2018 City Council Goals – End of Year Update

Invest in City Infrastructure and Facilities –

Capital Improvement Projects
The City of Evanston had a successful year investing in infrastructure. The Sheridan Road Improvements project is complete, connecting Wilmette and Northwestern University to downtown Evanston via new bicycle lanes and providing substantial safety improvements for Northwestern students and Evanston residents alike. The Phase I study for the Howard Street Corridor Improvements is complete and under review by IDOT, while the Central Street Bridge has an approved Phase I study and has moved into Phase II design. The Fountain Square Improvements project is substantially complete, and the Sherman Avenue Extension Streetscape Improvements (from Davis Street to Church Street) has been designed and is ready for construction in 2019. Fleetwood-Jourdain HVAC and Electrical Improvements is complete, as well as the Service Center Structural Repairs, roofing replacements at Mason Park Fieldhouse and Fire Station 2, common area improvements at Noyes Cultural Arts Center, and Electrical Upgrades at Chandler-Newberger. In partnership with the Theo Ubique theater company, the City constructed a new theater on Howard Street. Design work has been completed for HVAC improvements at Chandler-Newberger and lighting upgrades at the Sherman Avenue Garage, and these projects will move into construction in 2019. Another partnership with Northwestern University and Designs 4 Dignity is working to complete interior renovations at Fleetwood-Jourdain – the design is complete, and these improvements will be constructed in 2019. The City Council approved construction of the replacement 5 million gallon treated water storage facility making a substantial investment into the reliability of the Evanston Water Treatment Plant which, by the end of 2019, is expected to be serving over 400,000 people in 10 communities. Leveraging another partnership – this time with the Friends of Robert Crown who has raised substantial private funds on behalf of this City project – the City Council also approved construction of the new Robert Crown Center. The building is expected to be operational in late 2019, with site improvements completed in 2020.

City of Evanston Facilities Division Updates
The Facilities Division has invested in City Infrastructure and Facilities by performing various work and projects in-house with City staff, by coordinating specialized work through outside vendors and by actively partnering with Engineering in the assessments, design process and construction of CIP projects with outside contractors. In-house work includes various office remodels in both the Civic Center and Service Center, the complete renovation of the James Park Restrooms, the complete renovation of the South Boulevard Restrooms, the complete renovation and window replacement in the Civic Center Boiler Building Apartment, Fleet Shop lighting upgrades, repairs and prep work for the Foster Mural Wall, furnace replacement and addition of air conditioning in the two Fog Houses, new HVAC in the Ackerman Park Field House, interior painting at Fire Station 3, the replacement of the Lagoon Shelter
doors and furnace, the addition of back up electric heat at the Gibbs Morrison Cultural Center, roof repairs at Fire 5, the installation of several new bottle filling drinking fountains, the installation of two new compressors at Noyes, the repair of the Civic Center lit sign box above the Ridge entry doors, the installation of a new Service Center West Security Gate, repairs and prep work for a mural wall near the South Boulevard Station, the installation of a new condensation pump at Noyes, the installation of a new humidifier at Fire Station 3, preventative maintenance and everyday repairs Citywide. Facilities staff is currently working on the remodeling of the 3rd and 4th floor Civic Center restrooms with the associated re-piping.

**Enhance Community Development and Job Creation Citywide**

The Economic Development Division remained focused on business retention and job creation in 2018. The City Council approved twelve Entrepreneurship Support Program grants totaling $24,000 assisting with the creation of several new food businesses and salons. Recognizing the important nexus between arts and the economy, the City Council approved a $25,000 workforce development Equity in the Arts grant for Mudlark Theater which provided funding to assist in the cost of hiring management staff. The Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse, a non-profit organization that promotes the reduction of waste in landfills through sustainable deconstruction and renovation building practices, received a Small Business Workforce Development grant approved by the City Council totaling $15,000 which will fund the training of five low-income individuals. The City continues its support of Evanston’s unique business districts through the Great Merchant Grant program. Council approved seven grants totaling $62,000 to seven districts. Funding was used for banners, flower planters, and district advertising. The funding was also used to support Tour De Noir, the Black Business Consortiums annual business tour and expo. Finally, the City Council approved approximately $162,000 of storefront modernization funding to assist with signage and storefront improvements. Booked, a new independent children's bookstore on Main Street was a recipient. The Church and Dodge business district, also known as Central Evanston Business Association, received a grant totaling $75,000 to improve appearance of the northwest corner of Church and Dodge.

