

⁸¹ NPS FY2025 budget justification, pp. RecFee-1, OPA-1, and MTF-1.

⁸² NPS reported that this funding was used for DM at the Presidio of San Francisco. Testimony of NPS Director Chuck Sams in U.S. Congress, House Committee on Natural Resources, *Examining the Implementation of the Great American Outdoors Act and the Growing National Park Service Deferred Maintenance Backlog*, 118th Cong., 1st sess., April 18, 2023, H.Hrg. 118-16, pp. 13-15, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-118hhrg51886/pdf/CHRG-118hhrg51886.pdf>; hereinafter cited as “H.Hrg. 118-16.”

⁸³ NPS budget justifications for FY2022-FY2025. These estimates were applied to NPS’s proposed projects for each fiscal year. In some cases, Congress allocated funding for a few projects differently, which could affect the estimates (see footnote 40 for more information). The amount of DM addressed for a given project is not the same as the amount of LRF funding going to the project. According to GAO, some projects may address a lower amount of DM than the actual cost of the project (for instance, because a portion of the investment addressed construction not classified as DM). Alternatively, a project in some cases may address a higher amount of DM than the project cost (for instance, if the agency replaces an asset that had high DM with a lower-cost solution). GAO January 2024 report, p. 17.

⁸⁴ Testimony of Cardell Johnson, GAO, in U.S. Congress, House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on (continued...)

reporting by NPS and other DOI agencies on reasons for changes in DM estimates, which have compromised the availability of information Congress may need for its decisionmaking.⁸⁵ GAO stated that, “in the absence of additional information on agencies’ DM&R estimates, Congress and the public are limited in their ability to determine the true impact of DM&R on agency operations or the actual amount of funding needed to address the DM&R backlog.”⁸⁶ Some observers have suggested that, if the LRF funding is reauthorized, Congress may wish to specifically mandate oversight of how the agencies develop and report their DM estimates.⁸⁷

In considering the possibility of an LRF reauthorization, some Members also have contemplated whether any potential future funding should come with additional requirements for project selection, such as requirements related to the geographic distribution of selected projects. Some Members have expressed concern about uneven distribution of the current NPS LRF funding across states and regions.⁸⁸ NPS’s criteria for LRF project selection have not explicitly included geographic distribution; in contrast, FS’s criteria for choosing LRF projects have included a requirement that 40% of LRF funding go to “regional priority projects” across the FS regions.⁸⁹ (In practice, projects have been selected in all the NPS regions, although the funding across states and regions has been uneven.⁹⁰) A related concern for some has been the distribution of LRF funds among larger versus smaller parks and urban versus rural parks.⁹¹

NPS has expressed that the current flexibilities in selecting LRF projects have allowed the agency to focus on “large-scale projects” that “have been historically out of reach with discretionary appropriations.”⁹² In support, some observers have pointed out that targeting LRF funds to large infrastructure projects, while potentially narrowing the number of parks served, may indirectly benefit parks around the country with smaller DM project needs by freeing up other DM funding sources (such as annual appropriations and recreation fees) to be targeted to these smaller

Federal Lands, *National Park Service’s Deferred Maintenance Backlog: Perspectives from the Government Accountability Office and the Inspector General*, hearing, 118th Cong., 2nd sess., January 10, 2024, pp. 5-6, https://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/testimony_johnson.pdf; hereinafter cited as “House Natural Resources Committee January 2024 hearing.”

⁸⁵ GAO, *Federal Real Property: Agencies Should Provide More Information About Increases in Deferred Maintenance and Repair*, GAO-24-105485, November 2023, pp. 18-24, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-105485>. GAO stated that “agency officials said they do not report additional information on their DM&R estimates because they are not required to do so” (p. 25).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁸⁷ See testimony of Mark Greenblatt, DOI Inspector General, and Cardell Johnson, GAO, at House Natural Resources Committee January 2024 hearing.

⁸⁸ See, for example, remarks of Rep. Tom Tiffany and questions for the record from Rep. Bruce Westerman, H.Hrg. 118-16, pp. 2, 9; and questions for the record from Sen. Steve Daines, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on National Parks, *Implementation of the Great American Outdoors Act*, 117th Cong., 2nd sess., February 9, 2022, S.Hrg. 117-462, p. 69, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-117shrg46848/pdf/CHRG-117shrg46848.pdf>; hereinafter cited as “S.Hrg. 117-462.”

⁸⁹ The U.S. Forest Service stated that “this model of supporting both national and regional priorities was developed because the Forest Service recognizes community and state priorities may not result in projects that are selected nationally. As a result of this approach, the Forest Service project list provides an investment in deferred maintenance reduction that values both locally and nationally significant projects.” Testimony of Forest Service Deputy Chief Christopher French, S.Hrg. 117-462.

⁹⁰ For information on the NPS regions, see NPS, “About Us,” <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/contactinformation.htm>. For lists and maps of NPS’s LRF project locations, see NPS, “National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/legacy-restoration-fund.htm>.

⁹¹ For example, see remarks of Reps. Tom Tiffany, Bruce Westerman, and Pete Stauber, H.Hrg. 118-16, pp. 2, 13-14, 26; and questions for the record from Sen. Mazie Hirono, S.Hrg. 117-462, pp. 72-73.

⁹² NPS FY2024 budget justification, p. LRF-3.

projects.⁹³ NPS has stated that its use of some LRF funding for traveling “maintenance action teams” has allowed the agency to address maintenance needs at “under-resourced small and medium-sized parks, achieving geographic distribution of projects throughout the country.”⁹⁴ Some Members have advocated for higher portions of the LRF funding to be allocated to these teams.⁹⁵ Some stakeholders also have recommended establishing new NPS hiring authorities to build staff capacity to plan and execute DM projects at smaller or under-resourced parks.⁹⁶

Outside of debates about the LRF, some Members of Congress have advocated for prioritizing annual appropriations for NPS deferred (and cyclic) maintenance, especially in light of declines in this annual funding since enactment of the LRF (see section on “Annual Appropriations for NPS Deferred Maintenance”).⁹⁷ Some emphasize the importance of annual appropriations for preventing further growth of the backlog and point out that the GAOA, which established the LRF, stated that no amounts in the LRF were to be used to “supplant discretionary funding made available for annually recurring facility operations, maintenance, and construction needs.”⁹⁸ In contrast, some other Members of Congress, as well as NPS officials on some occasions, have expressed that the availability of LRF funding could allow annual appropriations to be used for NPS priorities other than maintenance (such as facility improvements), given limitations on overall funding for NPS and other DOI agencies.⁹⁹

Some stakeholders have proposed additional options to increase funding for NPS infrastructure maintenance, beyond annual appropriations and the LRF. Options could include increasing the revenues that NPS collects, such as by raising park fees (e.g., through across-the-board entrance fee hikes, congestion pricing for highly popular attractions, or a surcharge for international visitors) or introducing tolling on park highways that are used as commuter routes (e.g., in the region around Washington, DC).¹⁰⁰ Some have proposed funding NPS DM through visa fees paid

⁹³ See, for example, statement for the record of the National Parks Second Century Action Coalition, at S.Hrg. 117-462, p. 114.

⁹⁴ NPS, “Infrastructure: Maintenance Action Teams,” <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/infrastructure/maintenance-action-teams.htm>. Also see testimony of Shannon Estenoz, DOI Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, at S.Hrg. 117-462, p. 26.

⁹⁵ See, for example, questions for the record from Rep. Bruce Westerman in H.Hrg. 118-16, p. 9; and House Committee on Natural Resources, hearing memorandum, “Oversight Hearing on ‘Examining the Implementation of the Great American Outdoors Act and the Growing National Park Service Deferred Maintenance Backlog,’” April 18, 2023, p. 8. The LRF allocations for NPS maintenance action teams were \$14.1 million for FY2021, \$0 for FY2022, \$20.0 million for FY2023, and \$25.0 million for FY2024. NPS’s FY2025 budget request proposes \$25.0 million from the LRF for maintenance action teams.

⁹⁶ See, for example, statements for the record of the Coalition to Protect America’s National Parks and the Pew Charitable Trusts at S.Hrg. 117-462, pp. 101 and 129.

⁹⁷ For example, see remarks by Sen. Angus King in U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, *Hearing to Examine the President’s Budget Request for the U.S. Department of the Interior for Fiscal Year 2025*, hearing, 118th Cong., 2nd sess., May 2, 2024, <https://www.energy.senate.gov/hearings/2024/5/full-committee-hearing-to-examine-the-president-s-budget-request-for-the-u-s-department-of-the-interior-for-fiscal-year-2025>; and remarks by Rep. Ed Case at House Natural Resources Committee January 2024 hearing.

⁹⁸ 54 U.S.C. §200402(f)(2).

⁹⁹ For example, see testimony of NPS Director Charles Sams in H.Hrg. 118-16, p. 7; and remarks by Rep. David Joyce in U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, *Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Request for the National Park Service*, hearing, 117th Cong., 2nd sess., May 18, 2022, hearing transcript available at <https://plus.cq.com/doc/congressionaltranscripts-654055672>.

¹⁰⁰ See S. 2783 in the 116th Cong.; questions for the record by Rep. Tom McClintock in H.Hrg. 115-39, p. 12; Pew Charitable Trusts, *Protecting Our Parks: A Strategic Approach to Reducing the Deferred Maintenance Backlog Facing the National Park Service*, Spring 2019, https://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/assets/2019/05/protecting-our-parks-report_low-res.pdf, hereinafter cited as Pew Charitable Trusts, *Protecting Our Parks*; and Property and Environment Research Center (PERC), *How Overseas Visitors Can Help Steward Our National Parks*, December 2023, <https://www.perc.org/2023/12/21/how-international-visitors-can-help-steward-our-national-parks/>.

by foreign visitors to the United States, monies from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, income tax overpayments and contributions, taxes on outdoor recreation gear, motorfuel taxes, DOI land sales, or revenues from coin and postage stamp sales.¹⁰¹ Others have opposed such proposals as diverting federal funds from other valued uses or imposing unnecessary fees on the public.

Various proposals have focused on ways NPS could reduce DM without the use of additional funds. Some have suggested that this could be accomplished by increasing the role of nonfederal partners in park management (e.g., by leasing more historic buildings to private businesses or transitioning NPS-operated campgrounds to concessioner management); by promoting volunteer assistance (e.g., through conservations service corps); by expanding the role of friends-of-the-park groups and similar nonprofits in NPS maintenance and construction projects; by disposing of unneeded structures in poor repair; or by transferring some NPS assets (e.g., commuter roads) out of federal ownership.¹⁰² NPS and other stakeholders have identified challenges in considering some of these options, including challenges related to the costs and procedures for disposing of unneeded assets,¹⁰³ limitations to authorities for federal-nonfederal partnerships for infrastructure project management,¹⁰⁴ and regulatory and market obstacles to expanded use of leasing

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Heritage Foundation, *Budget Proposals: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies*, May 20, 2019, <https://www.heritage.org/blueprint-balance/budget-proposals/interior-environment-and-related-agencies>; Heritage Foundation, “Permanent Reauthorization of Land and Water Conservation Fund Opens Door to Permanent Land Grabs,” January 22, 2019, <https://www.heritage.org/environment/report/permanent-reauthorization-land-and-water-conservation-fund-opens-door-permanent>; Resources for the Future, *Efficiency and Equity of an Outdoor Recreation Equipment Tax to Fund Public Lands*, December 2020, <https://www.rff.org/publications/working-papers/efficiency-and-equity-of-an-outdoor-recreation-equipment-tax-to-fund-public-lands>; statement for the record by the Western Energy Alliance, S.Hrg. 117-462, pp. 139-140; Center for Western Priorities, *Funding America’s Public Lands Future*, November 2019, <https://westernpriorities.org/resource/funding-americas-public-lands-future/>; and National Park Hospitality Association and National Parks Conservation Association, *Sustainable Supplementary Funding for America’s National Parks*, March 19, 2013. Also see S. 2783 (116th Cong.), H.R. 2863 (115th Cong.); S. 268 (114th Cong.); H.R. 5220 (113th Cong.); H.R. 1731 (110th Cong.); H.R. 3094 (110th Cong.); S. 2817 (110th Cong.); S. 886 and H.R. 1124 (109th Cong.); and H.R. 5358 (108th Cong.).

¹⁰² See, for example, H.R. 1577 (115th Cong.); Pew Charitable Trusts, *Protecting Our Parks*; PERC, *Fixing National Park Maintenance for the Long Haul*, November 2020, <https://www.perc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/fixing-national-park-maintenance.pdf>, hereinafter cited as PERC, *Fixing National Park Maintenance*; questions for the record by Representatives Don Young, Jim Costa, and Tom McClintock, H.Hrg. 115-39, pp. 9-12; and testimony of Jessica Wahl, Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, in U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, *Deferred Maintenance Needs and Potential Solutions on Federal Lands Administered by the Department of the Interior and the USDA Forest Service*, 116th Cong., 1st sess., June 18, 2019, S.Hrg. 116-307, pp. 39-41, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-116shrg37803/pdf/CHRG-116shrg37803.pdf>, hereinafter cited as “S.Hrg. 116-307.”

¹⁰³ NPS identifies assets that are candidates for disposal as part of its real property reporting to the GSA (Federal Real Property Public Data Set, <https://www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/policy/real-property-policy/asset-management/federal-real-property-profile-frpp/federal-real-property-public-data-set>). For FY2023, NPS identified 1,087 assets (of a total 71,808 assets) as having the disposal determination; it did not include any DM needs for these assets in its DM total (NPS FY2025 budget justification, p. SpecEx-3). GAO found in 2016 that legal requirements—such as the requirement in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (P.L. 100-77, as amended) that federal buildings slated for disposal must be assessed for their potential to provide homeless assistance before being disposed of by other means—have created obstacles for NPS disposal of unneeded properties (GAO, *Federal Real Property: Improving Data Transparency and Expanding the National Strategy Could Help Address Long-Standing Challenges*, GAO-16-275, March 2016, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/676406.pdf>). More recently, NPS has noted that approval received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to streamline McKinney-Vento requirements for NPS demolition projects has “significantly shorten[ed] the time it takes to work through regulatory requirements” (NPS FY2024 budget justification, p. CONST-34).

¹⁰⁴ See, for example, testimony of Dan Puskar, Public Lands Alliance, at S.Hrg. 116-307, pp. 33-34.

authority.¹⁰⁵ Debate continues on the optimal strategies for reducing NPS deferred maintenance and the extent to which this should be a priority for NPS and for Congress.

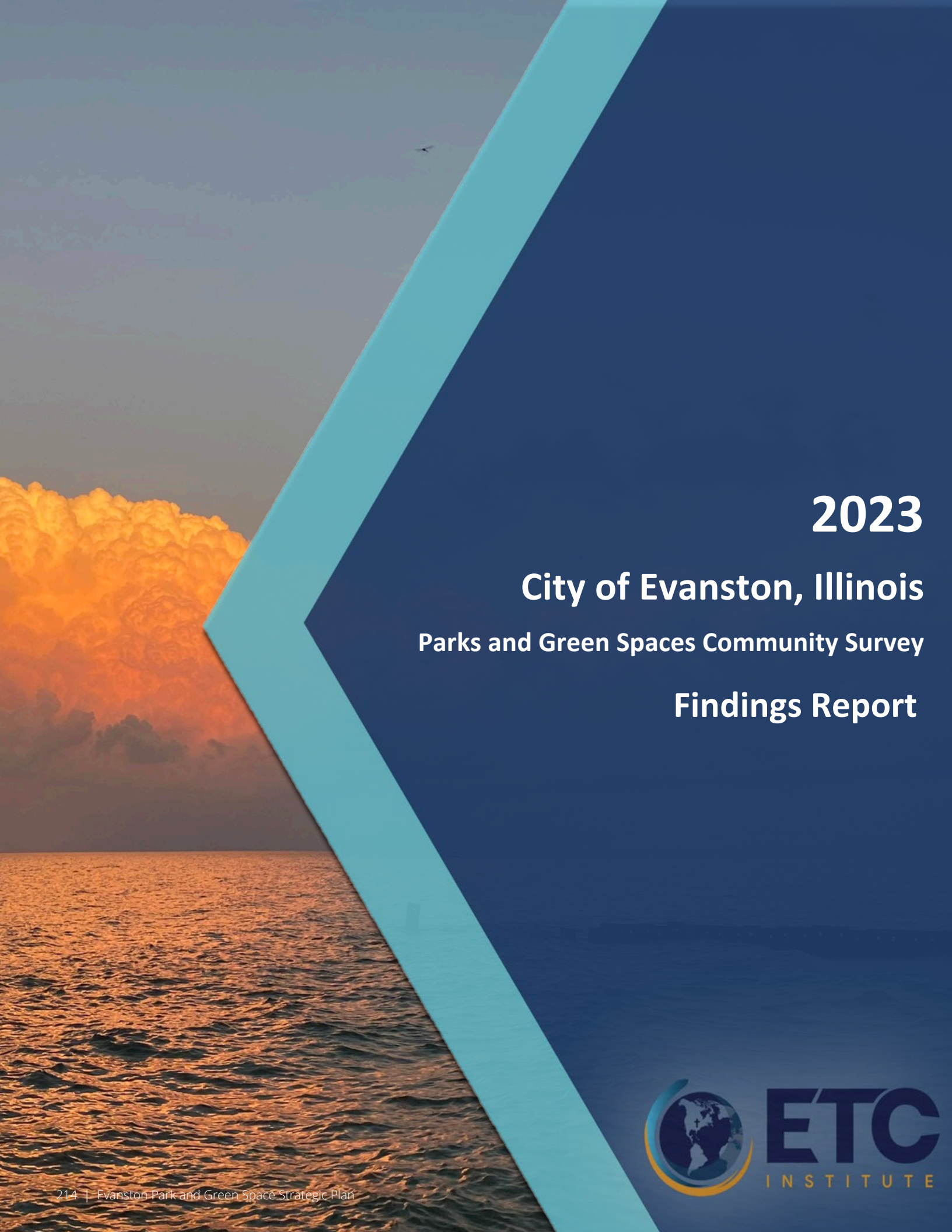
Author Information

Laura B. Comay
Specialist in Natural Resources Policy

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, letter from Olivia B. Ferreter, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget, Finance, Performance, and Acquisition, Department of the Interior, to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, March 29, 2018, included as Attachment 3 to H.Hrg. 115-39.



2023

City of Evanston, Illinois

Parks and Green Spaces Community Survey

Findings Report



Contents

Section 1: Executive Summary.....	4
Section 2: Charts and Graphs.....	14
Section 3: Priority Investment Rating	50
Section 4: National Benchmarks.....	58
Section 5: Tabular Data.....	66
Section 6: Survey Instrument.....	111



Executive Summary

2023 City of Evanston Parks and Green Spaces Community Survey Executive Summary

Overview

ETC Institute administered a Parks and Green Spaces Community Survey for the City of Evanston Parks and Recreation Department during spring 2023. The survey will help the City of Evanston determine park and green space priorities for the community.

Methodology

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the City of Evanston. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online at *EvanstonParkSurvey.org*.

After the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute followed up with residents to encourage participation. To prevent people who were not residents of Evanston from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses that were entered online with the addresses that were originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not included in the final database for this report.

The goal was to complete a minimum of 400 completed surveys from City residents. The goal was met with 469 completed surveys collected. The overall results for the sample of 469 households have a precision of at least ± 4.5 at the 95% level of confidence.

This report contains the following:

- Charts showing the overall results of the survey (Section 2)
- Priority Investment Rating (PIR) that identifies priorities for facilities and programs (Section 3)
- Benchmarks comparing data from Evanston to national averages (Section 4)
- Tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey (Section 5)
- Answers to open-ended questions (Section 6)
- A copy of the survey instrument (Section 7)

The major findings of the survey are summarized on the following pages.

Evanston Parks and Recreation Facilities

Use of Parks/Facilities: Respondents were asked to indicate if their household had visited any parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other parks and recreation facilities operated by the city during the past 12 months. Most respondents (98%) visited one of these facilities. The highest percentage of respondents (43%) visited parks or facilities multiple times a week followed by 21% visiting weekly. Most respondents (85%) rated the overall condition of these facilities as either excellent (29%) or good (56%).

Barriers to Use: The top reasons respondents did not utilize Evanston parks and recreation beaches, parks, recreation centers, and other facilities more often were busy schedules (34%), lack of restrooms (20%), and old and outdated facilities (17%).

Transportation Methods: Respondents were asked to rate how often they use five types of transportation to visit City of Evanston parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other facilities. Respondents said they “most often” walk (62%) followed by drive in a personal vehicle for 10 minutes or less (36%).

Evanston Parks and Recreation Activities

Activity Participation: Respondents were asked to indicate if their household participated in any activities offered by the City of Evanston during the past year. Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents participated in the last year. Almost half of respondents (47%) had participated in 2-3 activities and almost a quarter (23%) did 4-6 activities. Most respondents (93%) rated these programs as either good (62%) or excellent (31%).

Barriers to Participation. Respondents were asked to select all the reasons they had not participated in Evanston recreation programs more during the past year. Respondents most often listed that they were too busy (34%), didn’t know what was offered (33%), or prefer individual activities (23%).

Ways Households Learn about Parks and Recreation News, Events, Programs, and Activities: Respondents were asked to select all the ways they currently receive information about Evanston Parks and Recreation. The highest number of respondents use the city website (76%), eNewsletters (69%), or word of mouth (55%). Respondents would most prefer that the city use eNewsletters (63%), the website (60%), or social media (32%) to communicate about Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities.

Benefits of Parks & Recreation and Support for Improvements

Benefits of Parks and Recreation. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on 15 statements about benefits of parks and recreation in Evanston. The highest percentage of respondents agreed (rating “agree” or “strongly agree”) that parks and recreation improves the quality of life in the city (96%), helps preserve open space and the environment (93%), and improves the health, wellbeing, and fitness of the community (91%). Respondents were then asked to select the three benefits most important to their household and most important to the future of Evanston. The same four items were selected as most important to households and the community:

- Improves health, wellbeing, and fitness of the community
- Improves the overall quality of life in the city
- Contributes to a sense of community
- Helps preserve open space and the environment

Potential Improvements: Respondents were asked to rate their level of support for 18 potential improvements and developments to parks and facilities. Respondents most supported (rating “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive”) focus on daily maintenance of existing parks and facilities (91%), improving existing parks infrastructure (91%), and renovating or upgrading aging parks and facilities (89%). Respondents were then asked to select the three potential improvements most important to their household. These were the three items selected most often:

- Improve existing parks infrastructure (39%)
- Focus on daily maintenance of existing parks and facilities (31%)
- Enhance bike and pedestrian access to parks/facilities (26%)

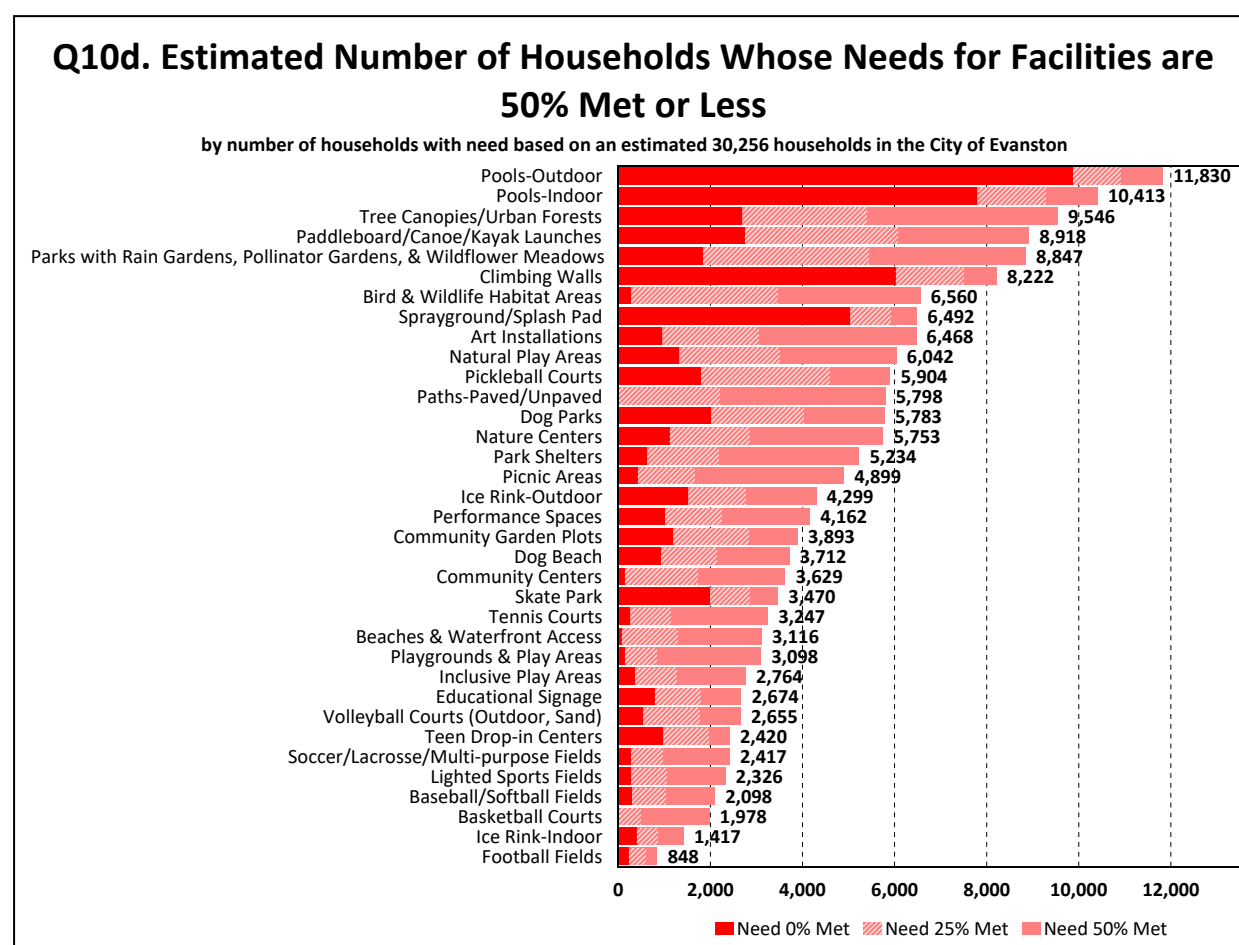
Parks and Recreation Facilities Needs and Priorities

Facility Needs: Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 35 parks and recreation facilities and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest “unmet” need for various facilities/amenities.

The three parks and recreation facilities/amenities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need:

1. Outdoor Pools – 11,830 households
2. Indoor Pools – 10,413 households
3. Tree Canopies/Urban Forests – 9,546 households

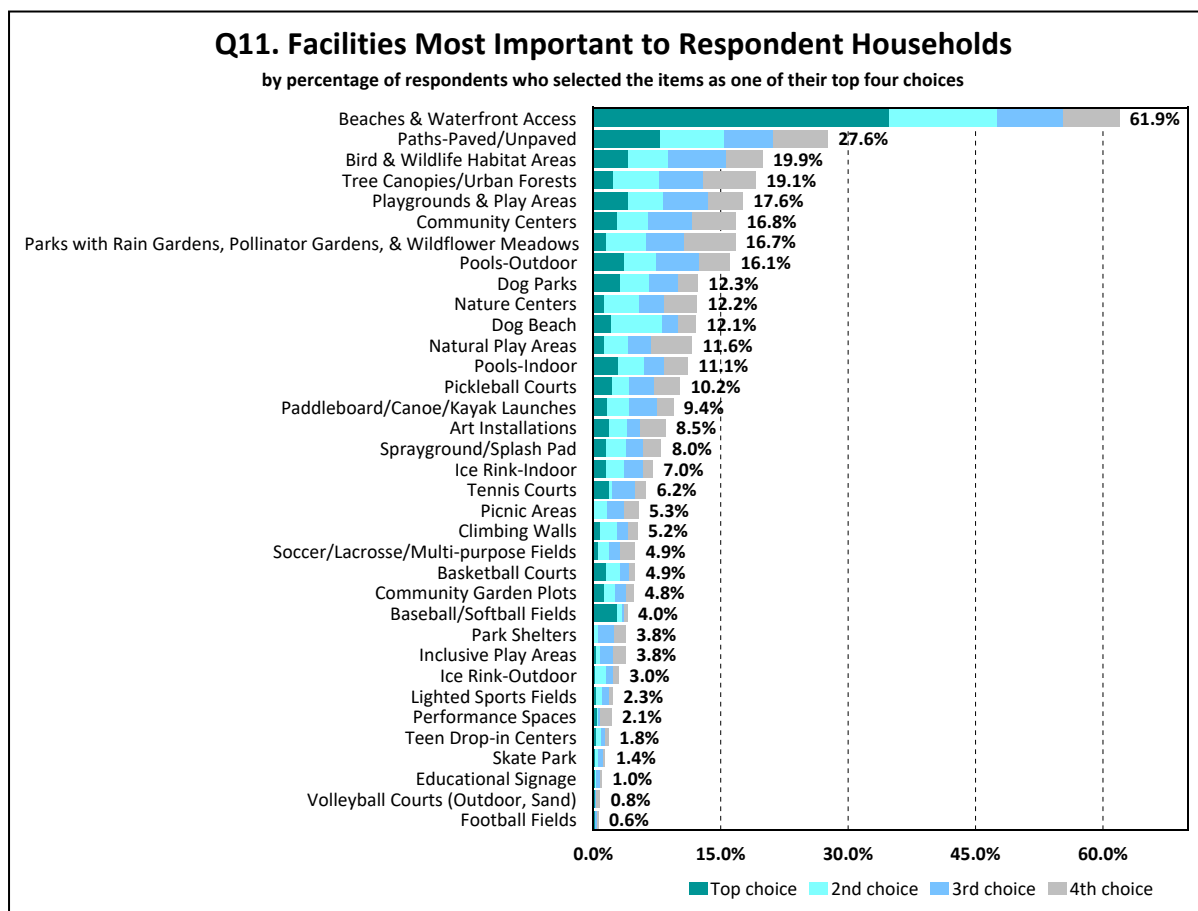
The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 35 parks and recreation facilities assessed is shown in the chart below.



Facilities and Amenities Importance: In addition to assessing the needs for each parks and recreation facility, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each item. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, these were the four facilities ranked most important to residents:

1. Beaches & Waterfront Access (62%)
2. Paths—Paved/Unpaved (28%)
3. Bird & Wildlife Habitat Areas (20%)
4. Tree Canopies/Urban Forests (19%)

The percentage of residents who selected each facility/amenity as one of their top four choices is shown in the chart below.

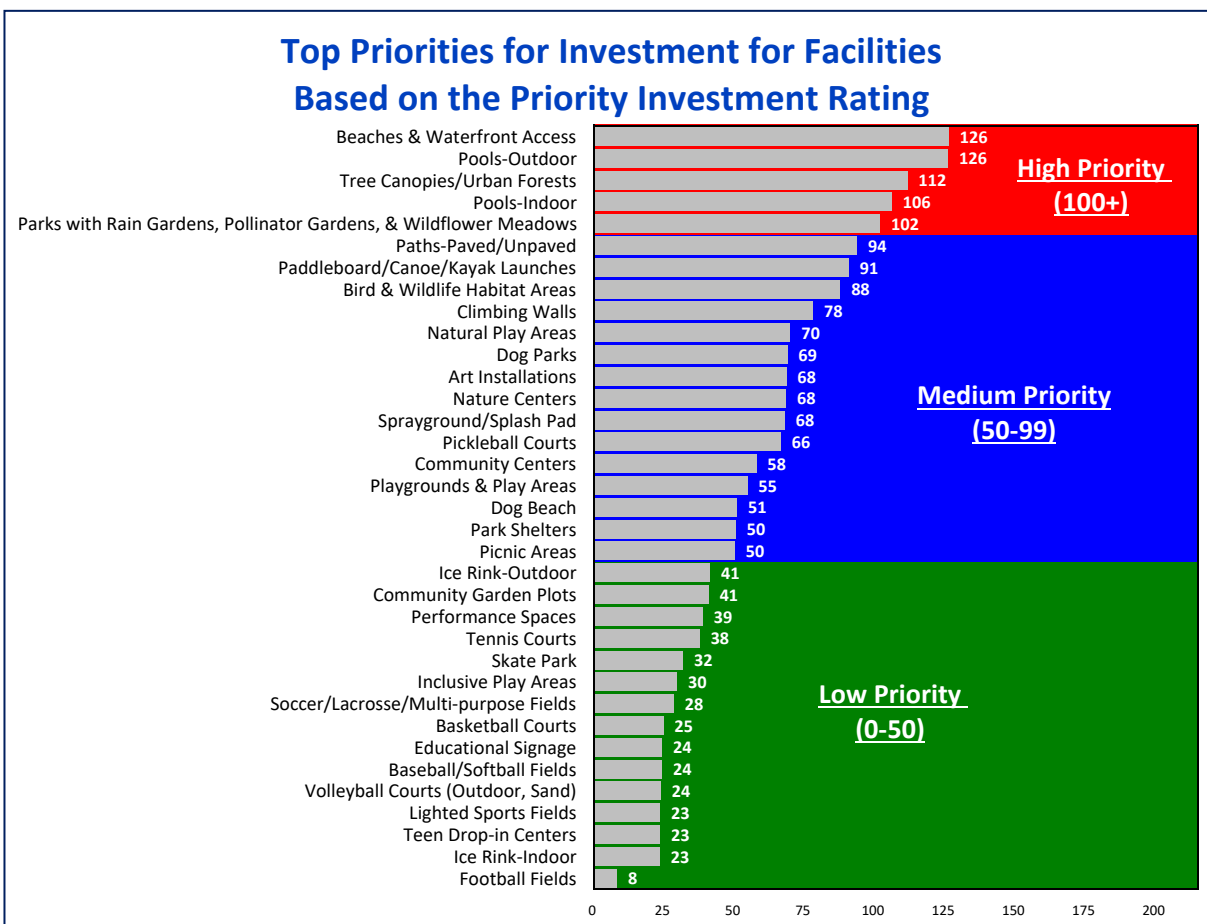


Priorities for Facility Investments: The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility. [Details regarding the methodology for this analysis are provided in Section 3 of this report.]

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following parks and recreation facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Beaches and Waterfront Access (PIR= 126)
- Outdoor Pools (PIR= 126)
- Tree Canopies/ Urban Forests (PIR= 112)
- Indoor Pools (PIR= 106)
- Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens, and Wildflower Meadows (PIR= 102)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 35 recreation facilities assessed in the survey.



