



**Executive Partners**

Strategy Design and Execution

# **THE CITY OF EVANSTON**

## **MANAGER'S MEETING**

### **SWOT**

**Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats**

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## **Strengths**

- ❑ Recent real estate development
- ❑ Transportation system
- ❑ Diversity – as a whole
- ❑ Technology
- ❑ Historic stability
- ❑ Restaurants and entertainment
- ❑ Approachable/visible open-minded manager
- ❑ Citizen input/ownership/partnership
- ❑ Honest, clean government
- ❑ Concerned and experienced staff
- ❑ Close knit community
- ❑ Strong real estate market
- ❑ Lakefront
- ❑ Safe neighborhoods
- ❑ Public transportation
- ❑ Urban center of North Shore and North side of Chicago
- ❑ Smart population/educated and trained
- ❑ High employment rate
- ❑ Multiple programs/city and others
  - Housing
  - Recreation
  - Health
- ❑ Successful economic development
- ❑ Pool of resources/biggest employers
  - Northwestern
  - Hospitals
- ❑ Tree canopy
- ❑ Municipal customer service
- ❑ Employees
  - Knowledge of the job
  - Experience in their area
  - Institutional knowledge – what has been tried before
  - Willingness to input
  - Dedicated
- ❑ City Council
  - Mix of veteran and new
- ❑ New City Manager
  - Background in strategic planning
  - Starting this process early
- ❑ Delivery and quality of services provided
- ❑ Range of services and programs provided – some unique to Evanston
- ❑ Diversity of the citizens
  - Politically, socially, ethnically – has a distinct personality
- ❑ Strong sense of civic duty – involved, committed, passionate

- ❑ Reputation of the city
  - Education, churches, social environment, North Shore community, quality of life, architecture
- ❑ Location/location/location – adjacent to Chicago, transportation, lakefront
- ❑ Northwestern University
- ❑ Eclectic neighborhoods
- ❑ Many parks (in neighborhoods)
- ❑ Two hospitals/healthcare
- ❑ Good place for seniors to live
- ❑ Amount of development in Evanston
- ❑ Highly desirable community
- ❑ Discerning population
- ❑ Open space/lake front/parks
- ❑ GIS
- ❑ Water plant and supply
- ❑ Leisure activities (city, schools and Northwestern University)
- ❑ Ethically strong
- ❑ Stable revenues
- ❑ Excellent in-house economic team
- ❑ Regional tourism
- ❑ Physically beautiful
- ❑ Volunteerism
- ❑ Staff responsive to citizen
- ❑ Cultural institutions
- ❑ Internationally recognized
- ❑ Increased property values
- ❑ Citizen watch – for community, codes, ordinance, etc.
- ❑ Lake Michigan/lake front downtown redevelopment
- ❑ AAA bond rating
- ❑ Safety
- ❑ Good, ample, cheap parking
- ❑ Street network – grid system
- ❑ Community groups
- ❑ Financial plan
- ❑ Public use of internet and computers
- ❑ High income level
- ❑ New sewer system
- ❑ Fiber optic system
- ❑ Good recreational opportunities
- ❑ High level of city services
- ❑ Commitment of city staff and elected officials
- ❑ The built and natural environment
- ❑ High number of employees work/live in community
- ❑ Strong school systems
- ❑ Extensive public services
- ❑ Pedestrian friendly

