

SORTABLE SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

Evanston Thrives Retail Action Plan												
CHAPTER	REC #	RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	ACTION	EARLY	ACTION STEPS	ACTION TYPE	COST LOW	COST HIGH	ARPA Eligible	LEAD (**=City Leadership Champion)	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	1	Improve data collection tools and processes.		Complete the City's records of businesses, types, and location.	EARLY ACTION	Follow up with any ground floor business identified by the Evanston Thrives analysis as not represented in the city's business license database.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	1	Improve data collection tools and processes.		Complete the City's records of businesses, types, and location.	EARLY ACTION	Create a consistent intake questionnaire used by both ED and Health and Human Services (HHS) to complete a single dataset reflecting ground floor uses of all retail types. Expand questions related to existing space dimensions, access, interior systems and equipment, and parking.	Internal				ED / HHS	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	1	Improve data collection tools and processes.		Systematize data management and presentation using new internal systems or a third-party tool.		Explore a third-party tool or internal process to establish a combined database for business information collected for Business.	Internal			ARPA	ED / HHS	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	1	Improve data collection tools and processes.		Systematize data management and presentation using new internal systems or a third-party tool.		Identify/Procure preferred calendar management method/service.	Internal				ED / City Comms	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	1	Improve data collection tools and processes.		Systematize data management and presentation using new internal systems or a third-party tool.	LONG TERM	Consider creating a dashboard of local metrics posted on the ED website with information that may benefit retailers or brokers.	Ongoing Funding Allocation (New Tool)	\$5,000	\$20,000		ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.		Create a Business Start-up Guide for Evanston.		Create a Q&A page on the Economic Development website with frequently asked questions about grants, permits, processes, and oversight.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.		Create a Business Start-up Guide for Evanston.		Develop public-facing guidance that accurately represents processes that require review and approval by multiple departments.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.		Create a Business Start-up Guide for Evanston.		Clearly identify circumstances where a project may require additional steps to be permitted or otherwise deviates from a typical process.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.		Create a Business Start-up Guide for Evanston.		Create a Business Start-up Guide or "cheat sheets" for how to open a business and navigate the permitting process or other quick start guides.	Internal / Graphic Design Support	\$500	\$2,500		ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.		Create a Business Start-up Guide for Evanston.		Provide an estimated timeframe for common procedures for internal review and approval wherever possible.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.	PRIORITY	Refine Economic Development's management and response strategy for business communication.		Establish "office hours" for in-person and calls. Identify unique times for event/programming questions distinct from business issues and/or requests	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.	PRIORITY	Refine Economic Development's management and response strategy for business communication.		Establish / manage a chat line for quicker questions or redirection to other city departments or partners.	Procedural / Policy				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.	PRIORITY	Refine Economic Development's management and response strategy for business communication.		Create and advertise a means to submit questions or requests via the ED website; Consider collaboration with Evanston 311.	Internal				ED / Evanston 311	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.		Better market available resources to local businesses.	EARLY ACTION	Reformat the Economic Development newsletter to include more communications targeted toward businesses.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.		Better market available resources to local businesses.	EARLY ACTION	Retool the Economic Development website and presentation of city grants available to businesses.	Internal				ED / City Communication	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.		Better market available resources to local businesses.		Regularly promote resources directly to businesses by attending SSA district meetings and business alliance meetings.	Internal / Public Touchpoint				ED / SSA Managers	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	2	Simplify internal processes and policies to better support business owners.		Better market available resources to local businesses.		Highlight businesses that use city programs through local news, city communication, and social media.	Internal / Public Touchpoint				City Communication / SSAs	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.	PRIORITY	Conduct a review of all grant programs administered by ED Division to align with equity and economic goals.	