

WELCOME TO THE PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE!

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

PROJECT SCOPE + STUDY AREA:

This planning project is focused on expanding open space opportunities and improving vehicular, biking, and walking connections for the neighborhoods surrounding the Mason Park and Church-Dodge areas.

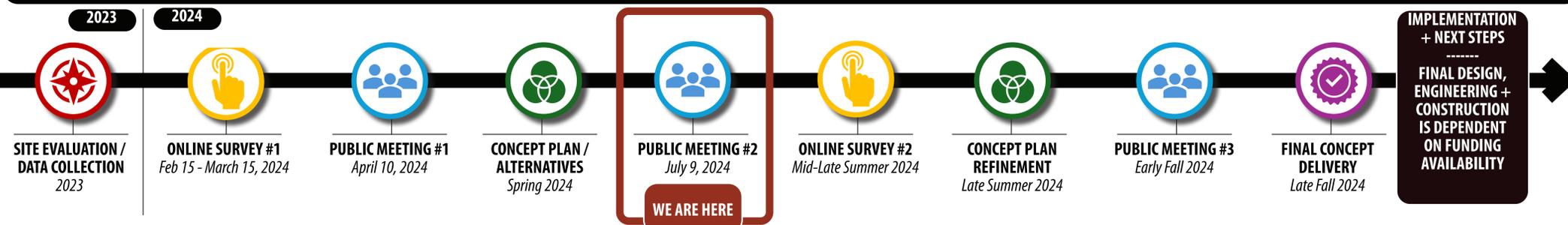
The study area includes the properties highlighted on the map (at right) and described below.

-  Existing Mason Park Area
-  Mason Park Expansion Area (former Railroad Embankment)
-  Church-Dodge Intersection Area

Throughout this study, the City is seeking public feedback about desired improvements via online surveys and public meetings. The result of this study will be a Concept Plan that will be used by the City to guide future improvements within the Mason Park and Church-Dodge Area.



ANTICIPATED PROJECT TIMELINE



EXISTING MASON PARK

Mason Park is a City owned park located south of Church Street, between the former Railroad Embankment and Florence Avenue. Existing park features include a field house, basketball courts, tennis courts, a baseball field, a soccer field, and a playground. Mason Park also includes an undeveloped sloped parcel of property, located south of Davis Street and east of the former Railroad Embankment.



MASON PARK EXPANSION AREA

This former railroad Right of Way (the Mayfair Cut-off) dates back to the late 1880s. The line was discontinued in the 1980's and the land was subdivided and sold to private owners. This property also includes high tension electrical transmission lines. At the time of its original construction, the Mayfair Cut-off was located west of the majority of Evanston's populated area. The City has since expanded westward and the embankment now bisects much of the City's west side. At Mason Park the embankment disrupts neighborhood access, resulting in safety and security concerns. Over the past several years, the City purchased many of the former Right-of-Way parcels to correct these issues and reconnect neighborhoods.



CHURCH-DODGE INTERSECTION

The Church-Dodge Intersection is located nearby to active businesses, neighborhoods, and Evanston Township High School (ETHS). This busy intersection accommodates vehicles, buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The intersection often feels congested and lacks continuous flow for all users.



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements

City of Evanston, IL



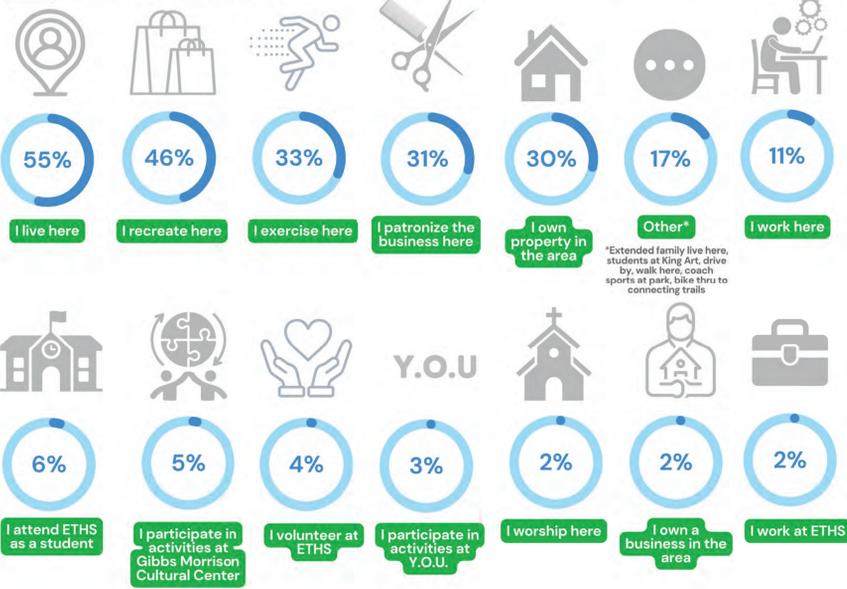
Survey Results (1 of 2)

Survey Dates February 15th - March 15th 2024

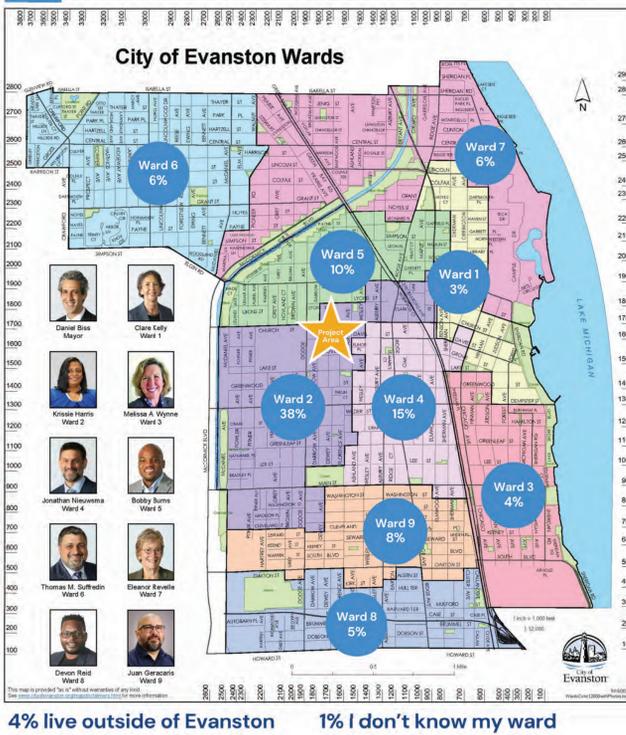
446 Participants

Demographics

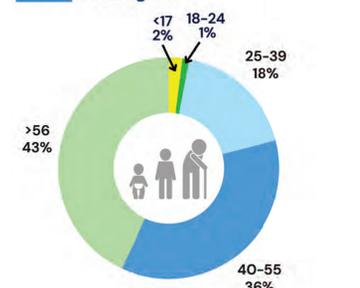
Q1 How are you connected to the Mason Park and Church-Dodge area? (Select all that apply)



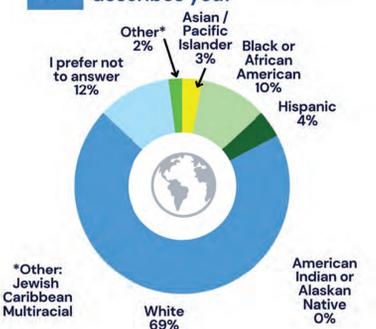
Q2 Please identify your neighborhood below (Select One)



Q3 What age group do you belong to?

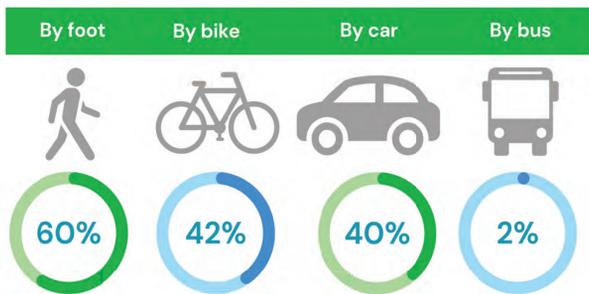


Q4 Which race or ethnicity best describes you?

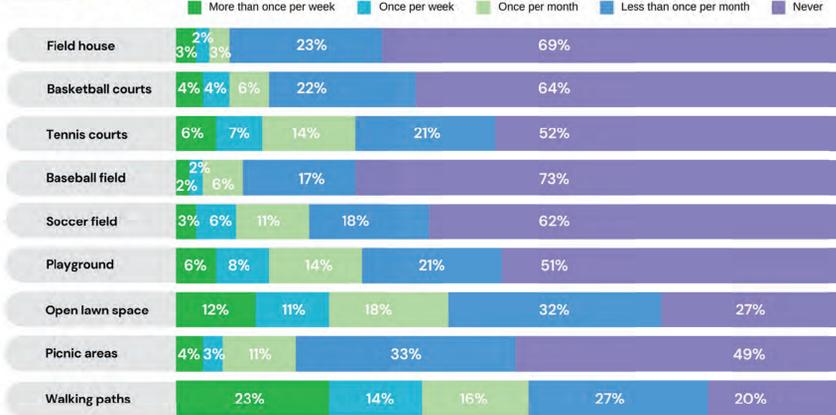


Existing Mason Park

Q5 How do you currently access Mason Park? (select all that apply)

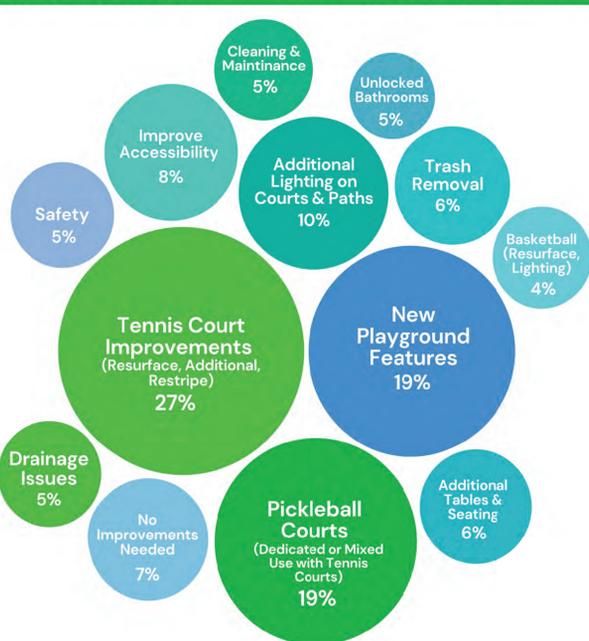


Q6 Below is a list of facilities at Mason Park. Please identify how frequently you and/or your family use these facilities.



