

# HELLO THERE !

## Welcome to the first public workshop for the Evanston Parks & Green Space Strategic Plan

The City of Evanston is developing a Park and Green Space Strategic Plan to inform future policies and projects for your local parks, playground, natural spaces, and beaches.

**Balance Community Access with Shoreline Resilience**



**Steward Ecological Health**



This public workshop will be a chance for you to tell us about the parks you visit, the events you participate in, and your vision for the city's park system over the next ten to twenty years.

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**  
Help us craft the plan together!

**Support a Thriving Community**



LAKE MICHIGAN

LAKE MICHIGAN

# TODAY'S JOURNEY

This is our first public workshop, and we really want to hear from you!

If you have any questions or want to share an idea, look for project team members, who will be stationed throughout the room.



## 1 Welcome Table

Start Here!

Share your contact info at the sign in table so we can let you know about the next workshop.

2

## Station 1

### Introduction & Park System

Learn more about the context and timeline of the project, as well as an overview of Evanston's park system.

3

## Station 2

### Community

Join us at station 2 to explore how Evanston's existing park system supports community needs.

## 5 Share Your Feedback

Participate in the mapping activity and "stratreegic" game to share your ideas about Evanston's parks and green space.

4

## Station 3

### Nature

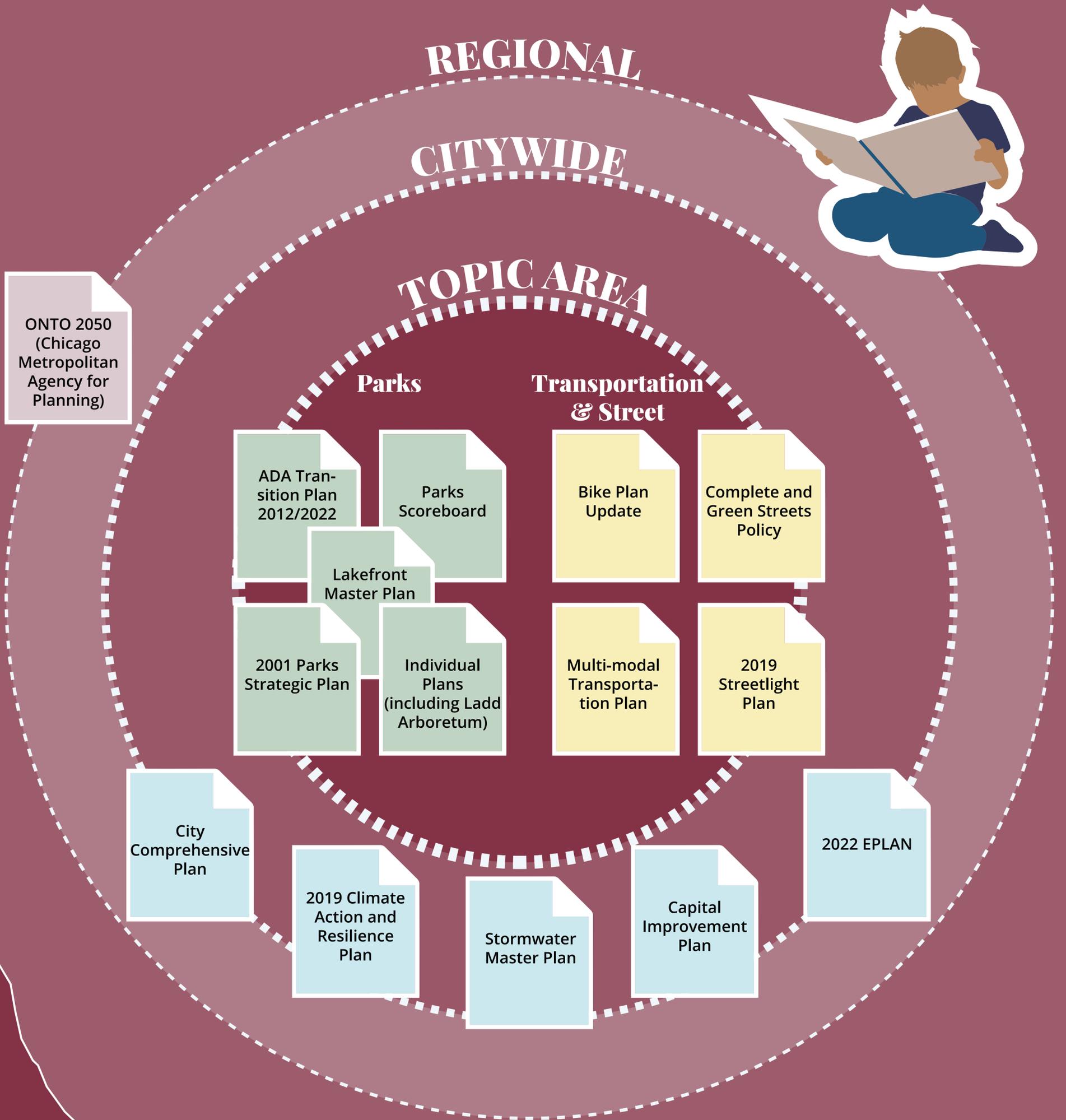
Find out more at station 3 about the important ways Evanston's parks and green spaces support the local environment.

Look forward to future engagements!

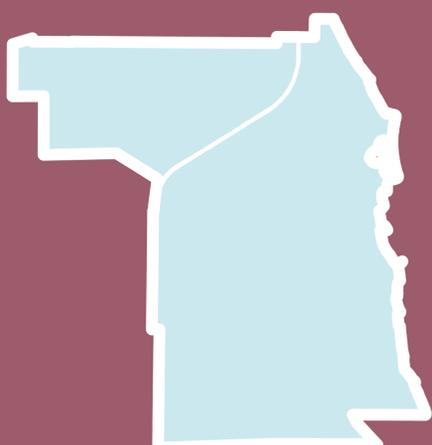


# Strategic Plan 101

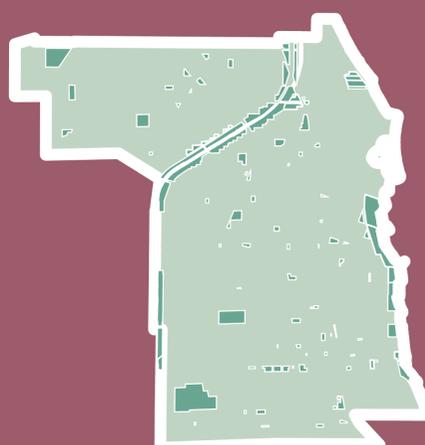
How do other plans and projects inform this effort?



