

PHOTO CREDIT: CARL LARSON



The City of Evanston is committed to promoting the highest quality of life for all residents by providing fiscally sound, responsive municipal services and delivering those services equitably, professionally and with the highest degree of integrity.

2013

Annual Report



Awards & Recognitions

In 2013, Evanston celebrated **150 years** since its incorporation in 1863. Through the volunteer initiative Evanston150, residents came up with 10 visionary ideas to make the city a better place. In partnership with the Evanston Community Foundation, volunteers began work to execute several of those ideas, including a year-round farmers' market, a vocational/co-op technical school, neighborhood literacy centers, a universal preschool, improved pedestrian and bicycle safety, enhanced sustainability, and a youth development center.

The Illinois Department of Transportation awarded the City a \$580,000 grant to rehabilitate the multi-use trail at the Ladd Arboretum. Constructed more than 50 years ago, the trail suffers from poor surface and drainage conditions.

The Evanston City Council recognized three members of the City's Lakefront Lifeguard Rescue team after they saved a boater's life in July. David Altman, Jack Killheffer and Tudor Byas got a mayday call from a boater who was in the water after his boat sank about a mile and a half offshore. They followed the radio signal and a trail of debris to rescue the boater. *(photo, bottom left)*

Evanston's Central Street neighborhood was recognized as one of **10 Great Neighborhoods for 2013** by the American Planning Association. The group recognized the neighborhood's involved residents, long history of planning, eclectic mix of businesses, proximity to Northwestern University and multitude of transportation options. Evanston was the only community in the Chicago area to make the 2013 list of Great Places in America.

The Evanston Chamber of Commerce and Northwestern University honored Evanston's Fire Department with the Catalyst Award at the 4th Annual MashUp event, recognizing its "professionalism and compassion."

The City garnered its third Sunny Award from the Sunshine Review, a national nonprofit devoted to government transparency. The Sunshine Review gave Evanston an **A+ for transparency**, citing its website and highlighting the amount of information made available on the City budget, contracts, taxes and more.

Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl presented the Keys to the City to NorthShore University HealthSystem for its support of the Evanston Township High School (ETHS) Health Clinic. Sponsored by the Evanston Health Department, NorthShore, ETHS and grant funding from the Illinois Department of Human Services, the clinic offers primary health care and psychosocial services to students.

In June, Evanston hosted the 2013 Statewide Illinois Preservation Conference for the first time since 1989. More than 230 people registered for the conference, which was held at the Hilton Orrington Hotel.

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) provided more than \$1.5 million of funding in support of two major City infrastructure improvements: replacement of the sewer main on Davis Street and the Morton Civic Center Green Infrastructure Storm Water Improvement Project.



PHOTO CREDIT: TOM CLARK



Youth and Young Adults

The City partnered with the Youth Job Center for a second year in the **Building Career Pathways to Sustainable Employment Program**, which served 20 at-risk youth and young adult participants in 2012-13. Seventy percent of participants successfully completed the job readiness training portion of the program, and 60 percent secured permanent employment.

The City and the James B. Moran Center for Youth Advocacy provided services to 81 youth and adult ex-offenders through the Certificate of Rehabilitation/Records Sealing Program, far exceeding its goal of assisting 15 ex-offenders.

The Youth & Young Adult Division worked with homeless youth and young adults through the **Runaway Street Youth Outreach Program**. The program is funded by a federal grant that supports two permanent part-time City outreach workers and two part-time Youth Organizations Umbrella staff who engage at-risk youth and young adults and redirect them toward community support and resources. In partnership with the McGaw YMCA, the City helped identify and place homeless young adults in the YMCA's single residency occupancy building.

The Youth & Young Adult Division sponsored a club of 20 ETHS students who work to mitigate violence and the potential for violence. The division also organized two Violence Prevention Forums in 2013 and held two Open Mic programs as an alternate activity for disengaged youth and young adults.

In partnership with Steve's Place CrossFit Program, the division provided free athletic training to 15 low-income Evanston youth in 2013.