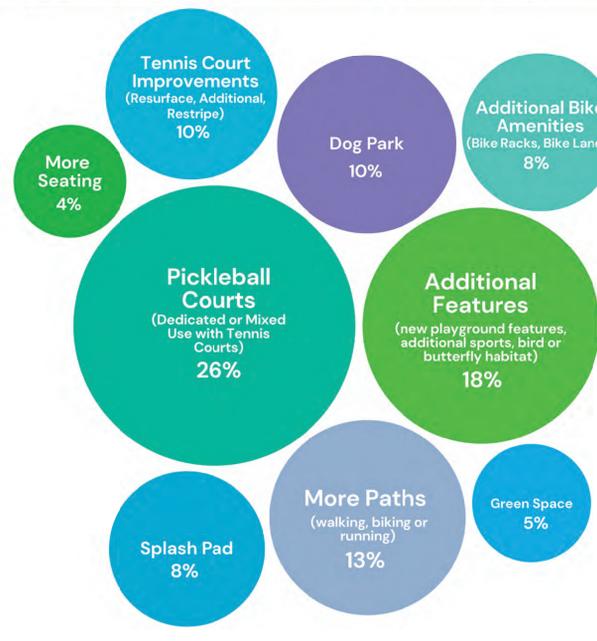
Q7 Are any improvements needed to the existing facilities at Mason Park?

Keywords reiterated the most are highlighted in the circles below; the size of the circles indicates the frequency/popularity of the response. Some community provided inputs are listed below



Q8 Do you have suggestions for additional recreational functions or features to be added to the Mason Park area?

Keywords reiterated the most are highlighted in the circles below; the size of the circles indicates the frequency/popularity of the response. Some community provided inputs are listed below



"Better lighting at night - we should be using Dark Sky approved lighting to keep the light focused on the ground."
 "Yes, there needs to be more frequent maintenance and cleaning in the area - there is a lot of trash laying around and things are generally dirty"
 "The baseball field is in horrid shape and constantly collects water even in the lightest rain. It becomes a giant mud pit that is both unplayable and very messy"
 "New playground equipment and a splash pad would be awesome"
 "The tennis courts are cracked and need resurfacing. These courts are most often used for pickleball and not tennis, so it would make sense to convert them to dedicated pickleball courts. 4 (maybe 6?) pickleball courts could replace the 2 tennis courts. If the footprint were expanded, this could potentially be 6-8 pickleball courts, with the embankment proving a good wind block. This is a centrally located park could provide better access to pickleball for Evanston residents."

"Additional pickle ball courts and perhaps bocce ball courts, an inexpensive and international sport that will appeal to large segments of our diverse population."
 "Circle or semicircle of benches that would be inviting for older residents as they walk the pathways, watch sports from a distance. It would be great to have a motion-activated splash fountain! Not everyone goes to the lakefront to cool off and there are no outdoor pools in Evanston—a neighborhood feature like this would be amazing"
 "Green space is good"
 "Better biking connectivity between West bound biking on Davis to the two way lane on Church west of the park"



COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Survey Results (2 of 2)

Survey Dates February 15th - March 15th 2024

446 Participants

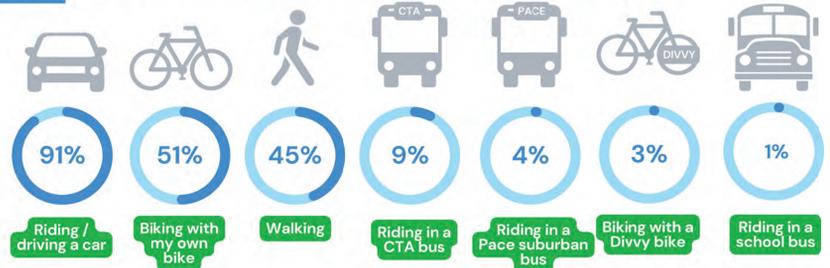
Church-Dodge Intersection Area

Q9 How frequently do you use the Church-Dodge intersection area? (select one)

Every day
Multiple times per week
Once per week
Once every two weeks
Once per month
Less than once per month
Never



Q10 What modes of travel do you use? (select all that apply)



1% Other: Skateboard

Q11 Describe any concerns you may have when traveling through the Church - Dodge Intersection area. (select all that apply)



13% of Respondents reported 'other' concerns, including the following responses:

"Intersection needs marked no left turns when school starts/stops with enforcement to ease traffic backups."
 "It never seems safe."
 "Too many people double park waiting/dropping off kids and too much stop and go traffic due to crossing guards and pedestrians crossings."

Mason Park Expansion (Former Railroad Embankment)

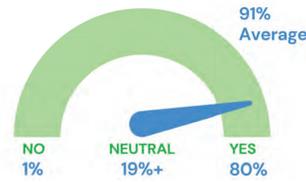
Q12 Describe your perception of the embankment area. (select one)



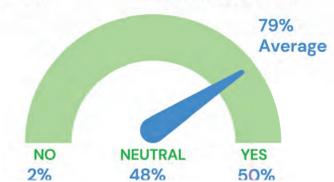
10% of Respondents reported 'other' perceptions, including the following responses:

"Cuts the neighborhood in half, some security concerns for students, under used."
 "It seems useless and is a barrier."
 "green space for birds; Provides greening and privacy for my neighborhood."
 "It certainly can be improved with walking and or biking trails while still maintaining much of the dense greenery."
 "both ugly and overgrown and poses safety security, and rodent concern."

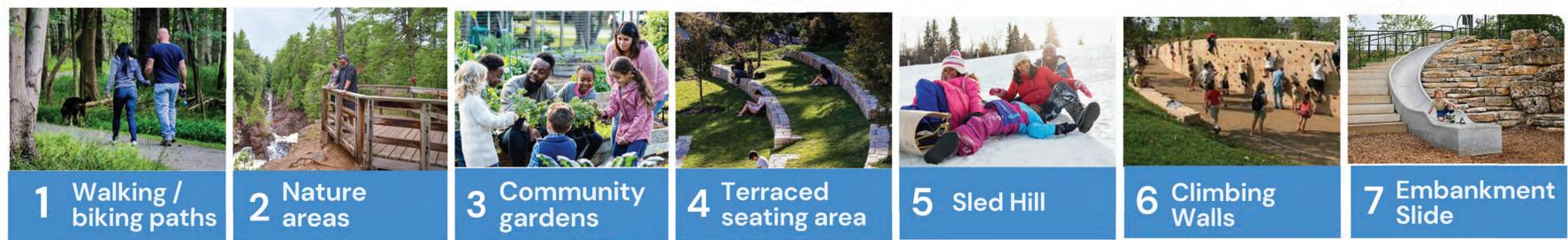
Q13 The City is evaluating the feasibility of providing a walking / biking path through the embankment at Davis Street. Below is an example of this concept. Would this feature be of value to the neighborhood?



Q14 The Edible Acre Community Garden is currently located at the southeast corner of Dodge Avenue and Davis Street. The City and Evanston Township High School are evaluating the feasibility of relocating the Edible Acre Community Garden to a larger property at the northeast corner of Dodge Avenue and Lake Street. In your opinion, would this relocation and expansion be of value to the neighborhood?



Q15 The embankment area offers potential for expanded open space opportunities. Below is a list of potential uses. Please rank these functions in the order of your preference (drag your most preferred to the top of the list)



Open-Ended Comments

Q16 Do you have any other suggestions for expanded open space opportunities? Please enter them here.

- Key Themes:**
- Build upon the naturalized character of the site and incorporate sustainable materials and practices. Preserve quality trees, incorporate native plantings and invite birds and wildlife.
 - Incorporate safety measures and additional lighting as practical.
 - Accommodate multi-generational community users, residents, local businesses and ETHS students/staff.
 - Plan for continued cleaning and maintenance of the area.
 - Establish walking paths and connections that bring the community together and connect us with the natural environment.

"Maintain and prune existing trees in the park, especially on the hill."
 "I would love to see the city incorporate sustainable materials and solutions into this project."
 "A combination of walking path with community garden would serve students and the residents."
 "Trash cans need to be available please to keep the spaces nice. Open areas without trash cans exponentially decrease their beauty and value b/c layers of trash sets the scene."
 "Native plantings, bird or nature preserve."
 "I think the embankment area has a lot of potential for naturalized areas. I myself enjoy walking through it, but think it definitely needs to be cleaned. Most of the trees are dead, but we could plant new ones. It would be very nice and pretty if we did that. People could volunteer to help clean it out and re-plant trees and plants, and it would be a nice community project."