EARLY ACTION	Compare each program's intent and limitations; revise to prioritize appropriate businesses by owners, location, or legacy status.	Internal				ED / City Leadership** / Business working group (?)	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.	PRIORITY	Conduct a review of all grant programs administered by ED Division to align with equity and economic goals.		Prioritize businesses located within a retail district or at nodes with co-located retail businesses to encourage retail clustering.	Internal / Policy Change				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.	PRIORITY	Conduct a review of all grant programs administered by ED Division to align with equity and economic goals.		Ensure Business Registration tools collect sufficient information to establish funding priority businesses so that each year, funds are allocated. Offer priority to business owners of color, women-owned businesses, and veteran and LGBTQ+ owners.	Internal / Policy Change				ED / City Leadership	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.	PRIORITY	Conduct a review of all grant programs administered by ED Division to align with equity and economic goals.		Ensure funding priority for non-formula, Evanston-based businesses. Adopt a Formula Business definition for Evanston.	Internal / Policy Change				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.		Restructure the Storefront Modernization Program (SMP).	EARLY ACTION	Add "Next Steps" explanation to the end of the SMP Request web form.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.		Restructure the Storefront Modernization Program (SMP).		Review publicly available program information for clarity of intent and limitations.	Internal				ED / Business working group (?)	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.		Restructure the Storefront Modernization Program (SMP).		Advocate for increased budget allocation for interior buildout assistance aspect of the Storefront Modernization Program to be used in areas without a TIF.	Ongoing Funding Allocation				City Leadership / Procurement / ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.		Restructure the Storefront Modernization Program (SMP).	LONG TERM	Decouple interior buildout funding/support from SMP once budget allocation for interior build-out grant/program is established.	Internal				City Leadership / ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.		Restructure the Storefront Modernization Program (SMP).	LONG TERM	Restructure Storefront Modernization Program such that some portion could be advance funding rather than rebate if city-approved contractors are contracted to complete the work.	Internal / Legal				City Leadership** / Procurement / ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.		Restructure the Storefront Modernization Program (SMP).	LONG TERM	Identify City-approved contractors to complete work requested through any program using City resources.	Internal / Legal				City Leadership** / Procurement / ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.	PRIORITY	Allocate funds for retail district improvements.		Institutionalize a priority for infrastructure enhancements in defined retail district areas.	Ongoing Funding Allocation	\$80,000			City Leadership** / ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.	PRIORITY	Allocate funds for retail district improvements.		Allocate funds for maintenance, snow removal, and landscaping of streets and sidewalks within non-SSA retail district areas.	Ongoing Funding Allocation				City Leadership** / ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.	PRIORITY	Allocate funds for retail district improvements.		Allocate funds in CIP for placemaking and public space enhancements in areas identified by the Retail Action Plan or future plans including Evanston's retail districts and Downtown.	Ongoing Funding Allocation				City Leadership** / ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.		Grow the reach of the Legacy Business Program		Allocate Legacy Business Program annual funding that can be used for marketing the program and participant businesses.	Internal				City Leadership** / LBP / ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.		Grow the reach of the Legacy Business Program		Prioritize Legacy Businesses in funding allocation for all physical improvements administered by Economic Development.	Internal				LBP / ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	3	Re-balance and more equitably distribute City resources to better support business needs.		Promote the Sustain Evanston program		Clarify how/if funding for physical improvements is available through the Sustain Evanston program.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	4	Strengthen partnerships with Northwestern University and other institutions that can help achieve entrepreneurship goals.	PRIORITY	Establish regular communication and set goals in partnership with NU.	EARLY ACTION	Identify public-private partnership opportunities and begin working toward shared goals and ideas.	Partnership - Northwestern			ARPA w/ NU Match	City Leadership** / ED / Northwestern	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	4	Strengthen partnerships with Northwestern University and other institutions that can help achieve entrepreneurship goals.		Establish regular communication and set goals in partnership with NU.		Establish a schedule of regular check-ins between the City and NU.	