Regional



Citywide



Parks

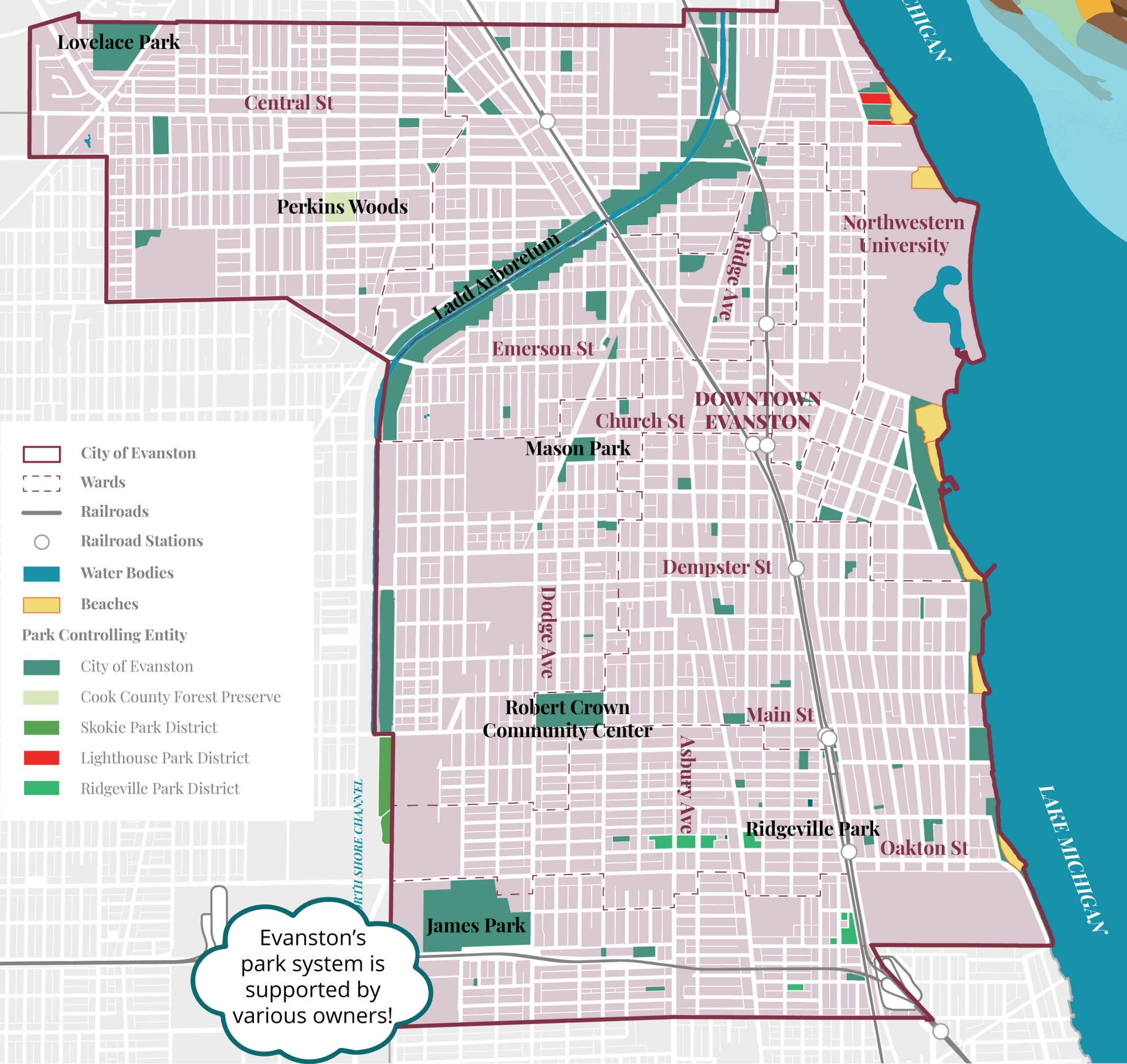


Mobility & Street



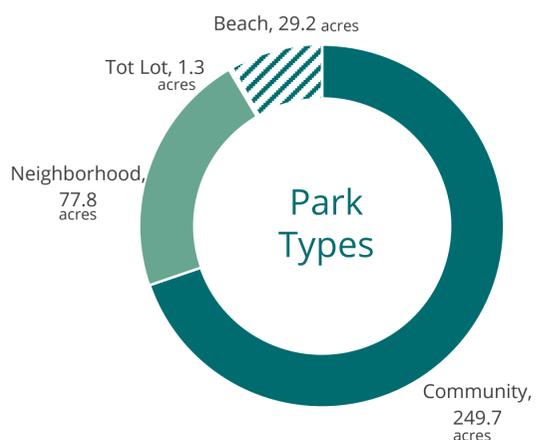
# Parks System

Evanston has a diverse system of parks and green spaces

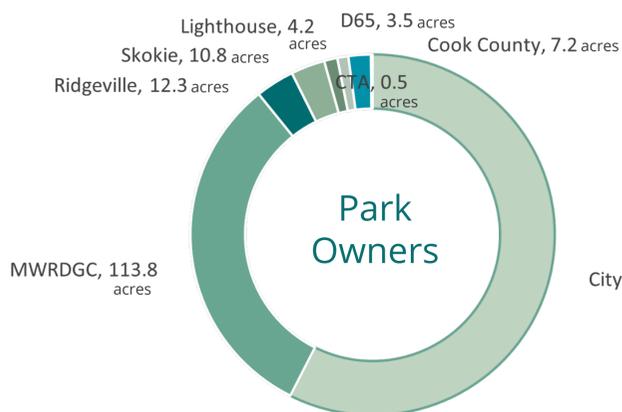


Evanston's park system is supported by various owners!