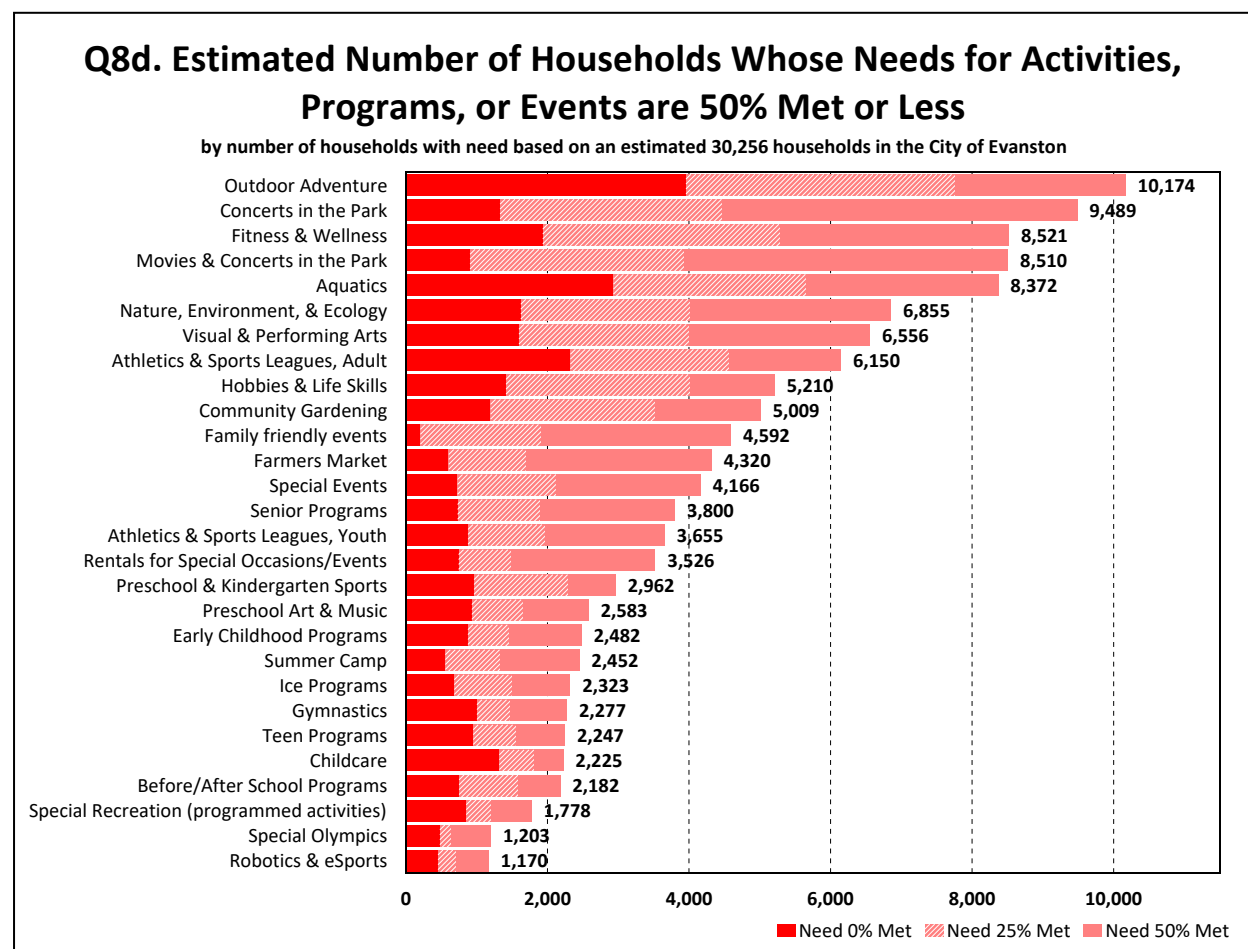
Evanston Programs, Activities, and Events Needs and Priorities

Program Needs: Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 28 programs, activities, and events and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest “unmet” need for various recreation programs.

The three programs with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need:

1. Outdoor adventure – 10,174 households
2. Concerts in the Park – 9,489 households
3. Fitness and Wellness – 8,521 households

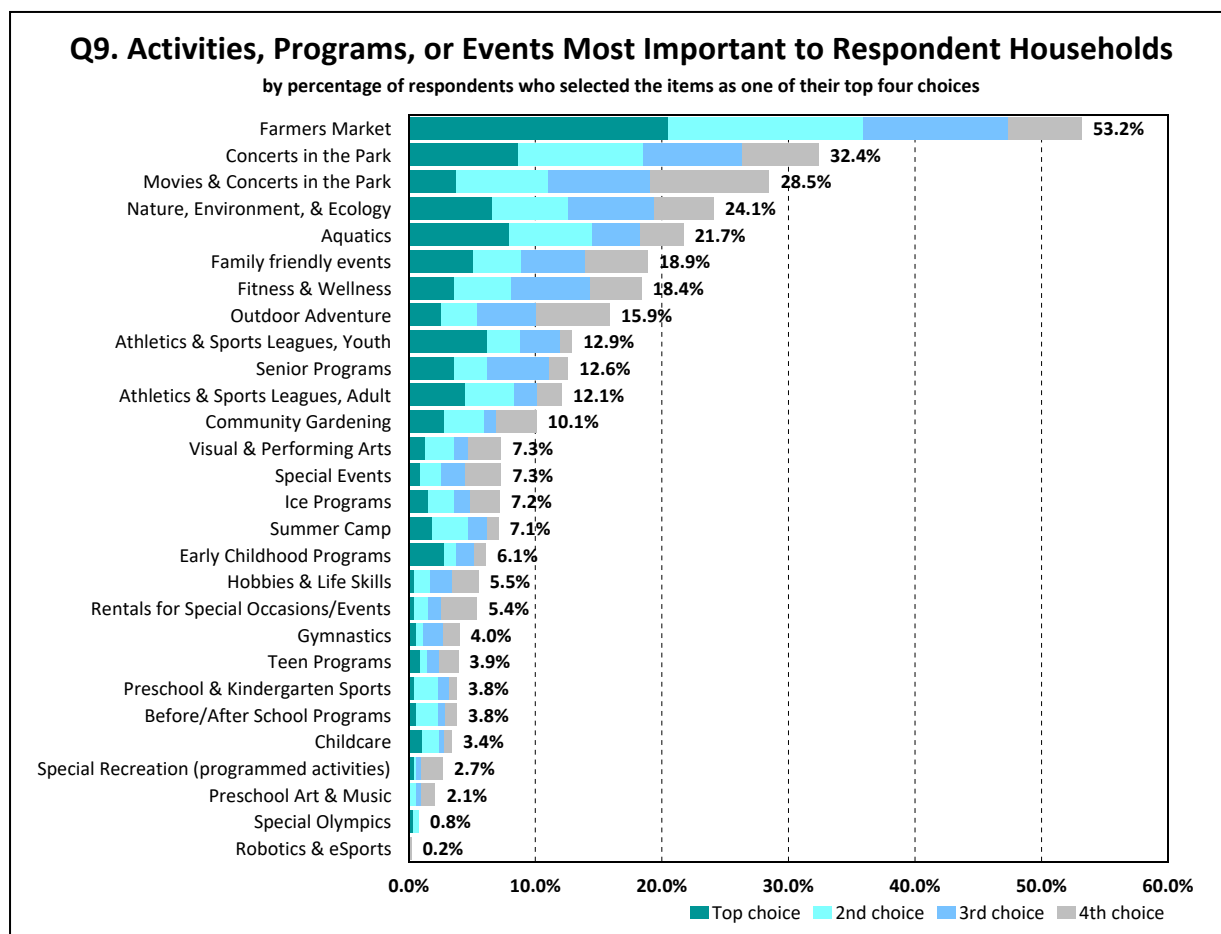
The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 28 parks and recreation program, activities, and events assessed is shown in the chart below.



Programs Importance: In addition to assessing the needs for each program, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each item. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, these are the four most important programs to residents:

1. Farmers market (53%)
2. Concerts in the Park (32%)
3. Movies & Concerts in the Park (29%)
4. Nature, Environment, and Ecology (24%)

The percentage of residents who selected each program as one of their top four choices is shown in the chart below.

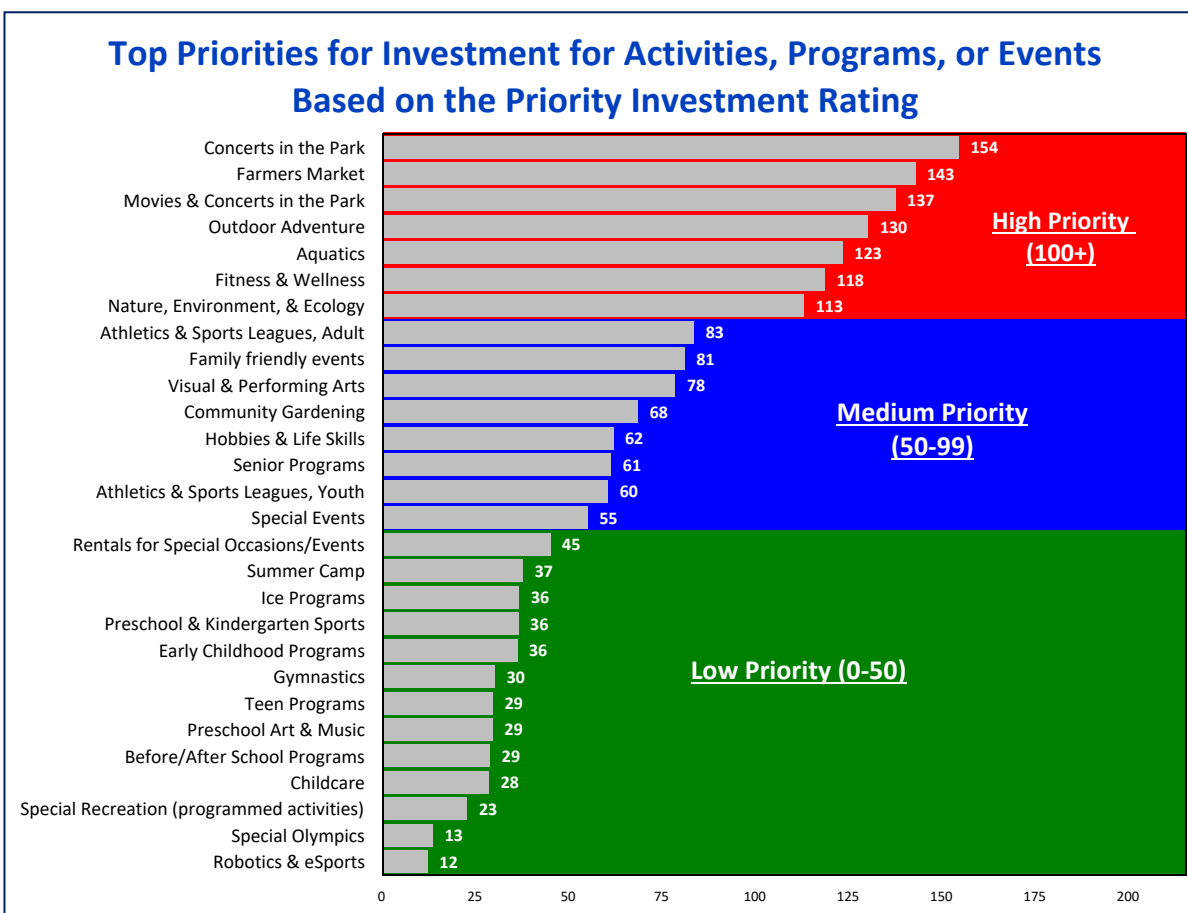


Priorities for Program Investments: The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weights (1) the importance that residents place on each program and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the program. [Details regarding the methodology for this analysis are provided in Section 3 of this report.]

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following Evanston programs were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Concerts in the Park (PIR=154)
- Farmers Market (PIR=143)
- Movies and Concerts in the Park (PIR=137)
- Outdoor adventure (PIR=130)
- Aquatics (PIR=123)
- Fitness & Wellness (PIR=118)
- Nature, Environment, and Ecology (PIR=113)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 28 programs assessed.

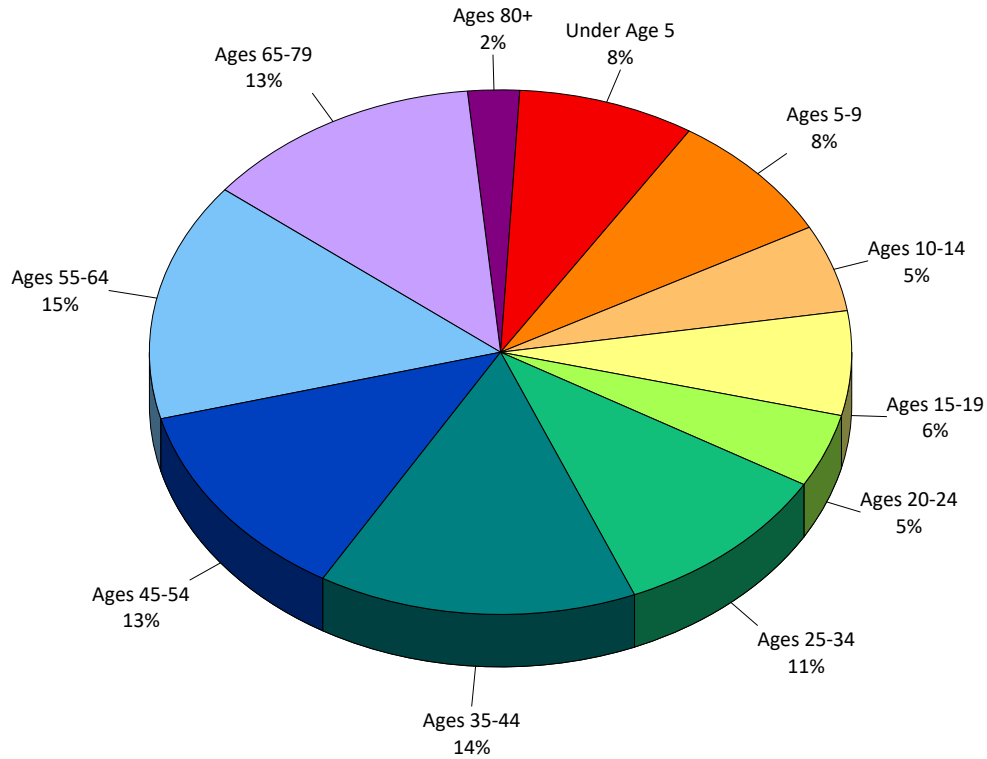




Charts & Graphs

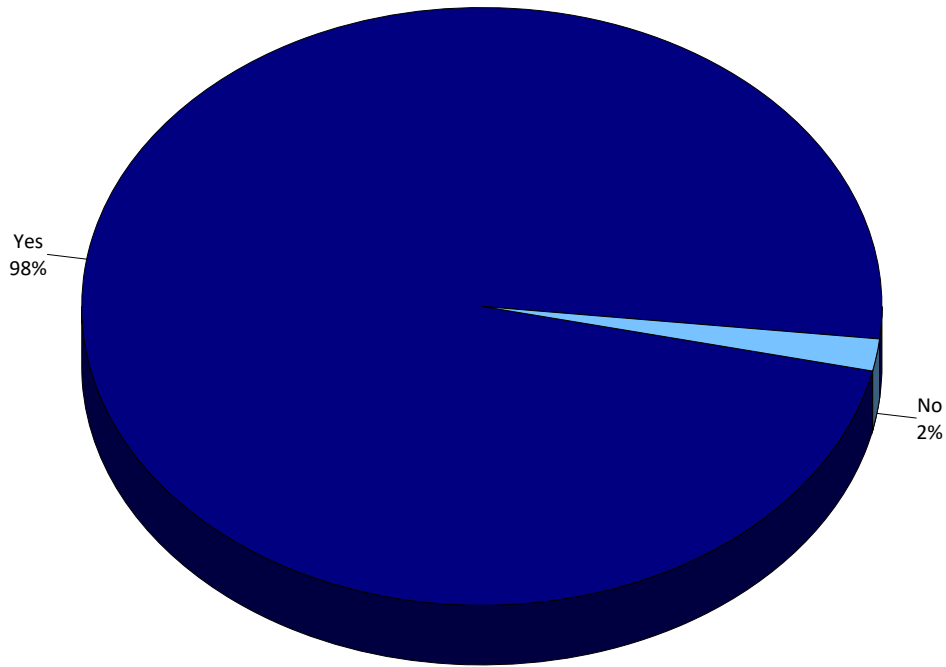
Q1. Including yourself, how many people in your household are in the following age groups?

by percentage of persons in household



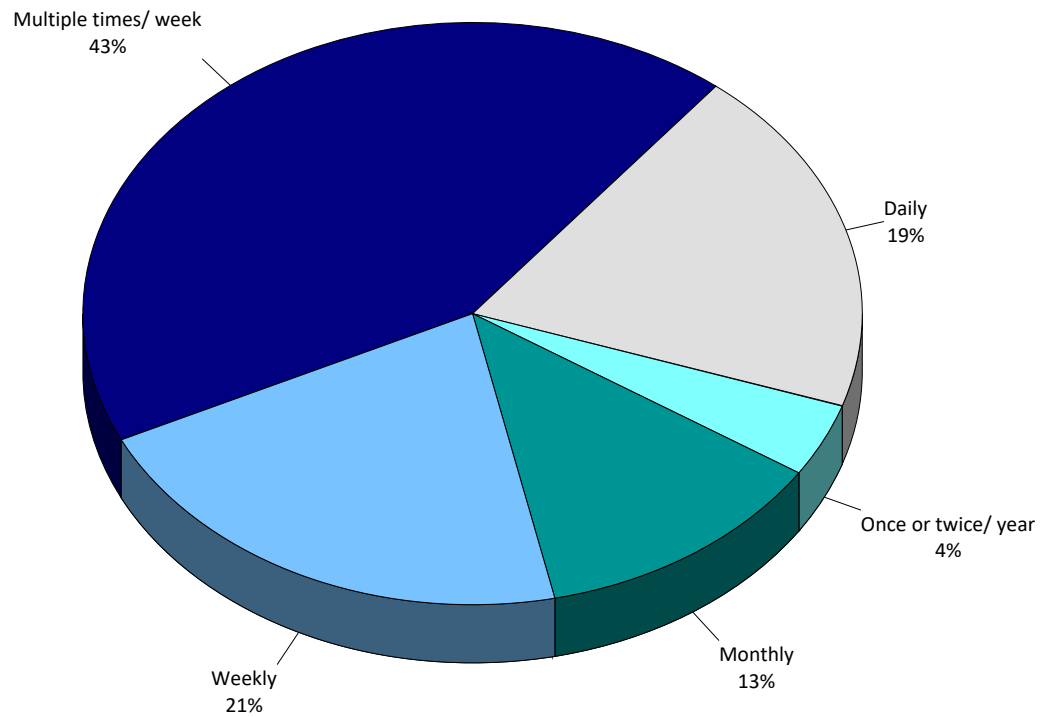
Q2. Have you or anyone in your household visited any of the parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities operated by the City of Evanston during the past 12 months?

by percentage of respondents



Q2a. Approximately how often have you or anyone in your household visited any of the parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities operated by the City of Evanston during the past 12 months?

by percentage of respondents

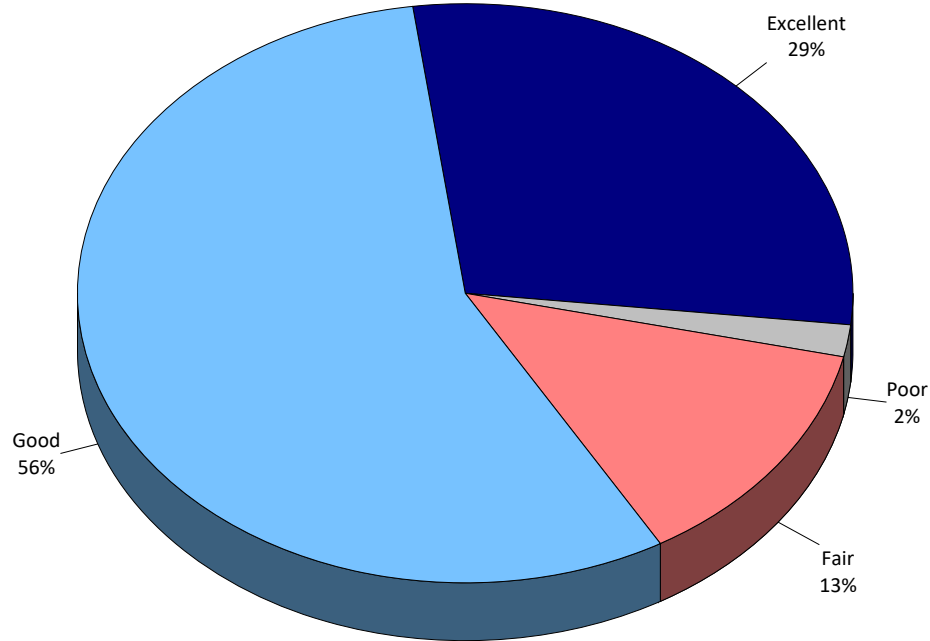


ETC Institute (2023)

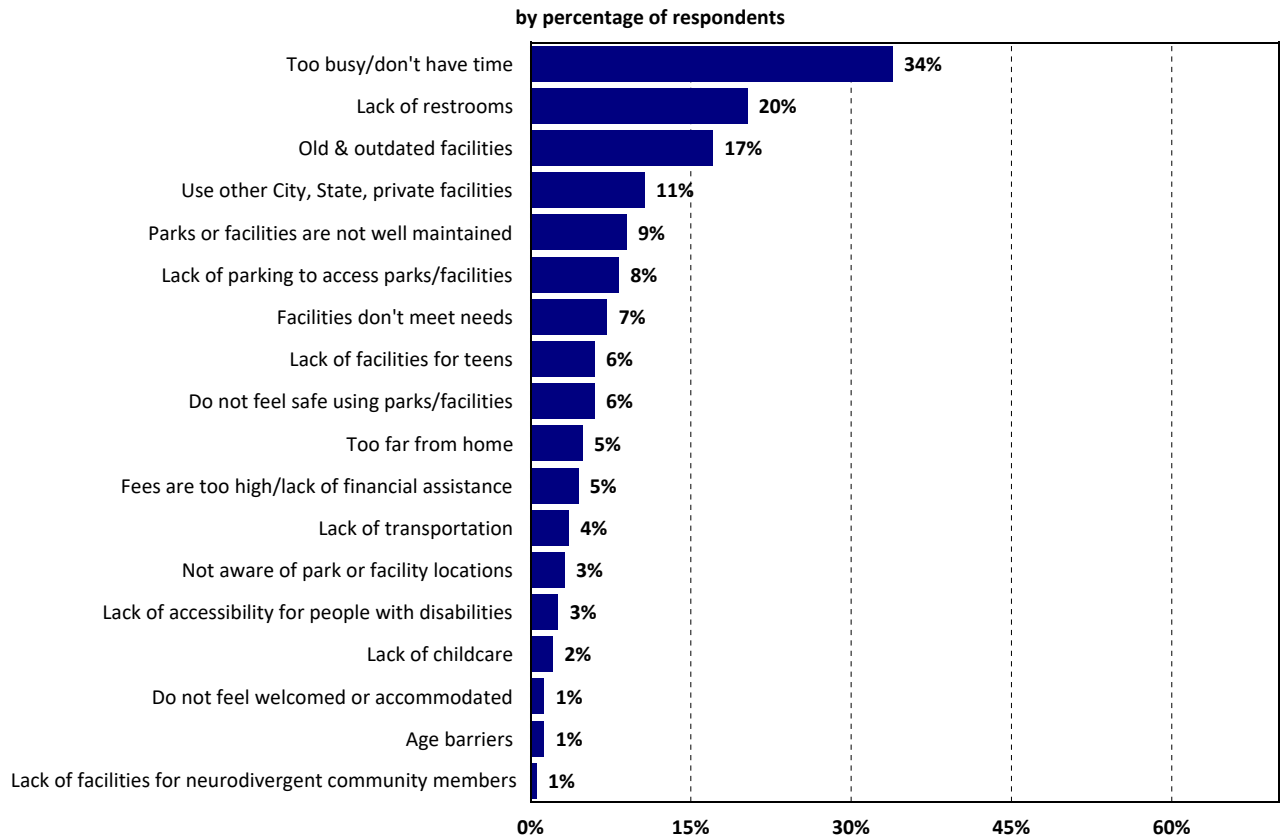
16

Q2b. Overall, how would you rate the quality of ALL the City of Evanston parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities that you and members of your household have used?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



Q2c. Please check ALL the reasons why you and the members of your household don't visit or don't visit more often the parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities offered by the City of Evanston.

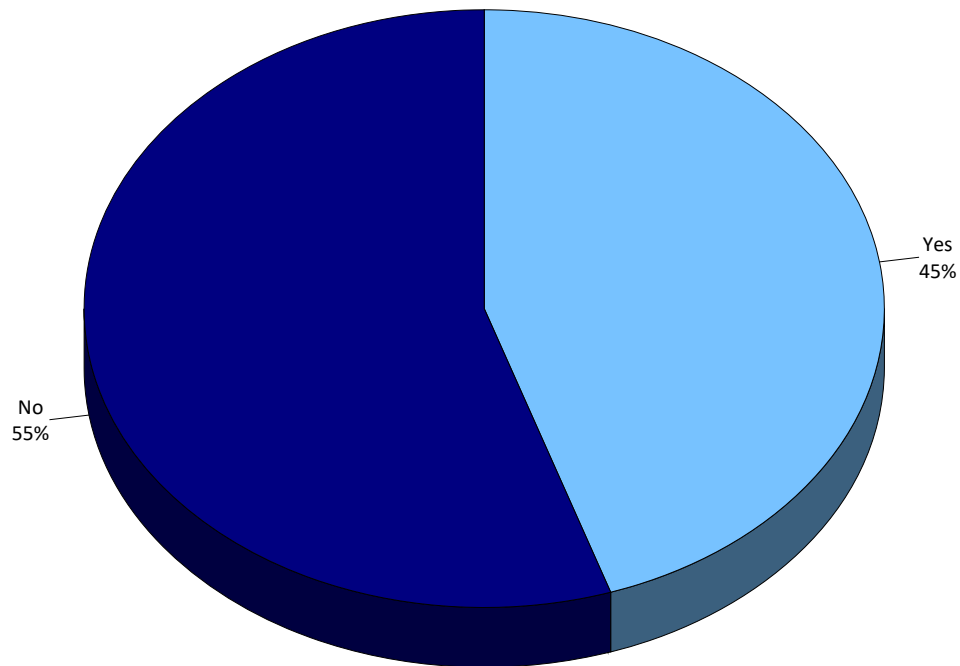


ETC Institute (2023)

18

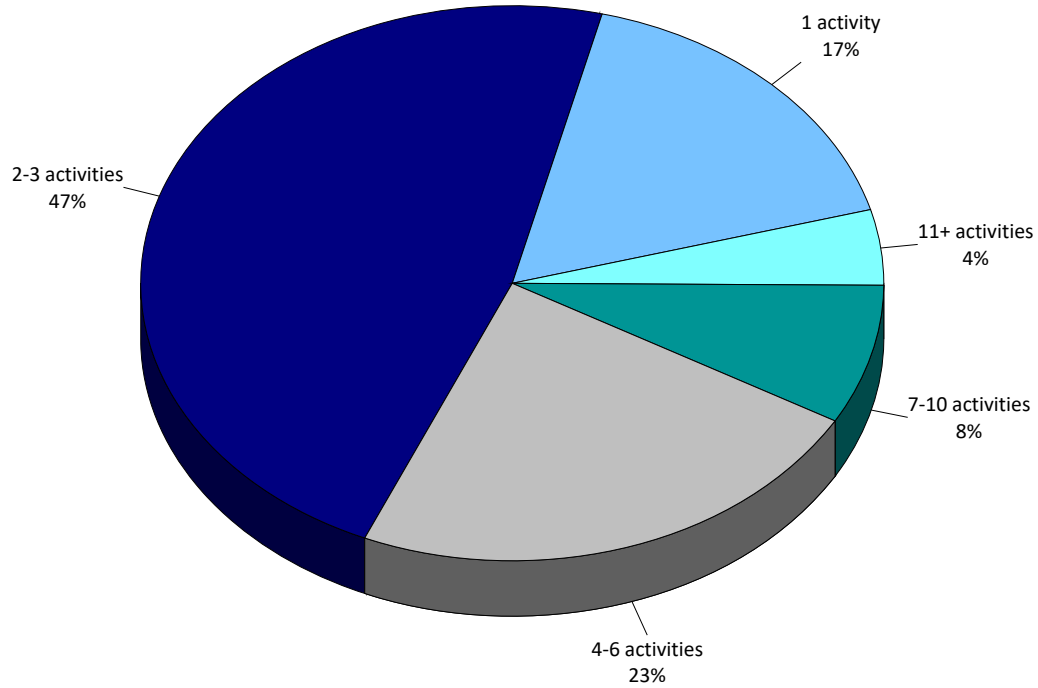
Q3. Have you or other members of your household participated in any activities (such as programs, sports leagues, or events) offered by the City of Evanston during the past 12 months?

by percentage of respondents



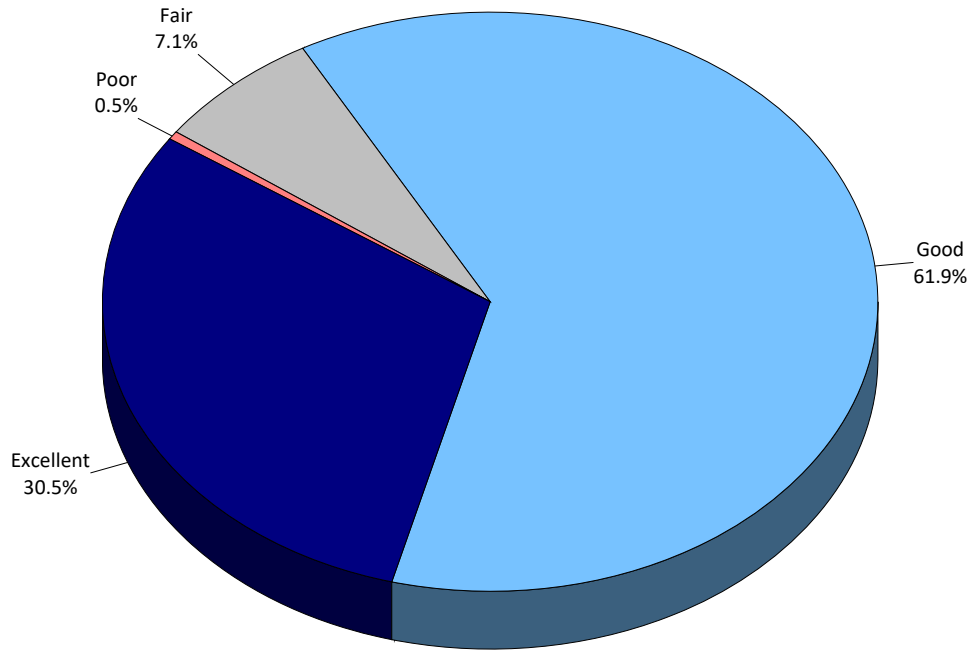
Q3a. Approximately how many different activities (such as programs, sports leagues, or events) offered by the City of Evanston have you or members of your household participated in over the past 12 months?

by percentage of respondents

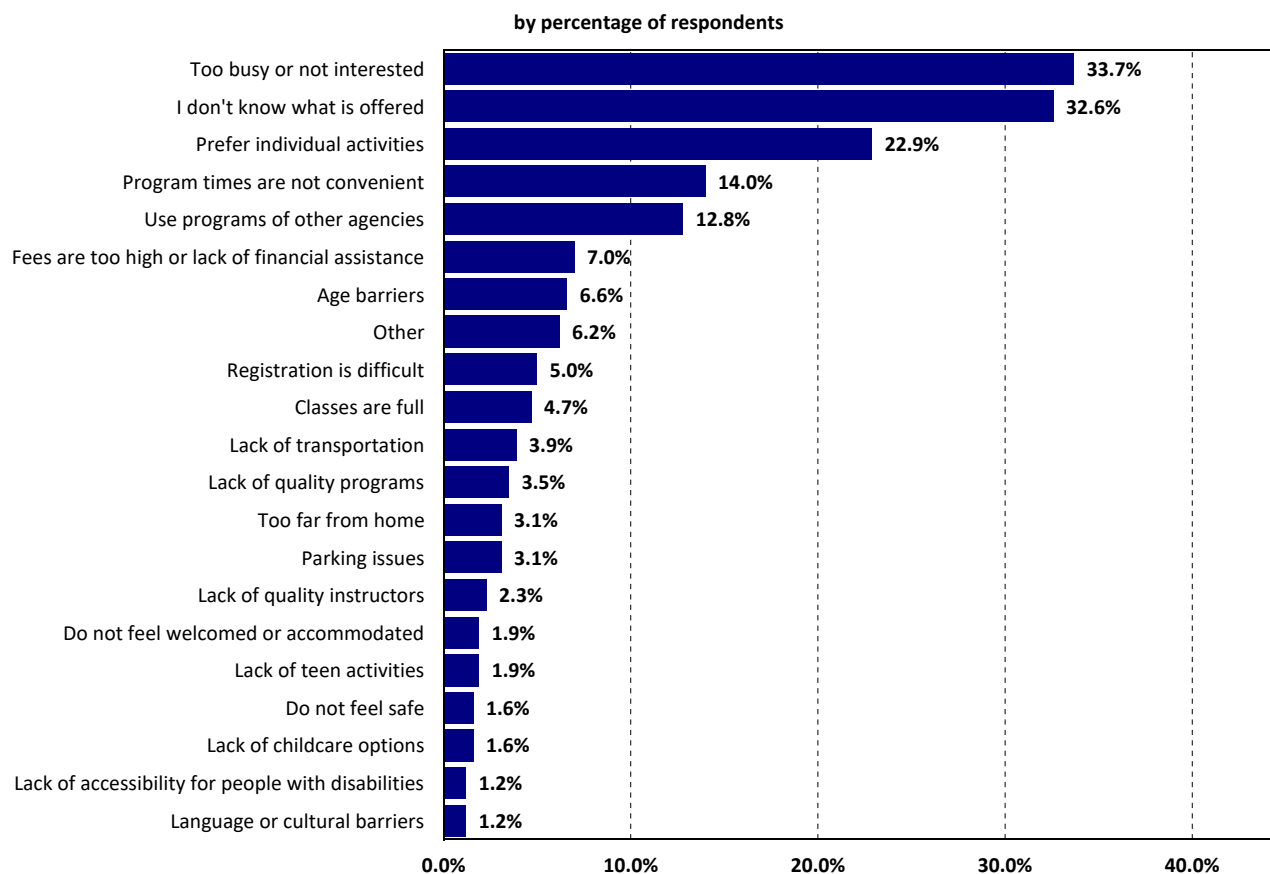


Q3b. Overall, how would you rate the quality of ALL the activities offered by the City of Evanston that you have participated in?

by percentage of respondents (excluding “not provided”)



Q3c. Please check ALL of the reasons why you and the members of your household don't participate or don't participate more often in the activities offered.