Partnership - Northwestern			ARPA w/ NU Match	City Leadership** / ED / Northwestern	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	4	Strengthen partnerships with Northwestern University and other institutions that can help achieve entrepreneurship goals.		Raise the profile of Evanston among the tech and NU entrepreneurship community.	EARLY ACTION	Initiate city-sponsored networking events such as coffee, meetups, and resume Evanston Edge Startup Showcase.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	4	Strengthen partnerships with Northwestern University and other institutions that can help achieve entrepreneurship goals.		Raise the profile of Evanston among the tech and NU entrepreneurship community.		Create coordination and referral mechanisms in partnership with NU to focus on stage 2 firms exiting the University to retain them in Evanston.	Partnership - Northwestern				City Leadership** / ED / Northwestern	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	4	Strengthen partnerships with Northwestern University and other institutions that can help achieve entrepreneurship goals.		Raise the profile of Evanston among the tech and NU entrepreneurship community.		Maintain relationships with office brokers and maintain office space database to accommodate Stage 2 firms.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	4	Strengthen partnerships with Northwestern University and other institutions that can help achieve entrepreneurship goals.	PRIORITY	Coordinate efforts with Chamber, key partners and business affinity groups.	EARLY ACTION	Convene the various members of Evanston business development ecosystem to better coordinate resources and referral systems, as well as have a management infrastructure for some of these programs.	Internal / Partnership				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	4	Strengthen partnerships with Northwestern University and other institutions that can help achieve entrepreneurship goals.		Coordinate efforts with Chamber, key partners and business affinity groups.		Coordinate business education opportunities w/ local partners, library, and NU	Internal / Partnership				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	5	Pursue strategic opportunities to purchase and market for property redevelopment.		Position City-owned properties for redevelopment.		Explore the status of city-owned properties identified as priority parcels. Prioritize redevelopment goals for the next 1-to-5-to-10 years.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	5	Pursue strategic opportunities to purchase and market for property redevelopment.		Position City-owned properties for redevelopment.		Identify priority parcels for repositioning/RFP.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	5	Pursue strategic opportunities to purchase and market for property redevelopment.		Position City-owned properties for redevelopment.		Work with Councilpeople and SSA Managers to outline priority acquisitions for the next 10 years in each district. Prioritize potential acquisitions against broader economic development goals.	Internal				ED / City Leadership	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	5	Pursue strategic opportunities to purchase and market for property redevelopment.		Position City-owned properties for redevelopment.		Identify priority parcels for potential acquisition.	Internal				ED	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	5	Pursue strategic opportunities to purchase and market for property redevelopment.		Build tools that make it easier for the City to guide development.		City manages sale and redevelopment of city-owned parking lots in strategic locations identified in each of the Retail Action Plan District Placemaking Action Plans.	Internal / Consultant				City Leadership / Comm Dev	
BUSINESS SUPPORTS	5	Pursue strategic opportunities to purchase and market for property redevelopment.		Build tools that make it easier for the City to guide development.		City acquires property, then solicits sale and redevelopment of property in key locations identified in each of the Retail Action Plan District Placemaking Action Plans.	Internal / Consultant				City Leadership / Comm Dev	
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.	PRIORITY	Adopt Downtown Evanston event as signature city happening or bring major event to heart of Downtown Evanston.		Invest in city staff or fund additional Downtown Evanston staff positions to coordinate events and manage event logistics.	Internal / Staff position	\$50,000	\$75,000	ARPA	Annual salary for position, not including benefits	
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.	PRIORITY	Adopt Downtown Evanston event as signature city happening or bring major event to heart of Downtown Evanston.		Establish a funding allocation intended to support signature events in Downtown.	Ongoing Funding Allocation	\$40,000	\$60,000	ARPA (years 1-3)	ED / City Leadership**	
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.	PRIORITY	Adopt Downtown Evanston event as signature city happening or bring major event to heart of Downtown Evanston.	Early Action	Conduct a public poll for input on the priority event for city funding/support in 2023.	Internal / Public Touchpoint	\$1,000			ED / City Communications	