For the last 7 years, the Youth and Young Adult Division of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department has enhanced the Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program which trains 600+ youth and young adults per year, the Division has a long term (6 year) job creation project with the Youth Job Center of Evanston where nearly 70% of participants have remained employed for 1 year or more - far exceeding the national average for such programs. The Division has also helped to establish the Mayor's Employer Advisory Council in partnership with the Chicago/Cook Workforce Partnership, National Able Network, Youth Job Center of Evanston and Evanston Cradle to Career. This program is developing the infrastructure to match employment and training opportunities with more than 60 local employers and agencies with young adults who are not immediately entering a 4-year college program.

In addition to these substantive efforts, the City has invested heavily into the Certificate of Rehabilitation - Records Sealing, Expungement and Clemency Program where
hundreds of local residents have received services that improve their eligibility for training, jobs, and housing.

Finally, the existence of the Youth and Young Adult Division outreach team has been an investment that has had a significant upward impact on job creation and retention especially among the most disadvantaged populations in Evanston.

**Expand Affordable Housing Options**

City Council moved several activities forward in 2018 to address the goal of expanding affordable housing options in Evanston. An Inclusionary Housing Ordinance (IHO) Subcommittee was formed to propose changes to the City’s IHO to more effectively incentivize more affordable units in market rate developments and assess new funding sources for the Affordable Housing Fund. Council approved the proposed amendments to the IHO on October 29, 2018 with an effective date of January 1, 2019. Council approved rental of existing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to non-family members of the primary dwelling on April 23, 2018 to expand rental housing, particularly in single-family neighborhoods that are primarily owner occupied; rental registration of these ADUs will begin in early 2019. A new Landlord Rehabilitation Assistance Program was developed to provide financing for rehab and repairs for rental units that will be affordable to households at 60% of the area median income for a specified number of years based on the amount of funding provided; it was approved by City Council on March 12, 2018. City Council entered into a five-year intergovernmental agreement with Evanston Township High School for the Geometry in Construction program on April 30, 2018; the City will provide a residential lot each year for the house built by ETHS students that will be sold to income eligible households and will remain affordable in perpetuity. Evaluation of numerous other strategies to develop and maintain affordable housing were undertaken in 2018, including developing new code to encourage the development of ADUs; zoning changes to allow small-lot housing; evaluating City-owned properties as potential sites for affordable housing; leveraging outside funding in order to develop new affordable units, working with the Housing Authority of Cook County and private developers. In addition, City Council engaged in initial discussions around a rental subsidy program, rooming houses and co-housing; and revisions to the City’s occupancy code. This work will continue in 2019.

City Council held quarterly meetings on affordable housing on January 29, April 30, July 30, and October 29. At its meeting on October 29, City Council approved Mayor Hagerty’s appointments to the Affordable Housing Plan Steering Committee. That Committee will oversee the development of a comprehensive affordable housing plan for the City. Its first meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2019.
Further Police/Community Relations Initiatives -

Alternatives to Arrest Committee
On April 17, 2017, Mayor Stephen Hagerty announced the formation of the Alternatives to Arrest Committee which consists of eight members appointed by the Mayor. The Committee’s goal is to find alternatives to arrest for misdemeanors and reduce the number of young adults that have a difficult time finding a job later in life. After its first few meetings, the Committee created a subcommittee to review current record keeping policies and procedures.

On August 24, 2017, Public Act 100-0285 was signed into law and took effect on January 1, 2018. The Act prohibits law enforcement agencies from disclosing records involving minors who commit ordinance violations and provides additional privacy protections to juveniles who were arrested or had interactions with law enforcement. Specifically, the Act requires law enforcement agencies to create procedures to review juvenile records on or before January 1st of each year to determine if records must be automatically expunged beginning January 1, 2018. The City complies with the Act and has administrative procedures in place to execute the Act requirements.

Upon request of the Committee, staff drafted Ordinance 15-O-18, which codifies and incorporates Public Act 100-0285 requirements into the City of Evanston Municipal Code and Ordinance 65-O-18, which works in concert with Public Act 100-0285 by also clearing juvenile administrative hearing records stemming from administrative adjudication in addition to law enforcement records. These Ordinances were adopted on May 14, 2018.

These Ordinances are in line with the purpose of the Committee and will reduce the number of young adults having difficulty finding a job due to juvenile arrest records. In compliance with state law, the City will automatically expunge on or before January 1st of each year law enforcement records to events occurring before an individual’s 18th birthday if one year has lapsed since the date of arrest; no petition for delinquency or criminal charges were filed; and six months have lapsed without an additional arrest. Additionally, administrative adjudication records for events occurring before an individual’s 18th birthday will be expunged on or before January 1st of each year after a year has passed since the Administrative Hearing Division deemed the case closed.

In 2018, The Evanston Police Department Juvenile Bureau worked closely with the Alternative to Arrest Committee to make sure the department was in compliance with and adhering to expungement requirements set forth in PA 100-0285.