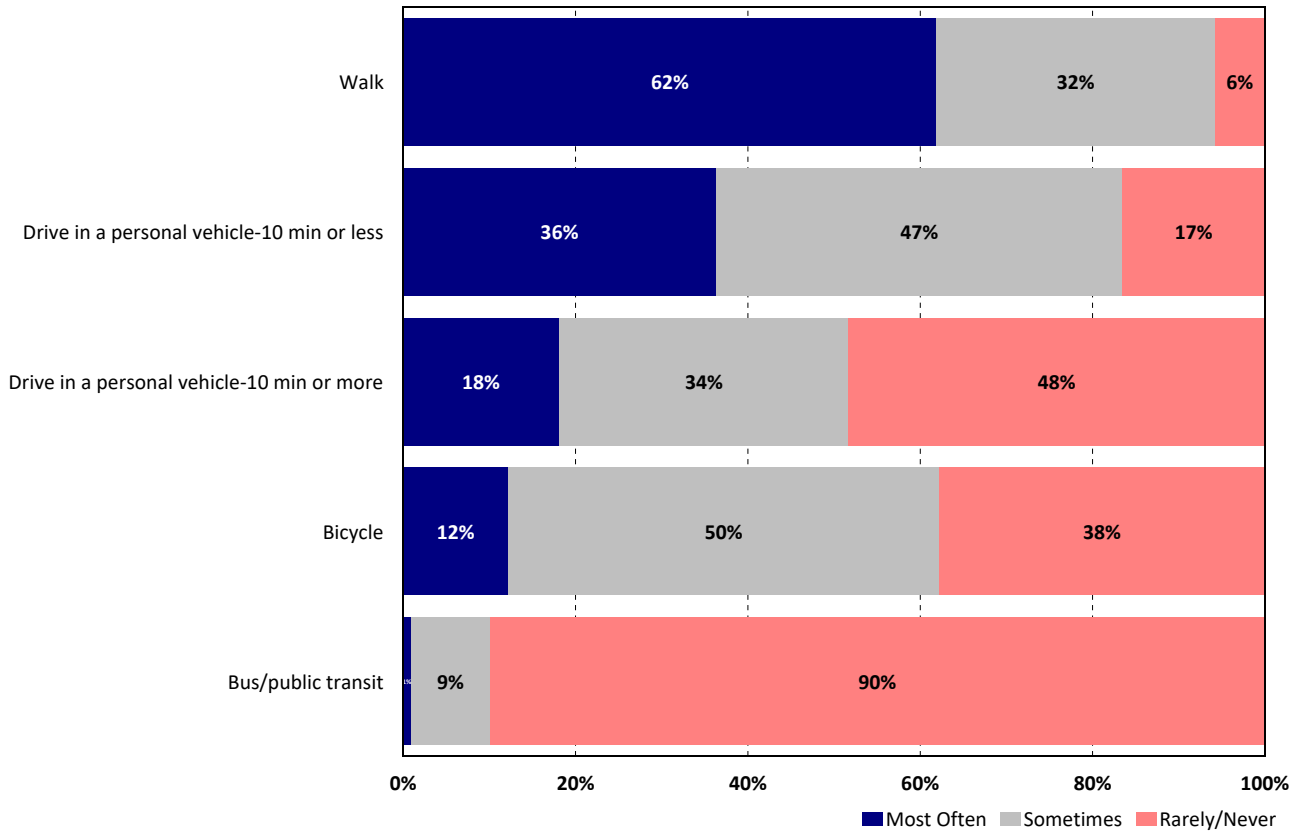


ETC Institute (2023)

22

Q4. How do you typically travel to visit City of Evanston parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")

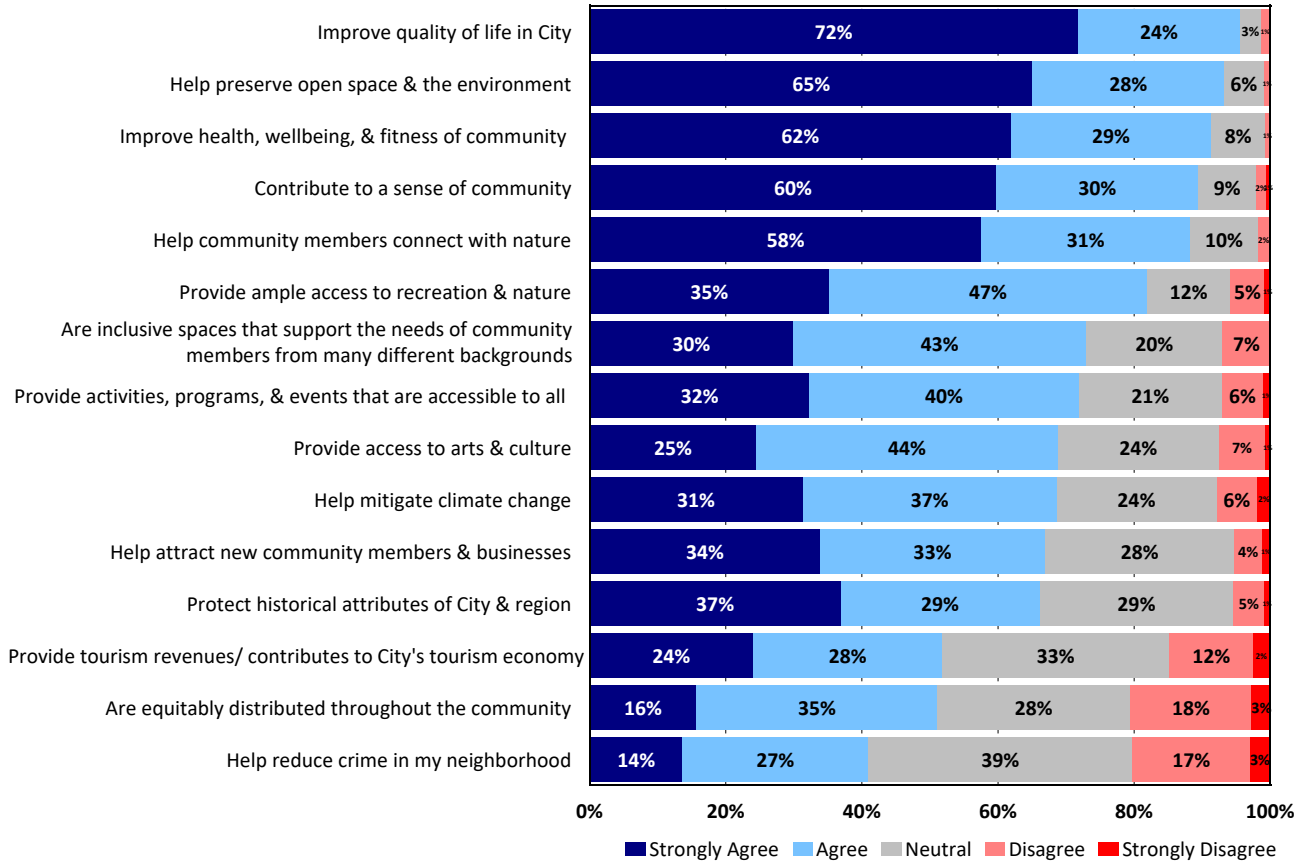


ETC Institute (2023)

23

Q5. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements

by percentage of respondents (excluding "don't know")

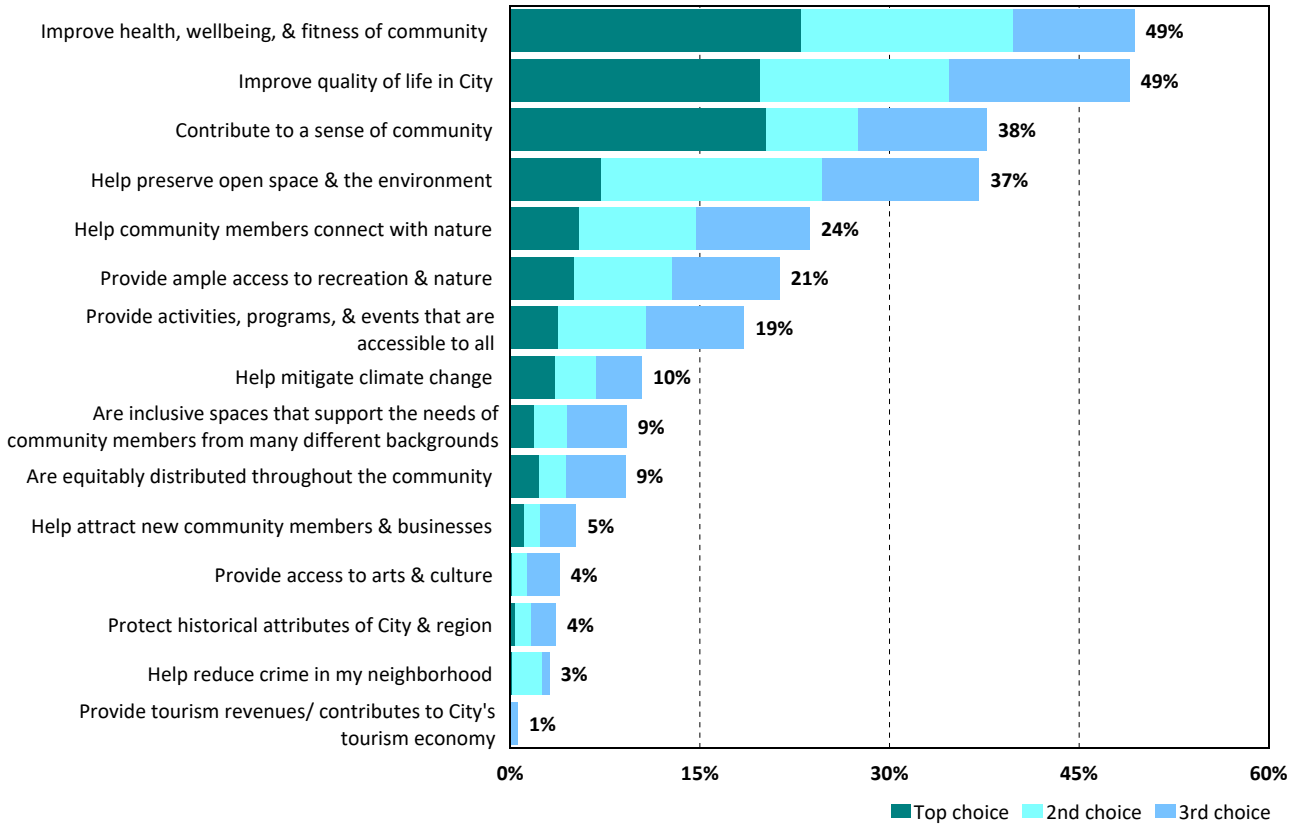


ETC Institute (2023)

24

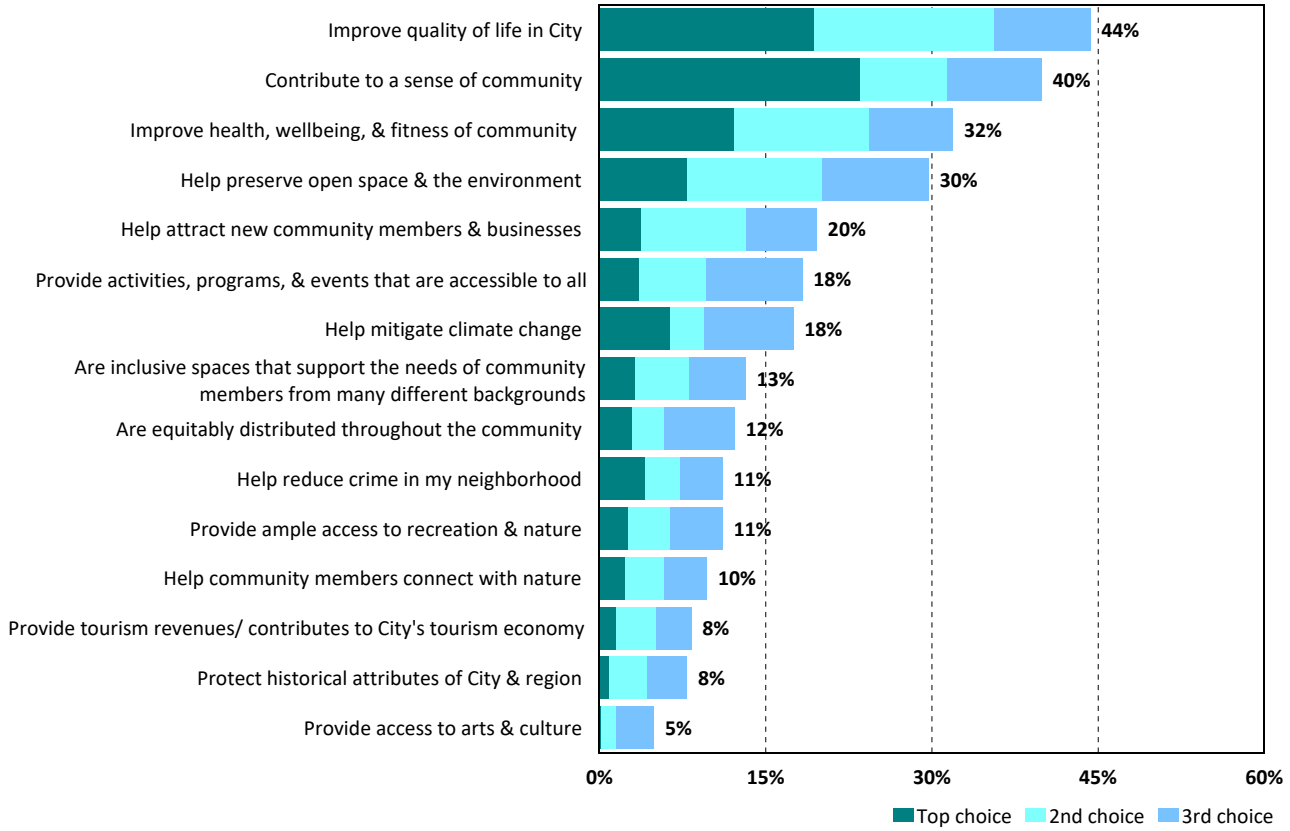
Q6. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices



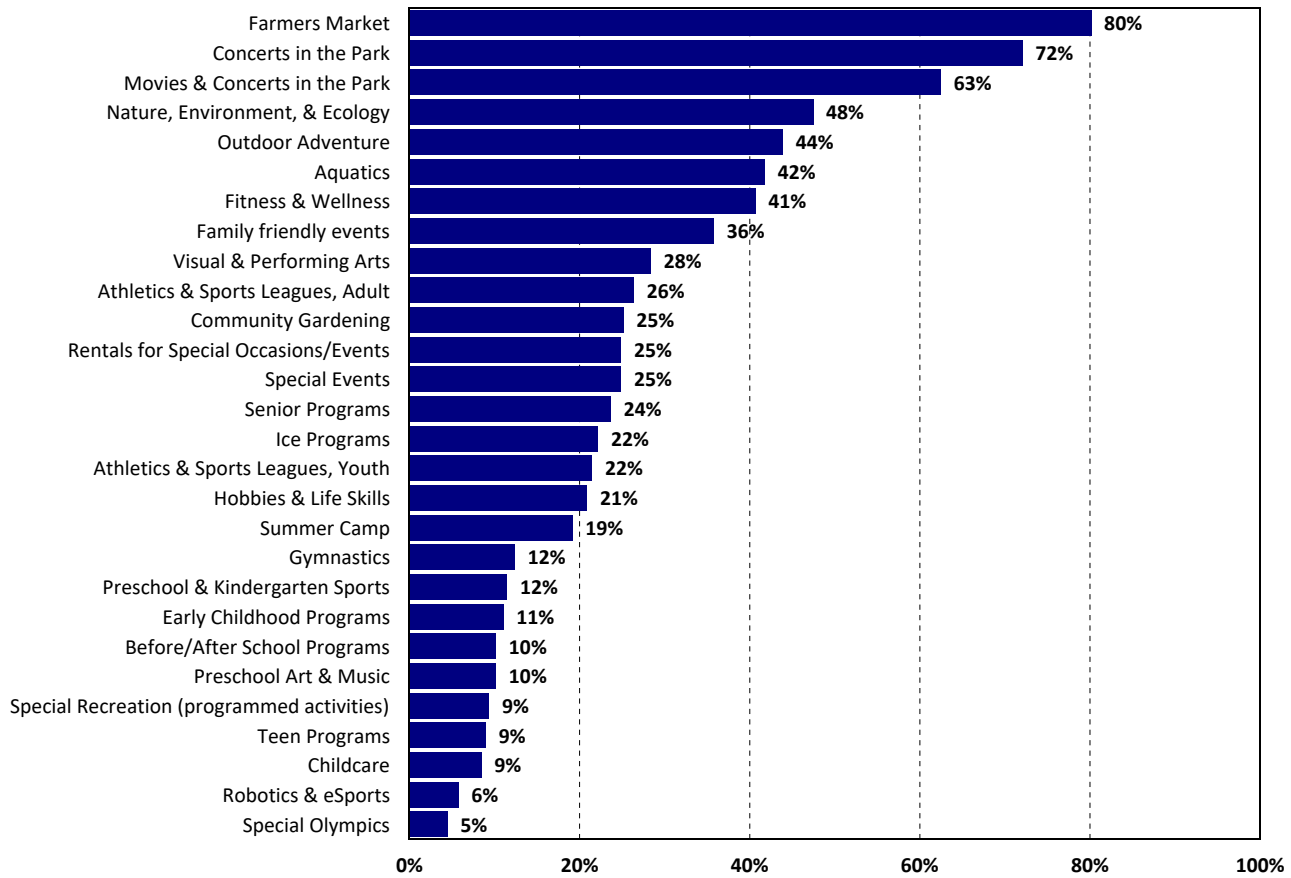
Q7. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to the future of the City of Evanston?

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices



Q8. Respondents With Need for Activities, Programs, or Events

by percentage of respondents

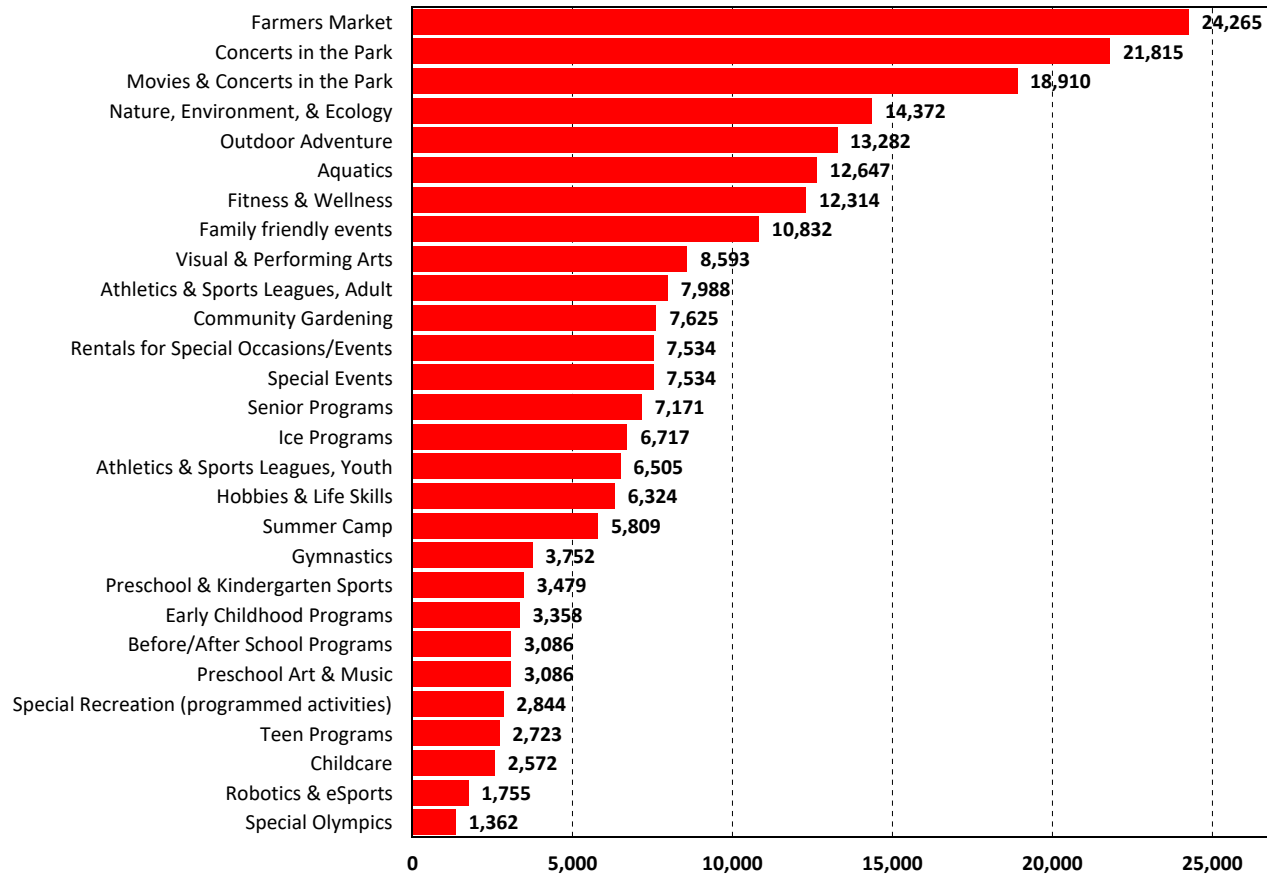


ETC Institute (2023)

27

Q8b. Estimated Number of Households With Need For Activities, Programs, or Events

by number of households based on an estimated 30,256 households in the City of Evanston

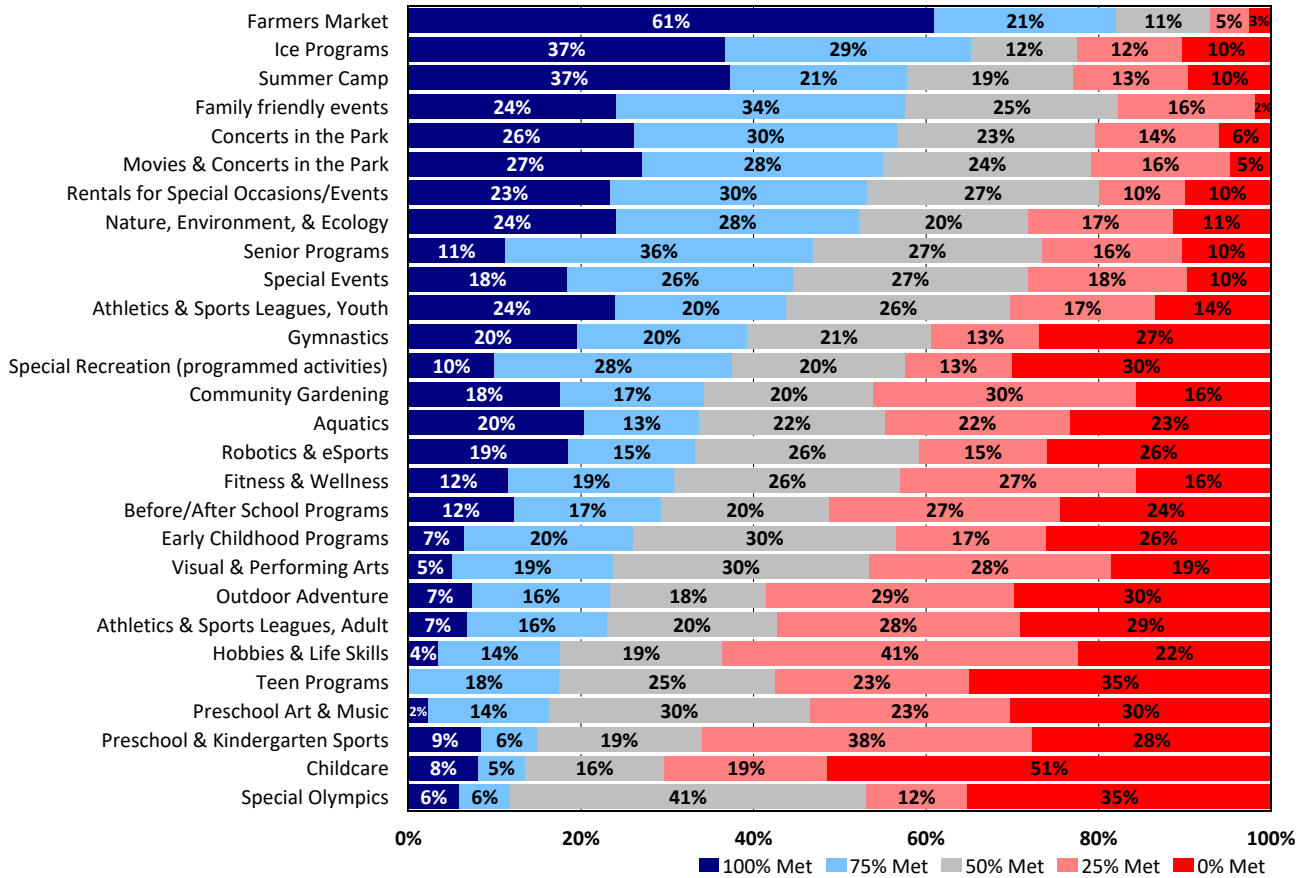


ETC Institute (2023)

28

Q8c. How Well Households' Needs Are Being Met

by percentage of respondents who indicated their household had a need for the activity, program, or event

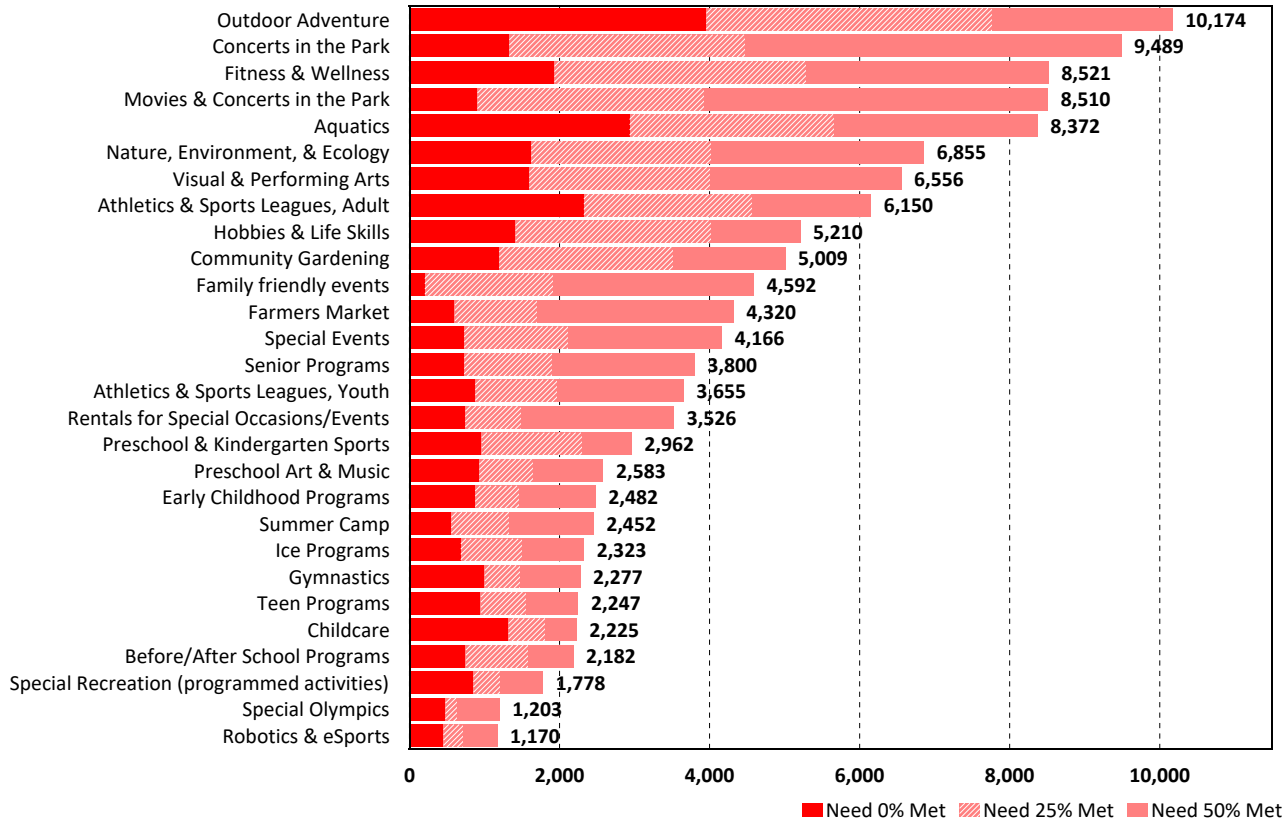


ETC Institute (2023)

29

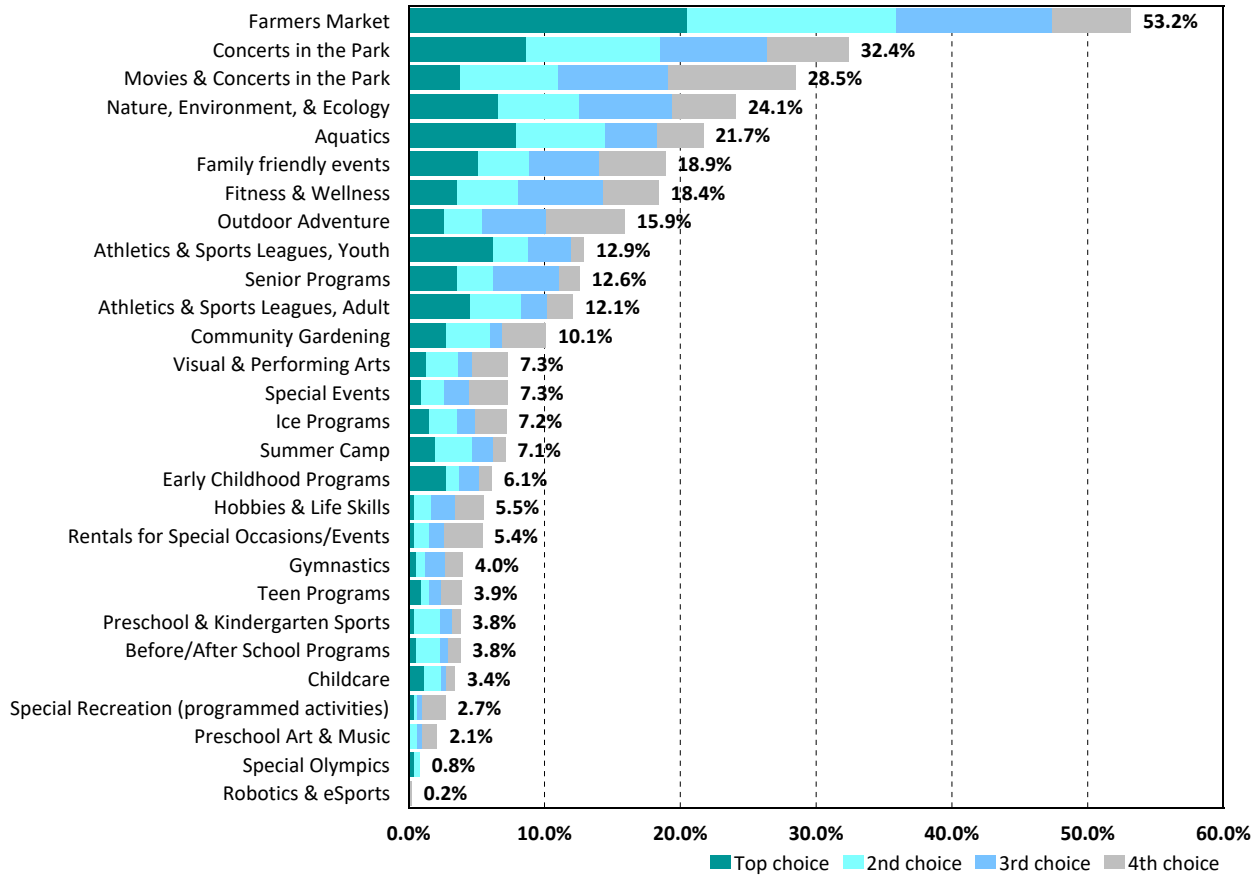
Q8d. Estimated Number of Households Whose Needs for Activities, Programs, or Events are 50% Met or Less

by number of households with need based on an estimated 30,256 households in the City of Evanston