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.	PRIORITY	Evolve / Expand regular Downtown events and marketing to better support brick-and-mortar businesses.	Early Action	Take stock of city equipment / resources available to expand the impact of events (screen, chairs, speakers, lights, etc.)	Internal			ARPA	ED	
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.	PRIORITY	Evolve / Expand regular Downtown events and marketing to better support brick-and-mortar businesses.	Early Action	Initiate a series of meetings with Downtown Evanston SSA to determine and plan for expanded downtown event or programming series.	Internal				ED / Downtown	
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.	PRIORITY	Evolve / Expand regular Downtown events and marketing to better support brick-and-mortar businesses.		Invest in temporary infrastructure for more impactful events in Fountain Square and retail districts.	Ongoing Funding Allocation	\$50,000	\$250,000	ARPA	ED	

EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.	PRIORITY	Evolve / Expand regular Downtown events and marketing to better support brick-and-mortar businesses.	Ensure city-owned event-related equipment is available for use for retail district public events by SSA Managers, Chamber, and other c	Internal / Procurement		\$250,000	ARPA	
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.	PRIORITY	Evolve / Expand regular Downtown events and marketing to better support brick-and-mortar businesses.	Work with restaurant owners and North Shore Convention and Visitors Bureau(CVB) to re-invigorate Evanston Restaurant Month or find new ways to feature local restaurants throughout the year.	Partnership - CVB				CVB / Districts / ED
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.		Draw sponsorship and partners to Evanston	Better define sponsorship strategy for the city of Evanston. Define city events or programs open to sponsorship and the potential impact or reach of sponsorship dollars spent on Evanston events.	Internal / Consultant		\$15,000		ED / CVB / External Consultant
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.		Draw sponsorship and partners to Evanston	Define an individual responsible for recruitment and partnership management.	Internal / Staff position				ED / City Leadership**
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	1	Drive increased activity in retail districts with high quality and frequent events and programming.		Draw sponsorship and partners to Evanston	Invest in city assets and equipment that make city events more robust and enticing for potential sponsors. Create informational memo with city assets to draw sponsorships. Include information on available spaces, equipment, branding opportunities and media reach.	Internal				ED / Downtown Evanston
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Invest in an improved user experience for the City's events calendar.	Explore suggested improvement to the city's events calendar. Evaluate the potential to improve the existing tool.	Internal				ED / City Comms / Parks
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Invest in an improved user experience for the City's events calendar.	Explore 3rd party tools which provide enhanced features for front-end and back-end calendar management and interactivity.	Internal				ED / City Comms / Parks
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Invest in an improved user experience for the City's events calendar.	Implement a new and improved city events calendar	Internal	staff time	\$30-\$100/month		ED / City Comms / Parks
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Invest in an improved user experience for the City's events calendar.	Maintain up-to-date information from across Evanston's districts and organizations on a combined calendar.	Internal / Staff position				ED / City Comms / Parks
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Rewrite information related to event permitting review and approval process.	Remove January deadline for event permit submission.	Internal				Parks, Rec. & Comm / City Leadership**
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Rewrite information related to event permitting review and approval process.	Commit to a scheduled response period for events on a rolling basis.	Internal				Parks, Rec. & Comm / City Leadership**
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Rewrite information related to event permitting review and approval process.	Market event permit process and timeline. Ensure information is easy to find on city's website.	Internal / Public Touchpoint				Parks, Rec. & Comm / ED or City Comms (marketing)
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Simplify the process to permit events in pre-approved locations	Draw-up a street closure strategy for Fountain Square that minimizes the need for security and/or traffic management staff.	Internal / Traffic Study	\$7,500	\$15,000	ARPA	Public Works, Parks/ City Leadership**
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Simplify the process to permit events in pre-approved locations	Remove public review / feedback period for events held in proven locations without major logistics changes.	Internal				Parks, Rec. & Comm / City Leadership
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.	PRIORITY	Simplify the process to permit events in pre-approved locations	Identify a central gathering space(s) in each of the retail districts and outline minimum event planning requirements for each to make activation easier for all.	Internal				Parks, Rec. & Comm / City Leadership
