

# Memorandum

To: Chair & Members of the Economic Development Committee

From: Paul Zalmezak, Economic Development Division Manager  
Cindy Plante, Economic Development Coordinator

Subject: 2018 Q3 Economic Development Quarterly Report

Date: October 19, 2018

## Summary & Highlights

The summer months of 2018 saw the return of many annual festivals and events, including the Art and Big Fork Festival, World Arts and Music Festival, Fourth of July Parade, Streets Alive, and the Kits, Kats and Kids Block Party. This year's festival calendar included several new events hosted by **SPACE** in honor of the music venue's 10th year in Evanston. In July, the SPACE team worked with WXRT to host two outdoor concerts at the Canal Shores Golf Course headlined by Mavis Staples and the Indigo Girls (pictured). In August, the **Big Evanston Block Party** shut down a block of Dempster Street for a weekend music festival.



In July, WBEZ's [Curious City](#) visited the Main Dempster Mile for a feature on Evanston's many rug stores. Verizon also named Evanston one of the [best places in the country for small business](#).

## New Businesses:

Based on available licensing data, **25 new businesses** opened in Evanston during the third quarter of 2018. The Main-Dempster Mile area welcomed two bookstores to Main Street during the third quarter: children's bookstore **Booked** and the expanded

relocation of **Squeezebox Books**. Accessory shop **Nicelena and Friends** opened shortly thereafter on Chicago Avenue in the space that previously housed the original Squeezebox store. In Downtown Evanston, **Prairie Moon** opened in its new location on Chicago Avenue down in the old Dave’s Italian Kitchen space (they moved to Noyes Street in 2016). On Church Street, the owners behind BopNgrill and Belmont Army opened **10Q Chicken**, a new fried chicken concept quickly gaining a following among Northwestern students. The name is a play on “thank you” and intended as a nod to their focus on customer service.

New Businesses – 2018 Q3	
Backlot Hospitality - 1042 Wesley Ave.	Prairie Moon - 1635 Chicago Ave.
Azzari - 2485 Howard Street	10Q Chicken - 816 Church
Spoonfoolery - 2113 Greenleaf St. #4	Rama Express - 1601 Simpson St. #3
Chicago Hot Dog & Co - 1009 Davis St.	Sushibox - 2450 Main St.
Fuelbar - 2255 Campus Dr.	Levy at Ryan Fieldhouse - 2255 Campus Dr.
Lao Sze Chuan - 1633 Orrington (new ownership)	French Kiss Cafe - 517 Dempster St. (new ownership)
Booked - 506 Main St.	Districton Solutions North America - 909 Davis St. #500
Edgewater Candles - 2113 Greenleaf St. # 16	Electronic Processing of North America - 1703 Central St.
Four Finches - 1320 Sherman Ave (new ownership)	Greater Chicago Kitchen & Bath - 928 Chicago Ave.
Jose’s Auto Detailing - 1951 Dempster St.	Nicelena & Friends - 1235 Chicago Ave.
Sammic Corp. - 1225 Hartrey Ave.	Brick House Services - 1603 Orrington #450
Wintrust Evanston Community Bank - 901 Grove St.	Squeezebox Books - 743 Main St.
Griffin Speech - 715 Chicago Ave	

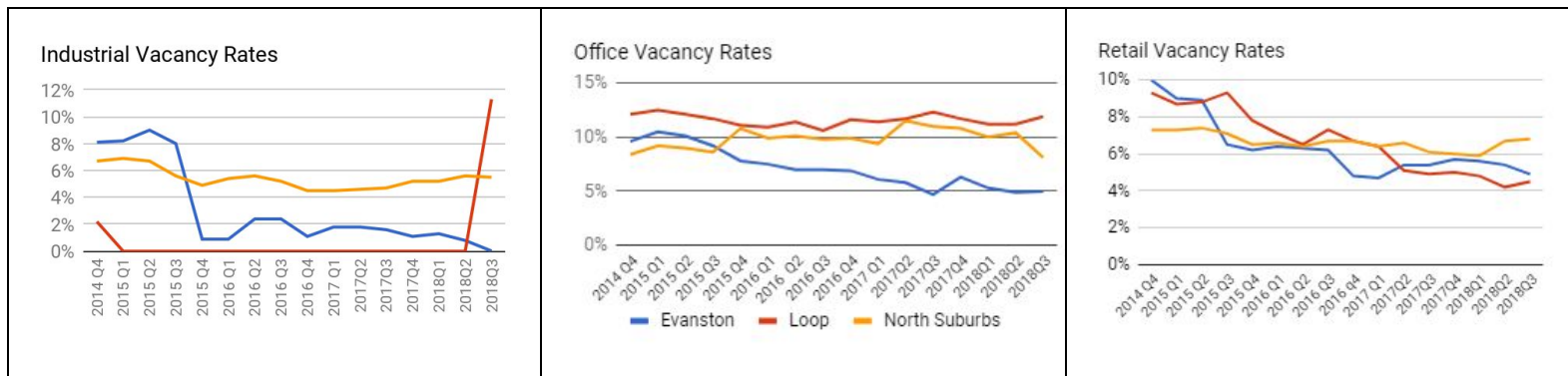
Construction & Real Estate:



The 3rd quarter saw the start of construction for the new Robert Crown Community Center and the Albion mixed-use building on Sherman Avenue (pictured). The Albion building will include 273 apartments, 182 Parking spaces, and 9,600 square feet of ground floor retail space. Construction on Focus Development’s 811 Emerson continues.

According to data from Costar Analytics, office vacancy rate held steady at around 5%, while industrial and retail vacancy rates

continued to trend downward.



The City Clerk’s office recorded **277 commercial and residential real estate transactions** in Evanston during July and August of 2018, yielding **\$736,235 in real estate transfer tax revenue**. The single largest property transaction during this period was the sale of 1620 Central Street in August for **\$20.5 Million**. Other notable sales include 960-990 Grove, and 1719-1723 Howard Street, which sold for \$4.9 million and \$5.3 million, respectively.

An estimated **\$94 million in commercial construction and renovation work** generated **\$1 million in building permit revenue during the third quarter of 2018**. The largest project this quarter was construction on the **Albion** building on Sherman Avenue. Other large commercial projects included remodeling of the **Aldi** store on Oakton and preparation of the former Chicago Avenue Whole Foods building for its new occupant, **Binny’s Beverage Depot**, which is expected to open in November.

Construction and renovation projects at Northwestern University this quarter were valued at an estimated **\$18.1 million** and generated **\$336,399** in building permit fees, about 46% of the total for July through September. The largest project at the Evanston campus was work at the Byron Coon Sports Center.

Entrepreneurship & Workforce Development:

Based on data provided by the Illinois Department of Employment Security, Evanston’s unemployment rate declined somewhat during the third quarter, and remained below four percent.

Mayor Hagerty’s [Elevate Evanston](#), the citywide initiative uniting our community’s efforts to connect individuals with employment opportunities, job training, and career education, continues to engage the business community.

The [Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program](#) wrapped up another successful season with 45 employers and 553 youth participants. Thanks to the Evanston business community for participating.

# Unemployment Rates