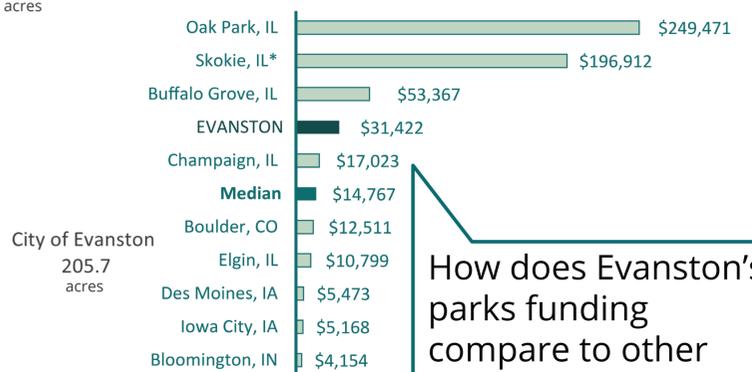
## Different Types of Parks and Green Space



## A range of park owners



## Operating expenditures per acre of parkland



How does Evanston's parks funding compare to other communities?

# Parks System

Evanston's parks are playing many important roles for the community and the environment!

COMMUNITY  
CONNECTIONS



RECREATION  
+ WELLNESS



CITY HISTORY



COMMUNITY

PARKS

+

OPEN SPACE

ENVIRONMENT

"How should we better balance different roles and needs?"



RESILIENCE



NATURALIZED HABITATS

# Community

## City History

Evanston has a long history of community participation and park system investment

**1855 - Town of Evanston was Named**  
Northwestern, a major landmark of Evanston, opened its doors in 1855 and its founder submitted the plan to rename the town Evanston

**1855 - Chicago & North Western Railroad**  
After the Civil War, the city saw an economic and population boom. During that time, the Northwestern was chartered and its railroad operated through Evanston

**1900 - 19,259**

**1900 - Pioneering Women in Evanston**  
Evanston women have made significant impacts in its community and beyond, and the dedication of many parks continue to celebrate their achievements.

**1918 - Trailblazer Dr. Isabella Garnett- Butler**  
Dr. Butler was born to one of Evanston's earliest Black families. She opened up the Evanston Sanitarium and Training School in 1918 after seeing the poor hospital care Black residents received; Butler park was named in her honor.

**1939 - Ridgeville Park District Formed**  
In 1939, Ridgeville Park District was formed to serve the needs of the people of South Evanston

**1960 - 79,283**

**1960s - Skokie Brought Competition**  
The opening of the Old Orchard Shopping Center in adjacent Skokie in the early 1960s drained vitality from Evanston's central business district

**1990 - 73,233**

**2000 - 74,239**

**2010 - 74,486**

**2020 - 78,110**

**Fleetwood-Jourdain Community Center**  
The center was built in 1956 and rededicated in 1986, in honor of Homer D. Fleetwood, its director for over 30 years and Edwin B. Jourdain, Evanston's first Black alderman.

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



## Recent Investment

2018



*Fleetwood-Jourdain Center*

Evanston continues to make investments in parks, facilities, and other infrastructure to improve quality and access.

*Harbert-Payne Park*



2018



*Fountain Square*

*Robert Crown Community Center*



2020

2020

# Community

## Community Snapshot

78,110

Residents  
(2020 US Census)

16,000

Full-time students at  
Northwestern University

42%

of the population identify  
as people of color. Evanston  
is more diverse than Cook  
County and the region.

39%

of tree canopy cover,  
compared to 28% in  
Cook County

36.2

median age. Residents aged  
20-64 constitute the largest  
cohort in Evanston, higher  
than the region.

5%

Population has grown 5% in  
the last ten years  
(3,684 people!)



## Community Survey Results

### Evanston has a well-attended park and recreation system

98%

of respondents **visited** the city's  
parks and recreation facilities  
during the past year!

of respondents rated the overall  
condition of these facilities as  
**excellent** (29%) or **good** (56%)

85%

96%

of respondents agreed that parks  
and recreation **improves the  
quality of life** in the city!

Evanston's parks and recreation  
facilities are **within reach**, as 62%  
of respondents walk to visit them  
and 36% drive there within 10 min

62%

There were **469** surveys  
collected from the a  
random sample of the  
community!

## Current Barriers and Future Improvements

### Barriers to Use

Top reasons respondents don't utilize Evanston  
parks and recreation facilities more often:

- 1 Busy schedules (34%)
- 2 Lack of restrooms (20%)
- 3 Old and outdated facilities (17%)

### Potential Improvements

Potential improvements that respondents  
supported the most:

- 1 Daily maintenance (91%)
- 2 Improve existing parks facilities (91%)
- 3 Renovate aging parks and facilities (89%)

### Barriers to Participation

Top reasons respondents didn't participate in  
Evanston recreation programs more often:

- 1 Busy schedules (34%)
- 2 Didn't know what was offered (33%)
- 3 Prefer individual activities (23%)

### Priorities for Investments

High priorities for investment in Evanston  
parks and recreation facilities:

- 1 Beaches and Waterfront Access
- 2 Outdoor Pools
- 3 Tree Canopies/ Urban Forests
- 4 Indoor Pools
- 5 Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens,  
and Wildflower Meadows