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.		Re-evaluate local policies that present real and perceived burdens to entertainment businesses and community even	Reconsider Evanston's Amusement Tax and impacts on local businesses.	Internal / Policy Change				ED / City Leadership
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	2	Encourage more events, programming, and entertainment in Evanston.		Re-evaluate local policies that present real and perceived burdens to entertainment businesses and community even	Pilot a Community Events Fund to support the local community to initiate more events in public spaces.	Pilot Funding Allocation	\$10,000	\$30,000		Parks, Rec. & Comm / ED
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.		Double down on Fountain Square and the lakefront at Church Street as premier event locations.	Explore seasonal installations that activate Fountain Square for longer periods of time with interactive seasonal activities. (refer to following page for ideas to consider)	Funding Allocation	\$50,000	\$100,000	ARPA	ED / Downtown Evanston / Parks
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.		Double down on Fountain Square and the lakefront at Church Street as premier event locations.	Identify a strategy to manage equipment storage and public restrooms for events at Fountain Square.	Internal			ARPA	ED / Downtown Evanston / Parks
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.		Double down on Fountain Square and the lakefront at Church Street as premier event locations.	Relocate Veteran's Memorial to a featured location in Raymond Park or the Lakefront.	Internal / Coordination			ARPA	ED / Downtown Evanston / Parks
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.		Double down on Fountain Square and the lakefront at Church Street as premier event locations.	Increase use of the Lakefront for signature parks events or programming.	Internal				Parks, Rec. & Comm / ED / City Leadership
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.		Double down on Fountain Square and the lakefront at Church Street as premier event locations.	Pilot the use of Arrington Lagoon building for food-based vendors limited to packaged goods for a limited period. Build-out restaurant pop-up space for rotating vendors at either Arrington Lagoon building or Church Street Beach entrance structure.	Policy Change / Procurement				Parks, Rec. & Comm / ED / City Leadership
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.		Double down on Fountain Square and the lakefront at Church Street as premier event locations.	Increase the cost of Lakefront event use for private events, but expand the types of events and support for use of Lakefront location for events.	Policy Change / Public Touchpoint				
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.		Coordinate programming among districts to activate Evanston all year long	Continue regular event coordination among SSA leaders to reduce event overlap/similarity.	Internal / Coordination				ED / SSAs
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.		Coordinate programming among districts to activate Evanston all year long	Work to activate each month and schedule events in advance for optimal promotion.	Internal / Coordination				ED / SSAs
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.		Coordinate programming among districts to activate Evanston all year long	Engage NU in event sponsorship, planning, and promotion.	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				City Leadership** / ED / Northwestern
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.	PRIORITY	Consider a pilot to host the Evanston Farmers Market in Fountain Square.	Pilot a weekly closure of Sherman for play street series coinciding with Farmers Market at its current location. Rotate activities such as Pickleball courts or other physical activation to encourage market-goers to explore further into Downtown.	Funding Allocation	\$25,000	\$75,000	ARPA	City Leadership** / Downtown Evanston
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	3	Activate Evanston's most unique public spaces more often.	PRIORITY	Consider a pilot to host the Evanston Farmers Market in Fountain Square.	Engage the Farmers Market coordination team in discussion about the future of the Market.	Partnership - Farmer's Market				City Leadership** / Downtown Evanston / Farmer's Marke
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	4	Engage Northwestern University in Event Planning and promotion of Downtown.	PRIORITY	Partner with NU to produce one event or programming series each year in Downtown.	Pilot Evanston+Northwestern event in Downtown specifically focused on students.	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				Northwestern / City Leadership** / Downtown Evanston
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	4	Engage Northwestern University in Event Planning and promotion of Downtown.	PRIORITY	Partner with NU to produce one event or programming series each year in Downtown.	Work with Downtown business owners and North Shore CVB to more effectively promote game-day happenings around Eva	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				Northwestern / City Leadership** / Downtown Evanston
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	4	Engage Northwestern University in Event Planning and promotion of Downtown.	PRIORITY	Partner with NU to produce one event or programming series each year in Downtown.	Work with NU Community Liaison, Student Affairs office, and Alumni engagement staff to identify potential event(s) that coul	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				Northwestern / City Leadership** / Downtown Evanston