Economic Development

In 2013, 72 new businesses opened in Evanston, providing 210 new jobs. Notable new businesses include a 13,000-square-foot **Trader Joe's** at 1211 Chicago Avenue and **the nation's first net-zero energy Walgreens** at 635 Chicago Avenue. The City Council also approved a new tax-increment financing district for the Main and Chicago business district, which will continue to support development in south Evanston.

AMLI Evanston and Central Station Apartments, two transit-oriented mixed-use projects, were completed in 2013. Both buildings offer ground-floor retail uses and modern apartment units on the upper floors.

Community Development

Emerson Square, a 32-unit, mixed-income development in west Evanston, officially opened its doors. Located at 1580 Foster Street, the development replaces a vacant industrial parcel and includes a park and community gardens. The project was funded by an **\$18.15 million** federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 grant, the largest housing grant the City has ever received, to revitalize two neighborhoods hardest hit by the foreclosure crisis.

The Evanston Revitalization Partnership received a \$1.5 million state grant to help address foreclosed and vacant properties in west Evanston. Community Partners for Affordable Housing will acquire and rehabilitate at least 10 housing units for sale and rent by low- and moderate-income residents.

The Housing Opportunity Development Corporation completed rehabilitation of a four-flat building on Callan Avenue, purchased with funding from local investors and the Chicago Community Loan Fund. The City provided funds to rehab the interiors and install new mechanical systems, while the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation provided a thermal water heating system.

The **Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program** saw a 46 percent increase in jobs over 2012, bringing the total number of participants to 350. More than 625 teens and young adults attended the City job fair.



Library staff and teen members of the ETHS Youth Technology Corps visited a 107-unit senior residence, Primm Towers, to offer computer skills classes. The Youth Technology Corps donated two refurbished computers to continue the program.



TINY HOUSE AT THE EVANSTON ECOLOGY CENTER
The Evanston Environmental Association and Northwestern University partnered with the City to bring the Tiny House to the Ecology Center as a permanent exhibit to educate residents about sustainable initiatives.

Evanston Health Department

The **Erie Evanston/Skokie Health Center** began serving patients at its new, state-of-the-art facility at 1285 Hartrey Avenue in November 2013. Erie plans to expand services to roughly 5,500 people at the new facility, which has 15 exam rooms and five dental suites. Services include pediatric care, internal medicine, family medicine, women’s health, oral services for children, behavioral health, health education and case management. Erie provided 4,100 medical visits and 1,800 dental visits in 2013.

NorthShore University HealthSystem made a \$1.2 million capital donation and a \$600,000 operating commitment to Erie for three years. Their generosity was essential in enabling the clinic to open and to provide care.

Erie hosted two family-friendly “Obamacare Fairs” where residents could learn more about the Affordable Care Act and apply for health coverage. The health center also had an extensively trained “navigator” working on site who enrolled patients daily via appointments and on a walk-in basis.

Evanston Public Library

Evanston residents Dr. and Mrs. Fred Malkinson donated \$15,000 to the Evanston Public Library to support its American history collection. Fred and his wife, Una, are longtime Evanston residents and active library patrons.

To meet the needs of the city’s growing Spanish-speaking population, the library hired its first Latino Outreach Librarian. She helped bring a citizen application workshop and elementary science education program to the library, and hosted celebrations of Dia de Los Muertos and Latin American Mother’s Day.

The **Book Buddies program** continued to draw preschool through 2nd grade children in partnership with Northwestern student volunteers. Kids paired off with students for reading and participated in group story time, singing and arts and crafts. Support came from the library, Northwestern and AmeriCorps.

For the second year in a row, the library partnered with the Youth Job Center to hire 12 high school students to teach letter recognition to 35 preschoolers through the ABC Boosters summer program.

Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department

Evanston’s Recreation Division purchased a **new Boston Whaler boat** and trailer to enhance the City’s lakefront aquatic programs. The boat will allow more people to participate in activities, such as tubing and water skiing, in the Youth Aquatics Camp and other programs.