SURVEY  
RESULTS

# Variety of Experiences

## Evanston's parks support many different activities!

### Play

#### PLAYGROUNDS



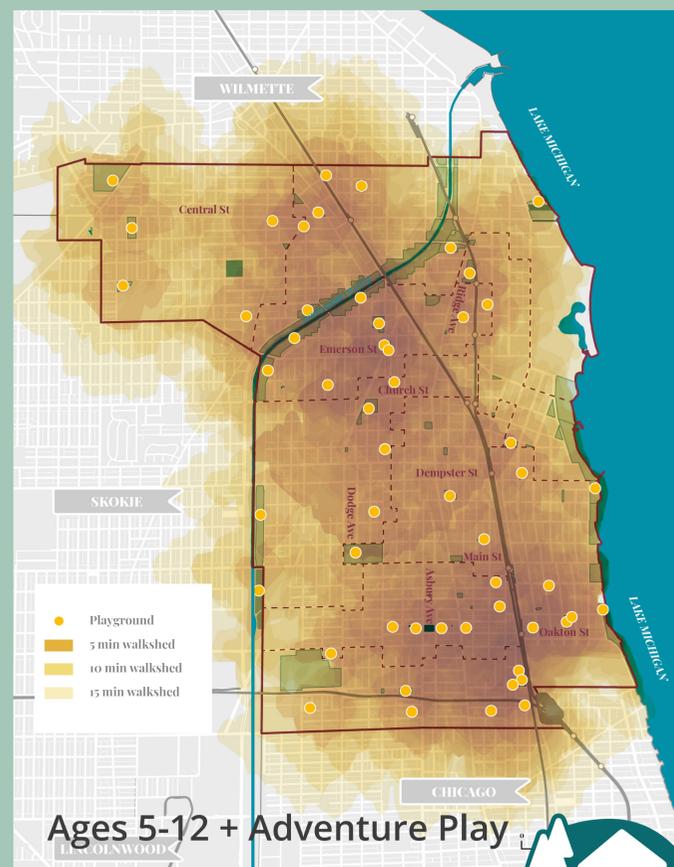
#### High Number of Playgrounds



Graph shows Evanston's playground access, calculated as the number of residents per playground, compared to peer communities and the national median.

#### Abundant Playground Access

All Evanston residents can walk to at least one playground within a 10-minute walk of their homes. Some areas have access to several playgrounds within this distance.



Ages 5-12 + Adventure Play



#### Many Older Playgrounds

Most playgrounds are well past the recommended lifespan and are ripe for reinvestment to improve quality and accessibility.

#### Survey Results

**MEDIUM PRIORITY**

### Sports Fields and Courts

#### TENNIS



Evanston  
2,206 residents/tennis court

Peers Median  
4,399

National Median  
6,413

Survey Results  
**LOW PRIORITY**

#### PICKLEBALL



Peers Median  
6,664

National Median  
13,922

Evanston  
15,000 residents/pickleball court (outdoor)

Survey Results  
**MEDIUM PRIORITY**

#### BASKETBALL



16 Full Courts and 13 Partial Courts

Evanston  
3,750 residents/basketball court

Peers Median  
4,373

National Median  
8,477

Survey Results  
**LOW PRIORITY**

#### BASEBALL / SOFTBALL



Evanston  
3,125 residents/baseball court

National Median  
8,095

Peers Median  
8,956

Survey Results  
**LOW PRIORITY**

#### RECTANGULAR FIELDS



Including 2 run by Skokie District

Evanston  
3,409 residents/rectangular field

Peers Median  
7,327

National Median  
12,505

Survey Results  
**LOW PRIORITY**

# Variety of Experiences

Evanston's parks support many different activities!

## Water Access + Swimming

### BEACH ACCESS

Survey Results  
**HIGH PRIORITY**

### SWIMMING POOLS

Survey Results  
**HIGH PRIORITY**

### SPRAYPADS

Survey Results  
**MEDIUM PRIORITY**

### DOG PARKS

Survey Results  
**MEDIUM PRIORITY**

### Potential Improvement for Water Access and Recreation

The community conveys a desire for more water access and recreation offerings, including beach access, spraypads, outdoor and indoor pools.