- ❑ Economic stability
- ❑ Provide tools to employees
- ❑ Progressive image – popular place
- ❑ Great water!
- ❑ Location – strategic
- ❑ Emergency – working well between departments
- ❑ CM high expectations
- ❑ Beautiful city
- ❑ Active citizens
- ❑ Strong sense of history
- ❑ Opportunity for advancement – tuition reimbursement – upward mobility program
- ❑ City website
- ❑ Variety of land use – industrial, residential, business, etc.
- ❑ Arts opportunities
- ❑ High % of residents making living in arts
- ❑ Strong economic development
- ❑ Great restaurants
- ❑ Outstanding events
- ❑ Well educated community
- ❑ Attract quality employees
- ❑ Good traffic patterns
- ❑ Good parking – most times of days
- ❑ Accessible public transportation
- ❑ Less bureaucracy than other cities
- ❑ City Manager form of government
- ❑ Integration of emergency services – police, fire, health
- ❑ Elected officials not professional politicians
- ❑ Employees
  - Diversity
  - Cultural
  - Ages
  - Race
- ❑ City amenities
  - Beaches
  - Northwestern University
  - Medical
  - Faith based
  - Quality of life
  - School locations

## Weaknesses

- ❑ Relationship with Northwestern University
- ❑ Affordable housing
- ❑ Tax base – reliance on property, exempt status
- ❑ Opportunities to raise revenue
- ❑ Parking
- ❑ Relationship with school districts
- ❑ Supporting 2 school districts
- ❑ Lack of entertainment opportunities
- ❑ Fully developed/land locked/traffic restricted
- ❑ Infrastructure – streets, power-grid, utilities
- ❑ Age and condition of city facilities
- ❑ Age and condition of historic facilities
- ❑ Balancing preservation
- ❑ 42% tax exempt land
- ❑ Dutch Elm disease
- ❑ Interdepartmental communication, teamwork, and coordination
- ❑ Not enough sharing of information
- ❑ 46% of housing stock built before 1939
- ❑ Older public facilities
- ❑ Can't buy panty hose
- ❑ More retail diversity
- ❑ Beaches closed too often
- ❑ No formal career development in city
- ❑ Lack of information for customer service
- ❑ Lack of industry
- ❑ Strong economy has not benefited all
  - Howard Street and West Evanston
  - Few job choices for high school dropouts
- ❑ Lawsuits and liabilities
- ❑ Condition of streets
- ❑ Emphasis on neighborhoods over city wide perspective and benefits
- ❑ Aging buildings (civic center)
- ❑ Lack of growth in revenue
- ❑ Lack of commitment to fiscal restraint by Council
- ❑ Inconsistent budget management strategy across departments
- ❑ Lack of pursuing revenue - raising opportunities
- ❑ Understaffing
- ❑ Responsibilities pushed out into the organization
- ❑ Council environment is negative
  - Ward-oriented vs. community interests
  - Argumentative
  - Lack of respect for staff
- ❑ Lack of definition of internal/external services
- ❑ Focus on “putting out fires” vs. long-range issues

- ❑ Difference between union and non-union benefits
- ❑ Lack of administrative policies/procedures
- ❑ Taxes are too high (perception)
- ❑ Low morale – no reward for doing a good job
- ❑ Formalized training programs
- ❑ Retirements of staff
- ❑ Culture counter to innovation
- ❑ Lack of centralized point for all complaints
- ❑ Communication flow
- ❑ Red tape
- ❑ Fighting on Council – how they treat each other and staff
- ❑ Assume citizen complaints are “true” before hearing from staff
- ❑ Lack of team and respect between Council and staff
- ❑ Lack of internal problem solving system with staff
- ❑ Traffic problem for truck to get to Evanston
- ❑ Lack of tools – tech.
- ❑ Lack of budget flexibility, to address market
- ❑ Inventory of staff attributes
- ❑ Filling vacant position
- ❑ Traffic signals
- ❑ Water mains
- ❑ Low fees – do not cover costs – fee structure
- ❑ Recreation center
- ❑ Lack of updated mission statement
- ❑ Viaducts
- ❑ ISO rating
- ❑ Poor signage
- ❑ Contract with Northwest Water Commission
- ❑ Deferred maintenance
- ❑ Citizens – more angry
- ❑ Employee lack of knowledge of other city functions
- ❑ Employee training
- ❑ Permit process
- ❑ Succession planning
- ❑ Unequal access to service due to income level
- ❑ Communication to citizens/community
- ❑ Internal top down communication
- ❑ Socio-economic diversity
- ❑ Lack of common mission
- ❑ Relation with management
- ❑ Active citizen polarizing effects
- ❑ Departmental “control” issues – “communication”
- ❑ Internal inertia (not forced to move forward)
- ❑ Manpower shortages
- ❑ Slow bureaucratic process
- ❑ Disposable work force (temp/part-time excluded) – no connection

