



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.

PHOTO CREDIT: CARL LARSON

# 2015

## Annual Report



## 2015 Awards & Recognitions



Evanston won a variety of accolades, including recognition as the World Wildlife Fund's 2015 **U.S. Earth Hour Capital** and Downtown Evanston being named one of the country's **best downtowns** by Livability.com.

Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl and the City received first place for small cities in the U.S. Conference of Mayors' National **Summer Youth Jobs Challenge**.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center designated Evanston as a **Gold Walk Friendly Community** for walkability initiatives and programs.

For the second year in a row, Evanston was the only U.S. city to receive the Public Technology Institute's special designation as a **Tech Savvy** award winner.

A steady stream of "**best-of**" lists named Evanston among the Most Educated Places in America (*NerdWallet.com*), Best Suburbs for Young Professionals (*Movoto.com*), Best Places to Raise a Family in Illinois, and Best Towns in America (*Niche.com*). *Politico* praised Evanston's progressive approach to planning and development in a lengthy article, dubbing Evanston "**The Suburb That Tried to Kill the Car.**"

Evanston's vibrant restaurant scene continued to earn praise, with write-ups in *Time Out Chicago*, *Midwest Diner*, *Thrillist*, *The Daily Meal*, and *Chicago Magazine*. *The New York Times* published a "Where to Eat and Drink in Evanston" feature in its Travel section. Local restaurants dominated *Make it Better Magazine's* annual "**Best of the North Shore**" reader's poll, with 25 businesses taking top honors. After only a year in operation, Peckish Pig was named a "Delicious Destination" by the Illinois Tourism Board.

The Evanston Public Library received the **Illinois Policy Institute's Sunshine Award** for government transparency, which recognizes EPL's successful measures to increase the Library's openness and accountability to residents and taxpayers.

One of Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre's original plays received four nominations for **Black Theater Alliance awards**.

The Fleet Services Division was one of six fleets in Illinois recognized in "The 100 **Best Fleets** in the Americas" competition.

Evanston Special Olympics Team athletes and coaches received the Kevin T. Kendrigan **Outstanding Team Award** at the Area 18 Track Meet.

# Economic Development



- **67 new businesses** opened, including **Valli Produce**, Evanston's third **Whole Foods**, and **Little Beans Café**.
- Downtown Evanston: **Accuity** relocated its headquarters here, **ZS Associates** expanded, and **PharmaCannis** opened a medical marijuana dispensary
- Construction began on the new site for **LuLu's** and **Taco Diablo**, the **Hyatt House** hotel, and a mixed-use development at the corner of **Main Street and Chicago Avenue**.
- An estimated total of **\$253.9 million** in construction and renovation projects generated **\$4.7 million** in permit fees.
- **3 Startup Showcase events** supported Evanston's most innovative ventures; **NextChapter** hosted 13 small business workshops at the Evanston Public Library; 18 Evanston entrepreneurs graduated from Sunshine Enterprises' **Community Business Academy**
- Merchants created a **Chicago-Main-Dempster Special Service Area** to generate tax funding for neighborhood improvements and promotion of local independent businesses.

# Community Engagement

- The **City Channel 16** broadcast system was rebuilt and a fire station video communication system was implemented for staff training.
- A Community Engagement **trailer** was created to provide a single source for City information at outdoor special events.



# Community Development

## Building Permits and Inspections



**\$321,578,749**  
Construction Valuation



**4,265 (up ↑ 10%)**  
Permits Issued



**7,593 (up ↑ 4%)**  
Inspections



**\$6,120,419**  
Permit Fees Collected



Architect's rendering of 1571 Maple Project

- Amended the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance to address the loss of affordable housing and maintain Evanston's economic diversity
- Processed Land Use entitlements for several large-scale developments, including 1620 Central Street and 1571 Maple Avenue Planned Developments and Evanston Plaza redevelopment anchored by Valli Produce

# Parks, Recreation & Community Services

- A feasibility and planning study was conducted to guide fundraising efforts for a reimagined **Robert Crown Center**. Based on positive community feedback, the project is moving forward with a full campaign in 2016.
- **Gibbs-Morrison Cultural Center** opened at 1823 Church Street with programs focused on culture, education, health/wellness, and outreach. **First Slice Pie Café** will manage the facility's café.
- During the Downtown Evanston Farmers' Market's 40th Anniversary year, over **180,000** visitors spent **\$4.7 million** and provided an estimated additional economic impact of **\$2 million** in the area. Friends of Evanston Markets provides matching funds to LINK customers.
- The Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program employed more than **600** youth with over **20** employers.