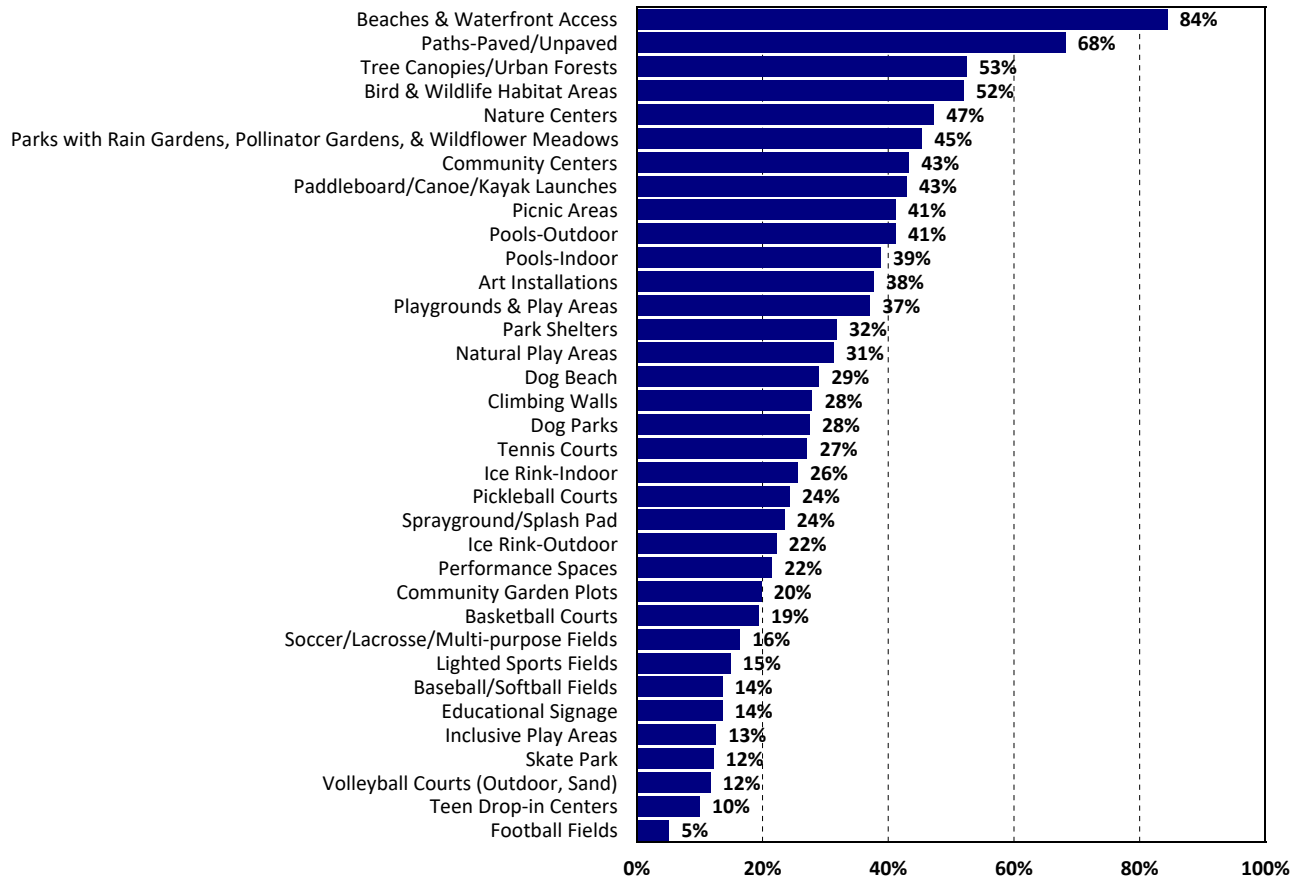
Q9. Activities, Programs, or Events Most Important to Respondent Households

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top four choices



Q10. Respondents With Need for Facilities

by percentage of respondents

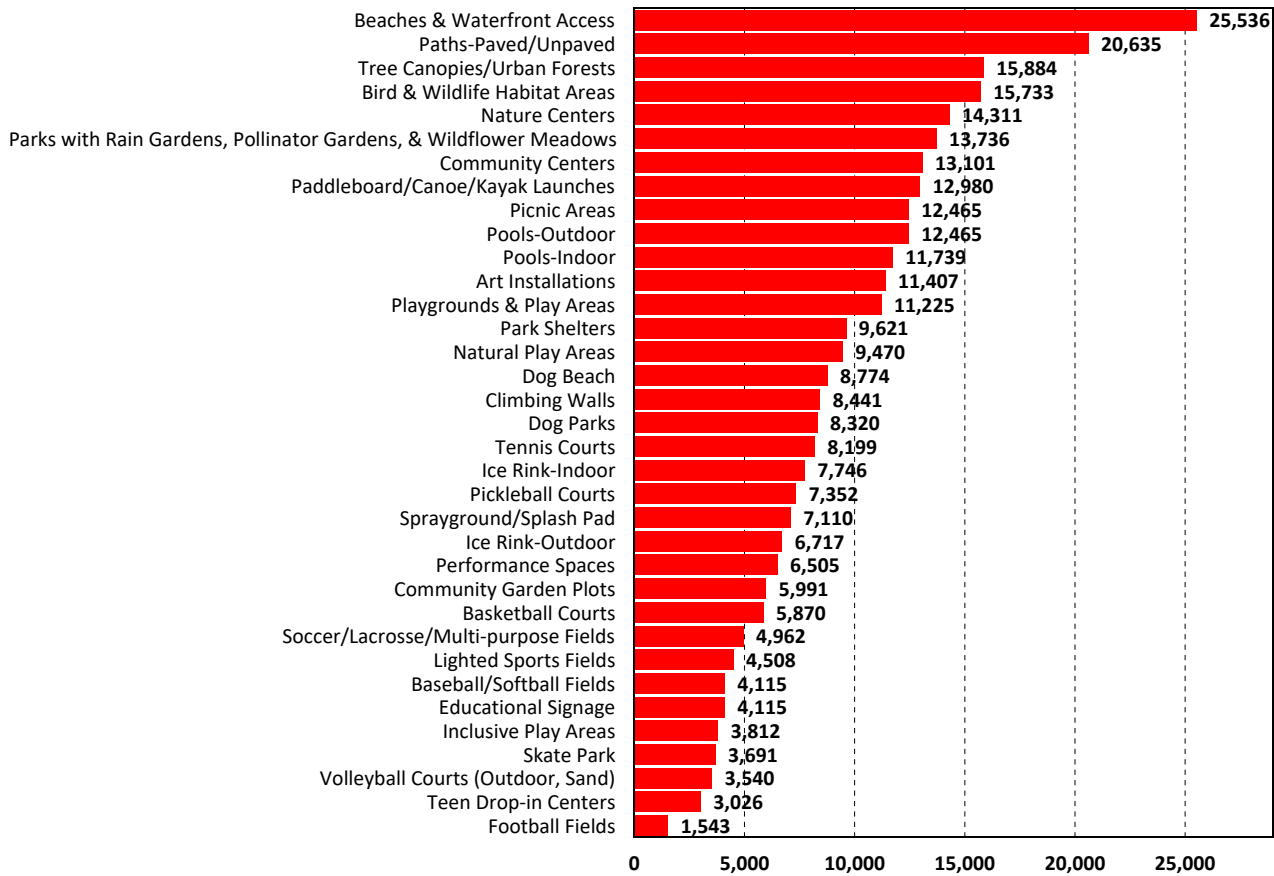


ETC Institute (2023)

32

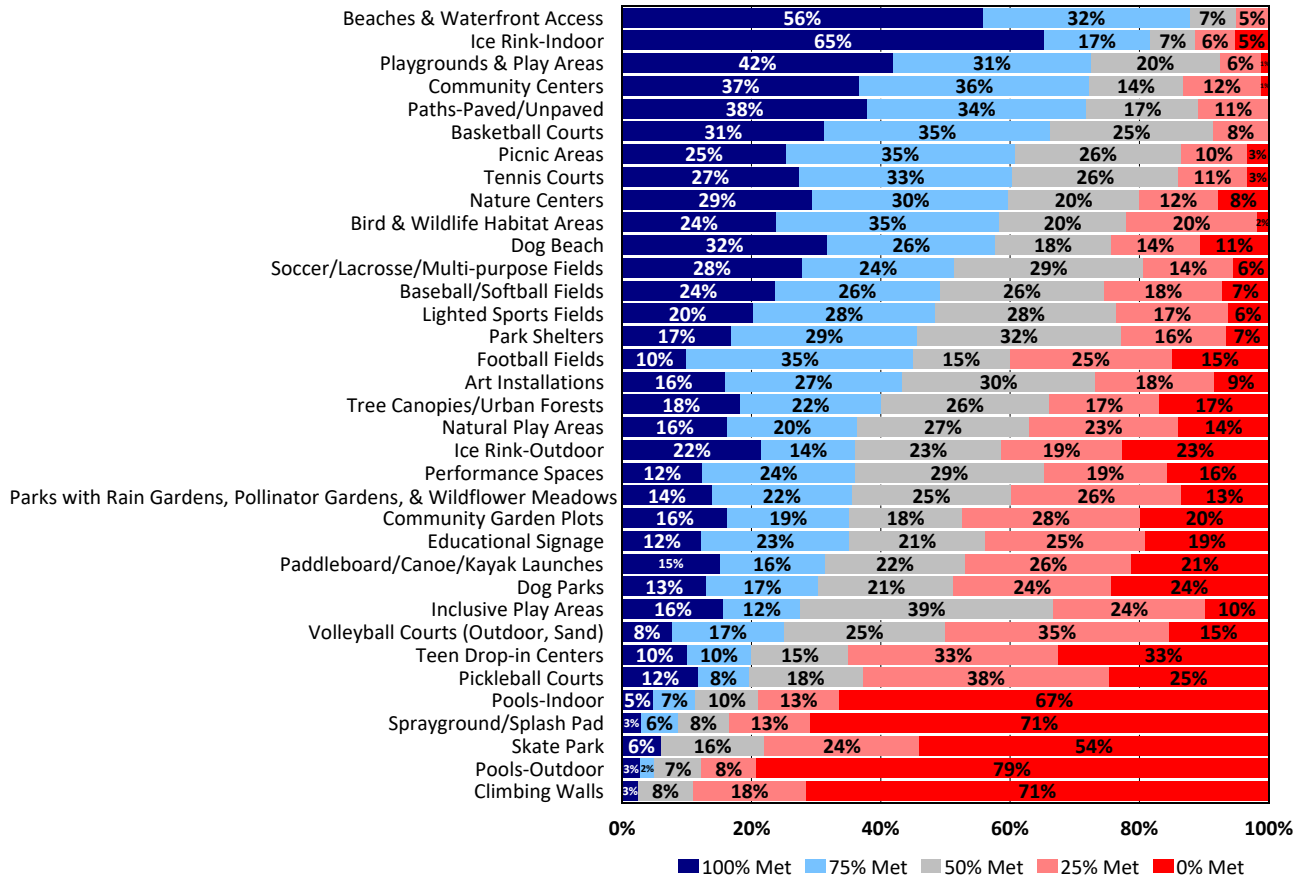
Q10b. Estimated Number of Households With Need For Facilities

by number of households based on an estimated 30,256 households in the City of Evanston



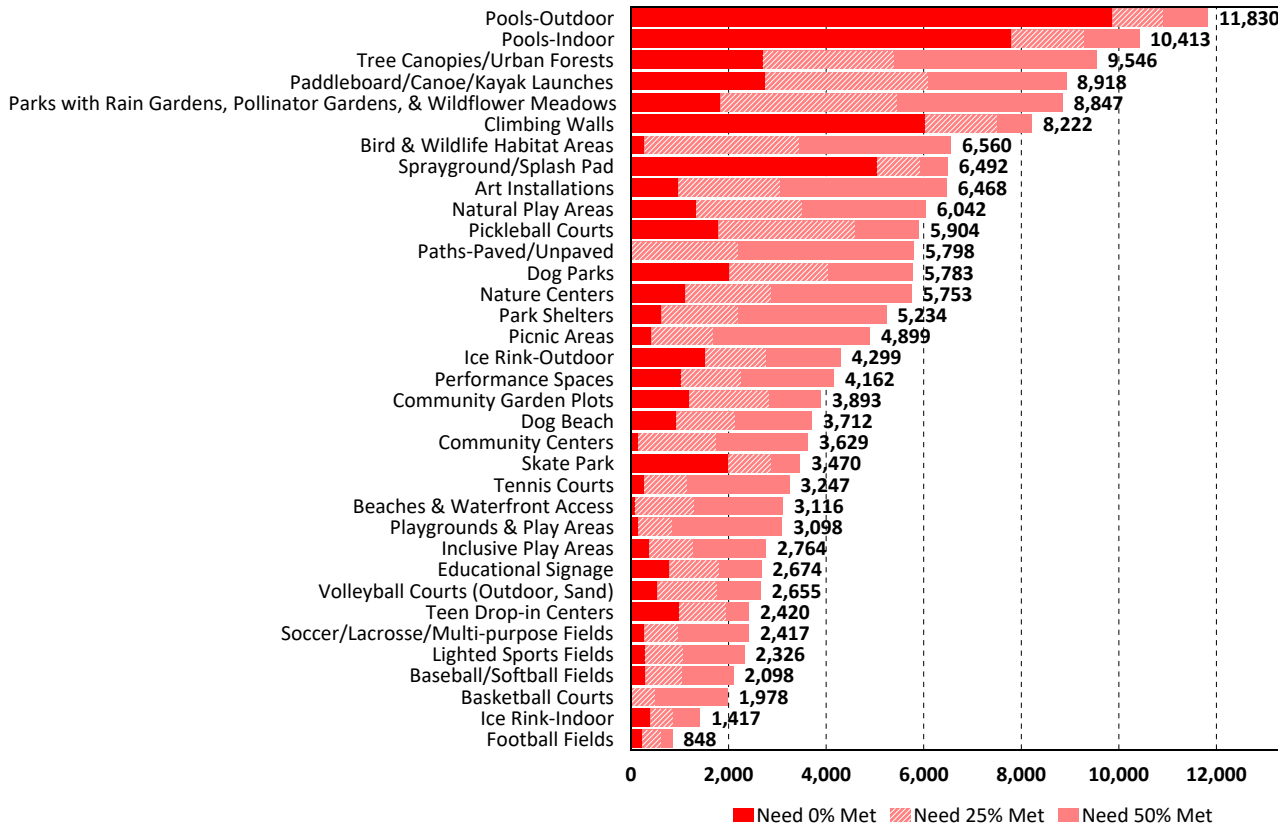
Q10c. How Well Households' Needs Are Being Met

by percentage of respondents who indicated their household had a need for the facility



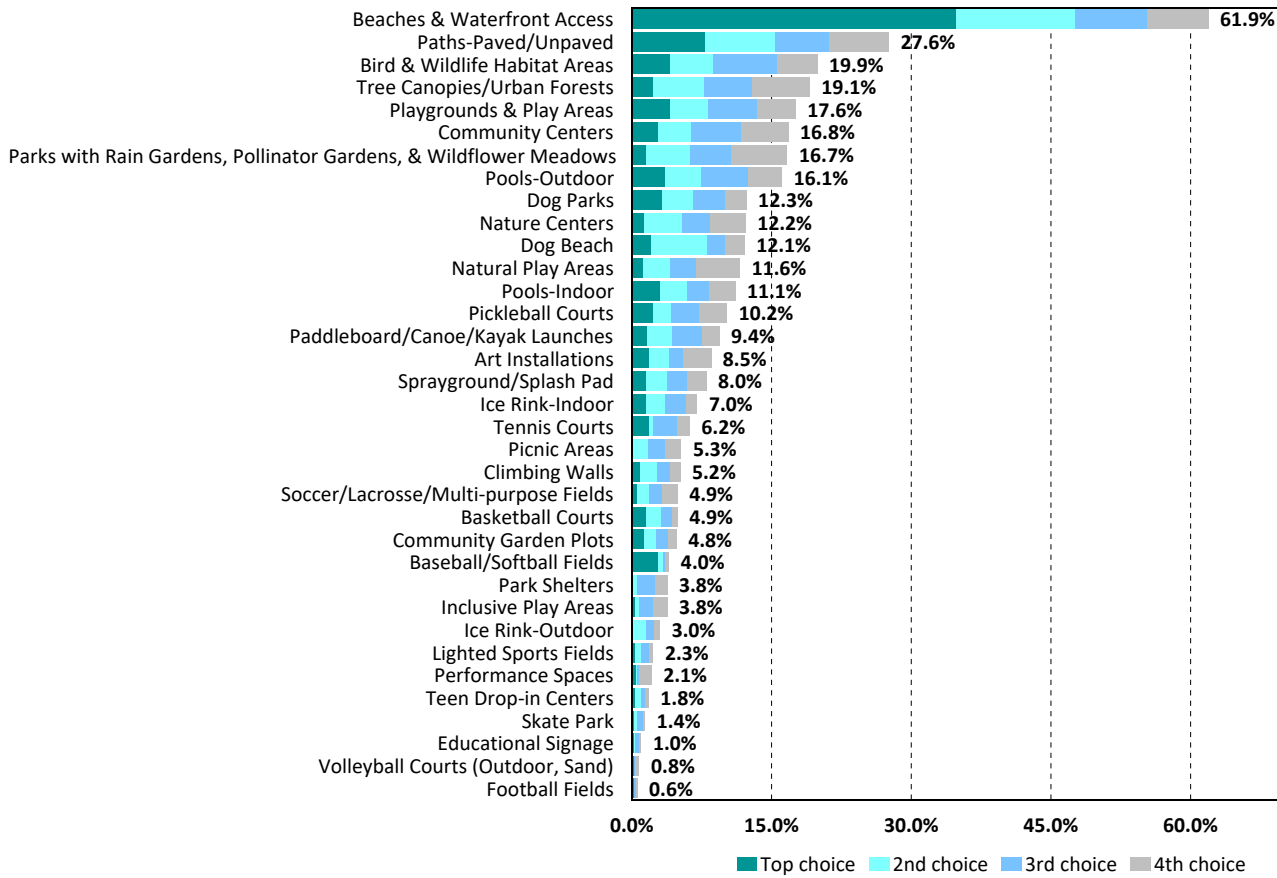
Q10d. Estimated Number of Households Whose Needs for Facilities are 50% Met or Less

by number of households with need based on an estimated 30,256 households in the City of Evanston



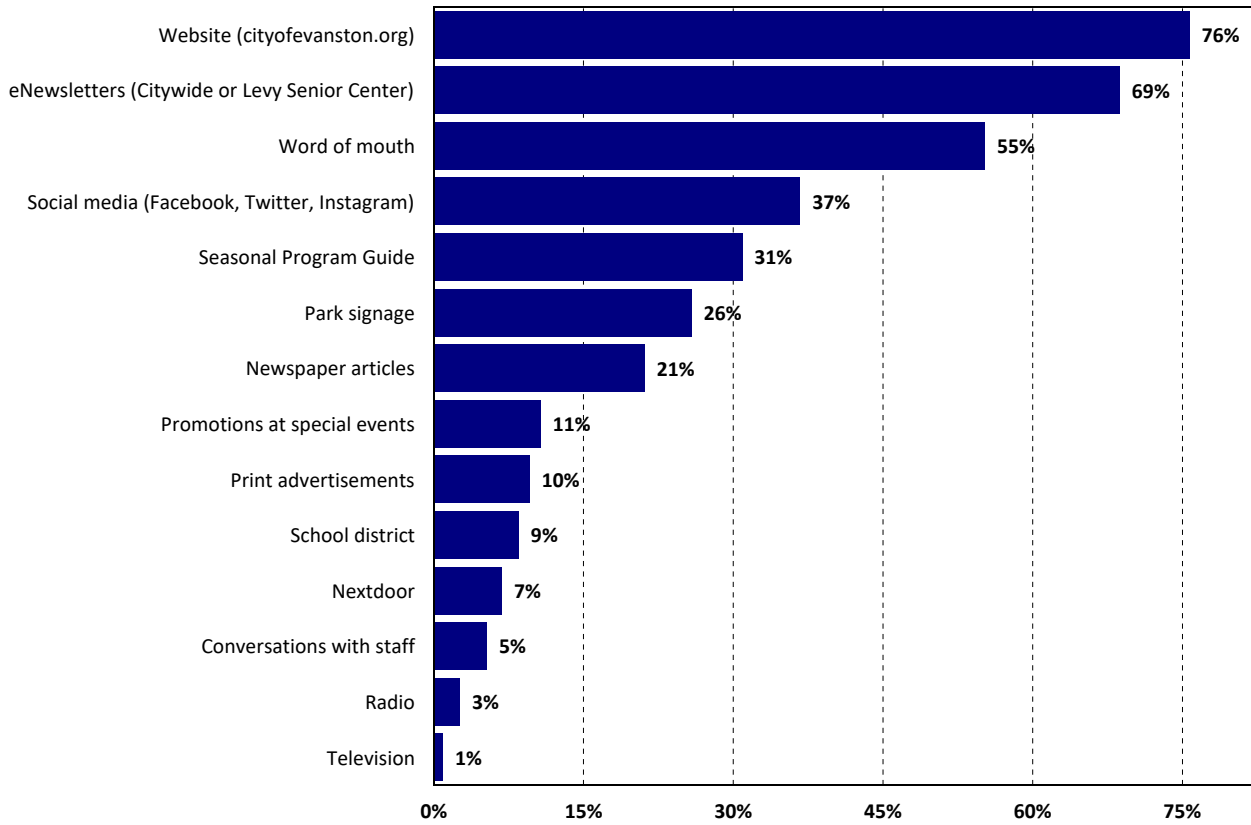
Q11. Facilities Most Important to Respondent Households

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top four choices



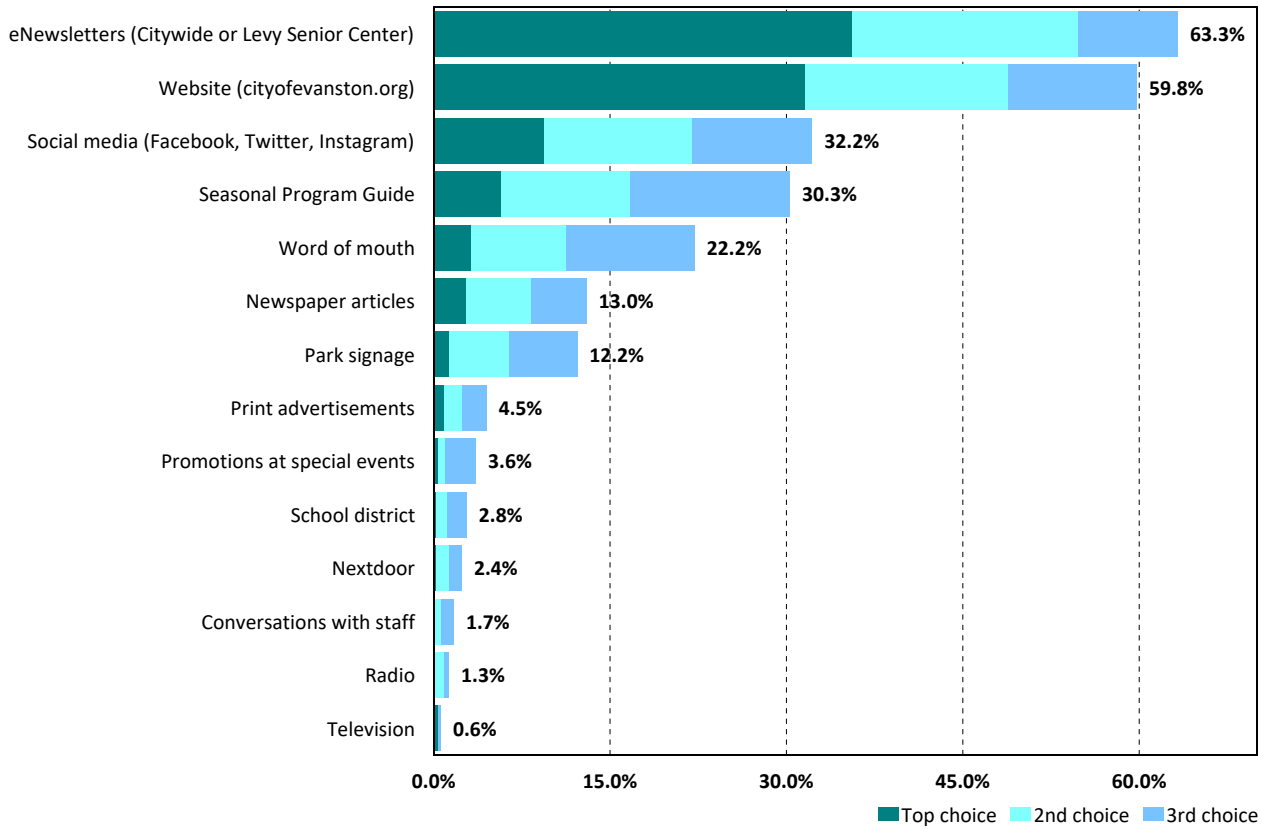
Q12. Please check ALL of the following ways you currently use to learn about City of Evanston Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities.

by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



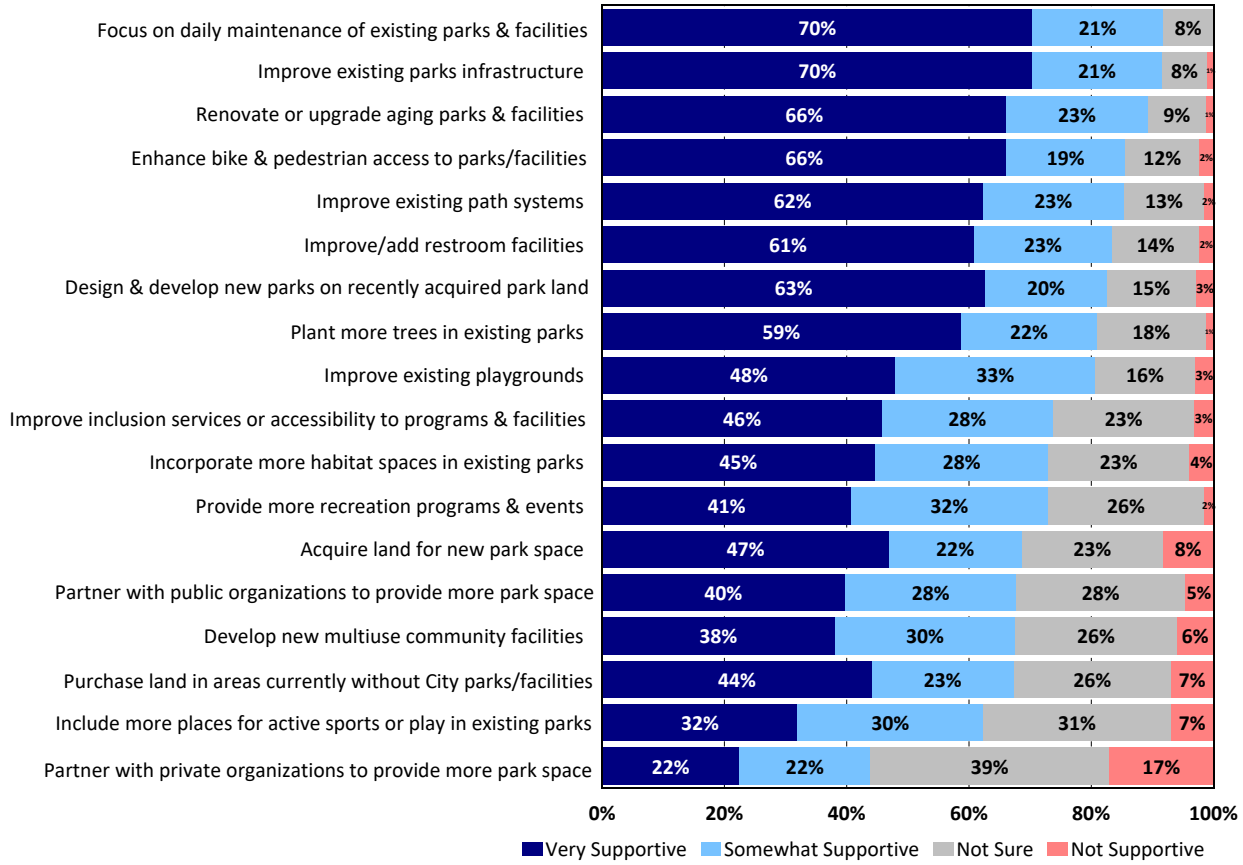
Q13. Which THREE sources are YOUR MOST PREFERRED SOURCES for learning about the City's Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities?

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices



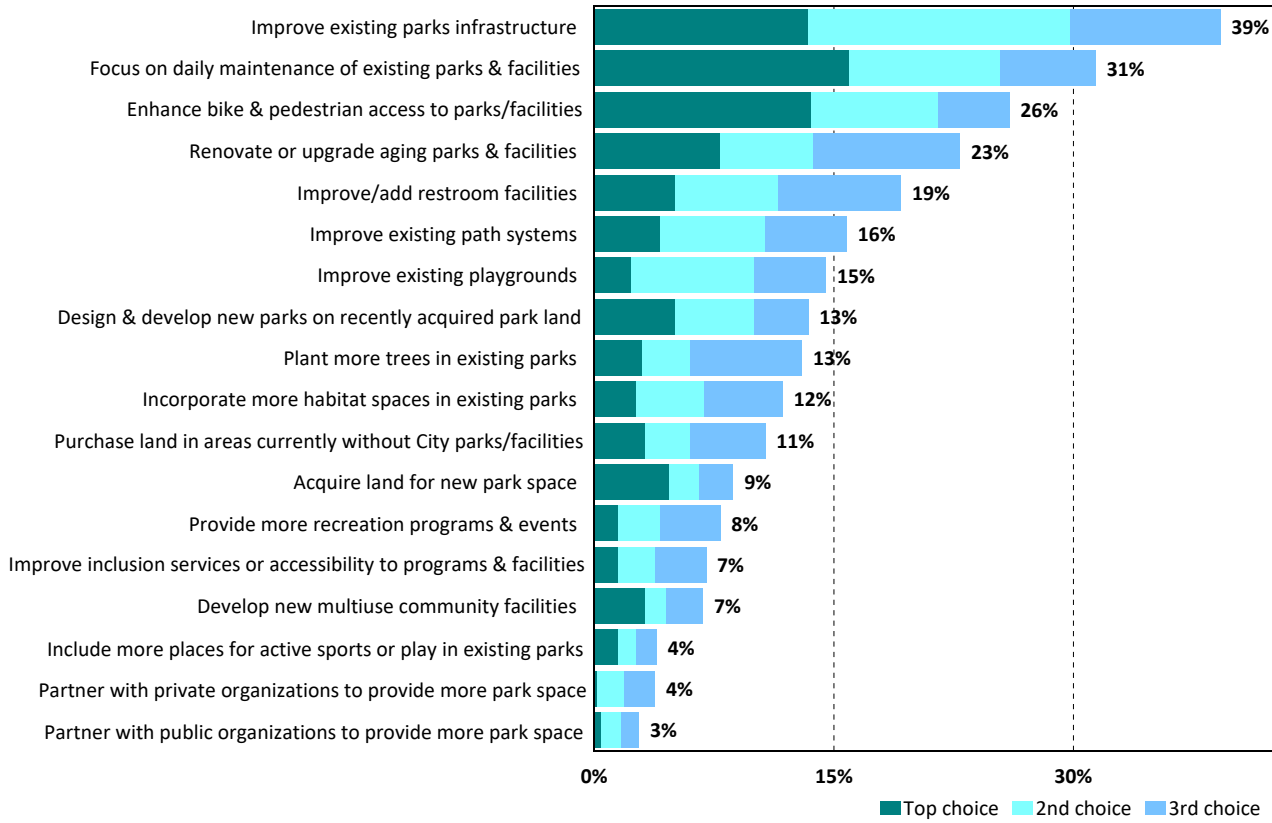
Q14. Please indicate your support for each potential action

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



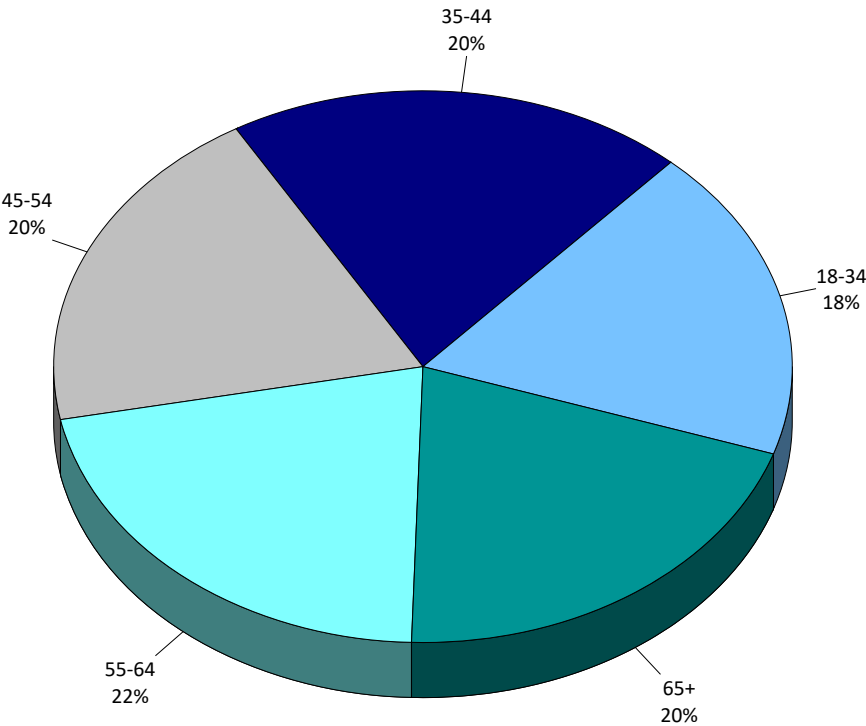
Q15. Which THREE of the potential improvements from the list in Question 14 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices



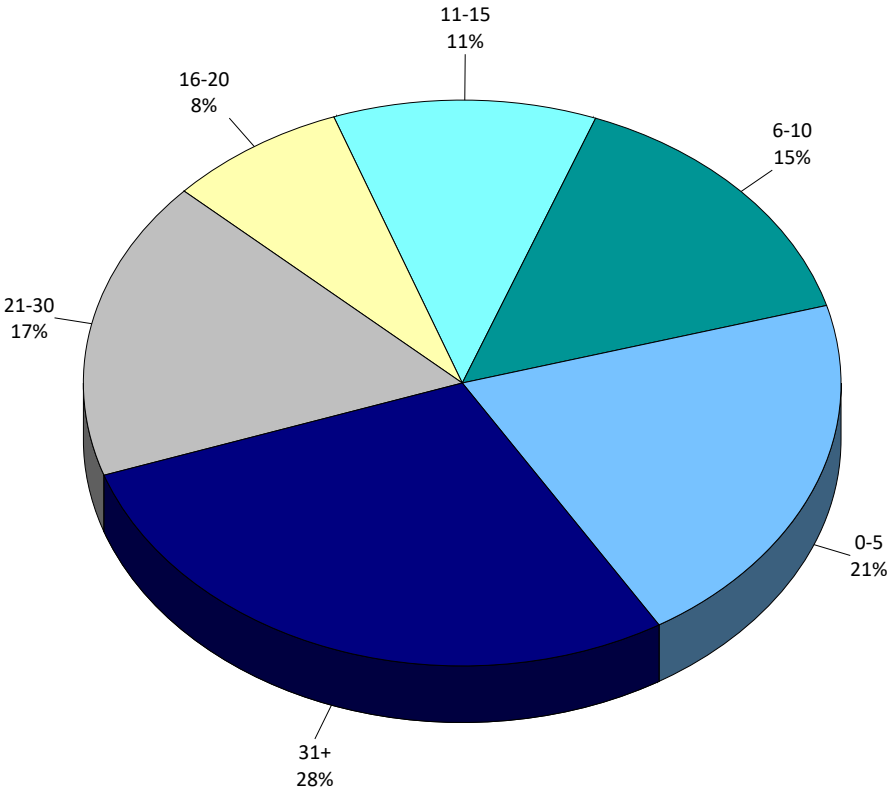
Q16. What is your age?