- ❑ Not eligible for upward mobility
- ❑ Tax exempt property
- ❑ Small number of people vote
- ❑ Intra/inter departmental communication
- ❑ Lack of commitment of some employees – poor attitudes
- ❑ Lack of institutional direction
- ❑ Complex procurement procedures
- ❑ Lack of respect for qualifications of employees
- ❑ Micro management
- ❑ Lack of commitment to kids in community
- ❑ Bike routes
- ❑ Lack of good N/S thoroughfares
- ❑ Clearly defined visions
- ❑ Congestion
  - Population density
  - Traffic congestion
  - Parking
- ❑ Affordable housing taxes
- ❑ Decision making
  - Cumbersome
  - Time consuming
  - Lengthy
  - Costly
  - Too much input
- ❑ Inadequate municipal facilities
- ❑ Middle management \$ paid
  - Weak
  - Out
  - Topped
- ❑ Budget security
- ❑ Poor and uneven resource allocation
  - Personnel
  - Funding
- ❑ Lack of career development
  - Recognition of skills
  - Challenging staff
- ❑ Not exploring options
  - We don't do that here
- ❑ “KP” pusher
- ❑ Accountability
- ❑ Exclusion/inclusion
- ❑ Minority issues
  - Health
  - Housing
  - Mistrust
  - Education (gap)

## **Opportunities**

- ❑ New City Council
- ❑ New City Manager
- ❑ Relationship with Northwestern University
- ❑ Establishing better relationships with school districts and businesses
- ❑ Tap into diversity of community/citizenry to develop arts/cultural opportunities
- ❑ Opportunity to develop programs/services for entire population
- ❑ Employee job advancement
- ❑ Stimulating development – West Evanston/Howard Street
- ❑ Employee turnover due to age and experience
- ❑ New businesses/youth employment
  - Food for less
  - Sherman Plaza
- ❑ New location for civic center
  - Spatial planning for customer service and interdepartmental efficiency
- ❑ Successful economic development has led to additional development opportunities
- ❑ Employee training
- ❑ Improving public facilities/parks
- ❑ More efficient citizen participation process
- ❑ Potential for collaboration with other organizations who are providing competing services
- ❑ This strategic planning process
- ❑ Development of more industrial areas
- ❑ Public/private partnerships
  - Northwestern
  - Create an atmosphere that fosters economic development
- ❑ Developers help with infrastructure
- ❑ Take advantage of strengths of citizens
- ❑ Church/dodge project
- ❑ Growth of technology
- ❑ New, bright young employees
- ❑ Ways to benchmark innovations, e.g., performance evaluations
- ❑ Grants
- ❑ Training to avoid litigations
- ❑ Recognize community residents who are leaders in their field and get involved in Evanston
- ❑ New developments to draw new activities
- ❑ Website and radio station
- ❑ Lake front – rethink fees, more common use
- ❑ New school boards
- ❑ Regional services/resources
- ❑ Downtown development
- ❑ Economic development
- ❑ Use of internet for services and information