Water Access Area

- 5 min walkshed
- 10 min walkshed
- 15 min walkshed

Beach Access Point

## Passive Enjoyment, Gathering, and Other Experiences

### OUTDOOR ICE SKATING

Survey Results  
**LOW PRIORITY**

### PICNIC AREAS

Survey Results  
**MEDIUM PRIORITY**

### DOG PARKS

Survey Results  
**MEDIUM PRIORITY**

Including 1 run by Skokie District

### COMMUNITY GARDENS

Survey Results  
**LOW PRIORITY**

### COMMUNITY CENTERS

Survey Results  
**MEDIUM PRIORITY**

**Evanston**  
37,500 residents/dog park

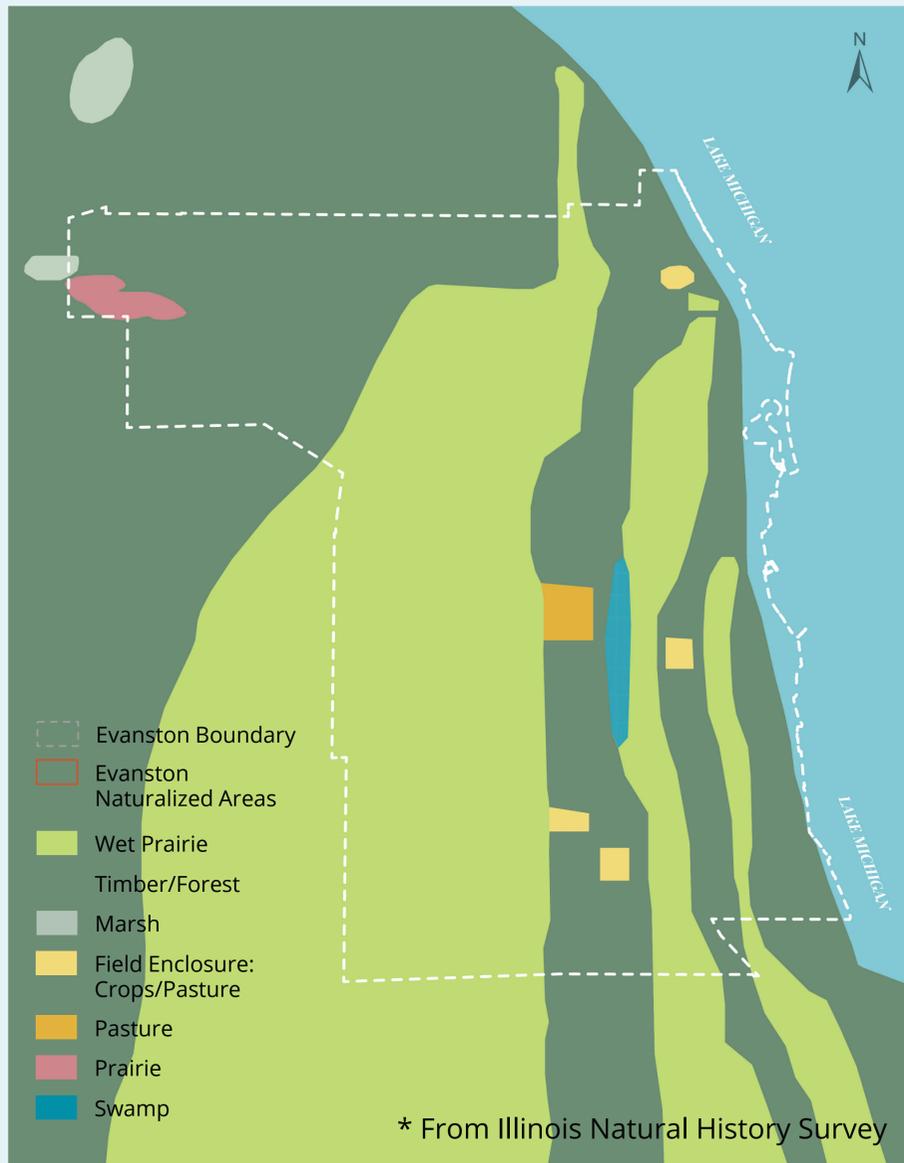
**Peers Median**  
39,984

**National Median**  
56,084

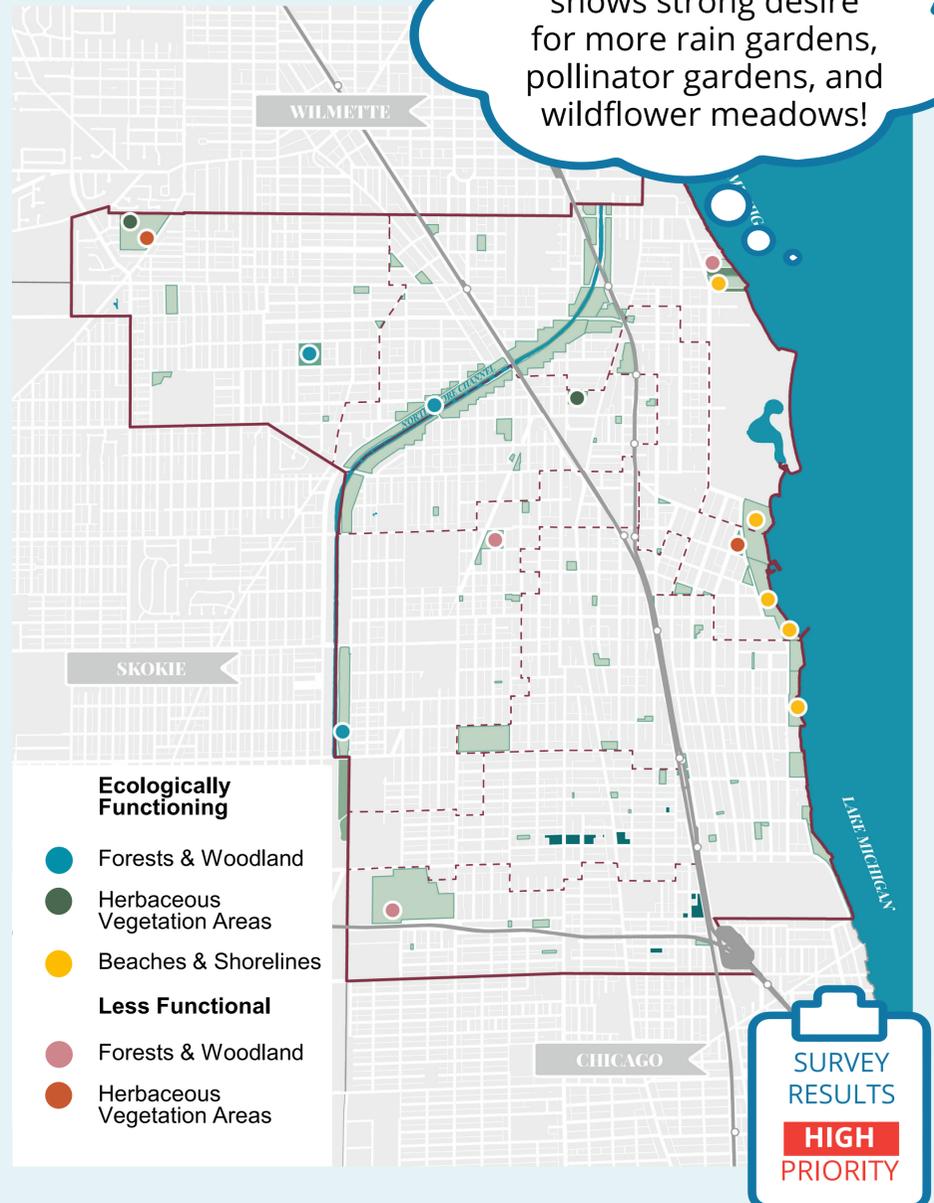
# NATURALIZED HABITATS

Green space in a mature city like Evanston is at a premium!

## Historical Vegetation



## Remnant and Naturalized Habitat



### Ecologically Functioning\*

### Less Functional\*

#### Forests & Woodland



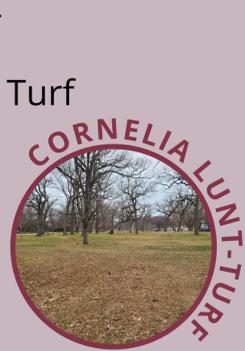
- 1 Ladd Arboretum
  - 2 Harbert-Payne Park
  - 3 Perkins Woods
- 
- 

- 1 North Shore Channel
  - 2 Mason Park
  - 3 James Park
  - 4 Lawson Park
- 
- 

#### Herbaceous Vegetation Areas



- 1 Dry Rain Gardens
  - 2 Wet Rain Gardens
  - 3 Restored Prairies (Lovelace Park)
- 
- 

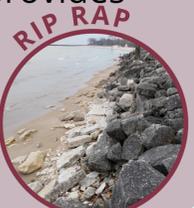
- 1 Turf
  - 2 Wet Turf
- 
- 

#### Beaches & Shorelines



- 1 Lighthouse Landing
  - 2 Clark Street Beach
- 

Hard armoring, including rip rap and trap bags, protects infrastructure or recreational parkland from wave action where space is limited, but provides minimal ecological value.