by percentage of respondents (excluding “not provided”)



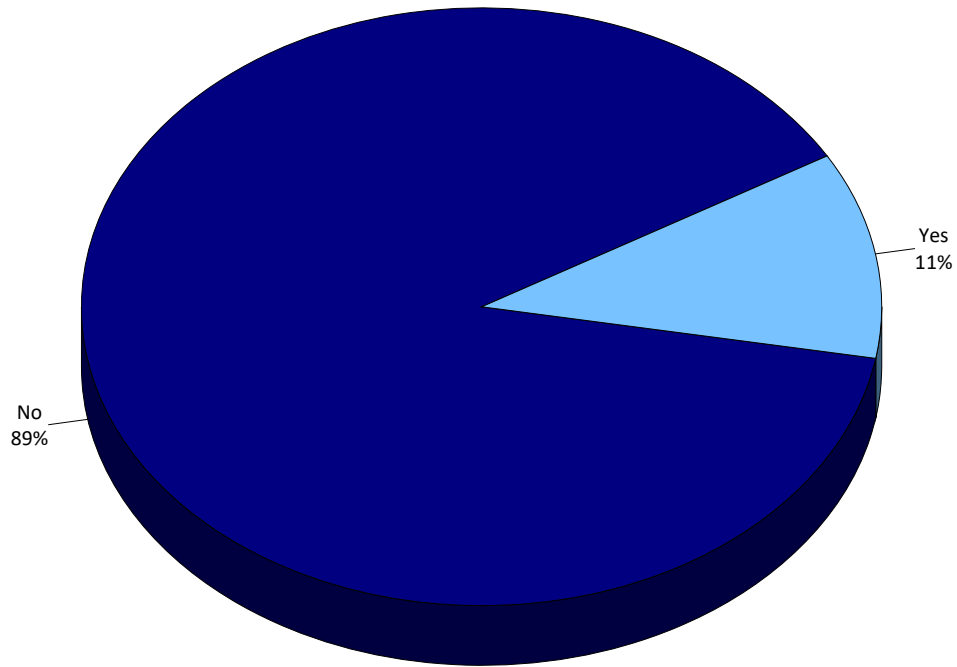
Q17. How many years have you lived in the City of Evanston?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



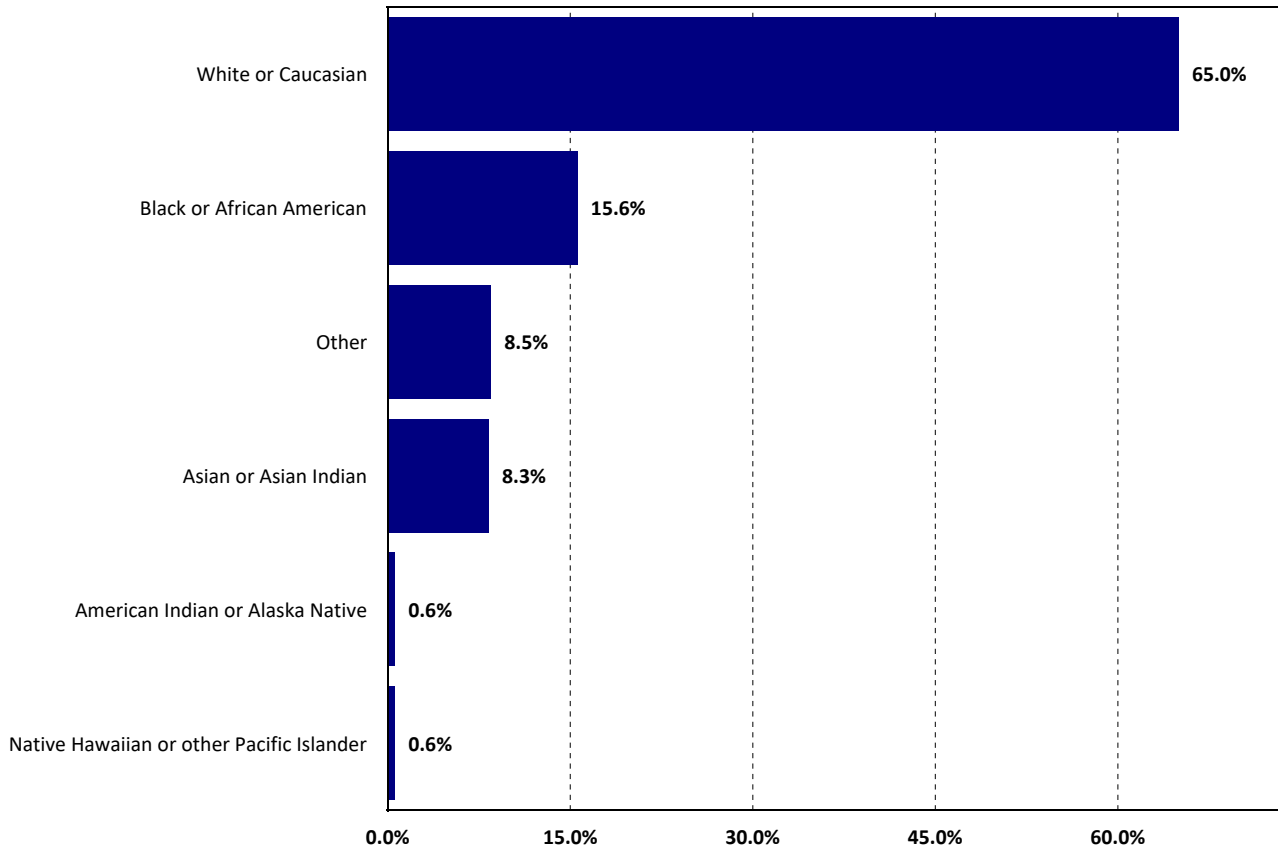
Q18. Are you or any members of your family of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x ancestry?

by percentage of respondents (excluding “not provided”)



Q19. Which of the following best describes your race?

by percentage of respondents

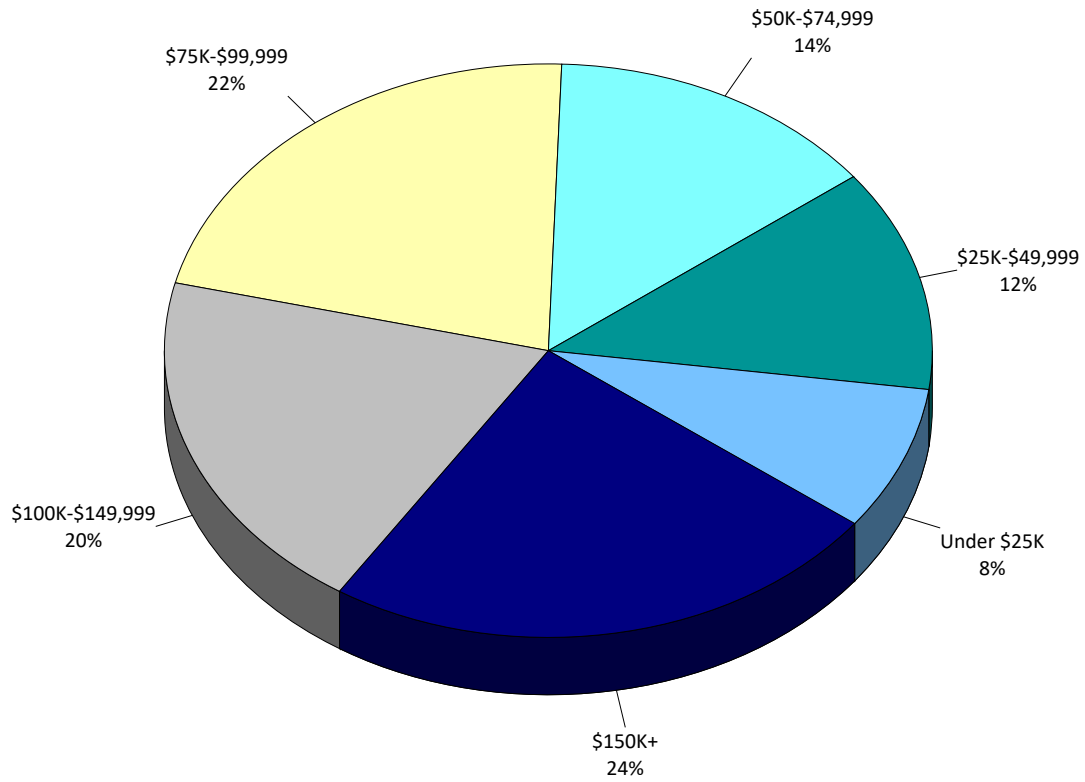


ETC Institute (2023)

44

Q20. What is your household income?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")

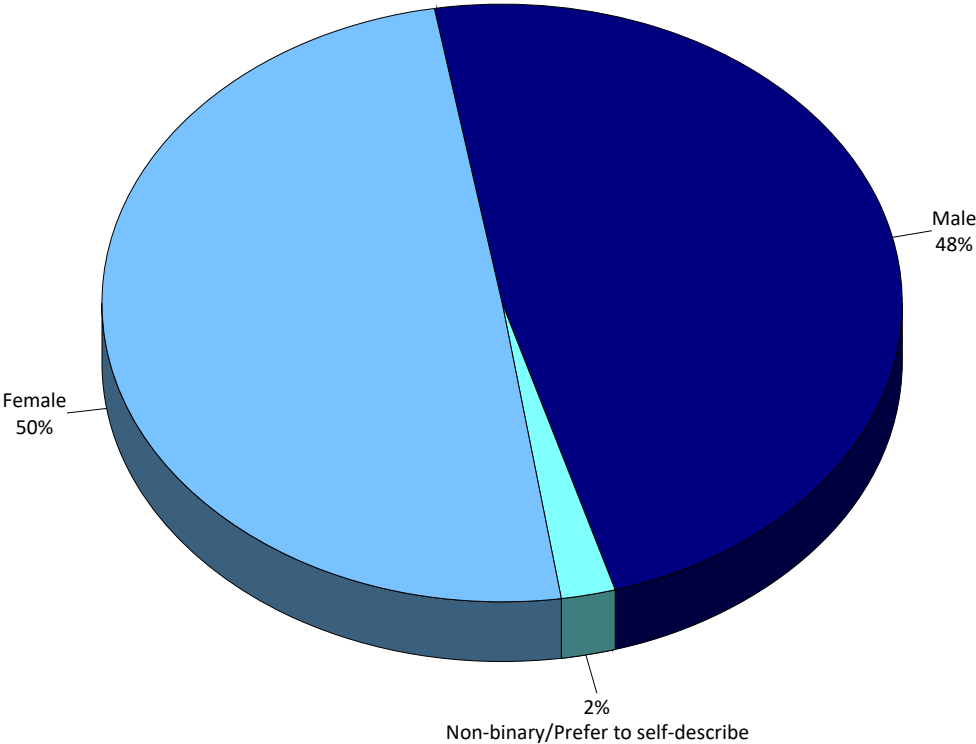


ETC Institute (2023)

45

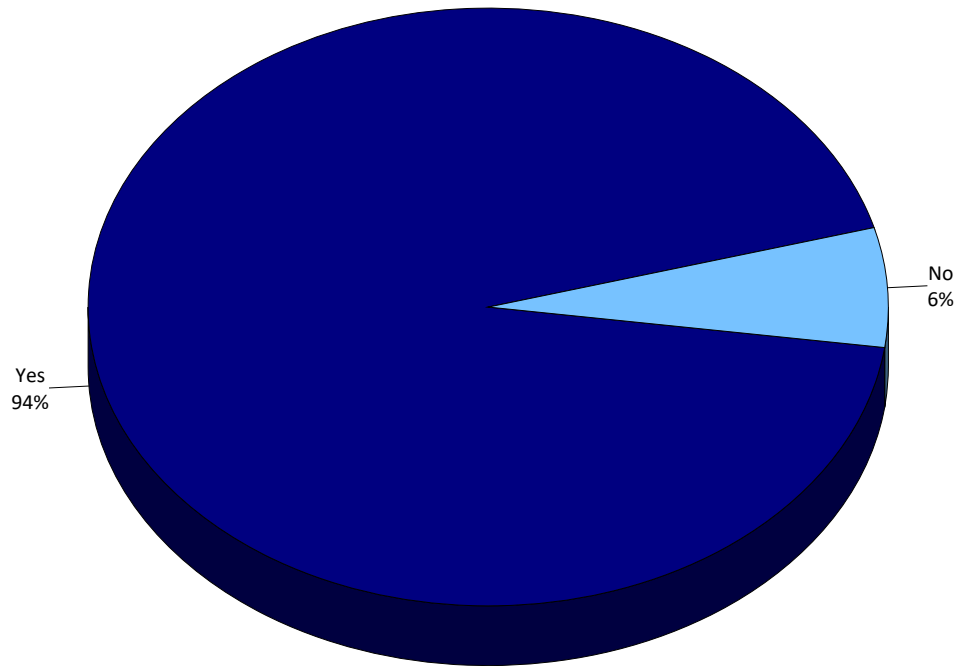
Q21. What is your gender?

by percentage of respondents (excluding “not provided”)



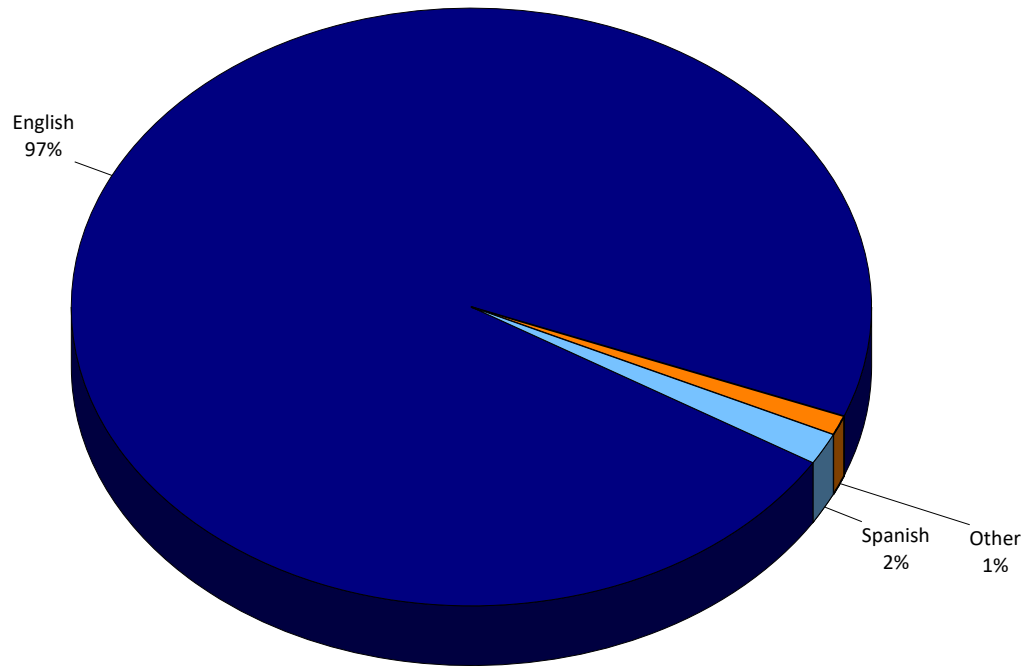
Q22. Does your household own a vehicle?

by percentage of respondents (excluding “not provided”)



Q23. What is the primary language spoken in your home?

by percentage of respondents (excluding “not provided”)





Priority Investment Ratings

Priority Investment Rating

Evanston, Illinois

The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide governments with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating was developed by ETC Institute to identify the facilities and programs residents think should receive the highest priority for investment. The priority investment rating reflects the importance residents place on items (sum of top 4 choices) and the unmet needs (needs that are not met or only partly met) for each facility/program relative to the facility/program that rated the highest overall. Since decisions related to future investments should consider both the level of unmet need and the importance of facilities and programs, the PIR weights each of these components equally.

The PIR reflects the sum of the Unmet Needs Rating and the Importance Rating as shown in the equation below:

$$\text{PIR} = \text{UNR} + \text{IR}$$

For example, if the Unmet Needs Rating for Community Gardens were 98.9 (out of 100) and the Importance Rating for Community Gardens were 21.6 (out of 100), the Priority Investment Rating for the Farmer's Market would be 120.5 (out of 200).

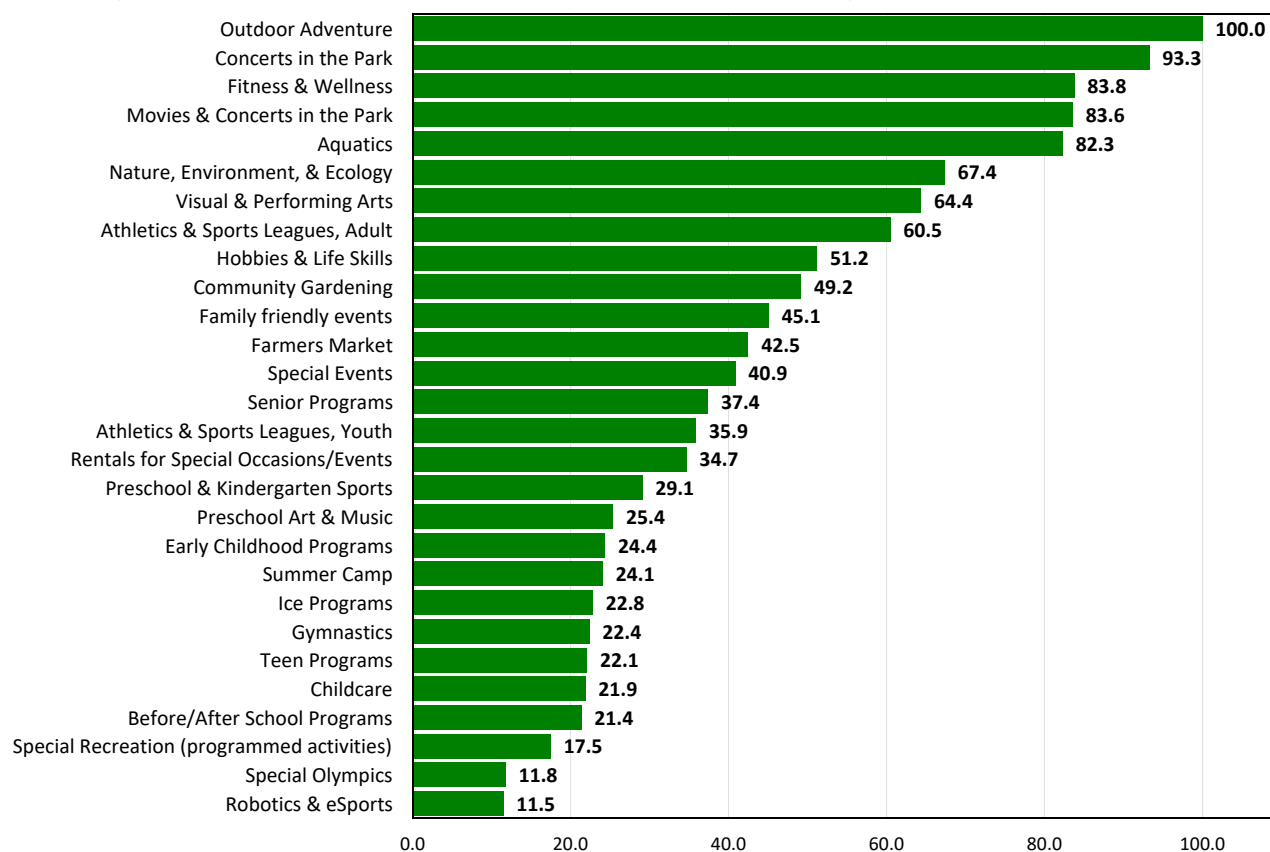
How to Analyze the Charts:

- **High Priority Areas** are those with a PIR of at least 100. A rating of 100 or above generally indicates there is a relatively high level of unmet need and residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements in this area are likely to have a positive impact on the greatest number of households.
- **Medium Priority Areas** are those with a PIR of 50-99. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a medium to high level of unmet need or a significant percentage of residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas.
- **Low Priority Areas** are those with a PIR below 50. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a relatively low level of unmet need and residents do not think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements may be warranted if the needs of very specialized populations are being targeted.

The following pages show the Unmet Needs Rating, Importance Rating, and Priority Investment Rating for facilities and programs.

Unmet Needs Rating for Activities, Programs, or Events

the rating for the item with the most unmet need=100
 the rating of all other items reflects the relative amount of unmet need for each item compared to the item with the most unmet need

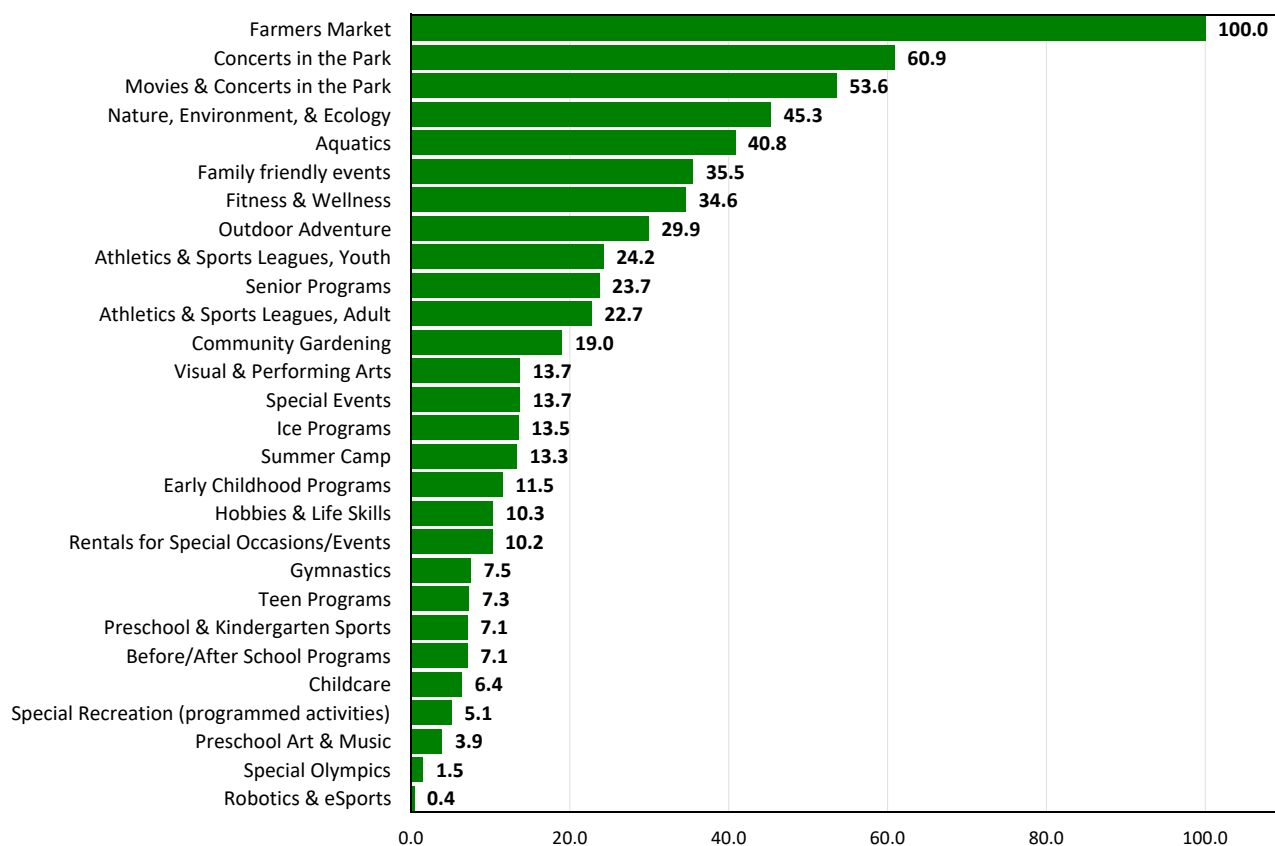


ETC Institute (2023)

51

Importance Rating for Activities, Programs, or Events

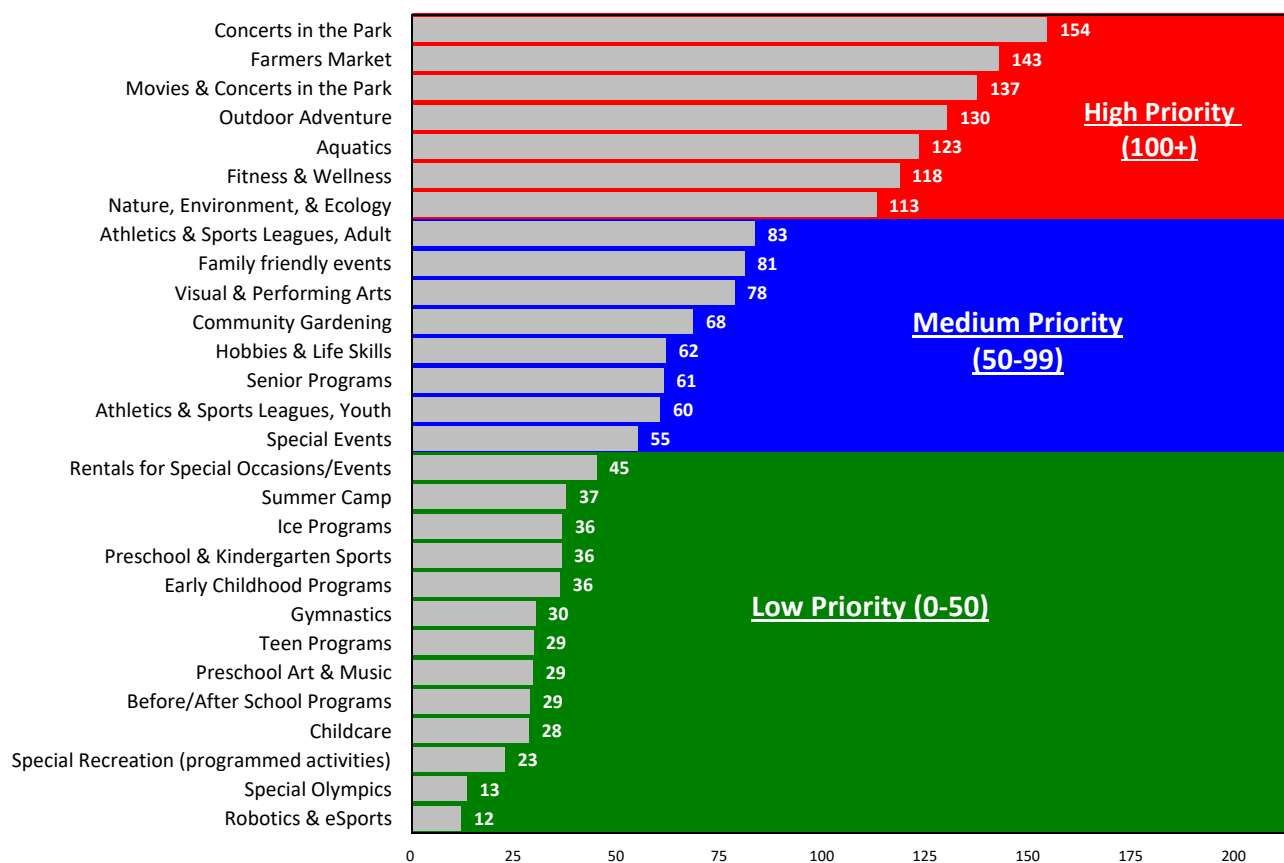
the rating for the item rated as the most important=100
the rating of all other items reflects the relative level of importance for each item compared to the item rated as the most important



ETC Institute (2023)

52

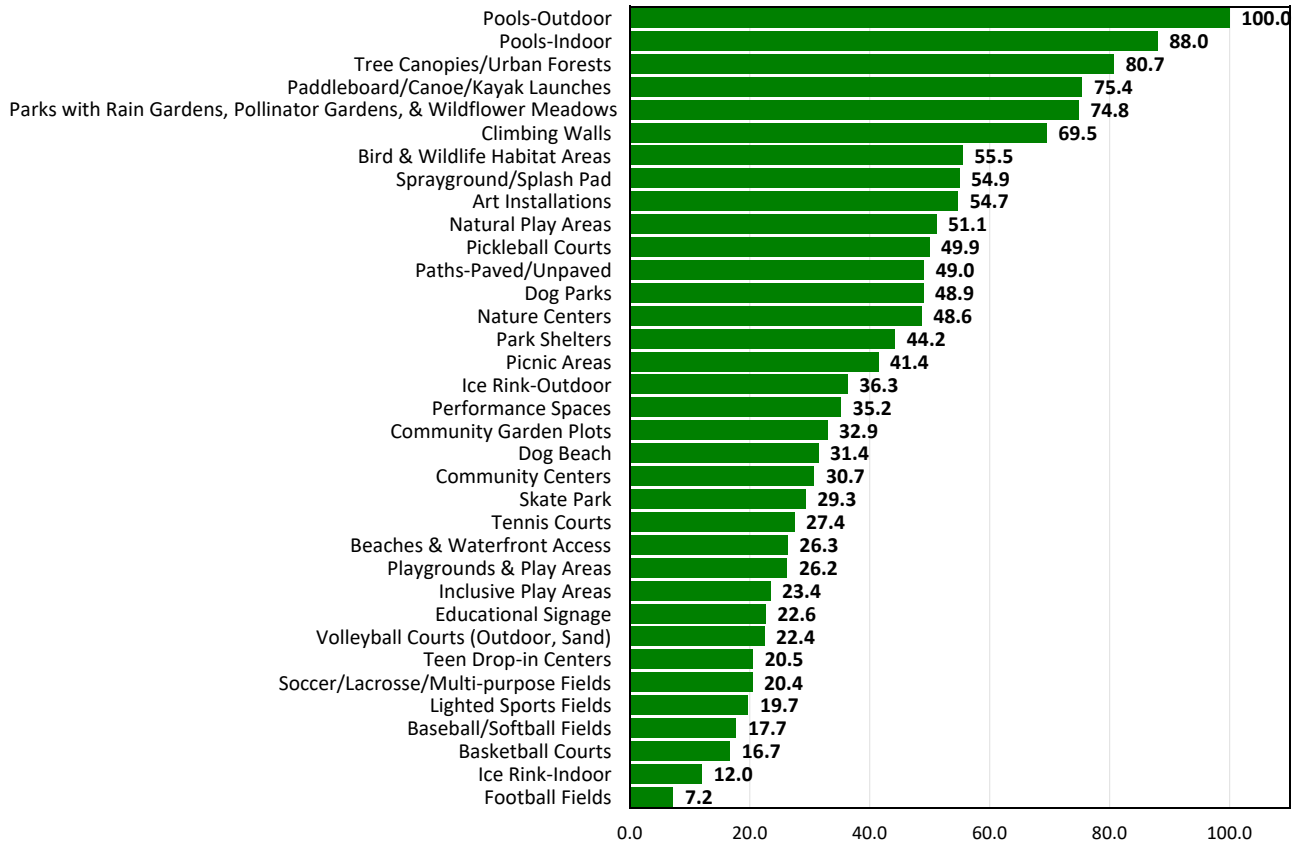
Top Priorities for Investment for Activities, Programs, or Events Based on the Priority Investment Rating



Unmet Needs Rating for Facilities

the rating for the item with the most unmet need=100

the rating of all other items reflects the relative amount of unmet need for each item compared to the item with the most unmet need



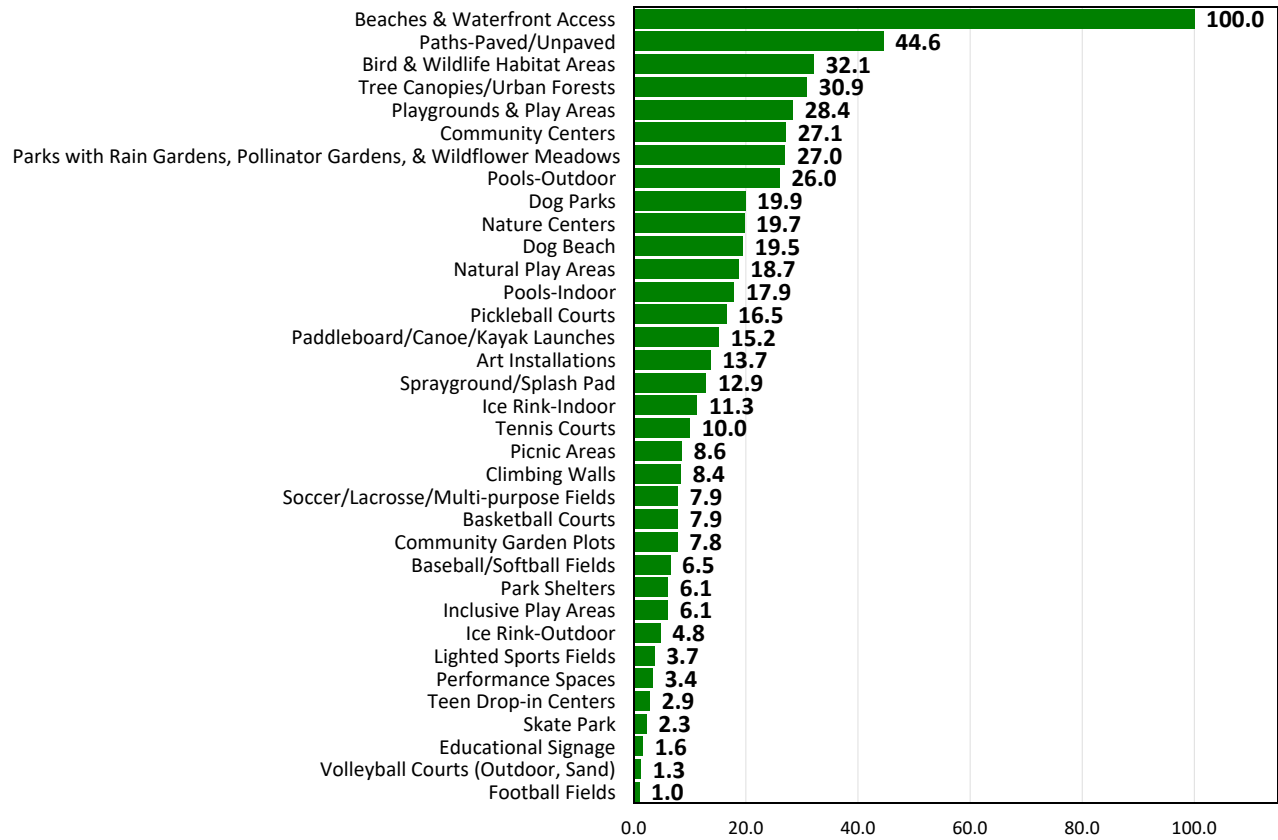
ETC Institute (2023)