Q17 If you have any additional comments about this project, please add them here.

- Key Themes:**
- Alleviate traffic congestion at Church / Dodge.
 - Establish clearer bike routes and connections along Church Street.
 - Improve pedestrian connections throughout the area, including safer passageways between the neighborhoods and ETHS.
 - Make use of this opportunity to connect with the natural surroundings and unique neighborhood.
 - Continue open lines of communication with the community and general interest for this project.

"Great ideas!! Very excited to see some of the ideas put forward about 15 years ago bearing fruit. I like the idea of an opening in the embankment so that high school students have an easier—and less dangerous—access to the high school than Dodge and Church intersection. But I worry about security at night."
 "Reconfigure the bike lanes on Church Street. They need to be marked better as do the car lanes."
 "Let's connect our neighborhoods!"
 "I think it's important to be more inclusive to the people who live on the west side of the embankment, and it should be a HIGH priority to create a safe pathway through the woods to the high school. It's ridiculous that hasn't been a priority a long time ago with SO many kids cutting through there every day, in all weather conditions. I also think the park serves as a natural habitat for wildlife, and that should be kept as is. Also, the garbage disposal company needs to stay hidden. It's ugly, noisy, and stinky. We certainly don't want that to be an even bigger nuisance."



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements

City of Evanston, IL



PUBLIC MEETING #1 KEY TAKEAWAYS

PUBLIC MEETING DATE + TIME:

April 10, 2024, Evanston Township High School, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

PUBLIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Project information and meeting announcements uploaded to the City of Evanston project website.
- Printed flyers posted in Mason Park + Gibbs Morrison Cultural Center.
- Emailed announcements provided to Evanston Township High School (ETHS), Youth Opportunity United (Y.O.U.), the 2nd Ward Offices and to all survey respondents who provided email addresses (approximately 250 individuals).
- Printed flyers mailed to approximately 561 households surrounding Mason Park.

Approximately 40 people attended the Public Open House.

MASON PARK EXPANSION AND CHURCH/DODGE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, April 10th
6:00pm - 8:00pm
Evanston Township High School (ETHS)
1600 Dodge Avenue, Evanston, Room N112
*Enter the Building at Entrance #1, located in front of ETHS on Dodge Ave
Parking is available along Dodge Ave and in Parking Lot #1 (accessed from Dodge Ave)*

Join us at the public open house to hear outcomes of the community survey, review existing conditions and participate in design visioning activities.

For more information, please visit the project webpage at the link below or scan the QR code with your smart device
www.cityofevanston.org/MasonChurchDodge






PUBLIC FEEDBACK ORGANIZED BY PROJECT AREA FOLLOWS BELOW:

EXISTING MASON PARK



RANKED IMPROVEMENTS:

Participants voted on desired improvements. The highest ranked improvements are at the top of the list.

1. Add Bioswales / Rain Gardens - 24 votes
2. Add Terraced Seating - 21 votes
3. Enhance Existing Field House / Bathrooms - 16 votes
4. Add Fitness/ Exercise Stations – 8 votes
5. Add a Dog Park – 7 votes
6. Use Existing Slope for an Embankment Slide – 6 votes
7. Add Play Mounds – 6 votes
8. Use Existing Slope for a Climbing Wall – 5 votes
9. Use Existing Slope for a Sled Hill – 5 votes
10. Enhance / Replace Playground Equipment – 3 votes
11. Add Pickleball – 1 vote

COMMENTS SUMMARY:

1. Expand field house programs (music, dance, gardening programs + classes)
2. Update restrooms and expand open restroom hours
3. Repair vending machine and lighting at field house columns
4. Implement on-street parking time limit near tennis courts
5. Add trail through trees (near embankment)
6. Add goal posts for football
7. Add frisbee course
8. Provide a designated dog area
9. Add water fountains, bike racks, picnic tables, and benches

MASON PARK EXPANSION AREA



RANKED IMPROVEMENTS:

Participants voted on desired improvements. The highest ranked improvements are at the top of the list.

1. Nature Trail – 24 votes
2. Urban Trail – 16 votes
3. Community Garden/Demonstration Garden – 11 votes
4. Overlook – 11 votes
5. Boardwalk/Benches – 11 votes
6. Shaded Seating – 8 votes
7. Nature Based Play – 7 votes
8. Fitness/Exercise Stations – 2 votes
9. Bench Swings – 2 votes
10. Sculpture Garden – 2 votes

COMMENTS SUMMARY:

1. Maintain open spaces and disincentivize illegal behaviors
2. Protect trees, establish native plantings
3. Develop a green walkway space along and across the hill
4. Develop a community garden and free farm stand for people experiencing food insecurity
5. Develop Lake/Dodge for public green space
6. Maintain sledding opportunities
7. Provide safe bike/ped connections to ETHS via Davis
8. Establish a pathway from Davis to Darrow
9. Establish a marked crossing across Church St
10. Bury, move overhead electric lines
11. Clean up trash and debris, especially around the transfer station
12. Remove graffiti at benches and lights

CHURCH-DODGE INTERSECTION



RANKED IMPROVEMENTS:

Participants voted on desired improvements. The highest ranked improvements are at the top of the list.

1. Protected bike lane – 19 votes
2. Bus Shelter + Amenities – 9 votes
3. Marked Bike Lane – 6 votes
4. Bus Bulbs – 4 votes
5. Bike Repair Station + Bike Racks - 3 votes

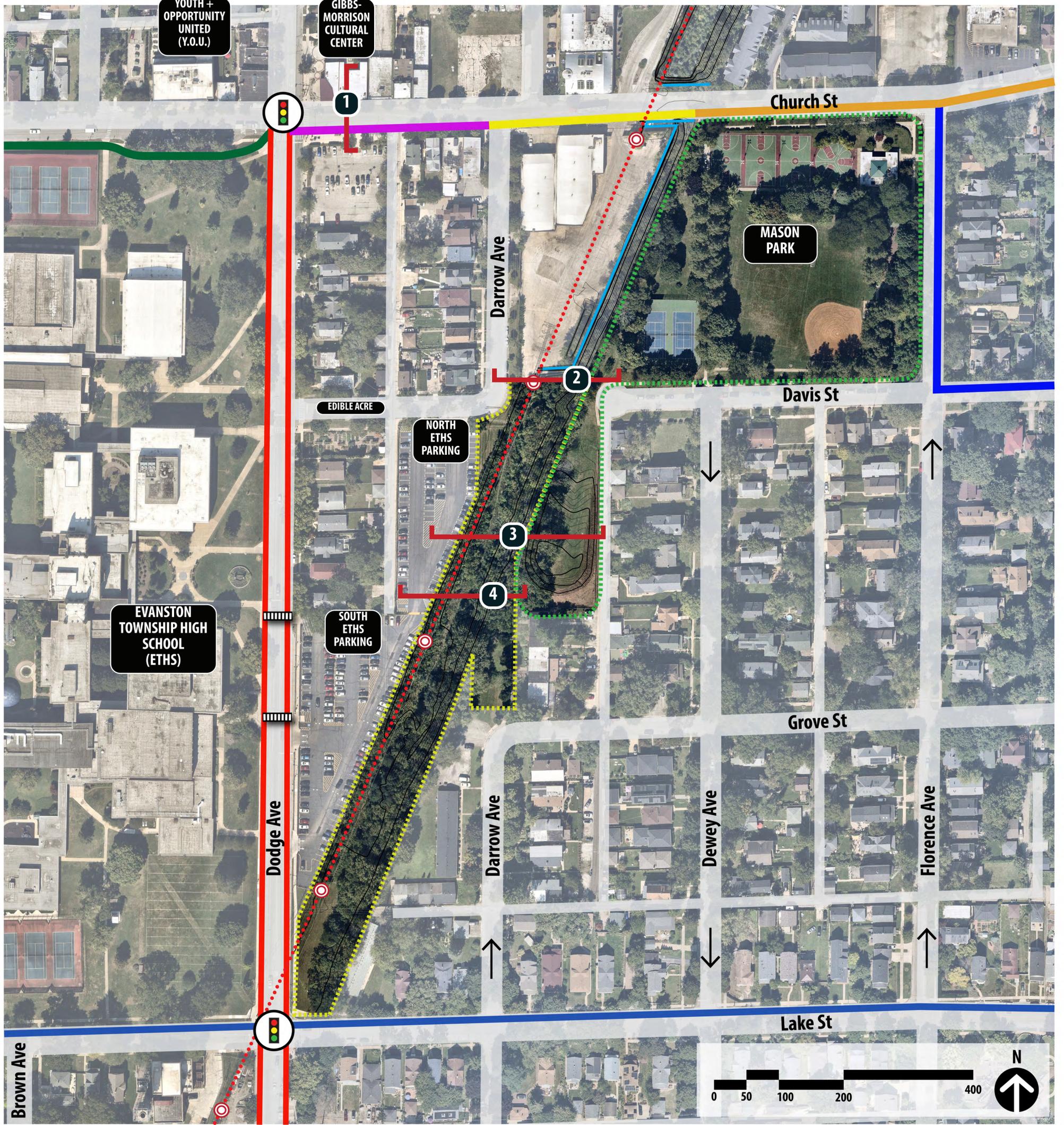
COMMENTS SUMMARY:

