

D1-D4*



Downtown Districts

(Zoning Ordinance Sections 6-11-2, 6-11-3, 6-11-4, 6-11-5
Updated April 2026)

***See Title 6, Chapter 11 of the Evanston Code of Ordinances for more information, definitions, additional requirements and exceptions to these regulations. A Zoning Analysis is strongly recommended for major projects prior to submitting an application for building permits.**

PURPOSE STATEMENTS

D1 Downtown Fringe District

Provide for business and office development in compact locations. Massing and scale of structures should be reflective of established uses and provide suitable transition between the adjacent residential districts and the more intense downtown districts. Mixed use development is encouraged through the use of planned developments.

D2 Downtown Retail Core District

Support traditional downtown shopping in Evanston. The district is characterized by street level storefronts and structures that accent pedestrian use. 75% of the total sidewalk exterior shall be dedicated to retail trade activity, including Type 1 Restaurants. Mixed use developments and reuse of structures shall be encouraged to create and maintain the pedestrian retail character as identified in the adopted "Plan for Downtown Evanston". Lots zoned D2 located in the oRD Redevelopment Overlay District must be developed through planned development.

D3 Downtown Core Development District

Provide the highest density of business infill development and large scale redevelopment in downtown Evanston. This district is also intended to encourage a mix of office, retail, and residential uses. Lots zoned D3 located in the oRD Redevelopment Overlay District must be developed through planned development to ensure consistency with the "Plan for Downtown Evanston".

D4 Downtown Transition District

Provide business infill development and redevelopment in downtown Evanston. Massing and scale of structures should reflect established uses and provide suitable transition between downtown and neighboring areas. The district is also intended to encourage a mix of office, retail, and residential uses. Lots zoned D4 located in the oRD Redevelopment Overlay District must be developed through planned development to ensure consistency with the "Plan for Downtown Evanston".

MINIMUM LOT SIZE

	D1	D2	D3	D4
Residential, square feet per dwelling unit	5,000 400/DU		5,000 300/DU	5,000 400/DU
Nonresidential	No requirement			

DU: Dwelling unit

MINIMUM LOT WIDTH

	D1	D2	D3	D4
	No requirement			

MINIMUM YARD REQUIREMENTS

Principal Structures		D1	D2	D3	D4
Front		15 ft.	Note 1 below		
Street Side		15 ft.	Note 1 below		
Interior Side, Abutting	Residential District	15 ft.	5 ft.	15 ft.	N/R
	Nonresidential District	No requirement			
Rear, Abutting	Residential District	10 ft.	15 ft.		
	Nonresidential District	10 ft.	No Requirement		
Parking Setbacks		D1	D2	D3	D4
Front		Open, unenclosed parking prohibited			
Street Side		Open, unenclosed parking prohibited			
Interior Side, Abutting	Residential, District	10 ft.			5 ft.
	Nonresidential District	5 ft.			
Rear, Abutting	Residential District	5 ft.	10 ft.		
	Nonresidential District	5 ft.	0 ft.	5 ft.	

1. Building to front property line is permitted if setbacks on the same public right of way of any existing street-facing facades of principal buildings on abutting properties, together with setbacks on same block and side of the public right of way of any existing street-facing facades of other principal buildings, form a substantially continuous setback along the public right of way; and if the proposed setback allows a minimum 5 ft. clear width for pedestrian passage between the building's outermost projection and any objects lawfully occupying the public right of way, including, but not limited to, trees, parking meters, utility poles, bicycle racks, planter boxes and planting areas, newspaper vending boxes, fire hydrants, traffic signs, and bus shelters

MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA RATIO

	D1	D2	D3	D4
Containing Residential	No requirement	2.75	4.5	5.4
Not containing residential				4.5

MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT

	D1	D2	D3	D4
	42 ft. ¹	42 ft. ^{1,2}	85 ft. ²	85 ft. ^{2,3}

1. Notwithstanding the above, buildings existing as of the effective date of the zoning code, shall, for the purpose of the district and the requirements, be deemed complying with district height requirements.

2. Building height (floors or stories) with 75% or more of the gross floor area devoted to accessory parking decks, up to a maximum of 4 stories or 40 ft., whichever is less, is excluded from the building height calculation.

3. Maximum building height for structures containing residential dwelling units is 105 ft.

PERMITTED, SPECIAL, AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW USES

	D1	D2	D3	D4
Administrative Review Uses, per Section 6-3-5-1		S	S	S
Artist studio	P	P	P	P
Apartment hotel			S	
Assisted living facility	S			
Assisted living facility (located above the ground floor)		S	S	S
Banquet hall	S	S	S	S
Boarding house	S			
Brew pub	P	P	P	P
Business or vocational school	S	S	S	S
Cannabis craft grower	S	S	S	S
Cannabis dispensary	S	S	S	S
Cannabis infuser	S	S	S	S
Cannabis transporter	S	S	S	S
Commercial indoor recreation	P	See below	P	P
Commercial indoor recreation (located above the ground floor)		P		
Commercial indoor recreation (located at ground floor)		AR		
Commercial parking garage			P	S
Convenience store	S	S	S	S
Craft alcohol production facility	S	S	S	S
Cultural facility	P	P	P	P
Daycare center – adult	S		S	S
Daycare center – child	S	S	S	S
Drive-through facility (accessory or principal)	S		S	S
Dwelling-Multiple-family	P			
Dwellings (located above the ground floor)		P	P	P
Educational institution – private or public	S	S	S	S
Financial institution	P		P	P
Financial institution (located above the ground floor)		P		
Financial institution (located at ground floor)		AR		
Food store establishment (not opened later than 12:00 midnight)	P			
Food store establishment		P	P	P
Funeral services excluding on site cremation	S	P	P	S
Government institution	P	P	P	P
Hotel	P	P	P	P

	D1	D2	D3	D4
Independent living facility	S			
Independent living facility (located above the ground floor)		S	S	S
Live-work units	P	P	P	P
Long term care facility	S			
Medical broadcasting station			P	
Membership organization	P	P	P	P
Mixed-use market (20,000 sq. ft. or less)	P	P	P	P
Mixed-use market (exceeding 20,000 sq. ft.)	S	S	S	S
Neighborhood garden	S	S	S	S
Office (located above the ground floor)	P	P	P	P
Office (at ground floor)	AR	AR	AR	AR
Open sales lot	S	S	S	S
Performance entertainment venue		S	S	S
Planned development	S	S	S	S
Public utility	P		P	P
Religious institution	P	S	S	S
Resale establishment	S	S	S	S
Residential care home – Category I and II	P			
Residential care home – Category I (located above the ground floor)		P	P	P
Residential care home – Category II (located above the ground floor)		S	S	S
Restaurant – Type 1	P	P	P	P
Restaurant – Type 2		AR	AR	AR
Retirement home	S			
Retirement hotel	S			
Retail establishment - Goods or Services	P	P	P	P
Sheltered care home	S			
Tattoo and body art establishment	S	S	S	S
Transitional shelter	S			
Urban farm, rooftop	S	S	S	S
Wholesale goods establishment	S			

P = Permitted Use AR = Administrative Review Use
 S = Special Use Not permitted, not eligible Special Use or Administrative Review Use