54

Importance Rating for Facilities

the rating for the item rated as the most important=100

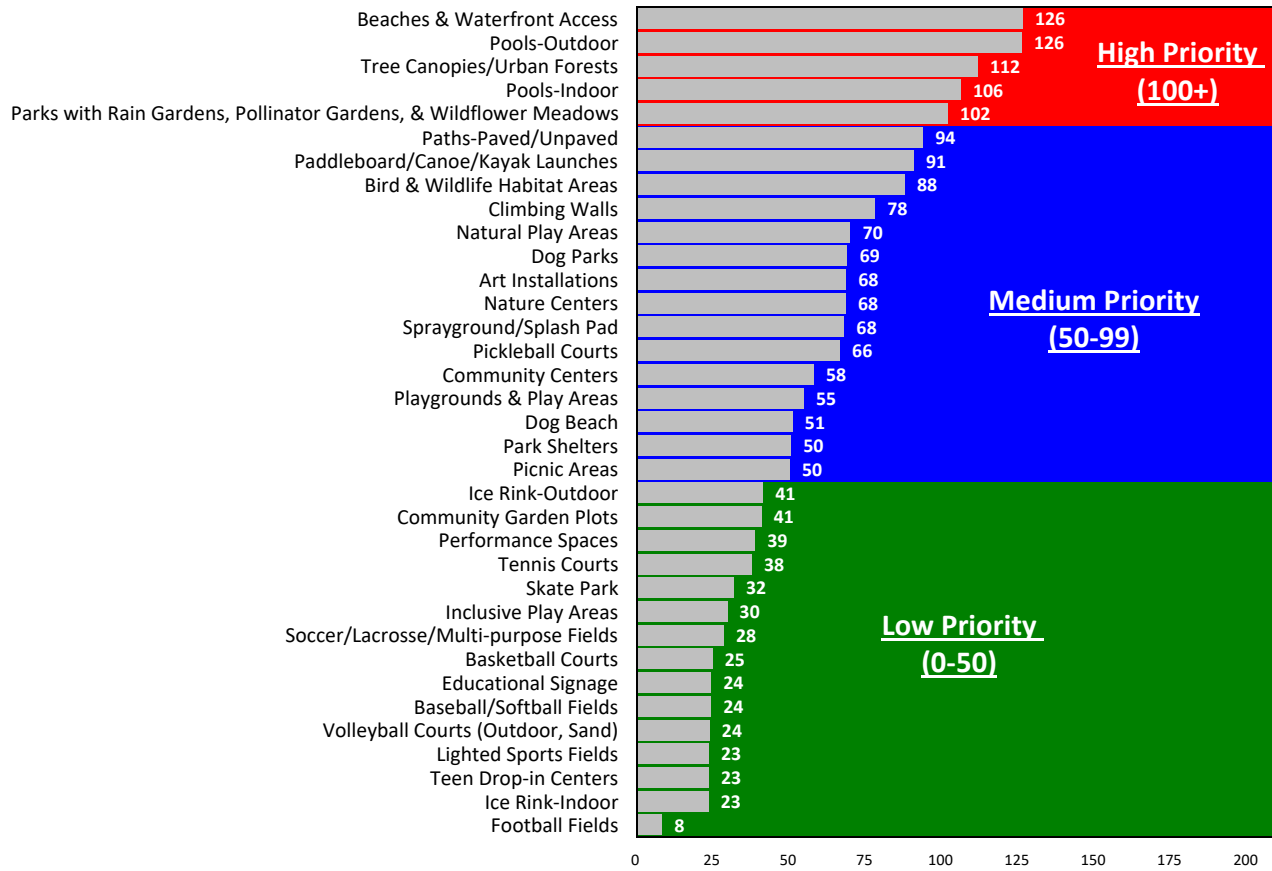
the rating of all other items reflects the relative level of importance for each item compared to the item rated as the most important



ETC Institute (2023)

55

Top Priorities for Investment for Facilities Based on the Priority Investment Rating



ETC Institute (2023)



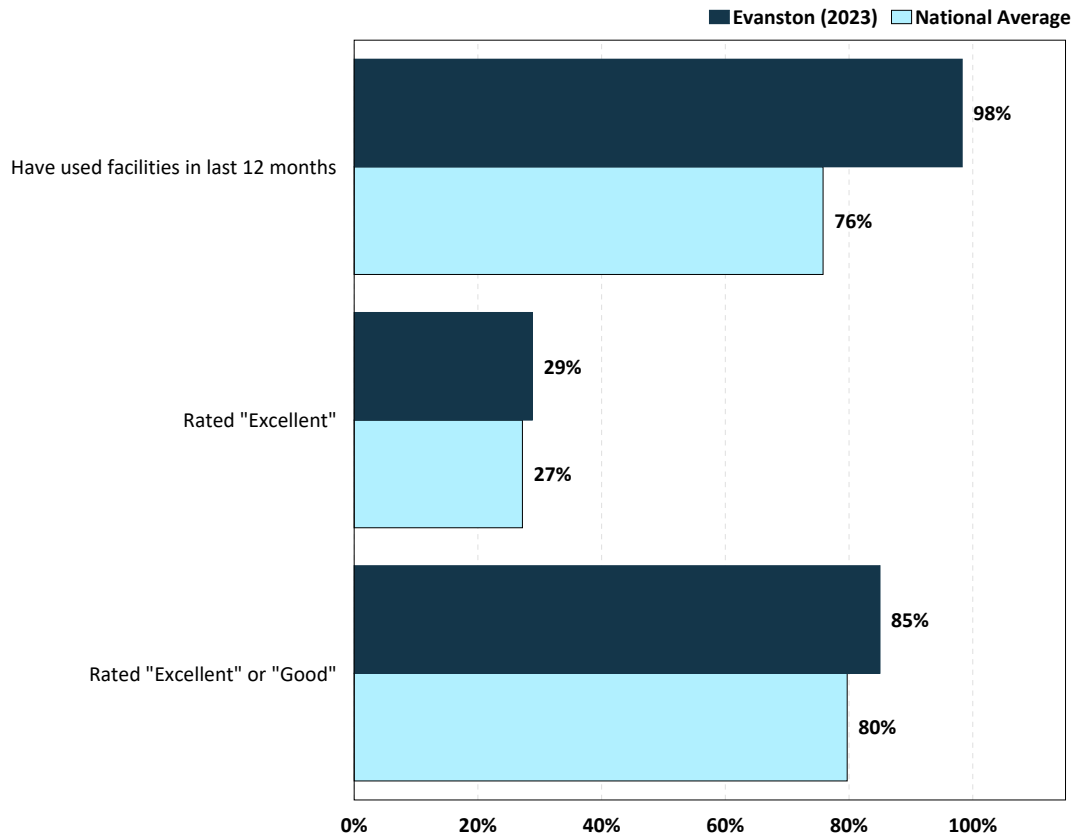
Benchmarks

National Benchmarks

Note: The benchmarking data contained in this report is protected intellectual property. Any reproduction of the benchmarking information in this report by persons or organizations not directly affiliated with the City of Evanston Parks and Recreation Department is not authorized without written consent from ETC Institute.

Use and Rating of Parks and Recreation Facilities

by percentage of respondents

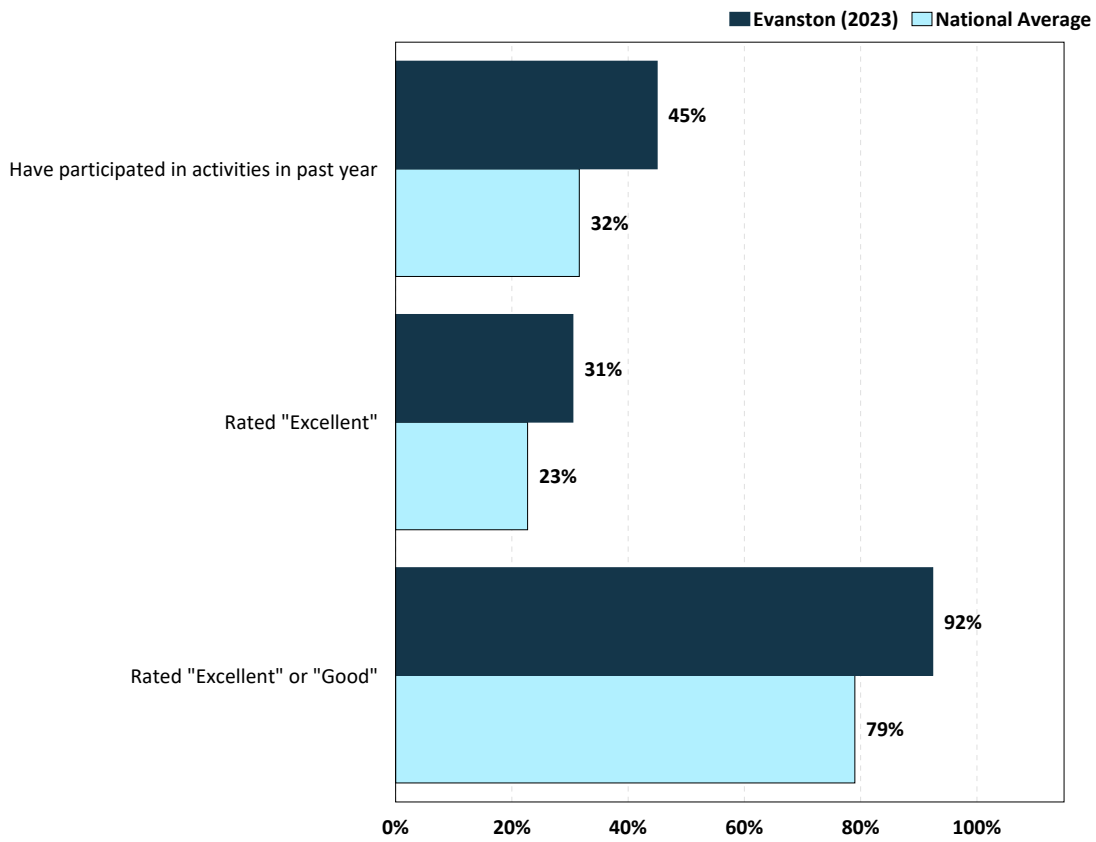


ETC Institute (2023)

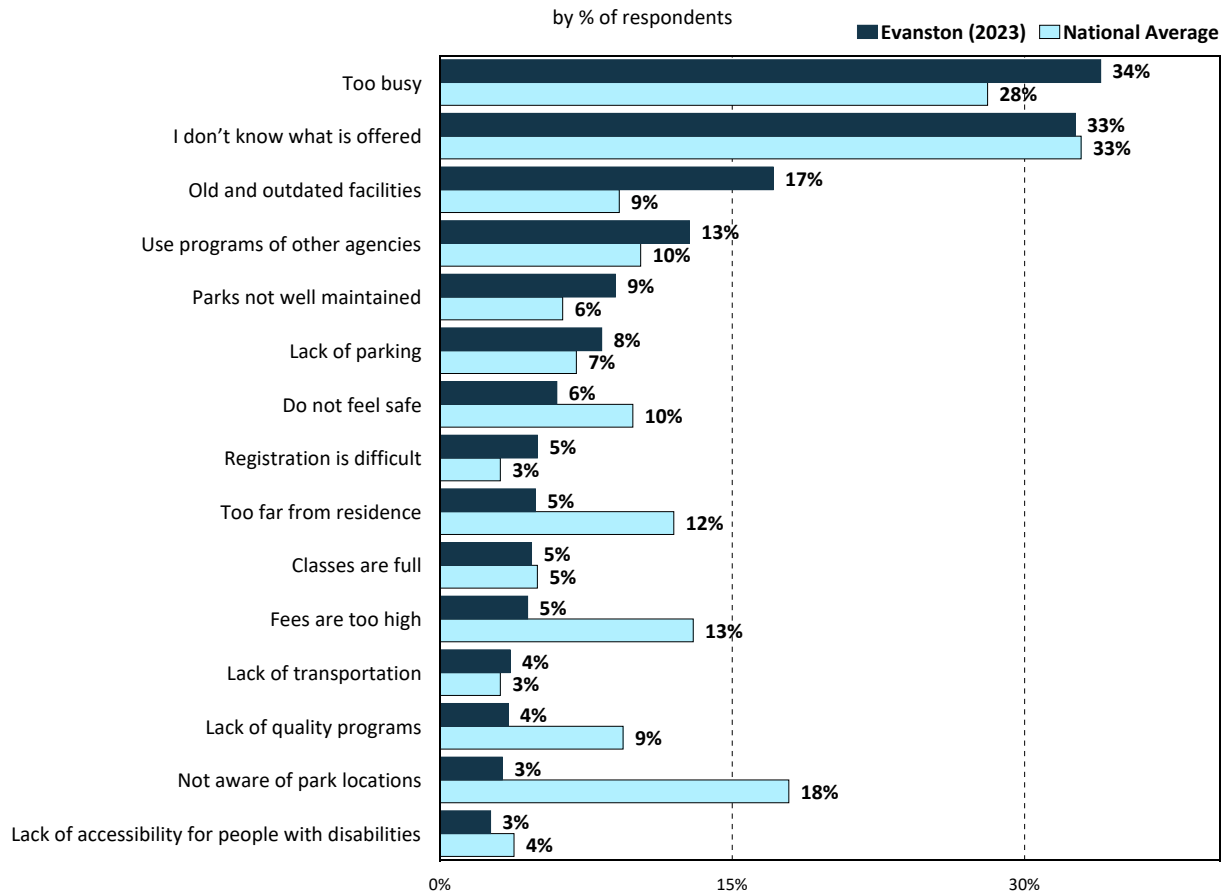
59

Use and Rating of Parks and Recreation Activities/Programs

by percentage of respondents



Barriers to Facilities and Programs Use

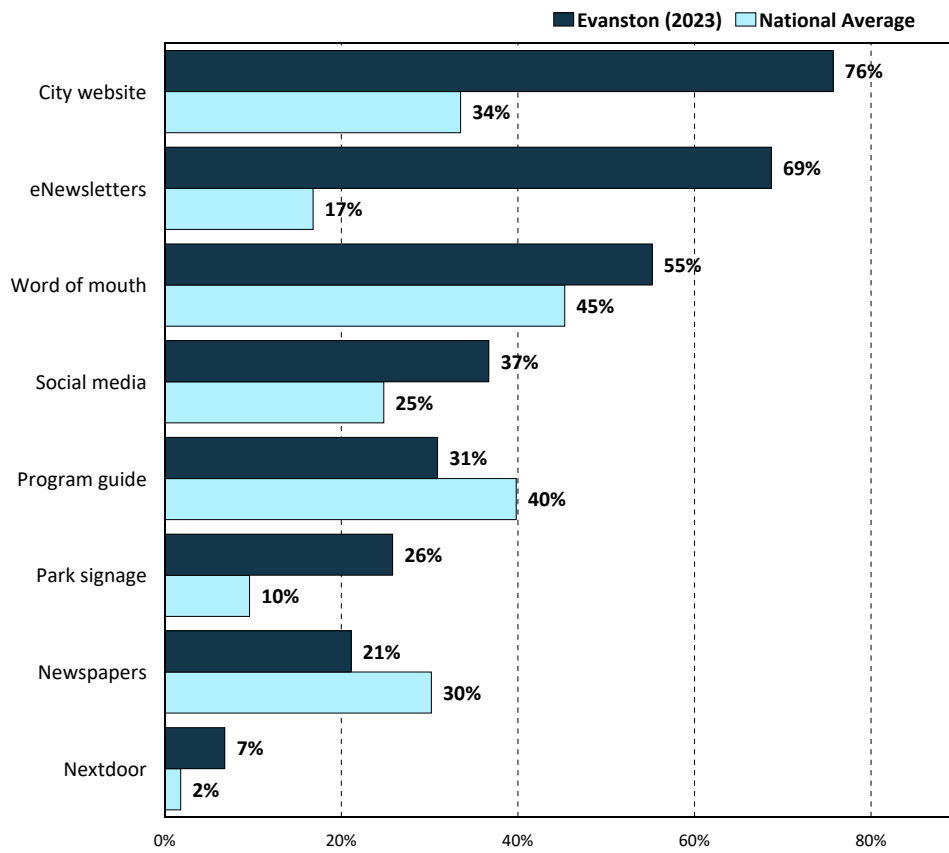


ETC Institute (2023)

61

Ways Households Learn About Activities and Events

by percentage of respondents

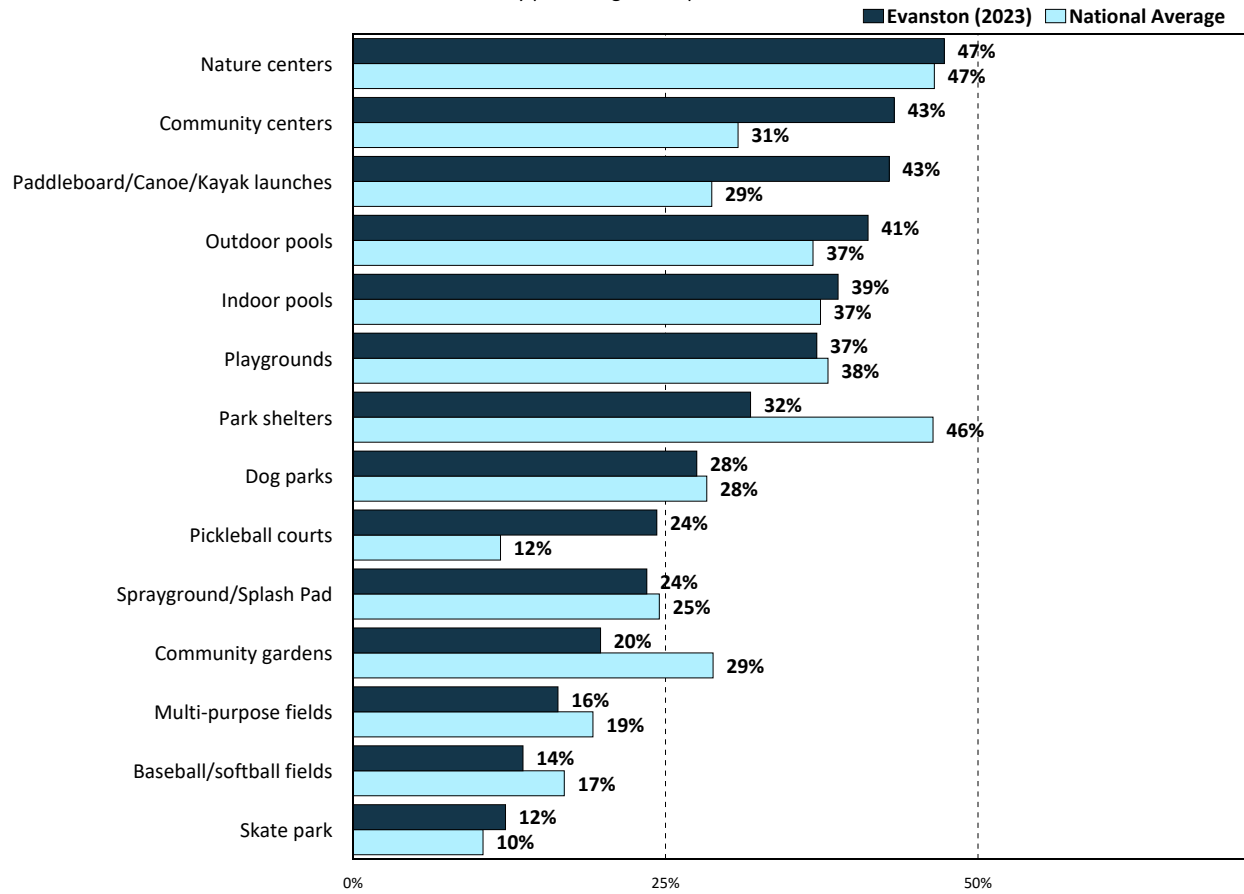


ETC Institute (2023)

62

Respondents with Need for Facilities

by percentage of respondents

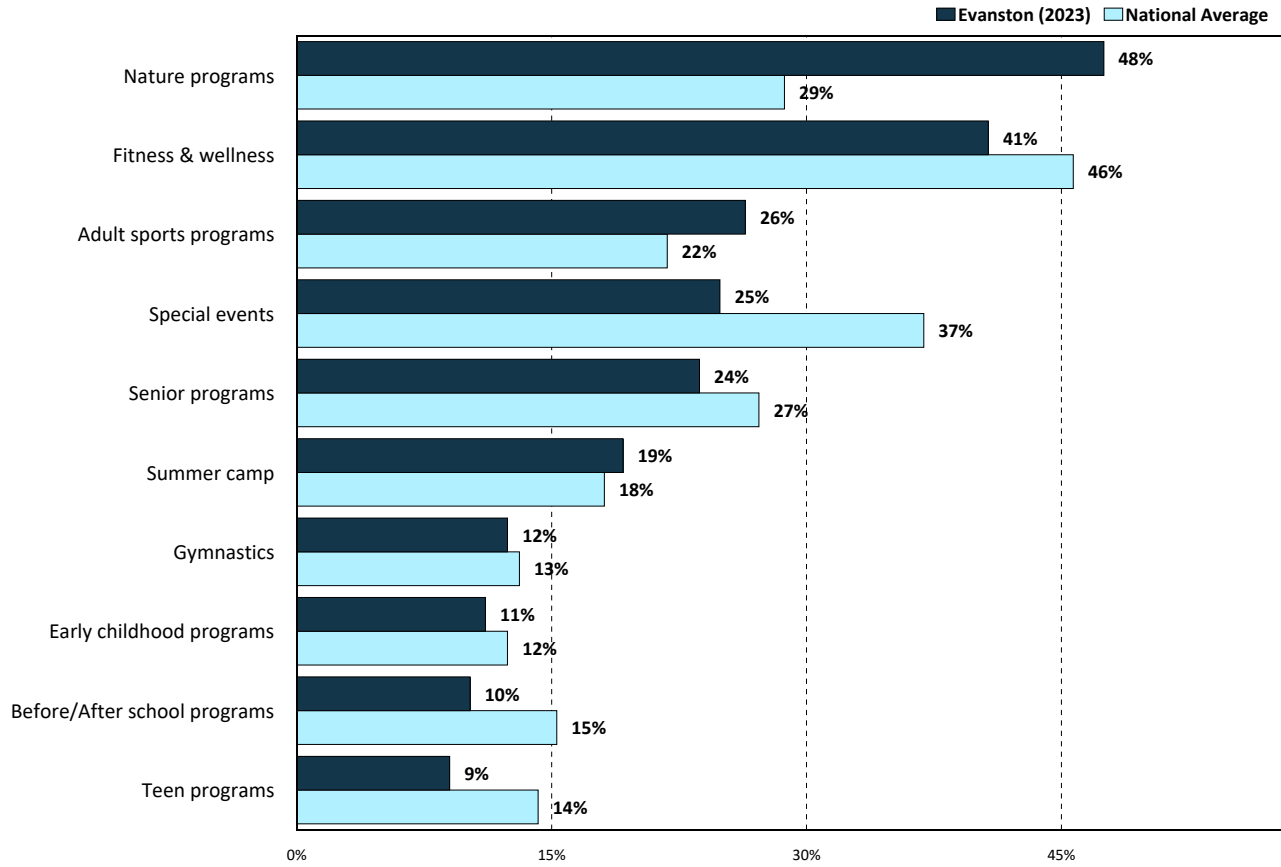


ETC Institute (2023)

63

Respondents with Need for Recreation Programs

by percentage of respondents



ETC Institute (2023)

64



Tabular Data

Q1. Please complete this survey with all household members in mind. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are...

	Mean	Sum
number	2.8	1271
Under age 5	0.2	103
Ages 5-9	0.2	105
Ages 10-14	0.1	68
Ages 15-19	0.2	79
Ages 20-24	0.1	58
Ages 25-34	0.3	134
Ages 35-44	0.4	184
Ages 45-54	0.4	161
Ages 55-64	0.4	185
Ages 65-79	0.4	165
Ages 80+	0.1	29

Q2. Have you or anyone in your household visited any of the parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities operated by the City of Evanston during the past 12 months?

Q2. Have you visited any City parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park & recreation facilities during past 12 months

	Number	Percent
Yes	461	98.3 %
No	8	1.7 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q2a. Approximately how often have you or anyone in your household visited any of the parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities operated by the City of Evanston during the past 12 months?

Q2a. How often have you visited any parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park & recreation facilities

	Number	Percent
Daily	89	19.3 %
Multiple times per week	197	42.7 %
Weekly	98	21.3 %
Monthly	58	12.6 %
Once or twice per year	19	4.1 %
Total	461	100.0 %

Q2b. Overall, how would you rate the quality of ALL the City of Evanston parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities that you and members of your household have used?

Q2b. How would you rate quality of all City parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park & recreation facilities

	Number	Percent
Excellent	132	28.6 %
Good	258	56.0 %
Fair	61	13.2 %
Poor	8	1.7 %
Not provided	2	0.4 %
Total	461	100.0 %

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")

Q2b. Overall, how would you rate the quality of ALL the City of Evanston parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities that you and members of your household have used? (without "not provided")

Q2b. How would you rate quality of all City parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park & recreation facilities

	Number	Percent
Excellent	132	28.8 %
Good	258	56.2 %
Fair	61	13.3 %
Poor	8	1.7 %
Total	459	100.0 %

Q2c. Please check ALL the reasons why you and the members of your household don't visit or don't visit more often the parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities offered by the City of Evanston.

Q2c. All the reasons why your household doesn't visit or doesn't visit more often parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park & recreation facilities

	Number	Percent
Use other City, State, private facilities	50	10.7 %
Too far from home	23	4.9 %
Too busy/don't have time	159	33.9 %
Not aware of park or facility locations	15	3.2 %
Parks or facilities are not well maintained	42	9.0 %
Old & outdated facilities	80	17.1 %
Lack of facilities for teens	28	6.0 %
Lack of parking to access parks/facilities	39	8.3 %
Do not feel safe using parks/facilities	28	6.0 %
Facilities don't meet needs	34	7.2 %
Lack of accessibility for people with disabilities	12	2.6 %
Do not feel welcomed or accommodated	6	1.3 %
Lack of facilities for neurodivergent community members	3	0.6 %
Lack of transportation	17	3.6 %
Lack of restrooms	95	20.3 %
Fees are too high/lack of financial assistance	21	4.5 %
Age barriers	6	1.3 %
Lack of childcare	10	2.1 %
Other	32	6.8 %
Total	700	

Q3. Have you or other members of your household participated in any activities (such as programs, sports leagues, or events) offered by the City of Evanston during the past 12 months?

Q3. Have you participated in any City activities during past 12 months

	Number	Percent
Yes	211	45.0 %
No	258	55.0 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q3a. Approximately how many different activities (such as programs, sports leagues, or events) offered by the City of Evanston have you or members of your household participated in over the past 12 months?

Q3a. How many different activities has your household participated in

	Number	Percent
1 activity	36	17.1 %
2-3 activities	100	47.4 %
4-6 activities	49	23.2 %
7-10 activities	17	8.1 %
11+ activities	9	4.3 %
Total	211	100.0 %

Q3b. Overall, how would you rate the quality of ALL the activities (such as programs, sports leagues, or events) offered by the City of Evanston that you have participated in?

Q3b. How would you rate quality of all activities you have participated in

	Number	Percent
Excellent	64	30.3 %
Good	130	61.6 %
Fair	15	7.1 %
Poor	1	0.5 %
Not provided	1	0.5 %
Total	211	100.0 %

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")

Q3b. Overall, how would you rate the quality of ALL the activities (such as programs, sports leagues, or events) offered by the City of Evanston that you have participated in? (without "not provided")

Q3b. How would you rate quality of all activities you have participated in

	Number	Percent
Excellent	64	30.5 %
Good	130	61.9 %
Fair	15	7.1 %
Poor	1	0.5 %
Total	210	100.0 %

Q3c. Please check ALL of the reasons why you and the members of your household don't participate or don't participate more often in the activities (such as programs, sports leagues, and events) offered by the City of Evanston.

Q3c. All the reasons why your household doesn't participate or doesn't participate more often in City activities

	Number	Percent
I don't know what is offered	84	32.6 %
Use programs of other agencies	33	12.8 %
Lack of quality instructors	6	2.3 %
Lack of quality programs	9	3.5 %
Prefer individual activities	59	22.9 %
Too far from home	8	3.1 %
Program times are not convenient	36	14.0 %
Classes are full	12	4.7 %
Do not feel safe	4	1.6 %
Lack of accessibility for people with disabilities	3	1.2 %
Fees are too high or lack of financial assistance	18	7.0 %
Do not feel welcomed or accommodated	5	1.9 %
Lack of teen activities	5	1.9 %
Registration is difficult	13	5.0 %
Lack of transportation	10	3.9 %
Lack of childcare options	4	1.6 %
Too busy or not interested	87	33.7 %
Language or cultural barriers	3	1.2 %
Age barriers	17	6.6 %
Parking issues	8	3.1 %
Other	16	6.2 %
Total	440	

Q4. How do you typically travel to visit City of Evanston parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities?

(N=469)

	Most often	Sometimes	Rarely/never	Not provided
Q4-1. Walk	57.1%	29.9%	5.3%	7.7%
Q4-2. Bicycle	9.8%	40.1%	30.3%	19.8%
Q4-3. Bus/public transit	0.6%	6.6%	64.6%	28.1%
Q4-4. Drive in a personal vehicle-10 minutes or less	32.8%	42.6%	14.9%	9.6%
Q4-5. Drive in a personal vehicle-10 minutes or more	13.4%	24.9%	35.8%	25.8%
Q4-6. Other	0.0%	71.4%	28.6%	0.0%

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")**Q4. How do you typically travel to visit City of Evanston parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities? (without "not provided")**

(N=469)

	Most often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
Q4-1. Walk	61.9%	32.3%	5.8%
Q4-2. Bicycle	12.2%	50.0%	37.8%
Q4-3. Bus/public transit	0.9%	9.2%	89.9%
Q4-4. Drive in a personal vehicle-10 minutes or less	36.3%	47.2%	16.5%
Q4-5. Drive in a personal vehicle-10 minutes or more	18.1%	33.6%	48.3%
Q4-6. Other	0.0%	71.4%	28.6%

Q4-6. Other

Q4-6. Other	Number	Percent
Skateboard, rollerblade, scooter	1	14.3 %
Via electric scooter	1	14.3 %
Car share	1	14.3 %
Ride with friends	1	14.3 %
Jog	1	14.3 %
Electric scooter	1	14.3 %
Roller skate	1	14.3 %
Total	7	100.0 %

Q5. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the corresponding number.

(N=469)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Q5-1. Contribute to a sense of community	58.6%	29.0%	8.3%	1.5%	0.6%	1.9%
Q5-2. Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	60.6%	28.8%	7.7%	0.4%	0.4%	2.1%
Q5-3. Improve quality of life in City	70.4%	23.5%	3.0%	1.1%	0.2%	1.9%
Q5-4. Help community members connect with nature	56.3%	29.9%	9.8%	1.3%	0.4%	2.3%
Q5-5. Help preserve open space & the environment	63.1%	27.3%	5.8%	0.6%	0.2%	3.0%
Q5-6. Protect historical attributes of City & region	34.8%	27.5%	26.9%	4.3%	0.9%	5.8%
Q5-7. Help attract new community members & businesses	31.8%	30.9%	26.0%	3.8%	1.1%	6.4%
Q5-8. Provide tourism revenues/contributes to City's tourism economy	21.1%	24.5%	29.4%	10.9%	2.1%	11.9%
Q5-9. Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	11.7%	23.2%	33.3%	14.7%	2.6%	14.5%
Q5-10. Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	29.2%	35.8%	19.0%	5.5%	0.9%	9.6%
Q5-11. Provide ample access to recreation & nature	33.9%	45.0%	11.7%	4.9%	0.9%	3.6%
Q5-12. Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	26.7%	38.4%	17.7%	6.0%	0.4%	10.9%

Q5. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the corresponding number.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Q5-13. Provide access to arts & culture	22.8%	41.2%	22.0%	6.4%	0.6%	7.0%
Q5-14. Are equitably distributed throughout the community	13.2%	29.9%	23.9%	15.1%	2.3%	15.6%
Q5-15. Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	26.7%	31.8%	20.0%	5.1%	1.7%	14.7%
Q5-16. Other	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	33.3%	0.0%

(WITHOUT "DON'T KNOW")**Q5. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the corresponding number. (without "don't know")**

(N=469)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q5-1. Contribute to a sense of community	59.8%	29.6%	8.5%	1.5%	0.7%
Q5-2. Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	61.9%	29.4%	7.8%	0.4%	0.4%
Q5-3. Improve quality of life in City	71.7%	23.9%	3.0%	1.1%	0.2%
Q5-4. Help community members connect with nature	57.6%	30.6%	10.0%	1.3%	0.4%
Q5-5. Help preserve open space & the environment	65.1%	28.1%	5.9%	0.7%	0.2%
Q5-6. Protect historical attributes of City & region	36.9%	29.2%	28.5%	4.5%	0.9%
Q5-7. Help attract new community members & businesses	33.9%	33.0%	27.8%	4.1%	1.1%
Q5-8. Provide tourism revenues/ contributes to City's tourism economy	24.0%	27.8%	33.4%	12.3%	2.4%
Q5-9. Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	13.7%	27.2%	38.9%	17.2%	3.0%
Q5-10. Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	32.3%	39.6%	21.0%	6.1%	0.9%
Q5-11. Provide ample access to recreation & nature	35.2%	46.7%	12.2%	5.1%	0.9%
Q5-12. Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	29.9%	43.1%	19.9%	6.7%	0.5%
Q5-13. Provide access to arts & culture	24.5%	44.3%	23.6%	6.9%	0.7%
Q5-14. Are equitably distributed throughout the community	15.7%	35.4%	28.3%	17.9%	2.8%
Q5-15. Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	31.3%	37.3%	23.5%	6.0%	2.0%
Q5-16. Other	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	33.3%

Q6. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

<u>Q6. Top choice</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Contribute to a sense of community	95	20.3 %
Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	108	23.0 %
Improve quality of life in City	93	19.8 %
Help community members connect with nature	26	5.5 %
Help preserve open space & the environment	34	7.2 %
Protect historical attributes of City & region	2	0.4 %
Help attract new community members & businesses	5	1.1 %
Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	1	0.2 %
Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	18	3.8 %
Provide ample access to recreation & nature	24	5.1 %
Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	9	1.9 %
Provide access to arts & culture	1	0.2 %
Are equitably distributed throughout the community	11	2.3 %
Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	17	3.6 %
<u>None chosen</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>5.3 %</u>
Total	469	100.0 %

Q6. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

<u>Q6. 2nd choice</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Contribute to a sense of community	34	7.2 %
Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	79	16.8 %
Improve quality of life in City	70	14.9 %
Help community members connect with nature	43	9.2 %
Help preserve open space & the environment	82	17.5 %
Protect historical attributes of City & region	6	1.3 %
Help attract new community members & businesses	6	1.3 %
Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	11	2.3 %
Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	33	7.0 %
Provide ample access to recreation & nature	36	7.7 %
Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	12	2.6 %
Provide access to arts & culture	5	1.1 %
Are equitably distributed throughout the community	10	2.1 %
Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	15	3.2 %
<u>None chosen</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>5.8 %</u>
Total	469	100.0 %

Q6. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q6. 3rd choice	Number	Percent
Contribute to a sense of community	48	10.2 %
Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	45	9.6 %
Improve quality of life in City	67	14.3 %
Help community members connect with nature	42	9.0 %
Help preserve open space & the environment	58	12.4 %
Protect historical attributes of City & region	9	1.9 %
Help attract new community members & businesses	13	2.8 %
Provide tourism revenues/contributes to City's tourism economy	3	0.6 %
Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	3	0.6 %
Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	36	7.7 %
Provide ample access to recreation & nature	40	8.5 %
Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	22	4.7 %
Provide access to arts & culture	12	2.6 %
Are equitably distributed throughout the community	22	4.7 %
Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	17	3.6 %
None chosen	32	6.8 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(SUM OF TOP 3)

Q6. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household? (top 3)

Q6. Top choice	Number	Percent
Contribute to a sense of community	177	37.7 %
Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	232	49.5 %
Improve quality of life in City	230	49.0 %
Help community members connect with nature	111	23.7 %
Help preserve open space & the environment	174	37.1 %
Protect historical attributes of City & region	17	3.6 %
Help attract new community members & businesses	24	5.1 %
Provide tourism revenues/contributes to City's tourism economy	3	0.6 %
Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	15	3.2 %
Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	87	18.6 %
Provide ample access to recreation & nature	100	21.3 %
Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	43	9.2 %
Provide access to arts & culture	18	3.8 %
Are equitably distributed throughout the community	43	9.2 %
Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	49	10.4 %
None chosen	25	5.3 %
Total	1348	

Q7. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to the future of the City of Evanston?