1. Calm speeding traffic throughout the intersection
2. Provide (left) turn lanes in all directions and update traffic signals
3. Consider no turn on red during peak times
4. Prohibit cars illegally using bike lanes
5. Explore feasibility to enhance bus infrastructure for southbound 93 + 206 stop
6. Improve bike connections through and east of the intersection. The two-way bike lane is confusing
7. Provide westbound bike infrastructure between Florence and Mayfair
8. Transition to planned future Church Street bike facility west of Dodge
9. Provide protected bike lanes and consider parking protected bike lanes
10. Provide pedestrian countdown timers
11. Consider a diagonal crossing cycle for pedestrians.
12. Consider raised crosswalks
13. Evaluate Divvy bike usage and whether this location is appropriate



EXISTING CONDITIONS | MAP

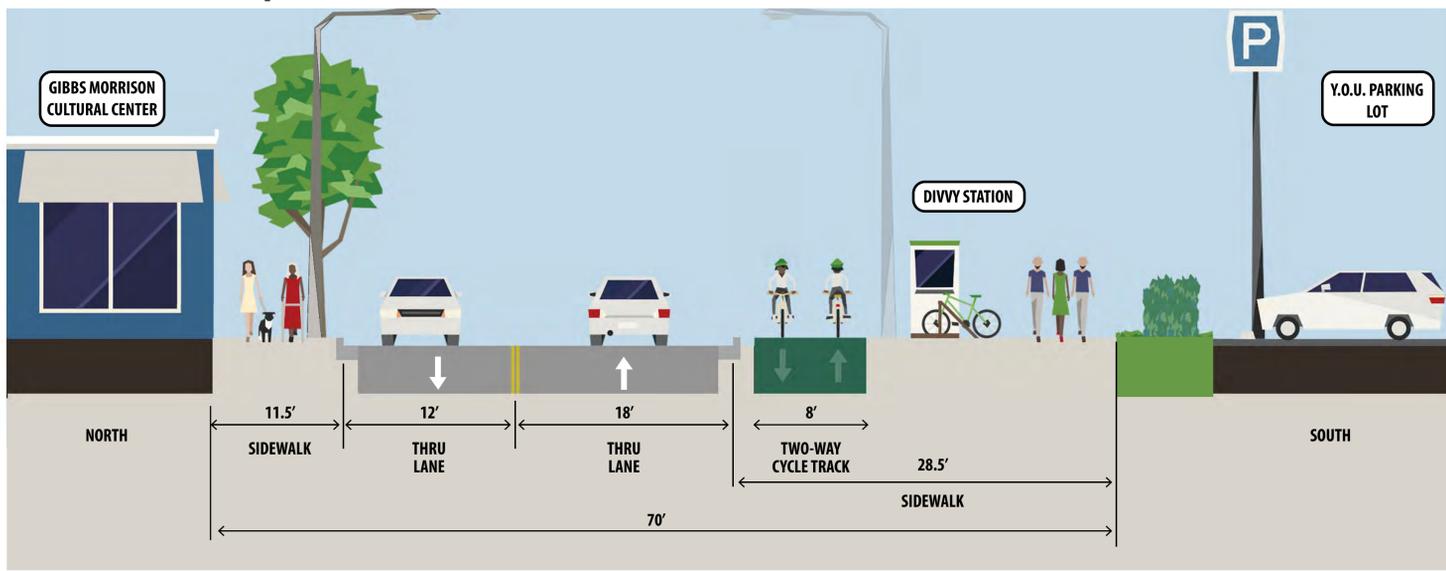
-  Existing Traffic Signal
 -  Existing Mid-Block Crossing
 -  Embankment Wall
 -  Mason Park Expansion Area
 -  Existing Mason Park
 -  ComEd High Tension Tower/ Overhead Wires
 -  Section Elevations (See Section Exhibits)
-
- Bike Facilities**
 -  Existing Signed Bike Route
 -  Existing Bike Lane
 -  Existing Protected Bike Lane
 -  Existing Off-Street Cycle Track (2-Way)
 -  Existing On-Street Cycle Track (2-Way)
 -  Existing Bike Path
 -  Existing Bike Route



