

# Evanston celebrates new, open concept Fountain Square



Evanston residents gather at the dedication of the new Fountain Square on May 18, 2019. (Karie Angell Luc/Pioneer Press)



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**T**he new fountain in Evanston's Fountain Square was dedicated and turned on for the season May 18.

"We're very excited to do an official dedication for the community," said Lawrence Hemingway, Evanston's director of parks, recreation and community services.

Fountain Square is located at Sherman Avenue and Davis Street in downtown Evanston.

Evanston Mayor Steve Hagerty invited children to step up to the podium area where an oversized ceremonial switch was flipped.

"We have a beautiful, beautiful center of downtown Evanston," Hagerty said.

The rectangular fountain is zero-depth and has 20 fountain heads. Personnel said lighting can be changed to color coordinate with happenings in town such as the holidays or local school homecomings, for example.

The new fountain accommodates people of all ages and abilities.

“The previous fountain wasn’t conducive to this kind of environment,” said Annie Coakley, Downtown Evanston executive director. “You couldn’t get in it, you couldn’t experience it in person, it was sort of chunky and blocked off, so this is completely open, accessible to everyone, wheelchairs, baby strollers, you name it, anyone can enjoy it.”

In addition to the new fountain, the renovated Fountain Square includes a new veterans memorial wall, a redone community plaza south of Davis Street, a pedestrian-friendly streetscape, street lighting improvements, traffic signal updates, landscaping and outdoor furniture.

“I just love the open concept, the table, the chairs, it’s a place to come and sit,” said Susan Lane of Evanston, who came to experience the fountain with her daughter Julia Lane, 9, a third-grader at Dawes Elementary School.

Dancers from Northwestern University performed along with an Evanston flamenco group. A bagpiper played shortly after the fountain was turned on.

Grace Rivera, 6, an Evanston kindergartner, told her family that the water was not that cold once you got used to it.

“This is amazing,” Grace said.

**Karie Angell Luc is a freelance reporter for Pioneer Press.**

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