\* Assessment is based on a review of species of vegetation and environmental function collected as part of the inventory process.

# RESILIENCE

## Urban Forestry in Evanston

Compared to Cook County, Evanston outperforms in urban forestry as 39% of the city is covered by tree canopy!

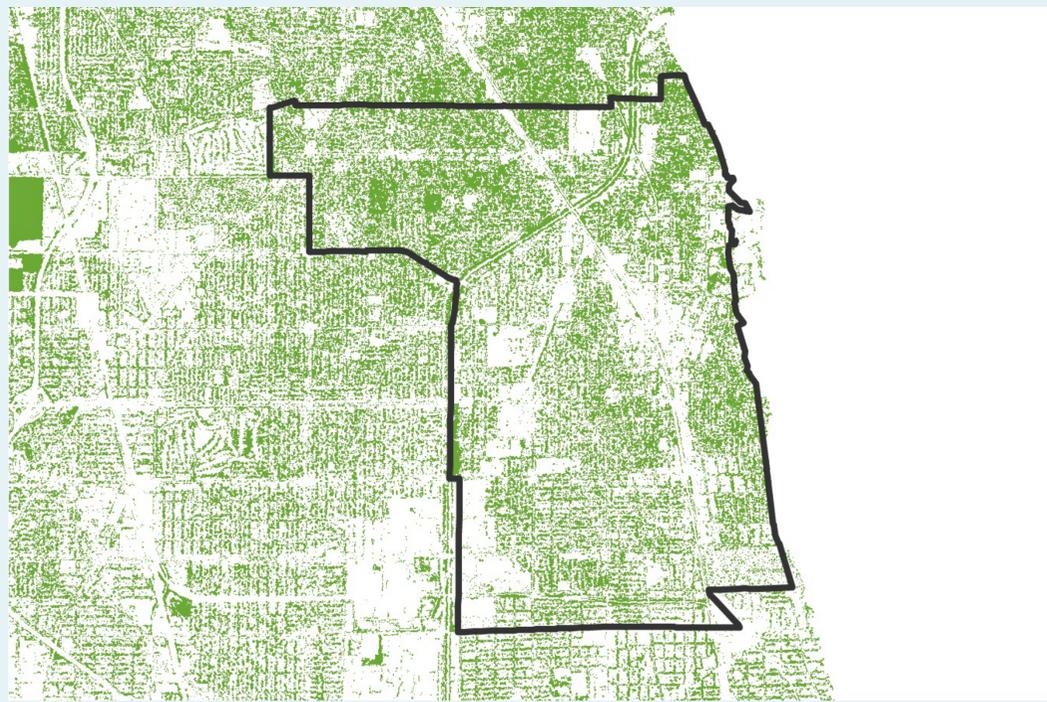
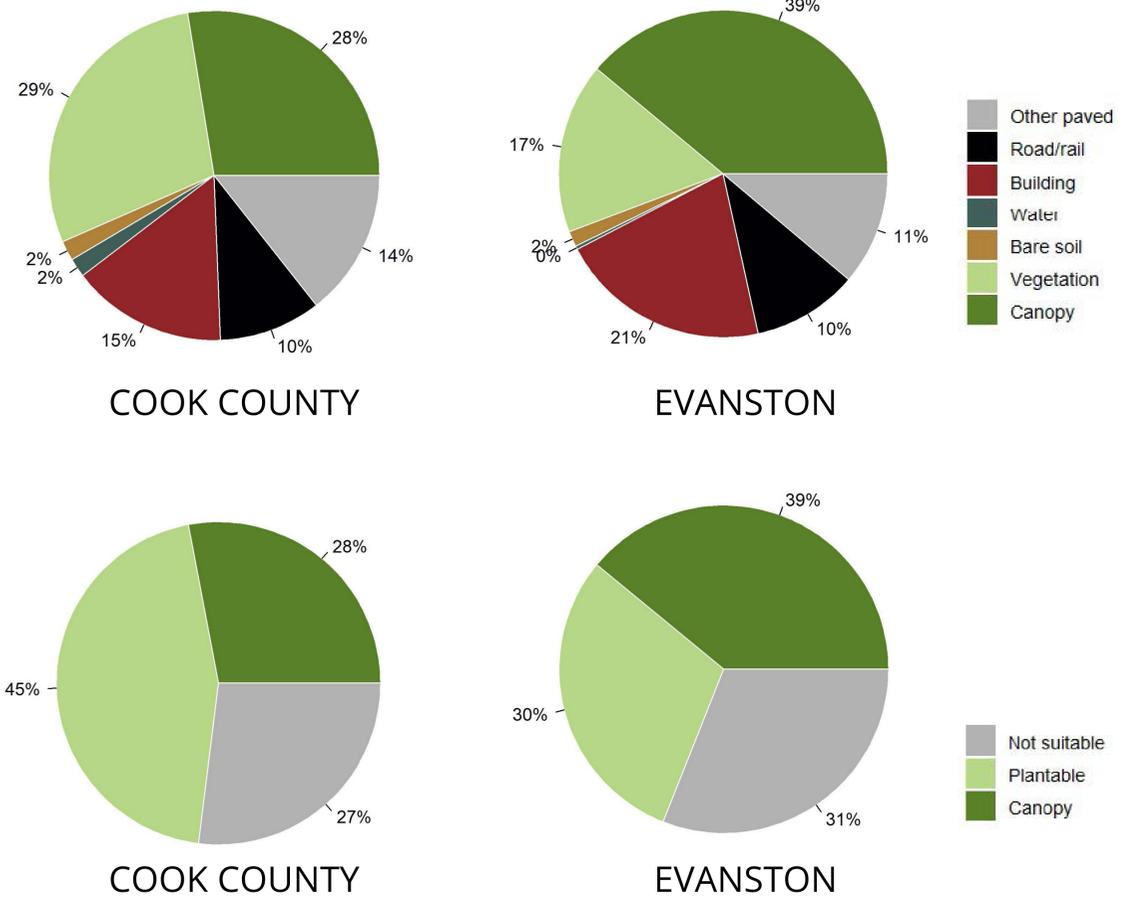