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements City of Evanston, IL

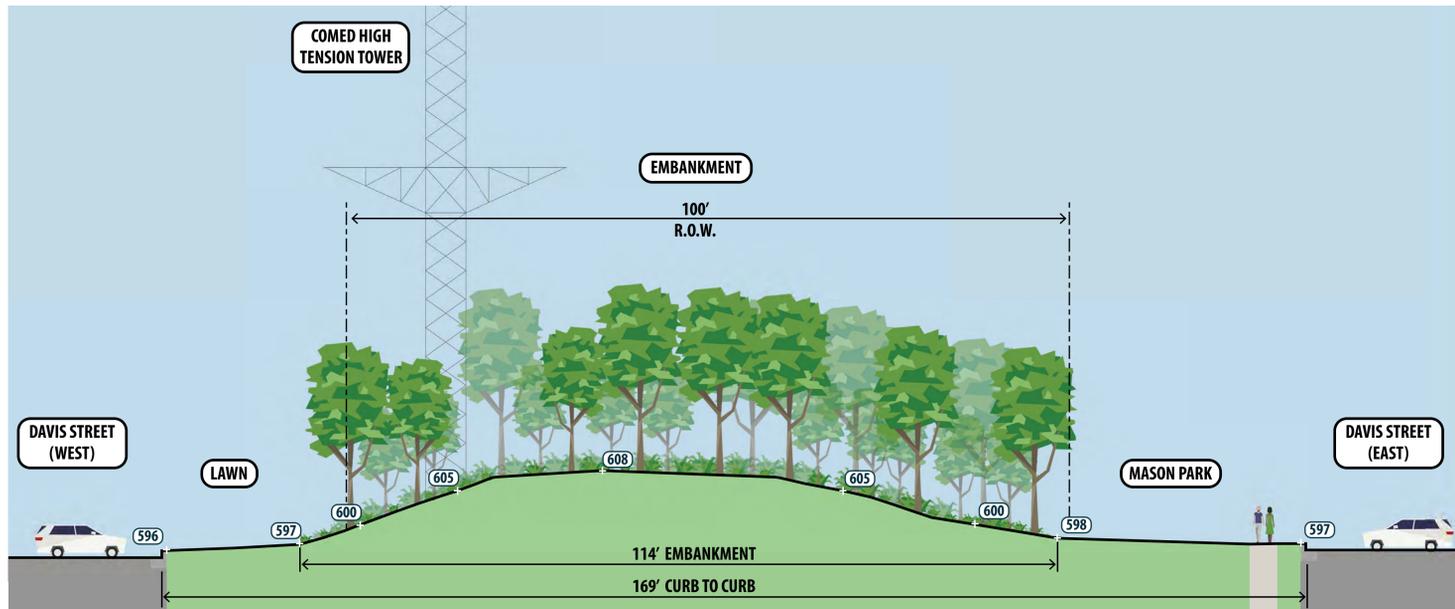


EXISTING CONDITIONS | SITE SECTIONS



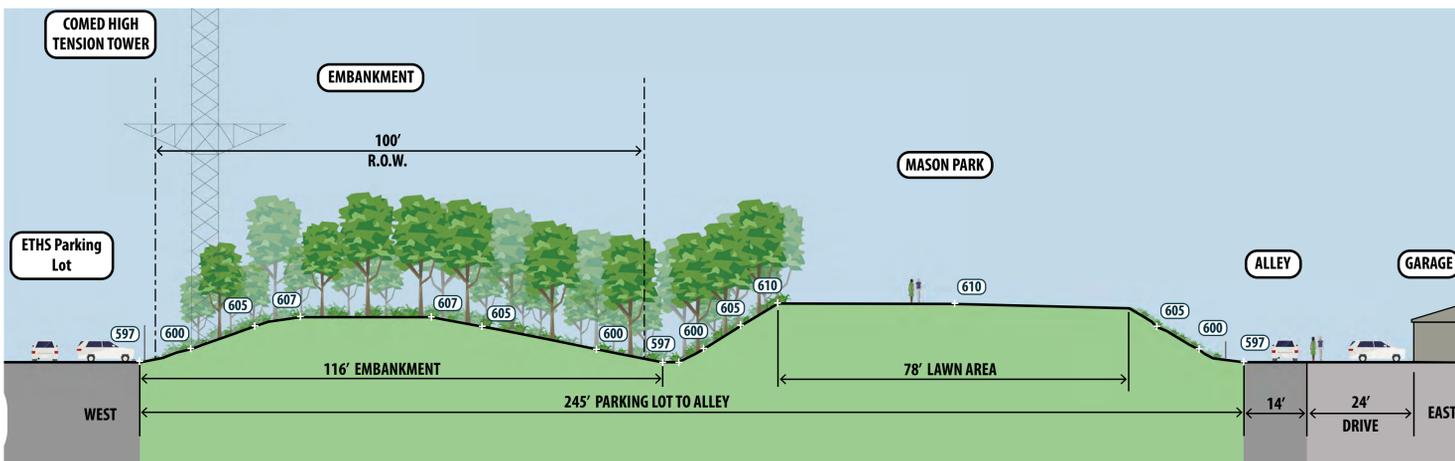
1

SECTION 1: CHURCH STREET EAST OF DODGE AVENUE, LOOKING EAST



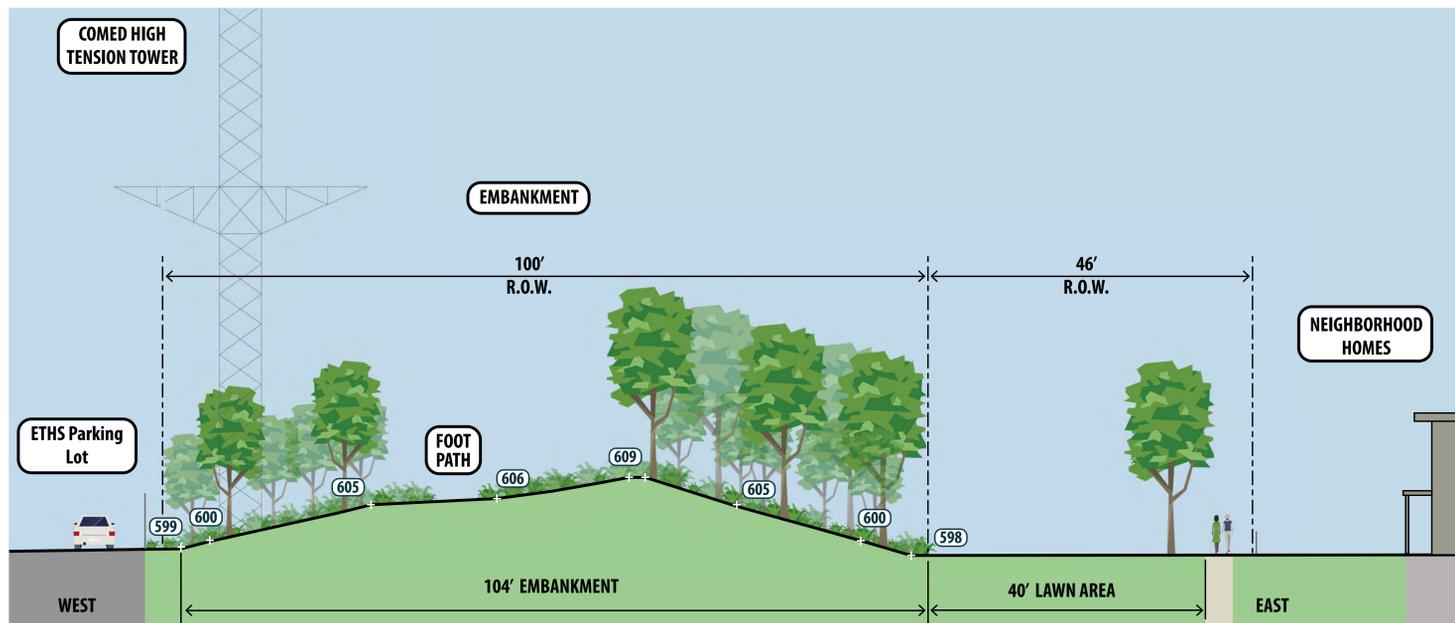
2

SECTION 2: EMBANKMENT BETWEEN EAST/WEST DAVIS STREET, LOOKING NORTH



3

SECTION 3: EMBANKMENT BETWEEN ETHS (NORTH) PARKING LOT AND MASON PARK/ALLEY (EAST), LOOKING NORTH



4

SECTION 4: EMBANKMENT BETWEEN ETHS (SOUTH) PARKING LOT AND NEIGHBORHOOD HOMES, LOOKING NORTH



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements City of Evanston, IL



EXISTING CONDITIONS | SITE PHOTOS



Mason Park Entrance at Church / Florence
(View South)



Basketball Courts
(View West)



Tennis Courts
(View North)



Playground
(View North)



Park Building
(View West)



Baseball / Soccer Field
(View West)



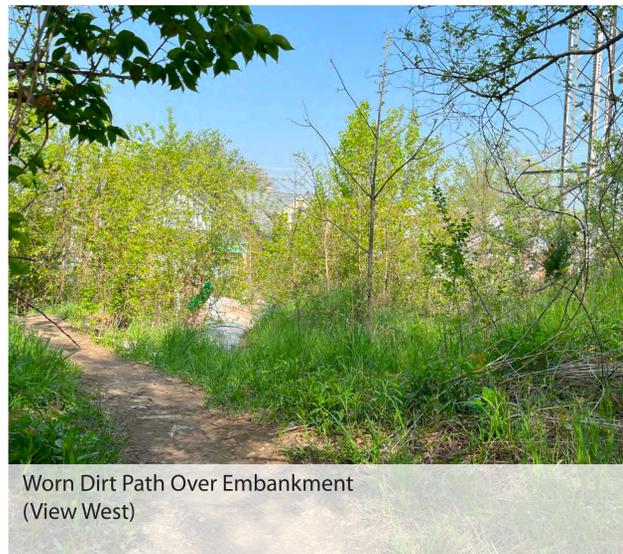
Basketball Court + Soccer Field
(View South)



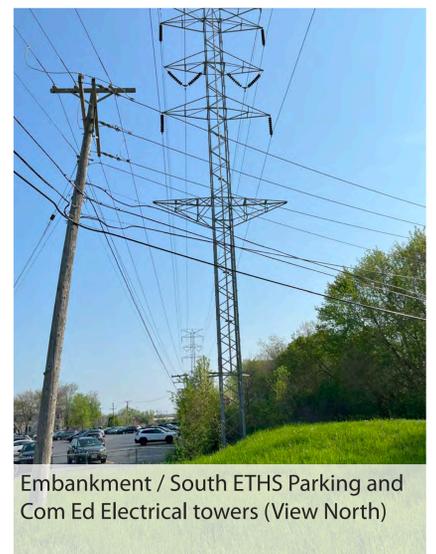
Davis St Along Mason Park Property /
Base of Embankment (View South)



Worn Dirt Path Over Embankment
(View West)



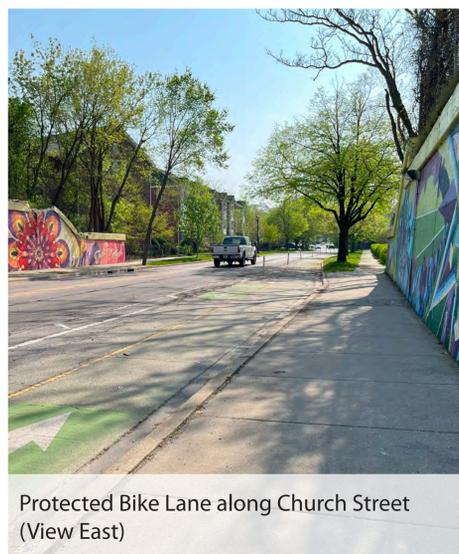
Worn Dirt Path Over Embankment
(View West)



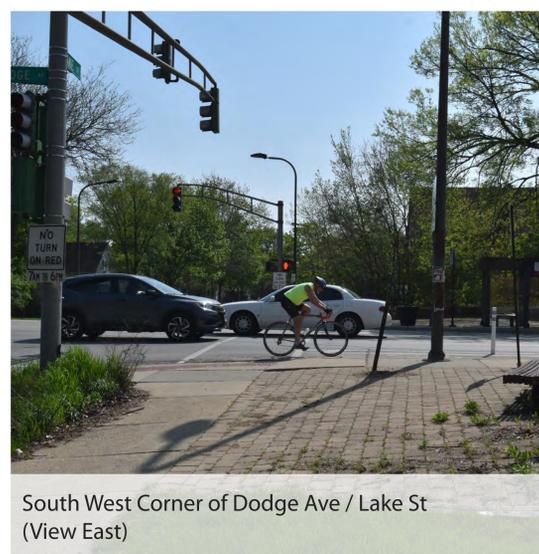
Embankment / South ETHS Parking and
Com Ed Electrical towers (View North)



Off-Street Cycle Track Along Church St at
Dodge Ave (View West)



Protected Bike Lane along Church Street
(View East)



South West Corner of Dodge Ave / Lake St
(View East)



Intersection of Dodge Ave / Church St
(View West)