# Evanston Public Library (EPL)

- Created, conducted and analyzed a **Community Survey**
- 1st Annual Evanston Public Library **Storytelling Festival** was held in October
- Launched **"The Big Read"** community reading program of **"Into the Beautiful North"** by Luis Alberto Urrea, which continues through May 2016



**1,071,401**

items checked out  
(books, e-books, movies,  
music, and more)

**510,593**

visits to the EPL website

**80,000**

internet sessions  
on EPL computers



**629,032**

patrons visited EPL in person



**1,050**

donors supported EPL's  
Fund for Excellence

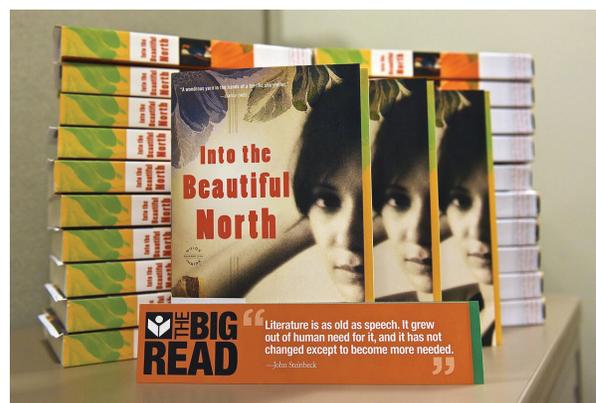


PHOTO CREDIT: LYNN TRAUTMANN, LTPHOTO EVANSTON

# Public Works Agency



Community outreach regarding infrastructure projects included **15-20** public workshops, attendance at **10** ward meetings, **20+** project-specific newsletters, a comprehensive 2015 project newsletter for every ward, and three project surveys.

Completed over **5,700** work orders, including tree evaluations, pothole patches, right-of-way permits, special trash pick-ups, and street light repairs.



There were approximately **410,000** weekly stops for refuse and recycling. Missed stops were 0.2% for refuse, 0.002% for recycling and 0.002% for yard waste.

Free bulk trash collection tonnage increased from 264 in 2014 to **345** in 2015.

Submitted **CMAQ** and **STP grant applications** to offset the over **\$4 million** cost of resurfacing Howard Street and improving the Green Bay Road corridor.

**The Northwest Water Commission** executed an agreement to provide the City of Des Plaines with Evanston water, expected to begin in 2016. Negotiations continue with Niles, Morton Grove, Lincolnwood, Park Ridge and the Northwest Suburban Municipal Joint Action Water Authority.

**Clearwells 1 and 2** (underground water storage) were rehabilitated on time and within budget. These 90- and 100-year-old structures are now fully operational. North and south standpipes (water storage tanks) were painted.

To prepare for possible revenue cuts from the State, a City-wide assessment and reorganization was completed, resulting in the consolidation of the Public Works and Utilities Departments into one **Public Works Agency** with four bureaus:

- **Infrastructure Maintenance:** Alleys, streets, sidewalks, and water/sewer infrastructure
- **Environmental Services:** Refuse, recycling, forestry, and parks and greenways maintenance
- **Water Production:** Evanston Water Plant operations
- **Capital Planning and Engineering:** Capital planning, projects and engineering

# Law Department



- The Law Department achieved a trial and pretrial disposition record of **11-2** in 2015.
- The renegotiation of all **solid waste franchise agreements** concluded in the fall and the City obtained several positive contractual modifications and concessions.

# Administrative Services

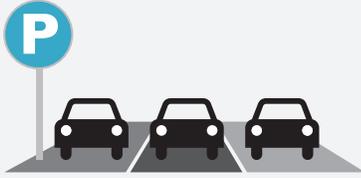


- Completed year 1 of a 3–4 year process replacing desktop computers with **Virtual Desktop Systems** to reduce maintenance costs and improve efficiency
- Received the Government Finance Officer Award for **Excellence in Financial Reporting** and the **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award**
- Established **paperless** open health enrollment for all eligible City staff and paperless paychecks

# Sustainability

## Morton Civic Center Parking Lot Project

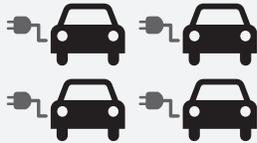
3 test types of permeable pavement



3 rain gardens



2 electrical vehicle charging stations  
(4 cars)



## Reusable Bags



- Launched **Plastic Disposable Shopping Bag Ban** by giving away 100s of “We Love Evanston” reusable bags
- Developed **Share-A-Bag** and plastic film recycling programs

## Rain Barrel Program



Partnered with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District to develop an Evanston Residential **Rain Barrel Program**. **400 +** free rain barrels were ordered in just two months.

# Cultural Arts

- **Three new exhibition areas** were created in the Morton Civic Center, including the newly relocated and designed **Fleetwood-Jourdain Gallery**
- Hosted 300+ artists and arts administrators September 27-29 at the statewide **One State Together in the Arts Conference**



Community members participate in the Evanston Winter HeARTh “TryAngles” public art project.