### The Importance of Urban Trees

Urban trees can provide many benefits to the community:

- improve air quality
- improve water quality and reduce flooding
- reduce energy use by shading buildings
- provide habitat for wildlife
- improve residents' quality of life

\* From Evanston Urban Forestry Summary



### Tree Canopy

Evanston has a higher percentage in land covered by tree canopy than Cook County, while the community would also love to see more trees and parks as priorities for future investment:

- Tree Canopies/ Urban Forests
- Parks with Rain Gardens, Pollinator Gardens, & Wildflower Meadows

**TOP 5**

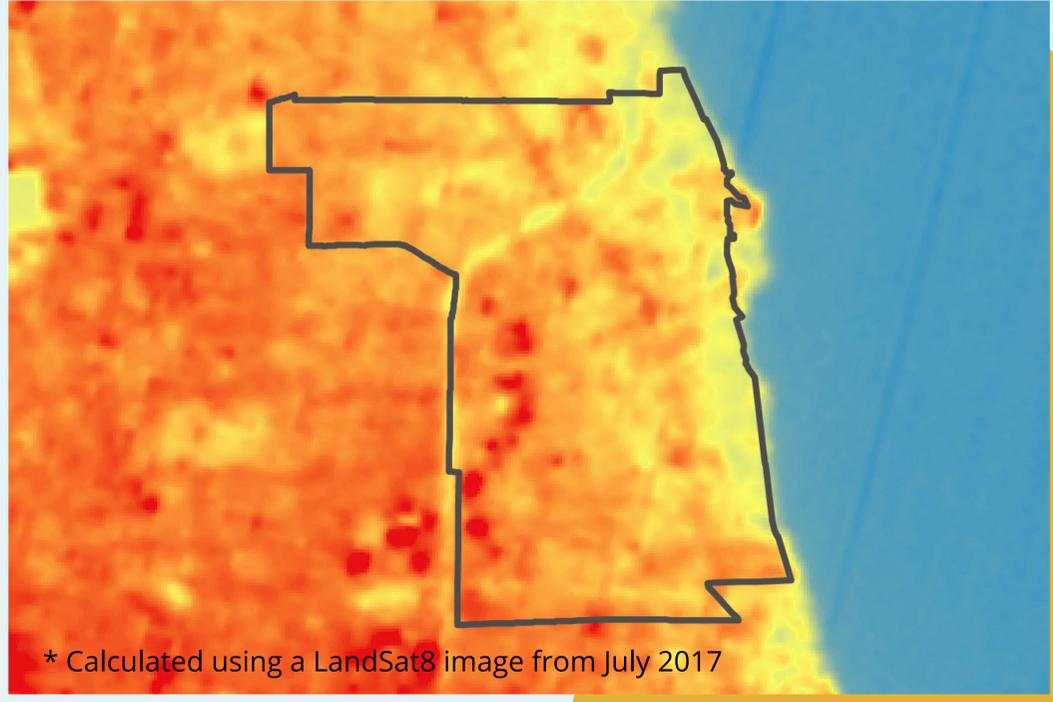
SURVEY RESULTS

**HIGH PRIORITY**

### Surface Temperature

Tree canopy can help address **urban heat island effect and make the city feel cooler**. These two maps show that urban areas that have more tree canopy tend to have lower surface temperatures.

Planting more trees in parks, parking lots and around buildings can be especially helpful!