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements City of Evanston, IL



ECOLOGICAL CONCEPT | Nature based play, ecology trail + foraging gardens

**INPUT ACTIVITY:
USE THE POST-IT
NOTES TO ADD YOUR
COMMENTS**



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements City of Evanston, IL

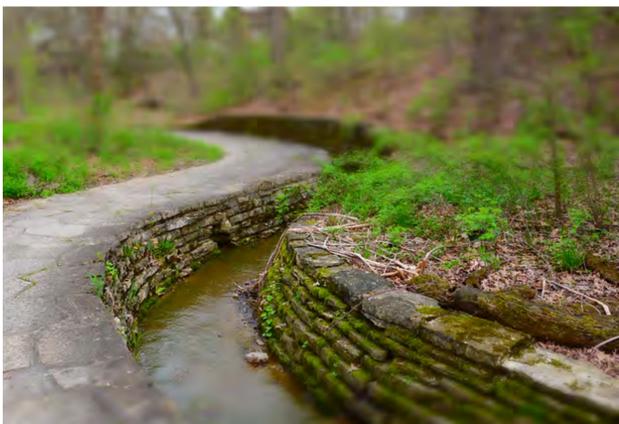


ECOLOGICAL CONCEPT | Nature based play, ecology trail + foraging gardens

**INPUT ACTIVITY:
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NOTES TO ADD YOUR
COMMENTS**



View looking from Davis Street west to Evanston Township High School

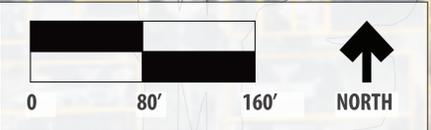


Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements
City of Evanston, IL



HILLSIDE + ADVENTURE CONCEPT | Hillside play, family games + adventure course

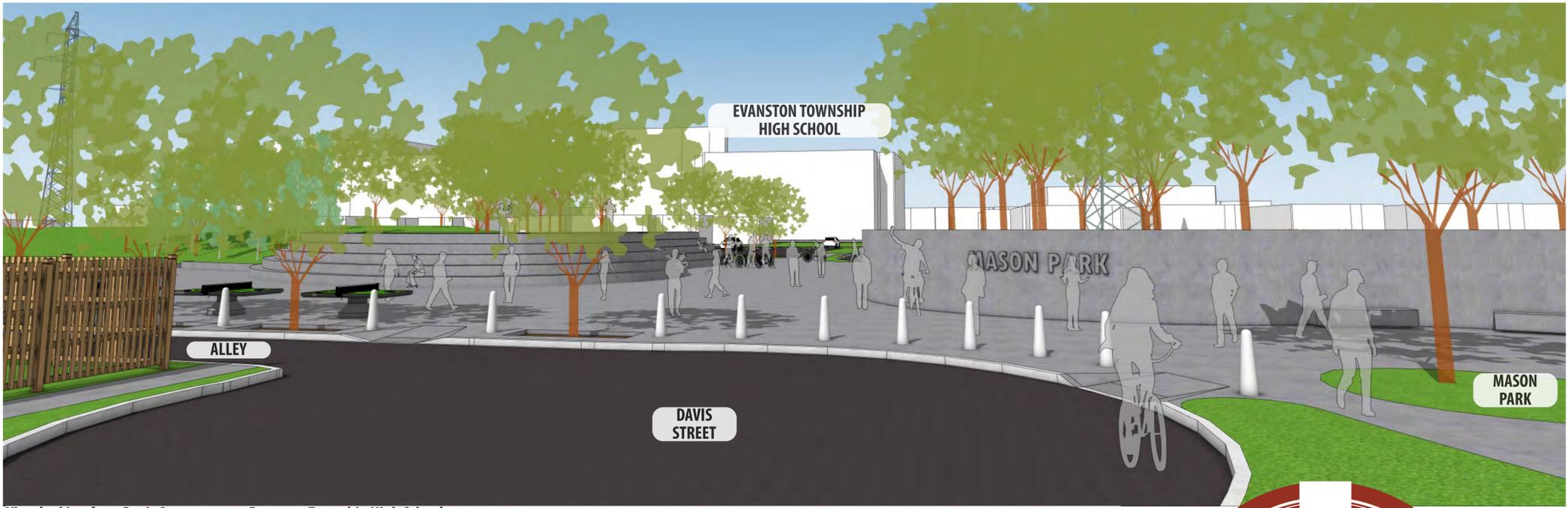
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NOTES TO ADD YOUR
COMMENTS



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements City of Evanston, IL



HILLSIDE + ADVENTURE CONCEPT | Hillside play, family games + adventure course



View looking from Davis Street west to Evanston Township High School

**INPUT ACTIVITY:
USE THE POST-IT
NOTES TO ADD YOUR
COMMENTS**



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements City of Evanston, IL



OPEN GREEN SPACE CONCEPT | Pickup field games + fitness course

**INPUT ACTIVITY:
USE THE POST-IT
NOTES TO ADD YOUR
COMMENTS**



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements City of Evanston, IL



OPEN GREEN SPACE CONCEPT | Pickup field games + fitness course



View looking from Davis Street west to Evanston Township High School



Birds eye view looking from Davis Street to the southwest

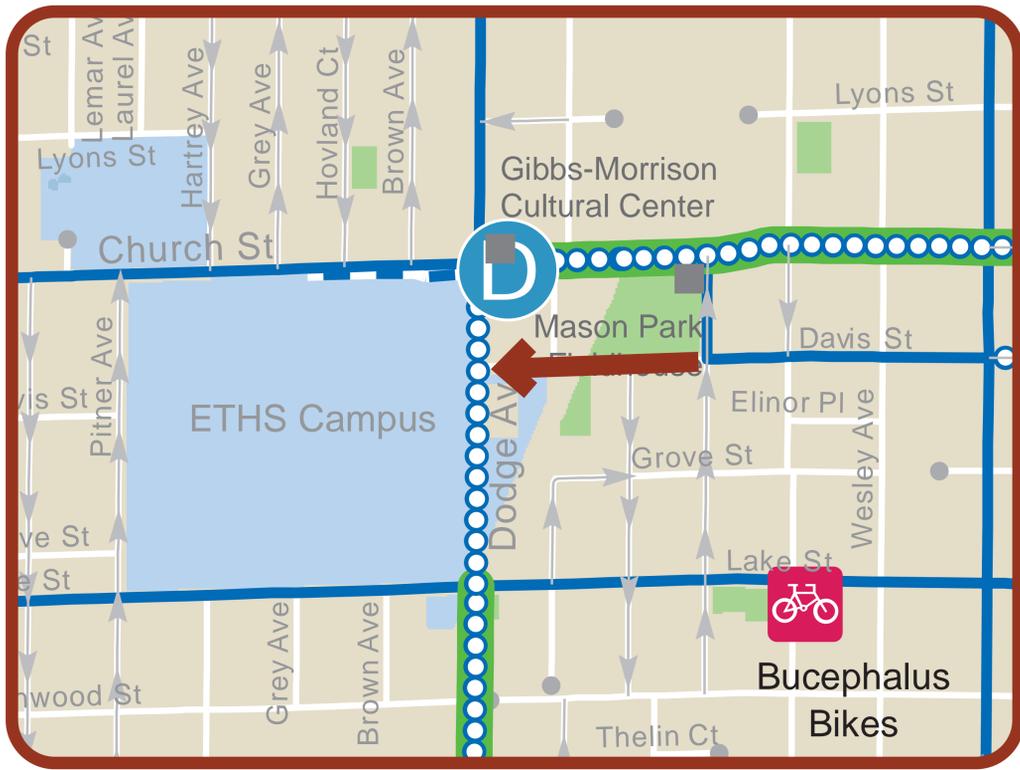
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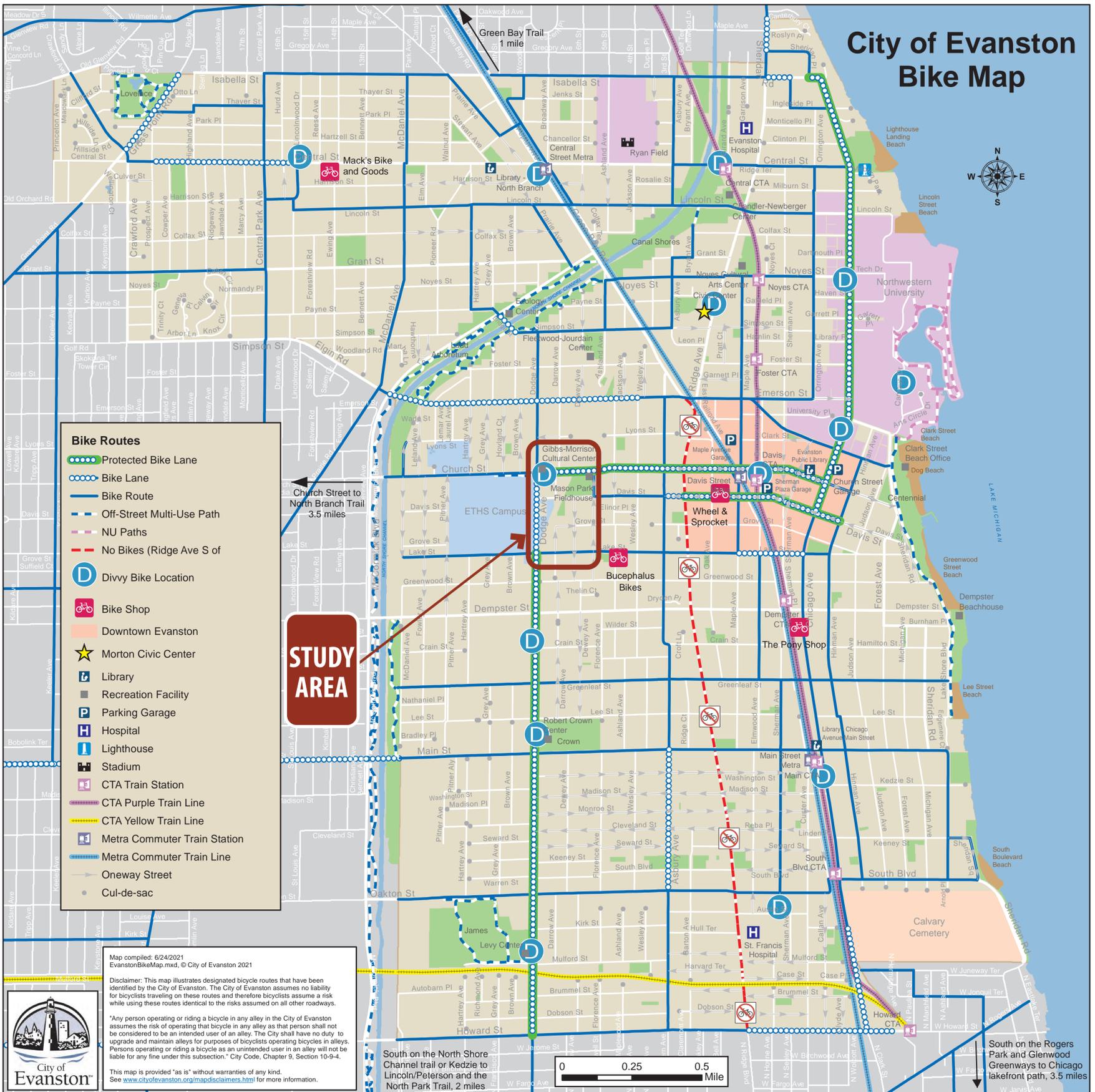