- ❑ Interaction with State and Federal elected officials - \$
- ❑ Review of current services
- ❑ Redevelop of the canal
- ❑ Lake Michigan as a draw (no marina)
- ❑ Streamlined government process
- ❑ Technology
- ❑ Location
- ❑ Intergovernmental co-op
- ❑ Shared resources with district 65/202
- ❑ Enhanced public transportation
- ❑ Beautiful city
- ❑ Active citizens
- ❑ Destination – popular
- ❑ Redevelopment
- ❑ Diverse community
- ❑ Untapped market of people in 20's and teens
- ❑ Good neighborhoods – attracts people – scenic
- ❑ Natural/physical resources
- ❑ New City Manager
- ❑ Partner with other institutions
- ❑ Work study opportunities – Northwestern University
- ❑ Better/more interaction with staff/departments
- ❑ Changing demographics
- ❑ Partnership with convention/visitors bureau
- ❑ Coordinating efforts with agencies to provide more efficient programs
- ❑ Network with community
  - Elected officials
  - Managers
- ❑ Learn internal resources
  - Cross-training
  - Best practices
  - Integrate resources
  - Sharing of resources
- ❑ Impact fee
- ❑ Employee input
  - Empowerment
  - Listen
  - Non-judgmental
  - Eliminate fear
- ❑ Proactive budget and process
- ❑ Fee for service
- ❑ Promote from within
  - Career path
- ❑ Extend budget process to include all staff
- ❑ Information sharing with staff
- ❑ Housing assistance to all employees

## **Threats**

- ❑ Economy
- ❑ CTA pull out
- ❑ Absentee landlords – subletting, transient population
- ❑ Store vacancies
- ❑ Technology – upgrades
- ❑ Infrastructure – streets, sewers, parks (trees)
- ❑ Polarization of the community/neighborhoods
- ❑ Population density – crime
- ❑ Lake bacteria
- ❑ Lawsuits
- ❑ Drugs/gangs/crime
- ❑ Land locked
- ❑ Changing labor market
- ❑ Employee turnover/age and experience
- ❑ Aging population
- ❑ Youth unemployment
- ❑ Loss of civility – society at large
- ❑ Security/safety in civic center
- ❑ Anxiety about change and resistance
- ❑ Budget cuts
- ❑ Maintaining school quality
- ❑ Citizen input/small minority create public policy
- ❑ Appeasement
- ❑ Tax base relief on residential properties
- ❑ Fragile financial situation
- ❑ Tension between staff and council
- ❑ Federal and State economy – unfunded mandates
- ❑ High entry fees
- ❑ Affordable housing
- ❑ Declining status of Evanston schools and revenues available to schools and how to fund schools
- ❑ Over population – traffic, parking
- ❑ “Bubble bust”
- ❑ 24/7 mentality
- ❑ Employee burnout
- ❑ Competition with other communities
- ❑ Traffic violators
- ❑ Declining diversity
- ❑ Experienced staff leaving organization
- ❑ Money – fiscal constraints
- ❑ Ideas falling on deaf ears
- ❑ Partners – non-cooperative
- ❑ State of Illinois budget

- ❑ Cultural bias
- ❑ Political in-fighting
- ❑ Income levels
- ❑ Infrastructure to support redevelopment and aging infrastructure
- ❑ Taxes – high – force out older/poor
- ❑ Cost of housing
- ❑ Small amount of citizens can drive policy for all
- ❑ Unmanaged growth
- ❑ Social services
- ❑ Parochial interest
- ❑ Education
- ❑ Epidemics
- ❑ Northwestern – not sharing, off tax role
- ❑ Tree diseases
- ❑ Development threat – changing neighborhoods
- ❑ Cutting manpower and services
- ❑ Predatory lending foreclosure
- ❑ Achievement gap in schools
- ❑ Financial viability of schools
- ❑ Inflation
- ❑ Water quality/lake beaches
- ❑ State and Federal regulatory requirements
- ❑ NPDES emission standards
- ❑ State allocation of funds
- ❑ Inability to finish projects
- ❑ Fear of change/inability to implement change
- ❑ Funding concern through grants
- ❑ Housing/land \$ exceed practical values
- ❑ Interest groups – disproportional opinions
- ❑ Gentrification – making Evanston unaffordable
- ❑ Lack of economic diversity
- ❑ Insufficient infrastructure roads
- ❑ Loss of open space
- ❑ Taxes
- ❑ Loss of historical value of Evanston