Participation of Evanston youth in cultural arts programming was enhanced by including teen performers in its concert series and at the Ethnic Arts Festival. The department also introduced the “Goaled Gallery Tent” at the Lakeshore Arts Festival, where teens sold their handmade artwork.

More than 3,200 registrations for 2013 City summer camps were processed as part of a new online registration process.

The department received \$15,500 in grants to support its matching funds program for Illinois Link card customers at the farmers’ market.

The City partnered with Latino Resources to host the first **Hispanic Heritage Festival** at the Robert Crown Center. More than 400 attendees enjoyed Hispanic art, food, music and dancing.

Public Works, Infrastructure and Utilities

Crews installed new, energy efficient light fixtures at the Sherman Plaza Garage as part of a project funded by the State of Illinois’ Public Sector Energy Efficiency Program. The new lights are expected to reduce electricity costs by \$91,568 per year, and save the City more than \$1 million over their lifetime.

The City launched the “**I Heart Evanston Trees**” campaign in June to help replace trees destroyed by the Emerald Ash Borer. Working with community volunteers and donors, the City raised nearly \$20,000 in a matter of months.

City crews collected an estimated 12,500 tons of residential refuse, representing a reduction of 5,000 tons from the amount of residential refuse generated in 2008. The City’s programs diverted more than 9,000 tons of recycling and 2,000 tons of yard waste from the landfill.

In November, the City received a \$480,000 grant from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program to install protected bike lanes, bike racks and secure bike lockers along Dodge Avenue from Howard Street to Church Street.

In early 2013, the City asked for the public’s input to develop and refine ideas for improvements at Firemen’s Park. The park was renovated in the fall with new playground equipment and surfacing, walkways, fencing and furnishings, security lighting, a drinking fountain and landscaping.

The roof of the Noyes Cultural Arts Center was replaced in its entirety, and extensive repairs were made to the building to better serve the center’s tenants and visitors alike.

In 2013, the City resurfaced 3.46 miles of neighborhood streets and 2.22 miles of primary streets. Approximately 25,300 square feet of sidewalk, roughly 950 sidewalk panels, was replaced at 126 locations. More than 500 feet of new sidewalk at Cartwright Park and on Crawford Avenue near Lovelace Park were installed to improve accessibility.

The City completed street resurfacing and a **protected bike lane on Davis Street** between Ridge Avenue and Hinman Avenue. This project was designed with a green infrastructure approach, taking into account all modes of travel as well as adjacent land uses. As part of the project, the existing 75-year-old water main was replaced from Benson Avenue to Hinman Avenue, and the deteriorating and undersized combined sewer main was replaced from Orrington Avenue to Hinman Avenue.

To improve pedestrian comfort, new street and pedestrian lights were installed on Church Street and McDaniel Avenue.

Evanston’s Water Quality Laboratory received a perfect score in a state audit for the fourth time in a row, meeting more than 200 different criteria for maintaining safe, quality drinking water.

Using funding from tax increment financing districts and low-interest loans from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the City rehabilitated 1.5 miles of aging large diameter sewer main. Crews also installed 1.8 miles of new water main as part of the department’s ongoing capital program.

The Utilities Department replaced the Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA) system, which monitors and controls all aspects of the water treatment process. The department also began a project to replace the City’s **Automated Meter Information (AMI) system**, which will be completed in 2014. The system provides more accurate water usage data collection and utilization.



The City’s mobile tap water station visited 31 community events to promote water conservation and eliminate waste. During 2013, the tap water station provided 6,200 gallons of water, eliminating the use of more than 99,000 8-ounce plastic water bottles.

Evanston volunteers logged more than **160,000 hours of community service** in 2013 as part of a year-long celebration of the City's 150th anniversary. While the goal was to reach 150,000 hours by the end of 2013, volunteers hit that mark in early November.