Q7. Top choice	Number	Percent
Contribute to a sense of community	110	23.5 %
Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	57	12.2 %
Improve quality of life in City	91	19.4 %
Help community members connect with nature	11	2.3 %
Help preserve open space & the environment	37	7.9 %
Protect historical attributes of City & region	4	0.9 %
Help attract new community members & businesses	18	3.8 %
Provide tourism revenues/contributes to City's tourism economy	7	1.5 %
Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	19	4.1 %
Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	17	3.6 %
Provide ample access to recreation & nature	12	2.6 %
Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	15	3.2 %
Provide access to arts & culture	1	0.2 %
Are equitably distributed throughout the community	14	3.0 %
Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	30	6.4 %
None chosen	26	5.5 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q7. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to the future of the City of Evanston?

Q7. 2nd choice	Number	Percent
Contribute to a sense of community	37	7.9 %
Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	57	12.2 %
Improve quality of life in City	76	16.2 %
Help community members connect with nature	17	3.6 %
Help preserve open space & the environment	57	12.2 %
Protect historical attributes of City & region	16	3.4 %
Help attract new community members & businesses	44	9.4 %
Provide tourism revenues/contributes to City's tourism economy	17	3.6 %
Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	15	3.2 %
Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	28	6.0 %
Provide ample access to recreation & nature	18	3.8 %
Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	23	4.9 %
Provide access to arts & culture	6	1.3 %
Are equitably distributed throughout the community	13	2.8 %
Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	14	3.0 %
None chosen	31	6.6 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q7. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to the future of the City of Evanston?

Q7. 3rd choice	Number	Percent
Contribute to a sense of community	40	8.5 %
Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	35	7.5 %
Improve quality of life in City	41	8.7 %
Help community members connect with nature	18	3.8 %
Help preserve open space & the environment	45	9.6 %
Protect historical attributes of City & region	17	3.6 %
Help attract new community members & businesses	30	6.4 %
Provide tourism revenues/contributes to City's tourism economy	15	3.2 %
Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	18	3.8 %
Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	41	8.7 %
Provide ample access to recreation & nature	22	4.7 %
Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	24	5.1 %
Provide access to arts & culture	16	3.4 %
Are equitably distributed throughout the community	30	6.4 %
Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	38	8.1 %
None chosen	39	8.3 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(SUM OF TOP 3)

Q7. Which THREE of the items listed in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to the future of the City of Evanston? (top 3)

Q7. Top choice	Number	Percent
Contribute to a sense of community	187	39.9 %
Improve health, wellbeing, & fitness of community members	149	31.8 %
Improve quality of life in City	208	44.3 %
Help community members connect with nature	46	9.8 %
Help preserve open space & the environment	139	29.6 %
Protect historical attributes of City & region	37	7.9 %
Help attract new community members & businesses	92	19.6 %
Provide tourism revenues/contributes to City's tourism economy	39	8.3 %
Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	52	11.1 %
Provide activities, programs, & events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	86	18.3 %
Provide ample access to recreation & nature	52	11.1 %
Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	62	13.2 %
Provide access to arts & culture	23	4.9 %
Are equitably distributed throughout the community	57	12.2 %
Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water & air quality & provide cool spaces on hot days)	82	17.5 %
None chosen	26	5.5 %
Total	1337	

Q8. Please indicate if YOU or any members of your household currently ATTEND or WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND each of the activities, programs, or events listed below.

(N=469)

	Yes	No
Q8-1. Aquatics	41.8%	58.2%
Q8-2. Athletics & Sports Leagues, Adult	26.4%	73.6%
Q8-3. Athletics & Sports Leagues, Youth	21.5%	78.5%
Q8-4. Before/After School Programs	10.2%	89.8%
Q8-5. Childcare	8.5%	91.5%
Q8-6. Community Gardening	25.2%	74.8%
Q8-7. Concerts in the Park	72.1%	27.9%
Q8-8. Early Childhood Programs (up to age 5)	11.1%	88.9%
Q8-9. Family friendly events	35.8%	64.2%
Q8-10. Farmers Market	80.2%	19.8%
Q8-11. Fitness & Wellness (i.e., Group Fitness Classes & Personal Training)	40.7%	59.3%
Q8-12. Gymnastics	12.4%	87.6%
Q8-13. Hobbies & Life Skills (i.e., cooking, budgeting, & computer skills)	20.9%	79.1%
Q8-14. Ice Programs (skating, hockey, etc.)	22.2%	77.8%
Q8-15. Movies & Concerts in the Park	62.5%	37.5%
Q8-16. Nature, Environment, & Ecology (i.e., bird watching, nature learning activities)	47.5%	52.5%
Q8-17. Outdoor Adventure (i.e., kayaking, canoeing, & camping)	43.9%	56.1%
Q8-18. Preschool & Kindergarten Sports	11.5%	88.5%

Q8. Please indicate if YOU or any members of your household currently ATTEND or WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND each of the activities, programs, or events listed below.

	Yes	No
Q8-19. Preschool Art & Music	10.2%	89.8%
Q8-20. Rentals for Social Occasions/ Events (such as spaces for birthday parties)	24.9%	75.1%
Q8-21. Robotics & eSports	5.8%	94.2%
Q8-22. Senior Programs (ages 55 & up)	23.7%	76.3%
Q8-23. Special Events	24.9%	75.1%
Q8-24. Special Olympics (competition)	4.5%	95.5%
Q8-25. Special Recreation (programmed activities)	9.4%	90.6%
Q8-26. Summer Camp	19.2%	80.8%
Q8-27. Teen Programs (ages 13 to 17)	9.0%	91.0%
Q8-28. Visual & Performing Arts (such as dance & music classes)	28.4%	71.6%

Q8. If "Yes," please indicate how well your needs are being met.

(N=456)

	100% met	75% met	50% met	25% met	0% met
Q8-1. Aquatics	20.4%	13.3%	21.5%	21.5%	23.2%
Q8-2. Athletics & Sports Leagues, Adult	6.8%	16.2%	19.7%	28.2%	29.1%
Q8-3. Athletics & Sports Leagues, Youth	24.0%	19.8%	26.0%	16.7%	13.5%
Q8-4. Before/After School Programs	12.2%	17.1%	19.5%	26.8%	24.4%
Q8-5. Childcare	8.1%	5.4%	16.2%	18.9%	51.4%
Q8-6. Community Gardening	17.6%	16.7%	19.6%	30.4%	15.7%
Q8-7. Concerts in the Park	26.2%	30.4%	23.0%	14.4%	6.1%
Q8-8. Early Childhood Programs (up to age 5)	6.5%	19.6%	30.4%	17.4%	26.1%
Q8-9. Family friendly events	24.1%	33.5%	24.7%	15.8%	1.9%
Q8-10. Farmers Market	60.9%	21.2%	10.8%	4.5%	2.5%
Q8-11. Fitness & Wellness (i.e., Group Fitness Classes & Personal Training)	11.6%	19.2%	26.2%	27.3%	15.7%
Q8-12. Gymnastics	19.6%	19.6%	21.4%	12.5%	26.8%
Q8-13. Hobbies & Life Skills (i.e., cooking, budgeting, & computer skills)	3.5%	14.1%	18.8%	41.2%	22.4%
Q8-14. Ice Programs (skating, hockey, etc.)	36.7%	28.6%	12.2%	12.2%	10.2%
Q8-15. Movies & Concerts in the Park	27.1%	27.9%	24.2%	16.0%	4.8%
Q8-16. Nature, Environment, & Ecology (i.e., bird watching, nature learning activities)	24.1%	28.1%	19.7%	16.7%	11.3%
Q8-17. Outdoor Adventure (i.e., kayaking, canoeing, & camping)	7.4%	16.0%	18.1%	28.7%	29.8%
Q8-18. Preschool & Kindergarten Sports	8.5%	6.4%	19.1%	38.3%	27.7%

Q8. If "Yes," please indicate how well your needs are being met.

	100% met	75% met	50% met	25% met	0% met
Q8-19. Preschool Art & Music	2.3%	14.0%	30.2%	23.3%	30.2%
Q8-20. Rentals for Social Occasions/ Events (such as spaces for birthday parties)	23.4%	29.7%	27.0%	9.9%	9.9%
Q8-21. Robotics & eSports	18.5%	14.8%	25.9%	14.8%	25.9%
Q8-22. Senior Programs (ages 55 & up)	11.2%	35.7%	26.5%	16.3%	10.2%
Q8-23. Special Events	18.4%	26.2%	27.2%	18.4%	9.7%
Q8-24. Special Olympics (competition)	5.9%	5.9%	41.2%	11.8%	35.3%
Q8-25. Special Recreation (programmed activities)	10.0%	27.5%	20.0%	12.5%	30.0%
Q8-26. Summer Camp	37.3%	20.5%	19.3%	13.3%	9.6%
Q8-27. Teen Programs (ages 13 to 17)	0.0%	17.5%	25.0%	22.5%	35.0%
Q8-28. Visual & Performing Arts (such as dance & music classes)	5.1%	18.6%	29.7%	28.0%	18.6%

Q9. Which FOUR activities, programs or events from the list in Question 8 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q9. Top choice	Number	Percent
Aquatics	37	7.9 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Adult	21	4.5 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Youth	29	6.2 %
Before/After School Programs	3	0.6 %
Childcare	5	1.1 %
Community Gardening	13	2.8 %
Concerts in the Park	41	8.7 %
Early Childhood Programs (up to age 5)	13	2.8 %
Family friendly events	24	5.1 %
Farmers Market	96	20.5 %
Fitness & Wellness (i.e., Group Fitness Classes & Personal Training)	17	3.6 %
Gymnastics	3	0.6 %
Hobbies & Life Skills (i.e., cooking, budgeting, & computer skills)	2	0.4 %
Ice Programs (skating, hockey, etc.)	7	1.5 %
Movies & Concerts in the Park	18	3.8 %
Nature, Environment, & Ecology (i.e., bird watching, nature learning activities)	31	6.6 %
Outdoor Adventure (i.e., kayaking, canoeing, & camping)	12	2.6 %
Preschool & Kindergarten Sports	2	0.4 %
Rentals for Social Occasions/Events (such as spaces for birthday parties)	2	0.4 %
Senior Programs (ages 55 & up)	17	3.6 %
Special Events	4	0.9 %
Special Olympics (competition)	2	0.4 %
Special Recreation (programmed activities)	2	0.4 %
Summer Camp	9	1.9 %
Teen Programs (ages 13 to 17)	4	0.9 %
Visual & Performing Arts (such as dance & music classes)	6	1.3 %
None chosen	49	10.4 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q9. Which FOUR activities, programs or events from the list in Question 8 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q9. 2nd choice	Number	Percent
Aquatics	31	6.6 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Adult	18	3.8 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Youth	12	2.6 %
Before/After School Programs	8	1.7 %
Childcare	6	1.3 %
Community Gardening	15	3.2 %
Concerts in the Park	46	9.8 %
Early Childhood Programs (up to age 5)	4	0.9 %
Family friendly events	18	3.8 %
Farmers Market	72	15.4 %
Fitness & Wellness (i.e., Group Fitness Classes & Personal Training)	21	4.5 %
Gymnastics	3	0.6 %
Hobbies & Life Skills (i.e., cooking, budgeting, & computer skills)	6	1.3 %
Ice Programs (skating, hockey, etc.)	10	2.1 %
Movies & Concerts in the Park	34	7.2 %
Nature, Environment, & Ecology (i.e., bird watching, nature learning activities)	28	6.0 %
Outdoor Adventure (i.e., kayaking, canoeing, & camping)	13	2.8 %
Preschool & Kindergarten Sports	9	1.9 %
Preschool Art & Music	3	0.6 %
Rentals for Social Occasions/Events (such as spaces for birthday parties)	5	1.1 %
Senior Programs (ages 55 & up)	12	2.6 %
Special Events	8	1.7 %
Special Olympics (competition)	2	0.4 %
Special Recreation (programmed activities)	1	0.2 %
Summer Camp	13	2.8 %
Teen Programs (ages 13 to 17)	3	0.6 %
Visual & Performing Arts (such as dance & music classes)	11	2.3 %
None chosen	57	12.2 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q9. Which FOUR activities, programs or events from the list in Question 8 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q9. 3rd choice	Number	Percent
Aquatics	18	3.8 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Adult	9	1.9 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Youth	15	3.2 %
Before/After School Programs	3	0.6 %
Childcare	2	0.4 %
Community Gardening	4	0.9 %
Concerts in the Park	37	7.9 %
Early Childhood Programs (up to age 5)	7	1.5 %
Family friendly events	24	5.1 %
Farmers Market	54	11.5 %
Fitness & Wellness (i.e., Group Fitness Classes & Personal Training)	29	6.2 %
Gymnastics	7	1.5 %
Hobbies & Life Skills (i.e., cooking, budgeting, & computer skills)	8	1.7 %
Ice Programs (skating, hockey, etc.)	6	1.3 %
Movies & Concerts in the Park	38	8.1 %
Nature, Environment, & Ecology (i.e., bird watching, nature learning activities)	32	6.8 %
Outdoor Adventure (i.e., kayaking, canoeing, & camping)	22	4.7 %
Preschool & Kindergarten Sports	4	0.9 %
Preschool Art & Music	2	0.4 %
Rentals for Social Occasions/Events (such as spaces for birthday parties)	5	1.1 %
Senior Programs (ages 55 & up)	23	4.9 %
Special Events	9	1.9 %
Special Recreation (programmed activities)	2	0.4 %
Summer Camp	7	1.5 %
Teen Programs (ages 13 to 17)	4	0.9 %
Visual & Performing Arts (such as dance & music classes)	5	1.1 %
None chosen	93	19.8 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q9. Which FOUR activities, programs or events from the list in Question 8 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q9. 4th choice	Number	Percent
Aquatics	16	3.4 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Adult	9	1.9 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Youth	4	0.9 %
Before/After School Programs	4	0.9 %
Childcare	3	0.6 %
Community Gardening	15	3.2 %
Concerts in the Park	28	6.0 %
Early Childhood Programs (up to age 5)	4	0.9 %
Family friendly events	23	4.9 %
Farmers Market	27	5.8 %
Fitness & Wellness (i.e., Group Fitness Classes & Personal Training)	19	4.1 %
Gymnastics	6	1.3 %
Hobbies & Life Skills (i.e., cooking, budgeting, & computer skills)	10	2.1 %
Ice Programs (skating, hockey, etc.)	11	2.3 %
Movies & Concerts in the Park	44	9.4 %
Nature, Environment, & Ecology (i.e., bird watching, nature learning activities)	22	4.7 %
Outdoor Adventure (i.e., kayaking, canoeing, & camping)	27	5.8 %
Preschool & Kindergarten Sports	3	0.6 %
Preschool Art & Music	5	1.1 %
Rentals for Social Occasions/Events (such as spaces for birthday parties)	13	2.8 %
Robotics & eSports	1	0.2 %
Senior Programs (ages 55 & up)	7	1.5 %
Special Events	13	2.8 %
Special Recreation (programmed activities)	8	1.7 %
Summer Camp	4	0.9 %
Teen Programs (ages 13 to 17)	7	1.5 %
Visual & Performing Arts (such as dance & music classes)	12	2.6 %
None chosen	124	26.4 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(SUM OF TOP 4)**Q9. Which FOUR activities, programs or events from the list in Question 8 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household? (top 4)**

Q9. Top choice	Number	Percent
Aquatics	102	21.7 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Adult	57	12.2 %
Athletics & Sports Leagues, Youth	60	12.8 %
Before/After School Programs	18	3.8 %
Childcare	16	3.4 %
Community Gardening	47	10.0 %
Concerts in the Park	152	32.4 %
Early Childhood Programs (up to age 5)	28	6.0 %
Family friendly events	89	19.0 %
Farmers Market	249	53.1 %
Fitness & Wellness (i.e., Group Fitness Classes & Personal Training)	86	18.3 %
Gymnastics	19	4.1 %
Hobbies & Life Skills (i.e., cooking, budgeting, & computer skills)	26	5.5 %
Ice Programs (skating, hockey, etc.)	34	7.2 %
Movies & Concerts in the Park	134	28.6 %
Nature, Environment, & Ecology (i.e., bird watching, nature learning activities)	113	24.1 %
Outdoor Adventure (i.e., kayaking, canoeing, & camping)	74	15.8 %
Preschool & Kindergarten Sports	18	3.8 %
Preschool Art & Music	10	2.1 %
Rentals for Social Occasions/Events (such as spaces for birthday parties)	25	5.3 %
Robotics & eSports	1	0.2 %
Senior Programs (ages 55 & up)	59	12.6 %
Special Events	34	7.2 %
Special Olympics (competition)	4	0.9 %
Special Recreation (programmed activities)	13	2.8 %
Summer Camp	33	7.0 %
Teen Programs (ages 13 to 17)	18	3.8 %
Visual & Performing Arts (such as dance & music classes)	34	7.2 %
None chosen	49	10.4 %
Total	1602	

Q10. Please indicate if YOU or any members of your household currently USE or WOULD LIKE TO USE each of the facilities listed below.

(N=469)

	Yes	No
Q10-1. Art Installations	37.7%	62.3%
Q10-2. Baseball/Softball Fields	13.6%	86.4%
Q10-3. Basketball Courts	19.4%	80.6%
Q10-4. Beaches & Waterfront Access	84.4%	15.6%
Q10-5. Bird & Wildlife Habitat Areas	52.0%	48.0%
Q10-6. Climbing Walls	27.9%	72.1%
Q10-7. Community Centers	43.3%	56.7%
Q10-8. Community Garden Plots	19.8%	80.2%
Q10-9. Dog Beach	29.0%	71.0%
Q10-10. Dog Parks	27.5%	72.5%
Q10-11. Educational Signage	13.6%	86.4%
Q10-12. Football Fields	5.1%	94.9%
Q10-13. Ice Rink-Indoor	25.6%	74.4%
Q10-14. Ice Rink-Outdoor	22.2%	77.8%
Q10-15. Inclusive Play Areas (e.g., full access for people with disabilities)	12.6%	87.4%
Q10-16. Natural Play Areas	31.3%	68.7%
Q10-17. Nature Centers	47.3%	52.7%
Q10-18. Paddleboard/Canoe/Kayak Launches	42.9%	57.1%
Q10-19. Park Shelters	31.8%	68.2%
Q10-20. Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens, & Wildflower Meadows	45.4%	54.6%

Q10. Please indicate if YOU or any members of your household currently USE or WOULD LIKE TO USE each of the facilities listed below.

	Yes	No
Q10-21. Paths-Paved/Unpaved	68.2%	31.8%
Q10-22. Lighted Sports Fields	14.9%	85.1%
Q10-23. Performance Spaces	21.5%	78.5%
Q10-24. Pickleball Courts	24.3%	75.7%
Q10-25. Picnic Areas	41.2%	58.8%
Q10-26. Playgrounds & Play Areas	37.1%	62.9%
Q10-27. Pools-Indoor	38.8%	61.2%
Q10-28. Pools-Outdoor	41.2%	58.8%
Q10-29. Skate Park	12.2%	87.8%
Q10-30. Soccer/Lacrosse/Multi-purpose Fields	16.4%	83.6%
Q10-31. Sprayground/Splash Pad	23.5%	76.5%
Q10-32. Teen Drop-in Centers	10.0%	90.0%
Q10-33. Tennis Courts	27.1%	72.9%
Q10-34. Tree Canopies/Urban Forests	52.5%	47.5%
Q10-35. Volleyball Courts (Outdoor, Sand)	11.7%	88.3%

Q10. If "Yes," please indicate how well your needs are being met.

(N=458)

	100% met	75% met	50% met	25% met	0% met
Q10-1. Art Installations	15.9%	27.4%	29.9%	18.3%	8.5%
Q10-2. Baseball/Softball Fields	23.6%	25.5%	25.5%	18.2%	7.3%
Q10-3. Basketball Courts	31.3%	34.9%	25.3%	8.4%	0.0%
Q10-4. Beaches & Waterfront Access	55.8%	32.0%	7.1%	4.8%	0.3%
Q10-5. Bird & Wildlife Habitat Areas	23.8%	34.5%	19.7%	20.2%	1.8%
Q10-6. Climbing Walls	2.5%	0.0%	8.4%	17.6%	71.4%
Q10-7. Community Centers	36.7%	35.6%	14.4%	12.2%	1.1%
Q10-8. Community Garden Plots	16.3%	18.8%	17.5%	27.5%	20.0%
Q10-9. Dog Beach	31.7%	26.0%	17.9%	13.8%	10.6%
Q10-10. Dog Parks	13.0%	17.4%	20.9%	24.3%	24.3%
Q10-11. Educational Signage	12.3%	22.8%	21.1%	24.6%	19.3%
Q10-12. Football Fields	10.0%	35.0%	15.0%	25.0%	15.0%
Q10-13. Ice Rink-Indoor	65.2%	16.5%	7.0%	6.1%	5.2%
Q10-14. Ice Rink-Outdoor	21.6%	14.4%	22.7%	18.6%	22.7%
Q10-15. Inclusive Play Areas (e.g., full access for people with disabilities)	15.7%	11.8%	39.2%	23.5%	9.8%
Q10-16. Natural Play Areas	16.3%	20.0%	26.7%	23.0%	14.1%
Q10-17. Nature Centers	29.4%	30.4%	20.1%	12.3%	7.8%
Q10-18. Paddleboard/Canoe/Kayak Launches	15.1%	16.2%	21.8%	25.7%	21.2%
Q10-19. Park Shelters	16.9%	28.7%	31.6%	16.2%	6.6%
Q10-20. Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens, & Wildflower Meadows	13.9%	21.6%	24.7%	26.3%	13.4%

Q10. If "Yes," please indicate how well your needs are being met.

	100% met	75% met	50% met	25% met	0% met
Q10-21. Paths-Paved/Unpaved	37.9%	33.9%	17.4%	10.7%	0.0%
Q10-22. Lighted Sports Fields	20.3%	28.1%	28.1%	17.2%	6.3%
Q10-23. Performance Spaces	12.4%	23.6%	29.2%	19.1%	15.7%
Q10-24. Pickleball Courts	11.8%	7.8%	17.6%	38.2%	24.5%
Q10-25. Picnic Areas	25.3%	35.4%	25.8%	10.1%	3.4%
Q10-26. Playgrounds & Play Areas	41.9%	30.6%	20.0%	6.3%	1.3%
Q10-27. Pools-Indoor	4.8%	6.6%	9.6%	12.6%	66.5%
Q10-28. Pools-Outdoor	2.8%	2.2%	7.3%	8.4%	79.2%
Q10-29. Skate Park	6.0%	0.0%	16.0%	24.0%	54.0%
Q10-30. Soccer/Lacrosse/Multi-purpose Fields	27.8%	23.6%	29.2%	13.9%	5.6%
Q10-31. Sprayground/Splash Pad	2.9%	5.8%	7.8%	12.6%	70.9%
Q10-32. Teen Drop-in Centers	10.0%	10.0%	15.0%	32.5%	32.5%
Q10-33. Tennis Courts	27.3%	33.1%	25.6%	10.7%	3.3%
Q10-34. Tree Canopies/Urban Forests	18.3%	21.7%	26.1%	17.0%	17.0%
Q10-35. Volleyball Courts (Outdoor, Sand)	7.7%	17.3%	25.0%	34.6%	15.4%

Q11. Which FOUR recreation facilities and amenities from the list in Question 10 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q11. Top choice	Number	Percent
Art Installations	9	1.9 %
Baseball/Softball Fields	13	2.8 %
Basketball Courts	7	1.5 %
Beaches & Waterfront Access	163	34.8 %
Bird & Wildlife Habitat Areas	19	4.1 %
Climbing Walls	4	0.9 %
Community Centers	13	2.8 %
Community Garden Plots	6	1.3 %
Dog Beach	10	2.1 %
Dog Parks	15	3.2 %
Educational Signage	1	0.2 %
Football Fields	1	0.2 %
Ice Rink-Indoor	7	1.5 %
Ice Rink-Outdoor	1	0.2 %
Inclusive Play Areas (e.g., full access for people with disabilities)	2	0.4 %
Natural Play Areas	6	1.3 %
Nature Centers	6	1.3 %
Paddleboard/Canoe/Kayak Launches	8	1.7 %
Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens, & Wildflower Meadows	7	1.5 %
Paths-Paved/Unpaved	37	7.9 %
Lighted Sports Fields	2	0.4 %
Performance Spaces	2	0.4 %
Pickleball Courts	11	2.3 %
Playgrounds & Play Areas	19	4.1 %
Pools-Indoor	14	3.0 %
Pools-Outdoor	17	3.6 %
Skate Park	1	0.2 %
Soccer/Lacrosse/Multi-purpose Fields	3	0.6 %
Sprayground/Splash Pad	7	1.5 %
Teen Drop-in Centers	2	0.4 %
Tennis Courts	9	1.9 %
Tree Canopies/Urban Forests	11	2.3 %
Volleyball Courts (Outdoor, Sand)	1	0.2 %
None chosen	35	7.5 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q11. Which FOUR recreation facilities and amenities from the list in Question 10 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q11. 2nd choice	Number	Percent
Art Installations	10	2.1 %
Baseball/Softball Fields	3	0.6 %
Basketball Courts	8	1.7 %
Beaches & Waterfront Access	60	12.8 %
Bird & Wildlife Habitat Areas	22	4.7 %
Climbing Walls	9	1.9 %
Community Centers	17	3.6 %
Community Garden Plots	6	1.3 %
Dog Beach	28	6.0 %
Dog Parks	16	3.4 %
Educational Signage	1	0.2 %
Ice Rink-Indoor	10	2.1 %
Ice Rink-Outdoor	6	1.3 %
Inclusive Play Areas (e.g., full access for people with disabilities)	2	0.4 %
Natural Play Areas	13	2.8 %
Nature Centers	19	4.1 %
Paddleboard/Canoe/Kayak Launches	12	2.6 %
Park Shelters	3	0.6 %
Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens, & Wildflower Meadows	22	4.7 %
Paths-Paved/Unpaved	35	7.5 %
Lighted Sports Fields	3	0.6 %
Performance Spaces	1	0.2 %
Pickleball Courts	9	1.9 %
Picnic Areas	8	1.7 %
Playgrounds & Play Areas	19	4.1 %
Pools-Indoor	14	3.0 %
Pools-Outdoor	18	3.8 %
Skate Park	2	0.4 %
Soccer/Lacrosse/Multi-purpose Fields	6	1.3 %
Sprayground/Splash Pad	11	2.3 %
Teen Drop-in Centers	3	0.6 %
Tennis Courts	2	0.4 %
Tree Canopies/Urban Forests	26	5.5 %
<u>None chosen</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>9.6 %</u>
Total	469	100.0 %

Q11. Which FOUR recreation facilities and amenities from the list in Question 10 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q11. 3rd choice	Number	Percent
Art Installations	7	1.5 %
Baseball/Softball Fields	1	0.2 %
Basketball Courts	5	1.1 %
Beaches & Waterfront Access	36	7.7 %
Bird & Wildlife Habitat Areas	32	6.8 %
Climbing Walls	6	1.3 %
Community Centers	25	5.3 %
Community Garden Plots	6	1.3 %
Dog Beach	9	1.9 %
Dog Parks	16	3.4 %
Educational Signage	2	0.4 %
Football Fields	1	0.2 %
Ice Rink-Indoor	11	2.3 %
Ice Rink-Outdoor	4	0.9 %
Inclusive Play Areas (e.g., full access for people with disabilities)	7	1.5 %
Natural Play Areas	13	2.8 %
Nature Centers	14	3.0 %
Paddleboard/Canoe/Kayak Launches	15	3.2 %
Park Shelters	9	1.9 %
Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens, & Wildflower Meadows	21	4.5 %
Paths-Paved/Unpaved	27	5.8 %
Lighted Sports Fields	4	0.9 %
Performance Spaces	1	0.2 %
Pickleball Courts	14	3.0 %
Picnic Areas	9	1.9 %
Playgrounds & Play Areas	25	5.3 %
Pools-Indoor	11	2.3 %
Pools-Outdoor	24	5.1 %
Skate Park	3	0.6 %
Soccer/Lacrosse/Multi-purpose Fields	6	1.3 %
Sprayground/Splash Pad	10	2.1 %
Teen Drop-in Centers	2	0.4 %
Tennis Courts	12	2.6 %
Tree Canopies/Urban Forests	24	5.1 %
Volleyball Courts (Outdoor, Sand)	1	0.2 %
None chosen	56	11.9 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q11. Which FOUR recreation facilities and amenities from the list in Question 10 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q11. 4th choice	Number	Percent
Art Installations	14	3.0 %
Baseball/Softball Fields	2	0.4 %
Basketball Courts	3	0.6 %
Beaches & Waterfront Access	31	6.6 %
Bird & Wildlife Habitat Areas	20	4.3 %
Climbing Walls	5	1.1 %
Community Centers	24	5.1 %
Community Garden Plots	4	0.9 %
Dog Beach	10	2.1 %
Dog Parks	11	2.3 %
Educational Signage	1	0.2 %
Football Fields	1	0.2 %
Ice Rink-Indoor	5	1.1 %
Ice Rink-Outdoor	3	0.6 %
Inclusive Play Areas (e.g., full access for people with disabilities)	7	1.5 %
Natural Play Areas	22	4.7 %
Nature Centers	18	3.8 %
Paddleboard/Canoe/Kayak Launches	9	1.9 %
Park Shelters	6	1.3 %
Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens, & Wildflower Meadows	28	6.0 %
Paths-Paved/Unpaved	30	6.4 %
Lighted Sports Fields	2	0.4 %
Performance Spaces	6	1.3 %
Pickleball Courts	14	3.0 %
Picnic Areas	8	1.7 %
Playgrounds & Play Areas	19	4.1 %
Pools-Indoor	13	2.8 %
Pools-Outdoor	17	3.6 %
Skate Park	1	0.2 %
Soccer/Lacrosse/Multi-purpose Fields	8	1.7 %
Sprayground/Splash Pad	10	2.1 %
Teen Drop-in Centers	2	0.4 %
Tennis Courts	6	1.3 %
Tree Canopies/Urban Forests	29	6.2 %
Volleyball Courts (Outdoor, Sand)	2	0.4 %
None chosen	78	16.6 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(SUM OF TOP 4)**Q11. Which FOUR recreation facilities and amenities from the list in Question 10 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household? (top 4)**

Q11. Top choice	Number	Percent
Art Installations	40	8.5 %
Baseball/Softball Fields	19	4.1 %
Basketball Courts	23	4.9 %
Beaches & Waterfront Access	290	61.8 %
Bird & Wildlife Habitat Areas	93	19.8 %
Climbing Walls	24	5.1 %
Community Centers	79	16.8 %
Community Garden Plots	22	4.7 %
Dog Beach	57	12.2 %
Dog Parks	58	12.4 %
Educational Signage	5	1.1 %
Football Fields	3	0.6 %
Ice Rink-Indoor	33	7.0 %
Ice Rink-Outdoor	14	3.0 %
Inclusive Play Areas (e.g., full access for people with disabilities)	18	3.8 %
Natural Play Areas	54	11.5 %
Nature Centers	57	12.2 %
Paddleboard/Canoe/Kayak Launches	44	9.4 %
Park Shelters	18	3.8 %
Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens, & Wildflower Meadows	78	16.6 %
Paths-Paved/Unpaved	129	27.5 %
Lighted Sports Fields	11	2.3 %
Performance Spaces	10	2.1 %
Pickleball Courts	48	10.2 %
Picnic Areas	25	5.3 %
Playgrounds & Play Areas	82	17.5 %
Pools-Indoor	52	11.1 %
Pools-Outdoor	76	16.2 %
Skate Park	7	1.5 %
Soccer/Lacrosse/Multi-purpose Fields	23	4.9 %
Sprayground/Splash Pad	38	8.1 %
Teen Drop-in Centers	9	1.9 %
Tennis Courts	29	6.2 %
Tree Canopies/Urban Forests	90	19.2 %
Volleyball Courts (Outdoor, Sand)	4	0.9 %
None chosen	35	7.5 %
Total	1697	

Q12. From the following list, please check ALL of the following ways you currently use to learn about City of Evanston Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities.