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	4	Engage Northwestern University in Event Planning and promotion of Downtown.		Increase student awareness of the Downtown area and use of Downtown spaces for events and activities.	Work with NU Community Liaison and Student Affairs office to identify potential event partnership or promotional opportunit	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				Northwestern / City Leadership** / Downtown Evanston
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	4	Engage Northwestern University in Event Planning and promotion of Downtown.		Increase student awareness of the Downtown area and use of Downtown spaces for events and activities.	Conduct annual student engagement to explore new ideas for partnership or participation in Downtown events (focus group	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				Northwestern / City Leadership** / Downtown Evanston
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	4	Engage Northwestern University in Event Planning and promotion of Downtown.		Increase student awareness of the Downtown area and use of Downtown spaces for events and activities.	Audit and update all student, parent, and employee-facing information about Evanston and Downtown (maps, general inform	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				City Leadership** / City Comms
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	4	Engage Northwestern University in Event Planning and promotion of Downtown.		Increase student awareness of the Downtown area and use of Downtown spaces for events and activities.	Pursue media attention highlighting Northwestern location and proximity to Downtown as an asset.	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				City Leadership** / City Comms
EVENTS/PROGRAMMING	4	Engage Northwestern University in Event Planning and promotion of Downtown.		Increase student awareness of the Downtown area and use of Downtown spaces for events and activities.	Pursue inclusion of Evanston restaurant and retail destinations in student meal plans or Wildcard.	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				Northwestern / City Leadership**
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	1	Keep Evanston Competitive	PRIORITY	Monitor the regulatory environment within the context of nearby municipalities and respond by adjusting local politics.	Regularly review and monitor the impact of local regulations that impact businesses - with an emphasis on small, local businesses in terms of operating expenses and profitability.					
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	1	Keep Evanston Competitive	PRIORITY	Monitor the regulatory environment within the context of nearby municipalities and respond by adjusting local politics.	Consider revisions to local policies that are out of sync with surrounding areas at the expense of local businesses, including higher Liquor and Amusement Taxes.					
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	1	Keep Evanston Competitive		Create incentives to draw businesses to Evanston.	Structure incentives to offset higher operating costs. The exact structure of incentives should respond to areas known to be competing with Evanston for businesses.					
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community	PRIORITY	(Re)introduce and sell Evanston as a retail location to retail brokerage community	Design and produce a print / digital brochure for property owners and leasing professionals to help them pitch Evanston and its individual districts.	Internal / Consultant	\$500	\$2,500		ED / SSAs
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community	PRIORITY	(Re)introduce and sell Evanston as a retail location to retail brokerage community	Distribute print / digital brochure to area leasing professionals and property owners for broader distribution.	Internal / Consultant	\$500	\$2,500		ED / SSAs
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community	PRIORITY	(Re)introduce and sell Evanston as a retail location to retail brokerage community	Hold meetings with regional retail brokerages or virtual sessions to share stats about Evanston's market and assets.	Internal / Partnership				ED
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community	PRIORITY	(Re)introduce and sell Evanston as a retail location to retail brokerage community	Attend regional (but not national) trade shows (e.g. ICSC Dealmaking); consider providing an informational takeaway.	Internal				ED / City Leadership
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community		Generate positive news coverage about Evanston & the business community	Submit articles and push for earned media in prominent mainstream and business publications in the region.	Internal / Public Touchpoint				City Comms / ED
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community		Generate positive news coverage about Evanston & the business community	Leverage any contacts with mainstream media to generate positive coverage.	Internal / Partnership - CVB				City Comms / CVB / ED