PHOTO CREDIT: SEAN SU

2008 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN GOAL MET

In 2013, the City formally achieved the greenhouse gas reduction goal set forth in Evanston's 2008 Climate Action Plan. Keys to meeting the goal included helping residents and small businesses purchase green energy through the electricity aggregation program, and the volunteer efforts of Citizens for a Greener Evanston and other community organizations.

Administrative Services Department

Thanks to the efforts of City staff, who worked diligently to improve efficiencies and reduce costs while maintaining services, Evanston expects to close fiscal year 2013 with a roughly **\$2.2 million surplus in the General Fund**. Because the projected \$17.6 million General Fund balance was expected to exceed the minimum required balance, the surplus was used to support other City funds with lower reserves. Internal transfers include \$500,000 to the insurance fund, \$600,000 to the fleet maintenance fund, and \$1 million to the debt service fund.

FY 2013 year-end financial information is preliminary and includes unaudited figures that may be subject to change as final receivable and payable entries are made. Audited FY 2013 financial information will be available in June with the completion of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

Arts & Culture

Members of the community-wide outreach project **evanstARTs** issued their final report after a comprehensive public survey of the arts in Evanston. They presented the City with a roadmap to build an arts "ecosystem" in Evanston, beginning with efforts to create a downtown arts corridor and construct facilities in the central business district. The ultimate goal is to transform downtown Evanston into a vibrant hub for the arts.

In response to the evanstARTs roadmap, the City hired a cultural arts coordinator, who began her duties in November.

Crews completed work on three new mural projects on train viaducts, and began work on a public art project at the Sherman Plaza garage.

In honor of Evanston's 150th anniversary, The Alumnae of Northwestern University presented a six-week course by Northwestern faculty and staff lecturers, focusing on the historical events that shaped the city.

Sustainability

The Active Transportation Alliance honored the City with a Public Leadership Award for designing **vibrant streets and public spaces that support transit**. Evanston's efforts to conserve resources and protect the environment were also recognized with a 2013 Honorable Mention Governor's Sustainability Award.

City Council members secured 100 percent renewable energy for residents as part of the second year of its Community Choice Electricity Aggregation program. The supplier also installed a clean energy storage system at the Chandler-Newberger Community Center.

The Evanston Environmental Association sponsored more than 10 initiatives, focusing on environmental education, ecology, and stewardship and worked with the Ecology Center to provide classes, workshops, camps and events for children and adults.

To facilitate the collaboration between all groups working on environmental issues in Evanston, the City created a new website, **evanstongreenbuzz.org**. The site serves as a one-stop shop for news, events and ongoing discussions about sustainability efforts in Evanston.

Public Safety

Evanston Fire and Life Safety Services Department

The Fire and Life Safety Services Department responded to 9,373 calls for service in 2013, including 20,349 apparatus responses. It was the highest total call volume in the department's history. About 60 percent of calls were for Emergency Medical Services, while the other 40 percent were for fires.

All told, firefighters responded to and mitigated 129 fires in 2013. As a result of the department's outstanding efforts, tactics, and response times, firefighters were able to save 97 percent of the properties involved, for a total of \$107,698,697 in saved property value.

Three new vehicles were placed into service, including an Advanced Life Support ambulance, Engine 25 and an incident command vehicle.

Through the Department's Citizen CPR Program, 435 people learned CPR and first aid.

The Fire Explorer program successfully completed its first year, giving 14- to 20-year-old participants a chance to learn about the Evanston Fire and Life Safety Services Department and the profession.

Evanston Police Department

Overall, **crime decreased by more than 9 percent** from 2012 to 2013, the most significant reduction since 2010. Notably, the incidence of aggravated battery and aggravated assault decreased by 20 percent, the incidence of robbery decreased by 20 percent, and the incidence of burglary decreased by 15 percent. Police will continue to take a proactive approach to reducing crime in 2014.

In partnership with Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl and the Evanston Community Foundation, the department facilitated an ongoing gun buyback program. Residents may turn in operational firearms to police at any time in exchange for \$100; all firearms will be inventoried and destroyed.

