Summertime in Evanston is filled with annual festivals and events, including Concerts in the Park, Streets Alive, and the Kits, Kats and Kids Block Party. In September, the Main-Dempster Mile drew a crowd to sip and shop throughout the business district, and Howard Street hosted their first open house event.

Five Evanston companies were among the fastest growing and included in a list of the 2019 "Most Successful Companies in America" released by Inc. 5000 Magazine. Congratulations to Toops LLC, Right at School, Opex Analytics, Clerestory Consulting, and Multilingual Connections!

The third quarter also saw construction at 811 Emerson Street, a new 9-story mixed-use building called The Link, wrap up and begin at 1727 Oak Avenue, a new 17-story 169 unit active senior living residence.
In the third quarter, Evanston had fifteen newly licensed businesses. Among the new businesses, were two new restaurants, an optometry practice, multiple salons, and more.

Salon Lofts, a shared space for stylists located at 1735 Maple Ave, houses several new independent beauty businesses in Evanston.

Litehouse Whole Food Grill at the Gibbs-Morrison Cultural Center, 1823 Church St., celebrated its grand opening in late September. The menu offers a variety of items with a healthy twist featuring all-natural foods that come from responsibly sourced places.
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & INITIATIVES

Evanston is committed to supporting a business friendly environment and recognizes the unique character and diversity each of its nine business districts bring to the City.

City Council approved two new applications through the Entrepreneurship Support Program totaling $3,160 in financial assistance. The program was designed to assist individuals starting or expanding a small business in Evanston with qualifying expenses such as tools, equipment, professional services, and licensing fees.

Funds approved through the Great Merchant Grant Program provided marketing support for the Howard Street Business Association's first Open House event. Thirteen local Howard Street businesses participated in the event, including Peckish Pig, Good to Go, Frontline North, Ward Eight, Hip Circle Empowerment Center, and Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre, among others. A gift basket comprised of offerings from Howard Street businesses was raffled off to attendees who visited each business.
Unemployment in Evanston steadily declined over the third quarter with the unemployment rate dropping to 2.7% in September, according to the Illinois Department of Employment Security. The unemployment rate remains consistently lower than the U.S., Illinois, and Chicago Metro Region average.
CONSTRUCTION & REAL ESTATE

PERMIT REVENUE
An estimated $48.2 million in construction and renovation work generated $966,855 in building permit revenue during the 3rd quarter of 2019.

REAL ESTATE TRANSFER TAX
309 Commercial and Residential Real Estate transactions yielded $652,157 in real estate transfer tax revenue.
Both the retail and office vacancy rates in Evanston experienced a slight increase in the third quarter, yet remain significantly lower than the Chicago Loop and Far North Suburban Cook County markets, according to data pulled from CoStar Analytics.