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community		Create a central clearinghouse for information that is valuable to the retail development, leasing, and tenancing community.	Engage local commercial brokers and SSA Managers in a discussion about useful/valuable metrics to display on a publicly accessible Commercial Space Inventory.	Internal Worksession				ED
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community		Create a central clearinghouse for information that is valuable to the retail development, leasing, and tenancing community.	Solicit for Business Registry / Commercial Space data management software or service to understand the value-add by 3rd party tool.	Procurement	?	?		ED
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community		Create a central clearinghouse for information that is valuable to the retail development, leasing, and tenancing community.	Cultivate deeper relationships and establish trust with local property owners such that they are willing to provide real-time information on available spaces.	Internal / Partnership				
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community		Create a central clearinghouse for information that is valuable to the retail development, leasing, and tenancing community.	Create a regularly-maintained and searchable inventory of available retail spaces, complete with contact info which includes items that are difficult for industry professionals to access on their own.	Funding Allocation	?	?		ED
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community		Create a central clearinghouse for information that is valuable to the retail development, leasing, and tenancing community.	Consider a vacant property registry system to feed into the available commercial space database.	Data Management				ED
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community		Lead a series of interactive "Retail 101" workshops with SSA's, non-SSA organizations, and other community stakeholders.	Create a Retail Training course/presentation that familiarizes participants with the basics of how retailers think, how retail revitalization (or repositioning) "happens" and what roles they can play in the process.	Internal / Consultant	\$2,500	\$5,000		ED / SSAs / Chamber
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	2	Market Evanston to the retail development, leasing and tenant community		Lead a series of interactive "Retail 101" workshops with SSA's, non-SSA organizations, and other community stakeholders.	Use sessions as an opportunity to provide context to challenges, underscore reasons for optimism and create new (or reinvigorate former) "ambassadors" for Evanston as a retail location.	Internal / Partnership				ED / SSAs / Chamber
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	3	Promote street-level vitality by tapping Evanston's entrepreneurial and creative energies.	PRIORITY	Initiate a window treatment art program for vacant storefronts.	Identify a local partner outside the City to help build and market this new program.	Internal				ED / Nonprofit & Arts partners
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	3	Promote street-level vitality by tapping Evanston's entrepreneurial and creative energies.	PRIORITY	Initiate a window treatment art program for vacant storefronts.	Expand Public Art Funding offered by city and non-profit partners to include artistic storefront installations.	Partnership - Arts Orgs				ED / Nonprofit & Arts partners
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	3	Promote street-level vitality by tapping Evanston's entrepreneurial and creative energies.	PRIORITY	Initiate a window treatment art program for vacant storefronts.	Create a public social media campaign to identify storefronts in need of activation.	Internal / Public Touchpoint				Partners
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	3	Promote street-level vitality by tapping Evanston's entrepreneurial and creative energies.	PRIORITY	Initiate a window treatment art program for vacant storefronts.	Pilot funding for a short-term activation to the "winner" of the social media campaign. Initiate a window treatment art program for vacant storefronts where a pop-up situation is not possible based on interest of the building owner.	One-time Funding allocation	\$1,000	\$6,500		ED / Partners
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	3	Promote street-level vitality by tapping Evanston's entrepreneurial and creative energies.	PRIORITY	Initiate a window treatment art program for vacant storefronts.	If successful, formalize storefront activation for vacant retail spaces as part of the Storefront Modernization Program.	Ongoing Funding Allocation	\$1,000	\$6,500		ED / Partners
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	3	Promote street-level vitality by tapping Evanston's entrepreneurial and creative energies.	PRIORITY	Create a pop-up leasing program.	"Pop-up" space leasing is likely to require regulatory adjustments on city licensing and fees. Pursue regulatory adjustment, if necessary.	Internal / Policy Change				ED
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	3	Promote street-level vitality by tapping Evanston's entrepreneurial and creative energies.	PRIORITY	Create a pop-up leasing program.	Explore liability insurance options from the perspective of building owners and explore options for the City to help pay for or assume some responsibility to allow independent or small businesses to more easily participate in pop-up retail leases.	Internal				ED