Guests experience the interactive public art exhibition, “The Art of Normal,” which celebrates the 25th Anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



A gallery exhibition of paintings by 97-year-old Evanston artist Peggy Lipschutz graces the James C. Lytle City Council Chambers.

## Thank you!

The City of Evanston would like to thank all of its community partners in 2015. Many of the accomplishments listed in this report would not have been possible without financial assistance and program support from many public and private institutions and organizations, as well as enthusiastic support from Evanston’s many volunteer organizations.



## Evanston Fire Department

**9,630\***

Total calls for service



\*highest call volume in 140-year history

**5,994\***

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls



All members were given the opportunity to achieve **Advance Cardiac Life Support certification** through the American Heart Association.

The second annual **Citizen Fire Academy** was conducted in the Fall of 2015 and **19** Evanston youths age **16–19** completed the **Fire Explorer Program** in early 2015.



**Free** drop-in wellness health programs and assessments were offered at fire stations in partnership with the Health & Human Services Department.



## Evanston Police Department



Increased contacts with faith organizations to enhance its partnership with the community



Reinvigorated the **Share the Road** campaign through a **“Let’s Roll Together Evanston”** educational campaign



Mobile phone customers are able to **text to 911** for emergency help (first community on North Shore)

**86 EPD personnel** attended training to more skillfully interact with members of the African-American community



## Health and Human Services

- A **Job Club** was created for General Assistance clients. The City’s Human Resources staff led several training sessions, including activities such as mock interviewing.
- Nearly **500** women participated in the **12-week Women Out Walking Program**. There were **102** sponsored health-related events in partnership with businesses and organizations, **48** organized weekly group walks, and **84** items were donated to reward high achievers.
- **The Emergency Response Plan** was updated to include how to better accommodate special populations during a public health emergency, including resources for communicating with special populations, such as people with limited English proficiency or who are visually impaired.
- Worked with **McGaw YMCA** to expand its annual **Father’s Day Cookout** to a Men’s Health Fair with health screenings. The inaugural event is set for Father’s Day 2016.



**WOW**  
women out walking



**Father’s Day Cookout**



“Creating the most livable city in America”

2016 & Beyond



PHOTO CREDIT: BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF ILLINOIS



NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY



In 2015, Northwestern University agreed to donate **\$1 million** annually to the City of Evanston for a period of five years, with proceeds to be spent on projects and services agreed to jointly by Mayor Tisdahl and President Schapiro. Their plans for the second \$1 million donation will be announced this fall.

The **Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program** has increased the number of youth placed in summer jobs every year; this year’s goal is to provide **over 600 jobs** for Evanston youth.

The **Health & Human Services Department** will launch a citywide **“Rethink Your Drink”** educational campaign about health risks linked to sugar-sweetened beverages.

A new **Digital Services team** will guide initiatives to improve City services through the use of technology, continuing Evanston’s leadership as an innovative city.

The **Public Works Agency** will expand its apprenticeship program by providing training opportunities for six residents.

Ten **Divvy Bike** stations will be installed in late June, with the program starting this summer. Eight stations are funded through a grant process that the City of Evanston worked on in partnership with the City of Chicago and the Village of Oak Park, along with support from developers and local institutions. Two stations are funded via a partnership with Northwestern University.

The City engaged Ross Barney Architects to design a **150-seat performing arts space** at 717 Howard St. This follows the commitment by the Strawdog Theatre Company from Chicago’s Lakeview neighborhood to relocate to Evanston in the new space.

Mayor Tisdahl committed to the Compact of Mayors, a global coalition of city leaders dedicated to **reducing greenhouse gas** (GHG) emissions.

The City’s **311 Center** marked **five years of service** to the Evanston community on March 1. Since the Center opened, staff has handled 678,101 phone calls, 132,270 service requests, 9,916 live online chats (starting July 2012) and 1,459 text messages (starting July 2014).

The **Evanston Police Department** is strengthening its community engagement efforts by committing to the Law and Your Community Program.

The **Evanston Public Library** will increase investments in diverse and balanced collections, both virtual and physical.

Expanded programs and events will be offered at the new **Gibbs-Morrison Cultural Center** and in the Ecology Center’s expanded classroom.

The **Fire Department** will initiate an “After the Fire” assistance program through the Fire Prevention Bureau.

The **Community Development Department** will be implementing the new Inclusionary Housing Ordinance and developing other means of expanding affordable housing.



**Values**

- Excellent Customer Service
- Continuous Improvement
- Integrity
- Accountability

**2016 City Council Goals**

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



**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**  
Eleanor Revelle

**8th Ward**  
Ann Rainey

**9th Ward**  
Brian Miller

**City Clerk**  
Rodney Greene

**City Manager**  
Wally Bobkiewicz