The police department also worked with the Alternatives to Arrest Committee towards one of its initiatives of a revised Formal and Informal Station Adjustment form. The new forms were completed in September 2018 and use of the forms began immediately within the police department.
Police Dashboard Updates
The police data automation project was publicly launched in October, offering public and staff near real time access to data sets such as Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) events, citations, arrests, traffic stops and crashes with appropriate privacy controls. IT and Police staff continue working on the presentation of visualizations. Community members will be able to easily view 12 datasets that are crafted to increase transparency and enhance the community's understanding about the Evanston Police Department.

Citizen Police Complaint Assessment Committee
A Citizen Police Complaint Assessment Committee was established and made a presentation of their findings and recommendations at the Human Services Committee meeting in December of 2018. The Human Services Committee advised the Citizen Police Complaint Assessment Committee that the newly appointed Police Chief should be presented with said findings prior to reconvening with Human Services Committee for a final decision. The Evanston Police Department will continue to work with the Citizen Police Complaint Assessment Committee in an effort to identify possible solutions to improve or restructure the civilian complaint process.

Ensure Equity in All City Operations-
During the past year the Office of Equity & Empowerment has supported the City Council’s equity goal in the following manner. We offered two sessions of Beyond Diversity a training about race. We also had three staff members Director Evonda Thomas Smith, Director Lawrence Hemingway and Jessica Wingader, Grants and Compliance Administrator become nationally certified equity trainers. They are currently offering a 36 hour training over a nine month period for the Equity Advocates. Equity Advocates are representatives from each department who will help advance the City’s equity goal. These staff members will significantly increase our ability to support departments as we roll out equity tools such as the Racial Equity Assessment and as departments set equity goals. Advocates will also facilitate difficult conversations around a diversity of issues that often come up in our daily work.

In response to the need to consistently provide translation and interpretation services, particularly to our Spanish speaking residents, we have worked with both the language department and the interpreter at District 202 and the interpreter at District 65 to share resources. As always Superintendents Dr. Paul Goren and Dr. Eric Witherspoon have given the City access to their staff and services allowing us to identify gaps and capitalize on strengths. We also are fortunate to have the expertise of the new Latina Engagement Librarian at EPL. As we move forward to develop a written plan, these resources will prove invaluable.
Community engagement has been high on the priority list for this office. The work of equity requires that we engage with communities that are most likely to be negatively impacted by policies, practices and procedures. The goal is to figure out collectively how to mitigate the potential negative impacts. With the Priority Based Budgeting survey, the data showed that we did not effectively reach the Black and Brown communities. The question that needed to be asked why? Why are people of color underrepresented in our decision making processes. Our response was to go out, literally, to places we were most likely to encounter these communities. We went to local Mexican restaurants, laundry mats, Food for Less, parks, picnics, community centers to name a few and we were able to talk with 507 Black and Brown people and visibly increased their attendance at budget meetings. We continue to work to build a model for effective community engagement.

The Equity assessment which was commissioned by the EPL Board was completed midyear. The results were relevant not just to the Library but all City departments. The report outlined twelve recommendations that are in line with equity practices and this office. Of note, they include ongoing training, formalized community engagement, and internal staff equity advocates. I continue to work with the staff and board so that our efforts do not overlap or conflict but capitalizes on resources.

**Stabilize Long-Term City Finances-**
At the beginning of 2018, staff began implementing a new cashiering system with the goal of full implementation by the end of 2018. This new system tracks receivables in details and allows for better integration with the wide variety of billing systems across the City. This has also allowed the City to pursue the renewal of debt collection. An agreement with a debt collection agency was signed in late summer 2018, and is currently in the mid to late stages of implementation. EMS debt collection is up and running, with collections for parking, citation ticket, and other miscellaneous outstanding debt up and running by March 2019.

In 2018, Moody’s and Fitch reaffirmed bond ratings for the City of Evanston. As such, the City was able to borrow money at a competitive rate to support the new Crown Center and other projects. 2018 A, B, C, and D issuances were finalized in July, providing funds for the Crown Center, other capital projects including for the water system, a refunding of 2008 bond issues, and a taxable issue for projects in the Howard-Ridge TIF district.

The 2019 Budget was adopted by City Council on November 19, 2018. The budget was adopted with a General Fund surplus of $1.7 million. This will allow at least $1.5 million to be added to General Fund reserves, moving the City closer to its goal of meeting the policy of 16.6% of reserves by the end of 2021. Additionally, the balanced budget includes a new transfer of $1 million from the General Fund to pay for debt service on the Crown project bonds. The budget process included reductions to staff and expenses, and increases to revenue sources including property tax, real estate transfer tax, wheel tax, and parking rates.