CONNECTIONS TO THE EVANSTON BIKE NETWORK



PROPOSED EASTBOUND PROTECTED BIKE LANE ALONG CHURCH STREET CONNECTS TO DOWNTOWN EVANSTON

PROPOSED WESTBOUND SHARED BIKE LANE ALONG DAVIS STREET CONNECTS TO DODGE AVENUE PROTECTED BIKE LANES AND ETHS



- Bike Routes**
- Protected Bike Lane
 - Bike Lane
 - Bike Route
 - - - Off-Street Multi-Use Path
 - - - NU Paths
 - - - No Bikes (Ridge Ave S of)
- D Divvy Bike Location
 - 🚲 Bike Shop
 - Downtown Evanston
 - ★ Morton Civic Center
 - 📖 Library
 - 🏟️ Recreation Facility
 - P Parking Garage
 - H Hospital
 - L Lighthouse
 - ⚡ Stadium
 - M CTA Train Station
 - CTA Purple Train Line
 - CTA Yellow Train Line
 - Metra Commuter Train Station
 - Metra Commuter Train Line
 - Oneway Street
 - Cul-de-sac

Map compiled: 6/24/2021
EvanstonBikeMap.mxd, © City of Evanston 2021

Disclaimer: This map illustrates designated bicycle routes that have been identified by the City of Evanston. The City of Evanston assumes no liability for bicyclists traveling on these routes and therefore bicyclists assume a risk while using these routes identical to the risks assumed on all other roadways.

*Any person operating or riding a bicycle in any alley in the City of Evanston assumes the risk of operating that bicycle in any alley as that person shall not be considered to be an intended user of an alley. The City shall have no duty to upgrade and maintain alleys for purposes of bicyclists operating bicycles in alleys. Persons operating or riding a bicycle as an unintended user in an alley will not be liable for any fine under this subsection. City Code, Chapter 9, Section 10-9-4.

This map is provided "as is" without warranties of any kind. See www.cityofevanston.org/mapdisclaimers.html for more information.

South on the North Shore Channel trail or Kedzie to Lincoln/Peterson and the North Park Trail, 2 miles

South on the Rogers Park and Glenwood Greenways to Chicago lakefront path, 3.5 miles

Church Street to North Branch Trail 3.5 miles

Green Bay Trail 1 mile

0 0.25 0.5 Mile



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements

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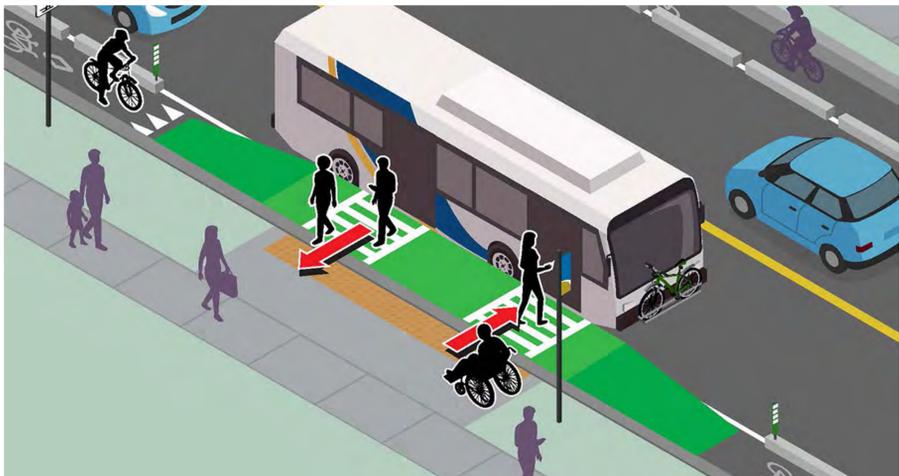
CHURCH-DODGE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS - MINIMUM CONCEPT

MINIMUM CONCEPT (NO CURB REALIGNMENTS)

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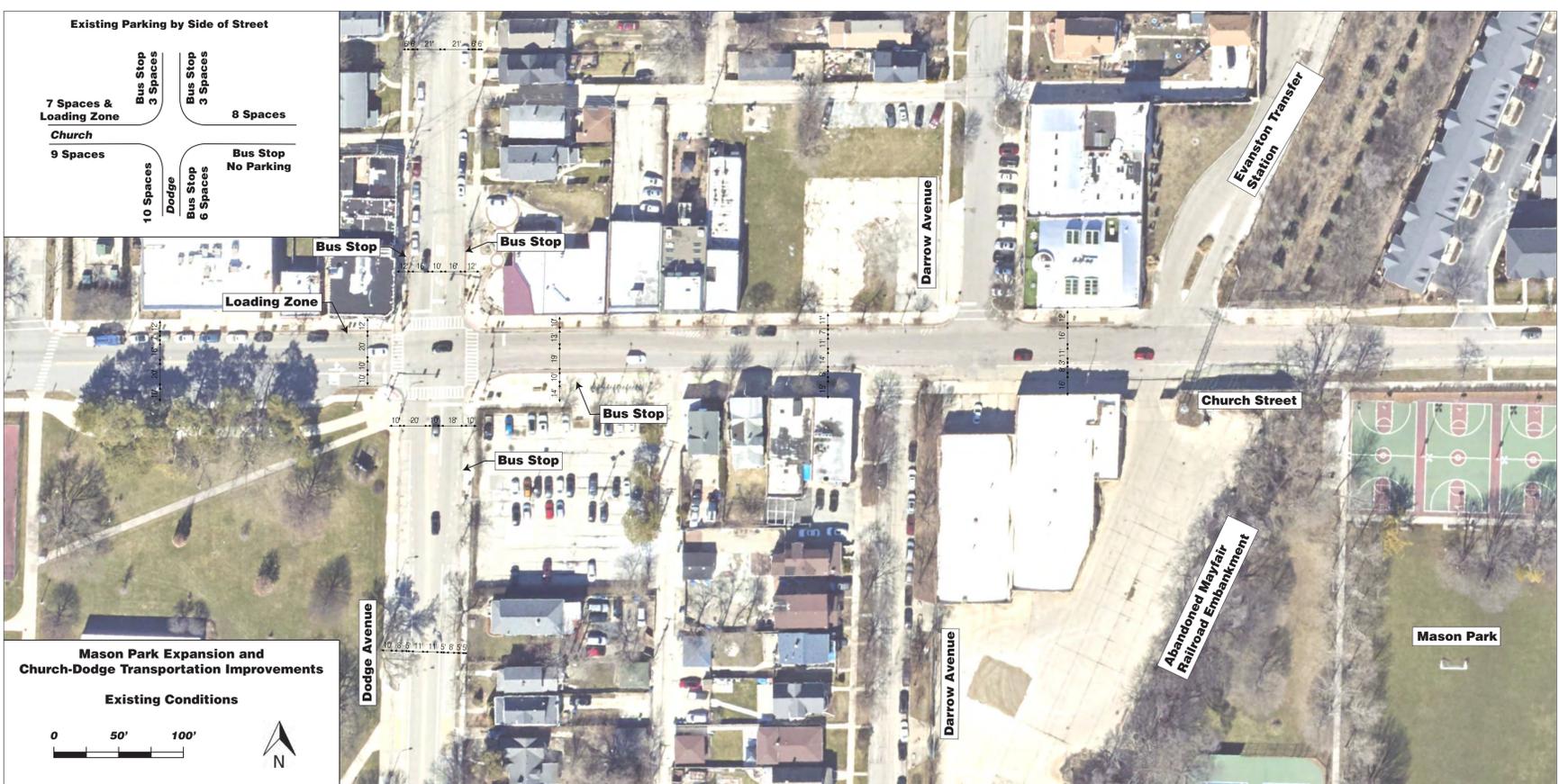
EXAMPLE IMAGERY



BUS BULB IMPROVEMENTS CONSIDERED FOR THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF CHURCH STREET + DODGE AVENUE (AT THE EXISTING BUS STOP)

PROTECTED EASTBOUND BIKE LANE CONSIDERED FOR CHURCH STREET, EAST OF DODGE AVENUE (SOUTH SIDE OF THE ROAD)