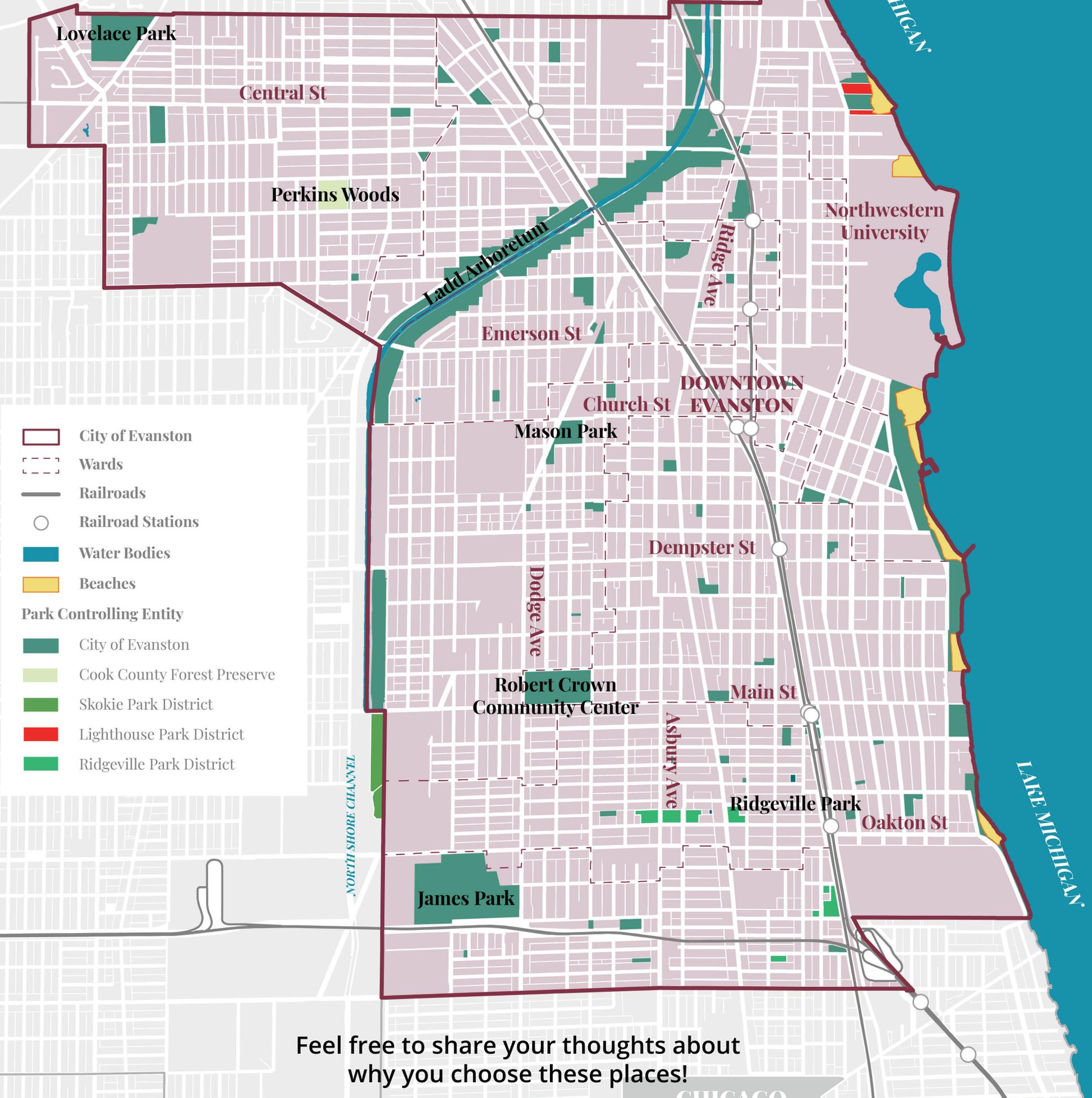


# MAPPING YOUR IDEAS

Use the blue and red flags to tell us about places and opportunities in Evanston.

 Places you love and should be strengthened

 Areas for change and improvement

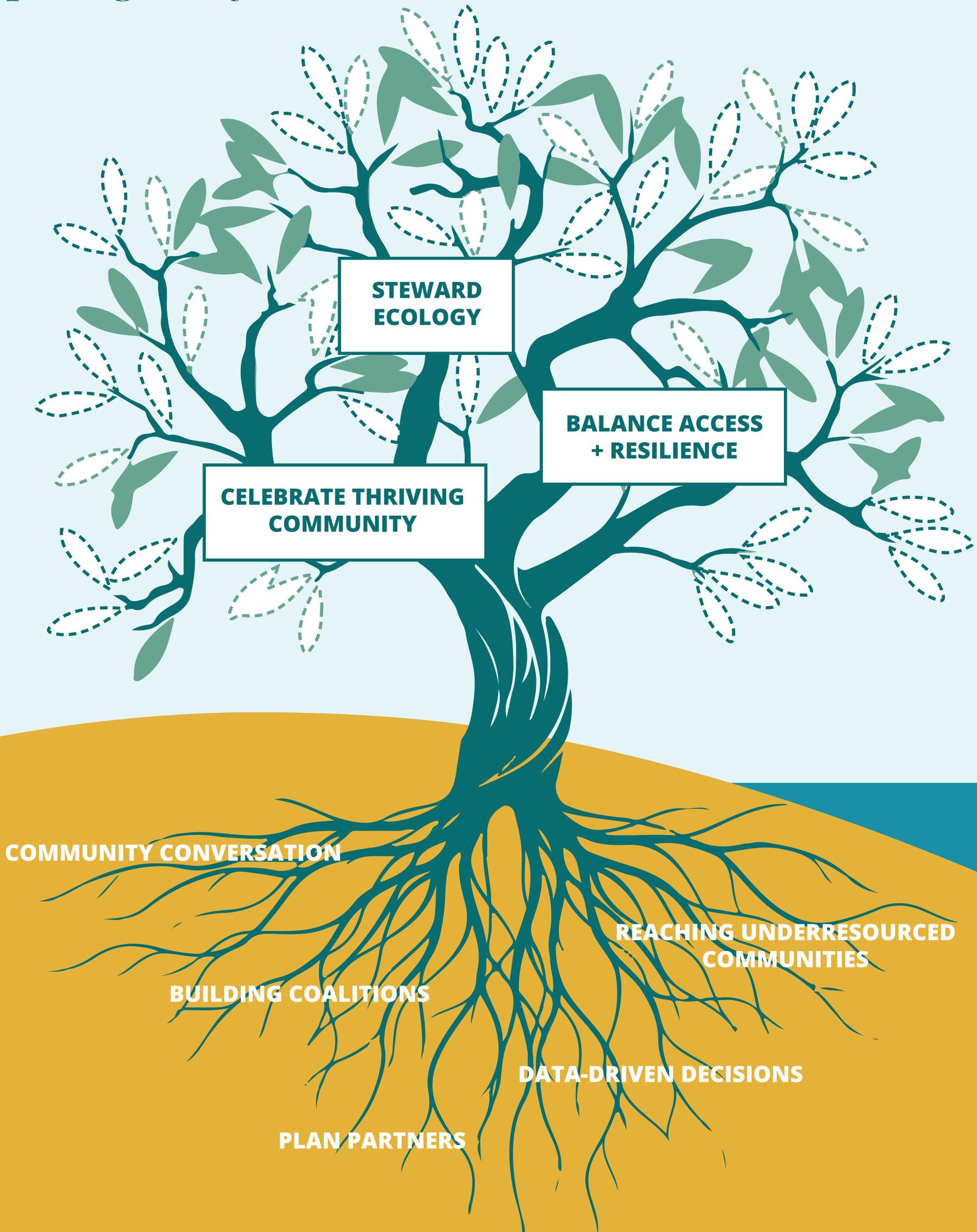


Feel free to share your thoughts about why you choose these places!



# HELP US BE MORE STRATEGIC!

Share your ideas to help the strategic tree thrive by putting sticky notes on the branches.



## EVANSTON PARKS AND GREEN SPACE STRATEGIC PLAN