TENANTING/ATTRACTION	3	Promote street-level vitality by tapping Evanston's entrepreneurial and creative energies.	PRIORITY	Create a pop-up leasing program.	Identify spaces that could accommodate food-based pop-ups where key equipment is still in place in a (recently) vacant space.	Internal / Research				ED

PLACEMAKING	1	Coordinate City investments in equipment, infrastructure, and signage to enhance Districts and Downtown.		Invest in connections with Northwestern University.		Establish priority investments to strengthen information and wayfinding between NU student residential campus and downtown	Partnership Initiative - Northwestern				City Leadership** / ED / Downtown Evanston
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Encourage parklets and sidewalk cafes.	Early Action	Critically reconsider the need for crash rated jersey barriers (concrete barricades) for every proposed on-street parklet.	Internal			ARPA	City Leadership / Public Works / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Encourage parklets and sidewalk cafes.	Early Action	Explore engineering alternatives for jersey barriers and/or purchase new barriers or alternatives for use in the public ROW	Internal / Consultant			ARPA	Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Encourage parklets and sidewalk cafes.	Early Action	Create a Parklet Design Guide (continue effort that began in 2019). Reference other successful guidelines.	Partnership - Arts Organization				ED / Partners
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Encourage parklets and sidewalk cafes.		Create a design competition to paint parklet jersey barriers / safety barriers.	Ongoing Funding Allocation				ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Encourage parklets and sidewalk cafes.		Reduce or remove the business-owner's responsibility to cover the cost of parking from a parklet initiative.					
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.		Create clear expectations for business signage		Create signage design templates which align with preferred scale, material, and position for business owners to simplify permit/review of signage by Community Development.	Internal / Consultant				Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.		Create clear expectations for business signage		Distribute/Promote "preferred" signage design, scale, and positioning through the city's permitting information.	Internal				Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.		Create clear expectations for business signage		Conduct sign guidance training and create a promotional campaign for local architects who work with local businesses.	Internal				Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.		Create clear expectations for business signage	Long term	Create design guidelines that are short, targeted and graphic.	Internal / Consultant				Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Redesign the food truck policy	Early Action	Remove food truck restrictions in retail districts for Evanston-based businesses. Establish at least one permanent food truck stall or space to be made available to any permitted truck in the city of Evanston.	Internal				Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Redesign the food truck policy	Early Action	Expand the period of time that food trucks may remain in one location in alignment with neighboring municipalities.	Internal				Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Redesign the food truck policy	Early Action	Expand the time of day to include early morning (coffee service) and late night.	Internal				Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Redesign the food truck policy		Consider specific permit locations for late-night food truck operation supporting area event centers, entertainment businesses, and sporting event venues.	Internal				Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Redesign the food truck policy		Review distance limitations around schools and parks. Consider an amendment to allow operation during sporting events or other limited operating opportunities, by right.	Internal				Comm Dev / ED
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Redesign the food truck policy		Consider a food truck plaza at Robert Crown for use during sporting tournaments that activate the outdoor fields for long periods on weekends.					
PLACEMAKING	2	Provide better design guidance and support for pedestrian-facing elements of small businesses that contribute to a great public realm by creating Evanston style manuals and design guidelines.	PRIORITY	Redesign the food truck policy		Create a pop-up restaurant space in a high-profile location in Downtown.					
PLACEMAKING	3	Better define non-SSA retail districts in Evanston to more effectively distribute resources.	PRIORITY	Redraw the district maps to focus on the most identifiable/legible blocks and nodes.	Early Action	Revise place-based grant funding policy to correlate directly with visible placemaking investments to benefit/reinforce the district identity in physical and digital spaces. Decouple these funds from small business education or maintenance purposes.	Ongoing Funding Allocation				ED
PLACEMAKING	3	Better define non-SSA retail districts in Evanston to more effectively distribute resources.	PRIORITY	Redraw the district maps to focus on the most identifiable/legible blocks and nodes.	Early Action	Pilot allocation of place-based funds to each of the defined retail district areas based on the revised map.	Ongoing Funding Allocation				City Leadership** / ED