EXISTING CONDITIONS



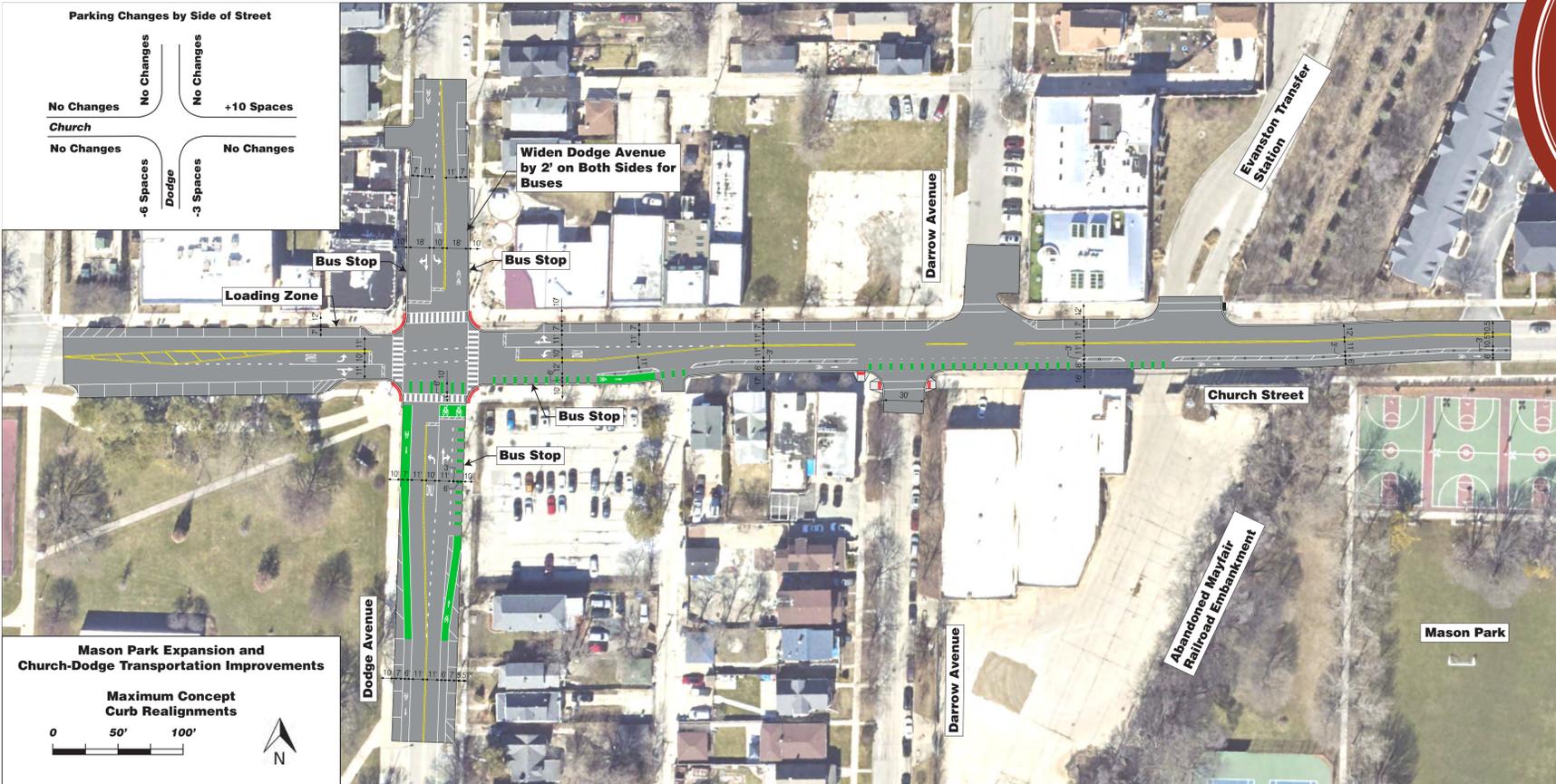
Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements
City of Evanston, IL



CHURCH-DODGE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS - MAXIMUM CONCEPT

MAXIMUM CONCEPT (CURB REALIGNMENTS)

INPUT ACTIVITY:
USE THE POST-IT
NOTES TO ADD YOUR
COMMENTS



EXAMPLE IMAGERY



PROTECTED EASTBOUND BIKE LANE CONSIDERED FOR CHURCH STREET, EAST OF DODGE AVENUE (SOUTH SIDE OF THE ROAD)

EXISTING CONDITIONS



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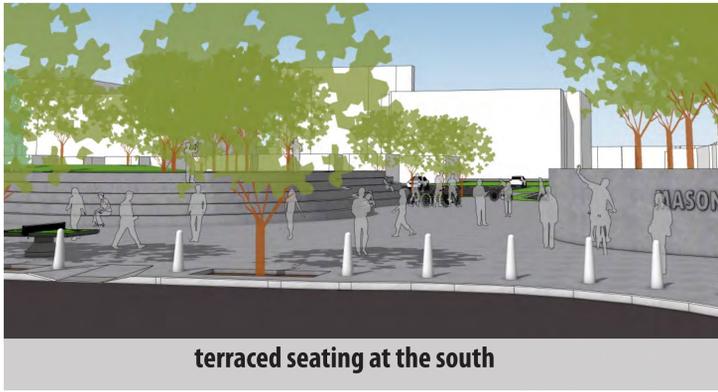
INPUT ACTIVITY:
USE (1) STICKER TO SELECT YOUR PREFERRED CONCEPT FOR EACH AREA BELOW

ECOLOGICAL CONCEPT

HILLSIDE + ADVENTURE CONCEPT

OPEN GREEN SPACE CONCEPT

AREA 1: DAVIS STREET PEDESTRIAN CROSSING



AREA 2: SOUTH MASON PARK GREEN SPACE (SOUTH OF DAVIS)



AREA 3: TRAIL SYSTEM

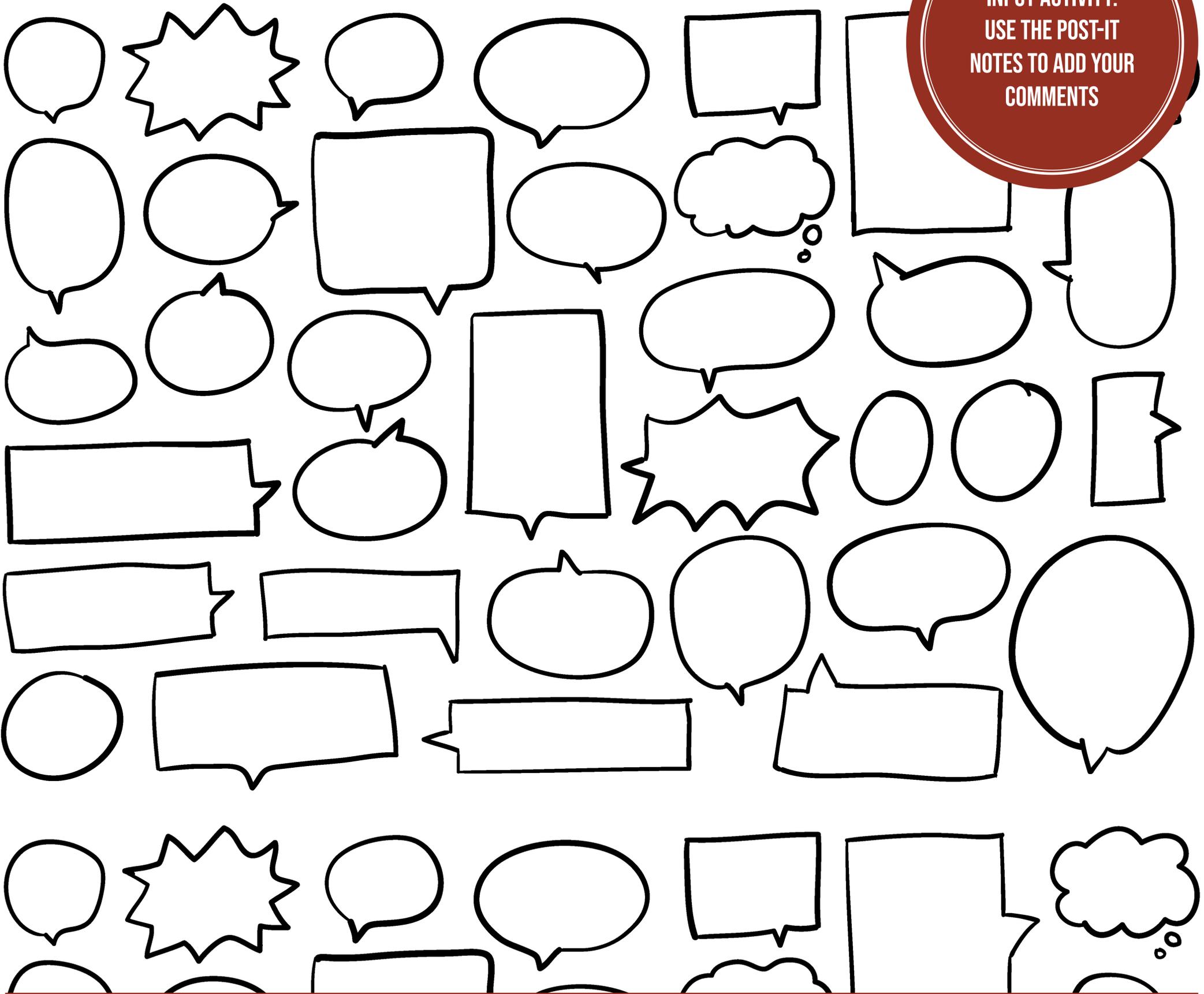


AREA 4: LAKE STREET PUBLIC SPACE



THANK YOU!

INPUT ACTIVITY:
USE THE POST-IT
NOTES TO ADD YOUR
COMMENTS



NEXT STEPS

Thank you for participating in the Second Open House Meeting!
Refined concepts will be presented at Public Meeting #3, anticipated Late Summer 2024.
Stay tuned to the project website for more information:



www.cityofevanston.org/MasonChurchDodge

Scan the code with the camera app on your smart phone



Mason Park Expansion + Church/Dodge Transportation Improvements
City of Evanston, IL