Brinks Corporation donated an armored vehicle to the Evanston Police Department, which the department's technical services detective adapted for surveillance at a cost of less than \$20,000. The Police Department deployed the surveillance vehicle to reduce crime in areas with higher rates of thefts, complaints of drug-related activity, and other disturbances.

In December, the department appointed its first police liaison for Evanston's LGBT community as part of the City's continued commitment to serve the diverse needs of all residents.

The Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association awarded its 2013 scholarship to Victoria Byerley, a junior at Missouri Western State University. The \$1,000 scholarship is given to dependents of sworn and civilian Police Department personnel, and applicants are judged on their academic achievement, character, leadership and community involvement, among other factors.

Community Engagement

The 311 call center added 8,500 new registered users in 2013 and handled 24,398 service requests, an increase of 18 percent from the number of service requests in 2012. On average, callers waited 11 seconds for an operator to pick up the phone, which is half the time of the industry standard. Residents can also contact **311** via text message, live chat or email.



The Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police honored the Evanston Police Department with second place in its Annual Traffic Safety Challenge, recognizing its efforts to reduce speeding and crashes while enforcing laws against driving under the influence of alcohol.



PHOTO CREDIT: CHRISTOPHER CAMERON



Values

Excellent Customer Service
Continuous Improvement
Integrity
Accountability

2014 City Council Goals

City Facilities
City Streets
Economic Development
Financial Policies and City Debt
Services for At-risk Families
Water and Sewer

2014 & Beyond

In early 2014, the City was awarded a 4-STAR rating from the STAR Community Rating System (STAR), which measures livability and **sustainability** of communities. In line with its tradition of leadership and its goal to be the “Most Livable City in America,” Evanston was the second city in the nation to earn the recognition and among the first 30 local governments to be evaluated using the STAR framework.

The Utilities Department will celebrate 100 years of clean, safe drinking water.

A new Downtown **Arts** Venue Task Force has been appointed by the mayor to determine the feasibility of and model for a performing arts center in downtown Evanston. This group’s work is a continuation of the recommendations outlined in both the 2012 National Endowment for the Arts study and the 2013 evanSTARTs report.

Crews will break ground on a mixed-use building at the corner of Main Street and Chicago Avenue, which will serve as the **economic development** engine of the Chicago/Main tax increment financing district. Revitalization efforts will continue on Howard Street when Evanston’s first brewpub, the Peckish Pig, opens. The restaurant and brewery will include a large outdoor dining space. In early 2014, Whole Foods announced it plans to open a new store at the former Dominick’s location on Green Bay Road in 2015 after significant remodeling. The City continues efforts to find a tenant for the other former Dominick’s at Evanston Plaza.

NextChapter, a joint program of the Evanston Public Library and the Economic Development Division, will bring technical assistance and support for entrepreneurs and home-based businesses that are ready for the next phase of development.

The **311 call center** launched a new mobile app in early 2014 that is available for iPhone, Android and Blackberry devices. The app includes push notifications, allows users to take photos to include in their inquiry, and tracks the history of each request.

The Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program expects to expand to 500 **youth and young adult** jobs in 2014. Every local business that hires young adults will be invited to participate in the 2014 job fair at ETHS.

The Building Career Pathways to Sustainable Employment Program, a partnership between the City and the Youth Job Center, plans to double its enrollment to serve more than 40 at-risk youth and young adult participants in 2013-14.

The City’s Youth and Young Adult Division and United Services of Chicago Inc. initiated a no-cost training program to prepare participants for the Transportation Construction Apprenticeship Readiness Training Program in November. The 12-week program will continue in 2014.

“Creating the most livable city in America”



Mayor
Elizabeth B. Tisdahl

1st Ward
Judy Fiske

2nd Ward
Peter Braithwaite

3rd Ward
Melissa Wynne

4th Ward
Donald Wilson

5th Ward
Delores A. Holmes

6th Ward
Mark Tendam

7th Ward
Jane Grover

8th Ward
Ann Rainey

9th Ward
Coleen Burrus

City Clerk
Rodney Greene

City Manager
Wally Bobkiewicz