Q12. All the ways you currently use to learn about City Parks & Recreation Department news, events, programs, & activities

	Number	Percent
Website (cityofevanston.org)	355	75.7 %
Television	4	0.9 %
Newspaper articles	99	21.1 %
Radio	12	2.6 %
Word of mouth	259	55.2 %
Park signage	121	25.8 %
eNewsletters (Citywide or Levy Senior Center)	322	68.7 %
Conversations with staff	25	5.3 %
Print advertisements	45	9.6 %
Nextdoor	32	6.8 %
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	172	36.7 %
School district	40	8.5 %
Promotions at special events	50	10.7 %
Seasonal Program Guide	145	30.9 %
Other	14	3.0 %
Total	1695	

Q12-15. Other

Q12-15. Other	Number	Percent
Libraries	2	14.3 %
Evanston Roundtable	2	14.3 %
Drive/bike around the city	1	7.1 %
City texting program	1	7.1 %
Library bulletin board	1	7.1 %
Emails	1	7.1 %
Traveling around the city	1	7.1 %
Evanston review	1	7.1 %
Google maps	1	7.1 %
Evanston Now Site	1	7.1 %
Email	1	7.1 %
Online newspaper articles	1	7.1 %
Total	14	100.0 %

Q13. Which THREE sources from the list in Question 12 are YOUR MOST PREFERRED SOURCES for learning about the City's Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities?

Q13. Top choice	Number	Percent
Website (cityofevanston.org)	148	31.6 %
Television	2	0.4 %
Newspaper articles	13	2.8 %
Word of mouth	15	3.2 %
Park signage	6	1.3 %
eNewsletters (Citywide or Levy Senior Center)	167	35.6 %
Print advertisements	4	0.9 %
Nextdoor	1	0.2 %
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	44	9.4 %
School district	1	0.2 %
Promotions at special events	2	0.4 %
Seasonal Program Guide	27	5.8 %
None chosen	39	8.3 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q13. Which THREE sources from the list in Question 12 are YOUR MOST PREFERRED SOURCES for learning about the City's Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities?

Q13. 2nd choice	Number	Percent
Website (cityofevanston.org)	81	17.3 %
Newspaper articles	26	5.5 %
Radio	4	0.9 %
Word of mouth	38	8.1 %
Park signage	24	5.1 %
eNewsletters (Citywide or Levy Senior Center)	90	19.2 %
Conversations with staff	3	0.6 %
Print advertisements	7	1.5 %
Nextdoor	5	1.1 %
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	59	12.6 %
School district	4	0.9 %
Promotions at special events	3	0.6 %
Seasonal Program Guide	51	10.9 %
None chosen	74	15.8 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q13. Which THREE sources from the list in Question 12 are YOUR MOST PREFERRED SOURCES for learning about the City's Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities?

Q13. 3rd choice	Number	Percent
Website (cityofevanston.org)	51	10.9 %
Television	1	0.2 %
Newspaper articles	22	4.7 %
Radio	2	0.4 %
Word of mouth	51	10.9 %
Park signage	27	5.8 %
eNewsletters (Citywide or Levy Senior Center)	40	8.5 %
Conversations with staff	5	1.1 %
Print advertisements	10	2.1 %
Nextdoor	5	1.1 %
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	48	10.2 %
School district	8	1.7 %
Promotions at special events	12	2.6 %
Seasonal Program Guide	64	13.6 %
None chosen	123	26.2 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(SUM OF TOP 3)

Q13. Which THREE sources from the list in Question 12 are YOUR MOST PREFERRED SOURCES for learning about the City's Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities? (top 3)

Q13. Top choice	Number	Percent
Website (cityofevanston.org)	280	59.7 %
Television	3	0.6 %
Newspaper articles	61	13.0 %
Radio	6	1.3 %
Word of mouth	104	22.2 %
Park signage	57	12.2 %
eNewsletters (Citywide or Levy Senior Center)	297	63.3 %
Conversations with staff	8	1.7 %
Print advertisements	21	4.5 %
Nextdoor	11	2.3 %
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	151	32.2 %
School district	13	2.8 %
Promotions at special events	17	3.6 %
Seasonal Program Guide	142	30.3 %
None chosen	39	8.3 %
Total	1210	

Q14. The following is a list of actions the City of Evanston could take to improve its parks and greenspace offerings. Please indicate your support for each potential action by circling the corresponding number to the right.

(N=469)

	Very supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not sure	Not supportive	Not provided
Q14-1. Acquire land for new park space	46.9%	21.7%	23.2%	8.1%	0.0%
Q14-2. Design & develop new parks on recently acquired park land	62.7%	19.8%	14.7%	2.8%	0.0%
Q14-3. Develop new multiuse community facilities	38.0%	29.6%	26.4%	6.0%	0.0%
Q14-4. Enhance bike & pedestrian access to parks/ facilities	66.1%	19.4%	12.2%	2.3%	0.0%
Q14-5. Focus on daily maintenance of existing parks & facilities	70.4%	21.1%	8.3%	0.2%	0.0%
Q14-6. Improve existing parks infrastructure (e.g., benches, shade structures, water fountains, resurface courts)	70.4%	21.1%	7.5%	1.1%	0.0%
Q14-7. Improve existing path systems (increasing connectivity/ accessibility)	62.3%	23.0%	13.2%	1.5%	0.0%
Q14-8. Improve existing playgrounds	48.0%	32.6%	16.4%	3.0%	0.0%

Q14. The following is a list of actions the City of Evanston could take to improve its parks and greenspace offerings. Please indicate your support for each potential action by circling the corresponding number to the right.

	Very supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not sure	Not supportive	Not provided
Q14-9. Improve inclusion services or accessibility to programs & facilities	45.8%	27.9%	23.2%	3.0%	0.0%
Q14-10. Improve/add restroom facilities	60.8%	22.6%	14.3%	2.3%	0.0%
Q14-11. Include more places for active sports or play in existing parks	32.0%	30.3%	30.7%	7.0%	0.0%
Q14-12. Incorporate more habitat spaces in existing parks	44.6%	28.4%	23.0%	4.1%	0.0%
Q14-13. Partner with private organizations to provide more park space (e.g., developers)	22.4%	21.5%	39.0%	17.1%	0.0%
Q14-14. Partner with public organizations to provide more park space (e.g., school districts)	39.7%	28.1%	27.5%	4.7%	0.0%
Q14-15. Plant more trees in existing parks	58.6%	22.4%	17.7%	1.3%	0.0%
Q14-16. Provide more recreation programs & events	40.7%	32.2%	25.6%	1.5%	0.0%
Q14-17. Purchase land in areas currently without City parks/facilities	44.1%	23.2%	25.8%	6.8%	0.0%
Q14-18. Renovate or upgrade aging parks & facilities	66.1%	23.2%	9.4%	1.3%	0.0%
Q14-19. Other	6.2%	0.2%	0.6%	0.0%	93.0%

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")

Q14. The following is a list of actions the City of Evanston could take to improve its parks and greenspace offerings. Please indicate your support for each potential action by circling the corresponding number to the right. (without "not provided")

(N=469)

	Very supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not sure	Not supportive
Q14-1. Acquire land for new park space	46.9%	21.7%	23.2%	8.1%
Q14-2. Design & develop new parks on recently acquired park land	62.7%	19.8%	14.7%	2.8%
Q14-3. Develop new multiuse community facilities	38.0%	29.6%	26.4%	6.0%
Q14-4. Enhance bike & pedestrian access to parks/facilities	66.1%	19.4%	12.2%	2.3%
Q14-5. Focus on daily maintenance of existing parks & facilities	70.4%	21.1%	8.3%	0.2%
Q14-6. Improve existing parks infrastructure (e.g., benches, shade structures, water fountains, resurface courts)	70.4%	21.1%	7.5%	1.1%
Q14-7. Improve existing path systems (increasing connectivity/accessibility)	62.3%	23.0%	13.2%	1.5%
Q14-8. Improve existing playgrounds	48.0%	32.6%	16.4%	3.0%
Q14-9. Improve inclusion services or accessibility to programs & facilities	45.8%	27.9%	23.2%	3.0%
Q14-10. Improve/add restroom facilities	60.8%	22.6%	14.3%	2.3%
Q14-11. Include more places for active sports or play in existing parks	32.0%	30.3%	30.7%	7.0%
Q14-12. Incorporate more habitat spaces in existing parks	44.6%	28.4%	23.0%	4.1%
Q14-13. Partner with private organizations to provide more park space (e.g., developers)	22.4%	21.5%	39.0%	17.1%
Q14-14. Partner with public organizations to provide more park space (e.g., school districts)	39.7%	28.1%	27.5%	4.7%

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")

Q14. The following is a list of actions the City of Evanston could take to improve its parks and greenspace offerings. Please indicate your support for each potential action by circling the corresponding number to the right. (without "not provided")

	Very supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not sure	Not supportive
Q14-15. Plant more trees in existing parks	58.6%	22.4%	17.7%	1.3%
Q14-16. Provide more recreation programs & events	40.7%	32.2%	25.6%	1.5%
Q14-17. Purchase land in areas currently without City parks/facilities	44.1%	23.2%	25.8%	6.8%
Q14-18. Renovate or upgrade aging parks & facilities	66.1%	23.2%	9.4%	1.3%
Q14-19. Other	87.9%	3.0%	9.1%	0.0%

Q15. Which THREE of the potential improvements from the list in Question 14 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q15. Top choice	Number	Percent
Acquire land for new park space	22	4.7 %
Design & develop new parks on recently acquired park land	24	5.1 %
Develop new multiuse community facilities	15	3.2 %
Enhance bike & pedestrian access to parks/facilities	64	13.6 %
Focus on daily maintenance of existing parks & facilities	75	16.0 %
Improve existing parks infrastructure (e.g., benches, shade structures, water fountains, resurface courts)	63	13.4 %
Improve existing path systems (increasing connectivity/ accessibility)	19	4.1 %
Improve existing playgrounds	11	2.3 %
Improve inclusion services or accessibility to programs & facilities	7	1.5 %
Improve/add restroom facilities	24	5.1 %
Include more places for active sports or play in existing parks	7	1.5 %
Incorporate more habitat spaces in existing parks	12	2.6 %
Partner with private organizations to provide more park space (e.g., developers)	1	0.2 %
Partner with public organizations to provide more park space (e.g., school districts)	2	0.4 %
Plant more trees in existing parks	14	3.0 %
Provide more recreation programs & events	7	1.5 %
Purchase land in areas currently without City parks/ facilities	15	3.2 %
Renovate or upgrade aging parks & facilities	37	7.9 %
None chosen	50	10.7 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q15. Which THREE of the potential improvements from the list in Question 14 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q15. 2nd choice	Number	Percent
Acquire land for new park space	9	1.9 %
Design & develop new parks on recently acquired park land	23	4.9 %
Develop new multiuse community facilities	6	1.3 %
Enhance bike & pedestrian access to parks/facilities	37	7.9 %
Focus on daily maintenance of existing parks & facilities	44	9.4 %
Improve existing parks infrastructure (e.g., benches, shade structures, water fountains, resurface courts)	77	16.4 %
Improve existing path systems (increasing connectivity/ accessibility)	31	6.6 %
Improve existing playgrounds	36	7.7 %
Improve inclusion services or accessibility to programs & facilities	11	2.3 %
Improve/add restroom facilities	30	6.4 %
Include more places for active sports or play in existing parks	5	1.1 %
Incorporate more habitat spaces in existing parks	20	4.3 %
Partner with private organizations to provide more park space (e.g., developers)	8	1.7 %
Partner with public organizations to provide more park space (e.g., school districts)	6	1.3 %
Plant more trees in existing parks	14	3.0 %
Provide more recreation programs & events	12	2.6 %
Purchase land in areas currently without City parks/ facilities	13	2.8 %
Renovate or upgrade aging parks & facilities	27	5.8 %
None chosen	60	12.8 %
Total	469	100.0 %

Q15. Which THREE of the potential improvements from the list in Question 14 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household?

Q15. 3rd choice	Number	Percent
Acquire land for new park space	10	2.1 %
Design & develop new parks on recently acquired park land	16	3.4 %
Develop new multiuse community facilities	11	2.3 %
Enhance bike & pedestrian access to parks/facilities	21	4.5 %
Focus on daily maintenance of existing parks & facilities	28	6.0 %
Improve existing parks infrastructure (e.g., benches, shade structures, water fountains, resurface courts)	44	9.4 %
Improve existing path systems (increasing connectivity/ accessibility)	24	5.1 %
Improve existing playgrounds	21	4.5 %
Improve inclusion services or accessibility to programs & facilities	15	3.2 %
Improve/add restroom facilities	36	7.7 %
Include more places for active sports or play in existing parks	6	1.3 %
Incorporate more habitat spaces in existing parks	23	4.9 %
Partner with private organizations to provide more park space (e.g., developers)	9	1.9 %
Partner with public organizations to provide more park space (e.g., school districts)	5	1.1 %
Plant more trees in existing parks	33	7.0 %
Provide more recreation programs & events	18	3.8 %
Purchase land in areas currently without City parks/ facilities	22	4.7 %
Renovate or upgrade aging parks & facilities	43	9.2 %
None chosen	84	17.9 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(SUM OF TOP 3)**Q15. Which THREE of the potential improvements from the list in Question 14 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household? (top 3)**

Q15. Top choice	Number	Percent
Acquire land for new park space	41	8.7 %
Design & develop new parks on recently acquired park land	63	13.4 %
Develop new multiuse community facilities	32	6.8 %
Enhance bike & pedestrian access to parks/facilities	122	26.0 %
Focus on daily maintenance of existing parks & facilities	147	31.3 %
Improve existing parks infrastructure (e.g., benches, shade structures, water fountains, resurface courts)	184	39.2 %
Improve existing path systems (increasing connectivity/ accessibility)	74	15.8 %
Improve existing playgrounds	68	14.5 %
Improve inclusion services or accessibility to programs & facilities	33	7.0 %
Improve/add restroom facilities	90	19.2 %
Include more places for active sports or play in existing parks	18	3.8 %
Incorporate more habitat spaces in existing parks	55	11.7 %
Partner with private organizations to provide more park space (e.g., developers)	18	3.8 %
Partner with public organizations to provide more park space (e.g., school districts)	13	2.8 %
Plant more trees in existing parks	61	13.0 %
Provide more recreation programs & events	37	7.9 %
Purchase land in areas currently without City parks/ facilities	50	10.7 %
Renovate or upgrade aging parks & facilities	107	22.8 %
None chosen	50	10.7 %
Total	1263	

Q16. What is your age?

Q16. Your age	Number	Percent
18-34	84	17.9 %
35-44	92	19.6 %
45-54	90	19.2 %
55-64	99	21.1 %
65+	94	20.0 %
Not provided	10	2.1 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")**Q16. What is your age? (without "not provided")**

Q16. Your age	Number	Percent
18-34	84	18.3 %
35-44	92	20.0 %
45-54	90	19.6 %
55-64	99	21.6 %
65+	94	20.5 %
Total	459	100.0 %

Q17. How many years have you lived in the City of Evanston?

Q17. How many years have you lived in City of

<u>Evanston</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0-5	96	20.5 %
6-10	70	14.9 %
11-15	51	10.9 %
16-20	36	7.7 %
21-30	79	16.8 %
31+	132	28.1 %
Not provided	5	1.1 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")**Q17. How many years have you lived in the City of Evanston? (without "not provided")**

Q17. How many years have you lived in City of

<u>Evanston</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0-5	96	20.7 %
6-10	70	15.1 %
11-15	51	11.0 %
16-20	36	7.8 %
21-30	79	17.0 %
31+	132	28.4 %
Total	464	100.0 %

Q18. Are you or any members of your family of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x ancestry?

Q18. Are you or any members of your family of

<u>Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x ancestry</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	50	10.7 %
No	405	86.4 %
Not provided	14	3.0 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")**Q18. Are you or any members of your family of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x ancestry? (without "not provided")**

Q18. Are you or any members of your family of

<u>Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x ancestry</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	50	11.0 %
No	405	89.0 %
Total	455	100.0 %

Q19. Which of the following best describes your race?

Q19. Your race

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Asian or Asian Indian	39	8.3 %
Black or African American	73	15.6 %
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	0.6 %
White or Caucasian	305	65.0 %
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	3	0.6 %
Other	40	8.5 %
Total	463	

Q19-6. Self-describe your race:

Q19-6. Self-describe your race	Number	Percent
Hispanic	30	75.0 %
Mixed	2	5.0 %
Middle Eastern and White	1	2.5 %
Peruvian	1	2.5 %
Puerto Rican	1	2.5 %
Polish	1	2.5 %
European	1	2.5 %
Jewish	1	2.5 %
Mexican	1	2.5 %
Mexican, White, & Middle Eastern	1	2.5 %
Total	40	100.0 %

Q20. What is your household income?

Q20. Your household income	Number	Percent
Under \$25K	33	7.0 %
\$25K-\$49,999	50	10.7 %
\$50K-\$74,999	57	12.2 %
\$75K-\$99,999	88	18.8 %
\$100K-\$149,999	79	16.8 %
\$150K+	96	20.5 %
Not provided	66	14.1 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")**Q20. What is your household income? (without "not provided")**

Q20. Your household income	Number	Percent
Under \$25K	33	8.2 %
\$25K-\$49,999	50	12.4 %
\$50K-\$74,999	57	14.1 %
\$75K-\$99,999	88	21.8 %
\$100K-\$149,999	79	19.6 %
\$150K+	96	23.8 %
Total	403	100.0 %

Q21. Your gender:

Q21. Your gender	Number	Percent
Male	222	47.3 %
Female	229	48.8 %
Non-Binary	6	1.3 %
Prefer to self-describe	4	0.9 %
Not provided	8	1.7 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")**Q21. Your gender: (without "not provided")**

Q21. Your gender	Number	Percent
Male	222	48.2 %
Female	229	49.7 %
Non-Binary	6	1.3 %
Prefer to self-describe	4	0.9 %
Total	461	100.0 %

Q21-4. Self-describe your gender:

Q21-4. Self-describe your gender	Number	Percent
Agender	1	25.0 %
Fluid	1	25.0 %
Transmale	1	25.0 %
Trans	1	25.0 %
Total	4	100.0 %

Q22. Does your household own a vehicle?

Q22. Does your household own a vehicle	Number	Percent
Yes	435	92.8 %
No	29	6.2 %
Not provided	5	1.1 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")**Q22. Does your household own a vehicle? (without "not provided")**

Q22. Does your household own a vehicle	Number	Percent
Yes	435	93.8 %
No	29	6.3 %
Total	464	100.0 %

Q23. What is the primary language spoken in your home?

Q23. What is the primary language spoken in your home	Number	Percent
English	451	96.2 %
Spanish	8	1.7 %
Other	5	1.1 %
Not provided	5	1.1 %
Total	469	100.0 %

(WITHOUT "NOT PROVIDED")**Q23. What is the primary language spoken in your home? (without "not provided")**

Q23. What is the primary language spoken in your home	Number	Percent
English	451	97.2 %
Spanish	8	1.7 %
Other	5	1.1 %
Total	464	100.0 %

Q23-3. Other:

<u>Q23-3. Other</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Native language	1	20.0 %
Russian	1	20.0 %
German	1	20.0 %
French	1	20.0 %
Serb Coratian	1	20.0 %
Total	5	100.0 %

6 Survey Instrument

Dear Evanston Resident,

Your response to the enclosed survey is extremely important!

The City of Evanston is conducting a survey to help determine park and green space priorities for our community. The feedback from this survey will also inform recommendations made in the City's Park and Green Space Plan effort. Your household has been selected at random to receive this survey, so your participation is very important.

We appreciate your time and realize that this survey will take approximately 12 – 15 minutes to complete. Each question is important. The time you invest in completing this survey will aid the City in taking a resident-driven approach to park and green space planning to enhance our community and improve the quality of life for all residents.

We have selected an independent research firm, ETC Institute, to conduct this survey. Your response will remain entirely confidential. Once the data has been gathered and analyzed, ETC will present us with a report of findings that will be made available to the public.

Please return your completed survey within the next two weeks in the enclosed postage-paid envelope addressed to ETC Institute, 725 W. Frontier Circle, Olathe, KS 66061. If you prefer to take the survey online, the address is **[EvanstonParkSurvey.org](https://www.EvanstonParkSurvey.org)**.

If you have any questions, please contact Ryan Murray, ETC Institute's Project Manager, at 913-254-4598 or Ryan.Murray@etcinstitute.com.

Don't miss this opportunity to make your voice heard and help us meet the ever-changing needs and interests of all community members. For more information about the plan process and to stay up to date on other ways to engage, head to www.CityofEvanston.org/ParksStrategicPlan

Sincerely,

Audrey Thompson
Director of Parks and Recreation
City of Evanston

2023 Evanston Parks and Green Spaces Community Survey

The City of Evanston would like your input to help determine park and green space priorities for our community. This survey will take 12-15 minutes to complete. We greatly appreciate your time. If you would prefer to complete the survey online, please go to [EvanstonParkSurvey.org](https://www.cityofevanston.org/about-evanston/maps). Your responses will remain completely confidential.

1. Please complete this survey with all household members in mind. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are...

Under age 5: ____ Ages 15-19: ____ Ages 35-44: ____ Ages 65-79: ____
 Ages 5-9: ____ Ages 20-24: ____ Ages 45-54: ____ Ages 80+: ____
 Ages 10-14: ____ Ages 25-34: ____ Ages 55-64: ____

2. Have you or anyone in your household visited any of the parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities operated by the City of Evanston during the past 12 months?
[If you are unsure about whether the facilities or amenities you use are operated by the City please visit the parks and beaches map on the following website to view all City operated facilities and amenities: <https://www.cityofevanston.org/about-evanston/maps>.]

____(1) Yes [Answer Q2a-2c.] ____ (2) No [Go to Q2c.]

2a. Approximately how often have you or anyone in your household visited any of the parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities operated by the City of Evanston during the past 12 months?

____(1) Daily ____ (3) Weekly ____ (5) Once or twice per year
 ____ (2) Multiple times per week ____ (4) Monthly

2b. Overall, how would you rate the quality of ALL the City of Evanston parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities that you and members of your household have used?

____ (4) Excellent ____ (3) Good ____ (2) Fair ____ (1) Poor

2c. Please check ALL the reasons why you and the members of your household don't visit or don't visit more often the parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities offered by the City of Evanston. [Check ALL that apply.]

____ (01) Use other city, state, private facilities	____ (12) Do not feel welcomed or accommodated
____ (02) Too far from home	____ (13) Lack of facilities for neurodivergent community members
____ (03) Too busy/don't have the time	____ (14) Lack of transportation
____ (04) Not aware of park or facility locations	____ (15) Lack of restrooms
____ (05) Parks or facilities are not well maintained	____ (16) Language or cultural barriers
____ (06) Old and outdated facilities	____ (17) Fees are too high/lack of financial assistance
____ (07) Lack of facilities for teens	____ (18) Age barriers
____ (08) Lack of parking to access parks/facilities	____ (19) Lack of childcare
____ (09) Do not feel safe using parks/facilities	____ (20) Other: _____
____ (10) Facilities don't meet needs	
____ (11) Lack of accessibility for people with disabilities	

3. Have you or other members of your household participated in any activities (such as programs, sports leagues, or events) offered by the City of Evanston during the past 12 months?

____(1) Yes [Answer Q3a-3c.] ____ (2) No [Go to Q3c.]

3a. Approximately how many different activities (such as programs, sports leagues, or events) offered by the City of Evanston have you or members of your household participated in over the past 12 months?

____ (1) 1 activity ____ (3) 4-6 activities ____ (5) 11 or more activities
 ____ (2) 2-3 activities ____ (4) 7-10 activities

3b. Overall, how would you rate the quality of ALL the activities (such as programs, sports leagues, or events) offered by the City of Evanston that you have participated in?

____(4) Excellent ____ (3) Good ____ (2) Fair ____ (1) Poor

3c. Please check ALL of the reasons why you and the members of your household don't participate or don't participate more often in the activities (such as programs, sports leagues, and events) offered by the City of Evanston. [Check ALL that apply.]

- | | |
|--|---|
| ____ (01) I don't know what is offered | ____ (11) Fees are too high or lack of financial assistance |
| ____ (02) Use programs of other agencies | ____ (12) Do not feel welcomed or accommodated |
| ____ (03) Lack of quality instructors | ____ (13) Lack of teen activities |
| ____ (04) Lack of quality programs | ____ (14) Registration is difficult |
| ____ (05) Prefer individual activities | ____ (15) Lack of transportation |
| ____ (06) Too far from home | ____ (16) Lack of childcare options |
| ____ (07) Program times are not convenient | ____ (17) Too busy or not interested |
| ____ (08) Classes are full | ____ (18) Language or cultural barriers |
| ____ (09) Do not feel safe | ____ (19) Age barriers |
| ____ (10) Lack of accessibility for people with disabilities | ____ (20) Parking issues |
| | ____ (21) Other: _____ |

4. How do you typically travel to visit City of Evanston parks, recreation centers, beaches, or other park and recreation facilities?

Mode of Travel	Most Often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never
1. Walk	3	2	1
2. Bicycle	3	2	1
3. Bus/public transit	3	2	1
4. Drive in a personal vehicle - 10 minutes or less	3	2	1
5. Drive in a personal vehicle - 10 minutes or more	3	2	1
6. Other: _____	3	2	1

5. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the corresponding number.

The City's parks and green spaces....	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
01. Contribute to a sense of community	5	4	3	2	1	9
02. Improve the health, wellbeing, and fitness of community members	5	4	3	2	1	9
03. Improve the quality of life in the City	5	4	3	2	1	9
04. Help community members connect with nature	5	4	3	2	1	9
05. Help preserve open space and the environment	5	4	3	2	1	9
06. Protect historical attributes of the City and region	5	4	3	2	1	9
07. Help attract new community members and businesses	5	4	3	2	1	9
08. Provide tourism revenues/contributes to the City's tourism economy	5	4	3	2	1	9
09. Help reduce crime in my neighborhood	5	4	3	2	1	9
10. Provide activities, programs, and events that are accessible to all community members regardless of age, ability, or other factors	5	4	3	2	1	9
11. Provide ample access to recreation and nature	5	4	3	2	1	9
12. Are inclusive spaces that support the needs of community members from many different backgrounds	5	4	3	2	1	9
13. Provide access to arts and culture	5	4	3	2	1	9
14. Are equitably distributed throughout the community	5	4	3	2	1	9
15. Help mitigate climate change (such as improve water and air quality and provide cool spaces on hot days)	5	4	3	2	1	9
16. Other: _____	5	4	3	2	1	9

6. Which **THREE** of the items listed in Question 5 are **MOST IMPORTANT** to you and the members of your household? [Write-in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 5, or circle "NONE."]

1st: _____ 2nd: _____ 3rd: _____ NONE

7. Which **THREE** of the items listed in Question 5 are **MOST IMPORTANT** to the future of the City of Evanston? [Write-in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 5, or circle "NONE."]

1st: _____ 2nd: _____ 3rd: _____ NONE

8. Please indicate if **YOU** or any member of your household currently **ATTENDS** or **WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND** each of the activities, programs, or events listed below. If "YES," please answer the questions to the right of the activity, program, or event regarding how well your need for each is currently being met in the City of Evanston. For example, if you indicate you use or would like to attend sports leagues, but you are not aware of any open sports leagues near your home then your need may only be 25% or 0% met.

Type of Recreation Activity, Program, Event		Do you attend or would you like to attend?		If "Yes," how well are your needs being met?				
				100% Met	75% Met	50% Met	25% Met	0% Met
01. Aquatics		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
02. Athletics & Sports Leagues, Adult		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
03. Athletics & Sports Leagues, Youth		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
04. Before/After School Programs		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
05. Childcare		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
06. Community gardening		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
07. Concerts in the park		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
08. Early Childhood Programs (up to age 5)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
09. Family friendly events		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
10. Farmers Market		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
11. Fitness and Wellness (i.e., Group Fitness Classes and Personal Training)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
12. Gymnastics		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
13. Hobbies and Life Skills (i.e., cooking, budgeting, and computer skills)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
14. Ice Programs (skating, hockey, etc.)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
15. Movies and concerts in the park		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
16. Nature, Environment, and Ecology (i.e., bird watching, nature learning activities)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
17. Outdoor Adventure (i.e., kayaking, canoeing, and camping)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
18. Preschool and kindergarten Sports		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
19. Preschool art and music		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
20. Rentals for special occasions/events (such as spaces for birthday parties)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
21. Robotics and E-Sports		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
22. Senior Programs (ages 55 and up)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
23. Special Events		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
24. Special Olympics (competition)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
25. Special Recreation (programmed activities)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
26. Summer Camp		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
27. Teen Programs (ages 13 to 17)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
28. Visual and Performing Arts (such as dance and music classes)		Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1

9. Which **FOUR** activities, programs or events from the list in Question 8 are **MOST IMPORTANT** to you and the members of your household? [Write-in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 8, or circle "NONE."]

1st: _____ 2nd: _____ 3rd: _____ 4th: _____ NONE

- 10. Please indicate if YOU or any member of your household currently USE or WOULD LIKE TO USE each of the facilities listed below. If "YES," please answer the questions to the right of the facility regarding how well your need for each type of facility is currently being met.**

Type of Facility/Amenity	Do you use or would you like to use?		If "Yes," how well are your needs being met?				
			100% Met	75% Met	50% Met	25% Met	0% Met
01. Art Installations	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
02. Baseball/Softball Fields	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
03. Basketball Courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
04. Beaches and Waterfront Access	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
05. Bird and wildlife habitat areas	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
06. Climbing Walls	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
07. Community Centers	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
08. Community garden plots	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
09. Dog beach	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
10. Dog Parks	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
11. Educational signage	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
12. Football Fields	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
13. Ice Rink - Indoor	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
14. Ice Rink - Outdoor	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
15. Inclusive Play Areas (e.g., full access for people with disabilities)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
16. Natural Play Areas	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
17. Nature Centers	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
18. Paddleboard/Canoe/Kayak Launches	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
19. Park Shelters	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
20. Parks with raingardens, pollinator gardens, and wildflower meadows	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
21. Paths - Paved/Unpaved	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
22. Lighted Sports Fields	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
23. Performance spaces	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
24. Pickleball Courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
25. Picnic Areas	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
26. Playgrounds & Play Areas	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
27. Pools - Indoor	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
28. Pools - Outdoor	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
29. Skate park	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
30. Soccer/Lacrosse/Multipurpose Fields	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
31. Sprayground/Splash Pad	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
32. Teen drop-in centers	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
33. Tennis Courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
34. Tree canopies/urban forests	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
35. Volleyball Courts (Outdoor, Sand)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1

- 11. Which FOUR recreation facilities and amenities from the list in Question 10 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household? [Write-in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 10, or circle "NONE."]**

1st: _____ 2nd: _____ 3rd: _____ 4th: _____ NONE

- 12. From the following list, please check ALL of the following ways you currently use to learn about City of Evanston Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities. [Check ALL that apply.]**

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ (01) Website (cityofevanston.org) | ☐ (09) Print advertisements |
| ☐ (02) Television | ☐ (10) Nextdoor |
| ☐ (03) Newspaper articles | ☐ (11) Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) |
| ☐ (04) Radio | ☐ (12) School district |
| ☐ (05) Word of mouth | ☐ (13) Promotions at special events |
| ☐ (06) Park signage | ☐ (14) Seasonal Program Guide |
| ☐ (07) E-newsletters (Citywide or Levy Senior Center) | ☐ (15) Other: _____ |
| ☐ (08) Conversations with staff | |

- 13. Which THREE sources from the list in Question 12 are YOUR MOST PREFERRED SOURCES for learning about the City's Parks and Recreation Department news, events, programs, and activities? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 12, or circle "NONE."]**

1st: _____ 2nd: _____ 3rd: _____ NONE

- 14. The following is a list of actions the City of Evanston could take to improve its parks and greenspace offerings. Please indicate your support for each potential action by circling the corresponding number to the right.**

Types of Improvements	Very Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Not Sure	Not Supportive
01. Acquire land for new park space	4	3	2	1
02. Design and develop new parks on recently acquired park land	4	3	2	1
03. Develop new multiuse community facilities	4	3	2	1
04. Enhance bike and pedestrian access to parks/facilities	4	3	2	1
05. Focus on daily maintenance of existing parks and facilities	4	3	2	1
06. Improve existing parks infrastructure (e.g., benches, shade structures, water fountains, resurface courts)	4	3	2	1
07. Improve existing path systems (increasing connectivity/accessibility)	4	3	2	1
08. Improve existing playgrounds	4	3	2	1
09. Improve inclusion services or accessibility to programs and facilities	4	3	2	1
10. Improve/Add restroom facilities	4	3	2	1
11. Include more places for active sports or play in existing parks	4	3	2	1
12. Incorporate more habitat spaces in existing parks	4	3	2	1
13. Partner with private organizations to provide more park space (e.g., developers)	4	3	2	1
14. Partner with public organizations to provide more park space (e.g., school districts)	4	3	2	1
15. Plant more trees in existing parks	4	3	2	1
16. Provide more recreation programs and events	4	3	2	1
17. Purchase land in areas currently without city parks/facilities	4	3	2	1
18. Renovate or upgrade aging parks and facilities	4	3	2	1
19. Other: _____	4	3	2	1

- 15. Which THREE of the potential improvements from the list in Question 14 are MOST IMPORTANT to you and the members of your household? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 14, or circle "NONE."]**

1st: _____ 2nd: _____ 3rd: _____ NONE

- 16. What is your age? _____ years**

- 17. How many years have you lived in the City of Evanston? _____ years**

18. Are you or any members of your family of Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x ancestry?

____(1) Yes ____ (2) No

19. Which of the following best describes your race? [Check ALL that apply.]

____(01) Asian or Asian Indian

____(04) White or Caucasian

____(02) Black or African American

____(05) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

____(03) American Indian or Alaska Native

____(99) Other: _____

20. What is your household income?

____(1) Under \$25,000

____(3) \$50,000-\$74,999

____(5) \$100,000-\$149,999

____(2) \$25,000-\$49,999

____(4) \$75,000-\$99,999

____(6) \$150,000 or more

21. Your gender:

____(1) Male

____(4) Prefer to self-describe: _____

____(2) Female

____(5) Prefer not to answer

____(3) Non-Binary

22. Does your household own a vehicle? ____ (1) Yes ____ (2) No**23. What is the primary language spoken in your home?**

____(1) English

____(2) Spanish

____(3) Other: _____

24. Would you be willing to participate in future surveys sponsored by the City of Evanston?

____(1) Yes [Answer Q24a.] ____ (2) No

24a. Please provide your contact information.

Mobile Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

This concludes the survey. Thank you for your time!

Please return your completed survey in the enclosed return-reply envelope addressed to:
ETC Institute, 725 W. Frontier Circle, Olathe, KS 66061

Your response will remain completely confidential.
The address information printed to the right will
ONLY be used to help identify areas with special
interests. Thank you.

