

Chicago Suburbs Relocation Guide

Your Full Resource for Moving, Living, and Thriving in the Chicago Suburbs

Created by Jade Mosak — Chicago Realtor® & Neighborhood Expert

Welcome

Welcome to the Chicago suburbs—a collection of communities that each offer their own unique lifestyle, pace, and personality.

Whether you're relocating from another state, moving out of the city, or simply looking for more space, this guide is designed to help you better understand some of Chicagoland's most desirable suburban communities.

One thing I always tell clients: there is no single "best" suburb. The right suburb depends entirely on your priorities, lifestyle, commute, budget, and what you want your day-to-day life to feel like.

While Chicagoland is home to well over 100 suburbs, this guide focuses on some of the most popular, highly rated, and frequently requested communities among my relocation clients. These areas offer strong schools, great amenities, vibrant downtowns, beautiful neighborhoods, and convenient access to Chicago.

From lakefront communities along the North Shore to family-friendly neighborhoods with excellent schools and easy commuter access, each suburb highlighted here offers something different.

My goal isn't to tell you where to live- it's to help you understand which communities might be the best fit for your lifestyle and long-term goals.

Let's explore some of the suburbs that continue to attract buyers, families, professionals, and relocators from across the country.

A Little About Me

With experience across Chicago's neighborhoods and the North/Northwest suburbs, I take a thoughtful, lifestyle-first approach to helping clients find a home that actually fits how they want

to live day-to-day—whether that’s a high-rise in Streeterville, a vintage walk-up in Lakeview, or a quieter pocket in the suburbs.

I graduated from University of Illinois at Chicago with a degree in Communication Studies, so I understand the importance of clear and consistent communication through one of the most important decisions of your life. Before getting into real estate full time, I worked in municipal building, zoning, and plan review—an unexpected but incredibly useful path that gave me a deep understanding of how Chicago-area real estate really works behind the scenes. Renovations, inspections, permits, code, new development... I’ve seen it from the inside, and I bring that knowledge with me when advising clients.

To me, real estate is more than bedrooms and bathrooms. It’s identity, pace, community, coffee shops, parks, restaurants, commutes, seasons, and lifestyle. Chicago is made up of over 200 neighborhoods, each with its own energy and rhythm, and I genuinely love helping people figure out *which version of Chicago is right for them*.

If you’re relocating here or considering a move, I hope this guide helps you feel grounded, informed, and excited. Let’s explore what makes Chicago such a magnetic place to call home. Shall we?

How to Choose the Right Suburb

Instead of asking "Where should I live?", ask:

- ✓ What commute am I comfortable with?
- ✓ Do schools matter?
- ✓ Do I want a walkable downtown?
- ✓ Do I want a newer home or character home?
- ✓ How important is access to the lake?
- ✓ What monthly payment am I comfortable with after taxes?

Important: Chicagoland has over 100 suburbs. The communities featured in this guide represent some of the most popular, highly rated, and relocation-friendly suburbs in the region, but they are only a starting point. If you're looking for personalized recommendations based on your budget, commute, lifestyle, or school preferences, I'd be happy to help narrow down the best options for you.

Planning Your Move

Whether you're relocating for work, lifestyle, or a fresh start, there are a few steps that make the transition smoother. Here's the process I guide relocation clients through:

01 — Schedule a call

We'll talk through your priorities, questions, timeline, and how you want your life in the Chicago suburbs to *feel*. I'll break down suburbs that match.

02 — Explore suburbs

We'll narrow to 3–5 areas based on lifestyle, walkability, commute, transit access, and budget. If you're not here yet, I offer virtual tours.

03 — Build a search plan

We'll curate rentals or homes that match your timeline + season.

04 — Tour + secure your place

Once we find “the one,” we apply (rent) or write an offer (buy). I'll handle all of the details and guide you through paperwork, strategy, and pacing. I will make the transition smooth and painless for you.

05 — Move, settle, and thrive

I'll help you integrate into your new area with local recommendations, resources, and vendors to make life easier—and more fun.

SUBURBS FEATURE PAGES

CHICAGO SUBURBS COMPARISON TABLE (2026)

Suburb: Winnetka

Median Home Price: ~\$1.9M

Typical Property Taxes: \$18,000-\$40,000+

Schools: 10/10

Walkability: 7/10

Downtown Area: 8/10

Commute to Chicago: 8/10
Family Friendly: 10/10
Airport Access: 7/10

Living Here Feels Like

Winnetka offers a refined North Shore lifestyle centered around beautiful lakefront scenery, historic architecture, top-ranked schools, and a strong sense of community. Residents enjoy a quieter pace of life while remaining connected to downtown Chicago.

Vibe Tags

Luxury • Lakefront • Established • Family-Oriented • Elegant

Housing Mix

Historic estates • luxury single-family homes • newer custom construction • townhomes

Notable Landmarks

Winnetka Beach • Hubbard Woods • Village Green Park • Indian Hill Club • Skokie Lagoons

Local Favorites

Aboyer • Pomeroy • Spirit Elephant • Towne & Oak • Mino's

Things To Do

Spend the day at Winnetka Beach, explore the Hubbard Woods shopping district, bike along the North Shore, enjoy summer concerts and community events, or take advantage of nearby golf, boating, and sailing opportunities.

My Take

Winnetka is one of the most sought-after communities in the Chicago area and offers a classic North Shore lifestyle that is difficult to replicate elsewhere. It combines exceptional schools, stunning homes, lakefront access, and a strong community feel while remaining within commuting distance of the city.

Ideal For

Luxury buyers • executives • families prioritizing schools • buyers seeking a prestigious North Shore address

Suburb: Lake Forest

Median Home Price: ~\$1.2M

Typical Property Taxes: \$15,000-\$30,000+

Schools: 10/10

Walkability: 6/10

Downtown Area: 7/10

Commute to Chicago: 7/10

Family Friendly: 10/10

Airport Access: 6/10

Living Here Feels Like

Lake Forest combines grand estates, lakefront beauty, historic architecture, and a peaceful suburban atmosphere. It feels private and exclusive while still offering a charming downtown and convenient commuter access.

Vibe Tags

Luxury • Historic • Estate Living • Lakefront • Private

Housing Mix

Luxury estates • custom homes • historic properties • townhomes

Notable Landmarks

Market Square • Deer Path Inn • Lake Forest Beach • Fort Sheridan • Conway Farms Golf Club

Local Favorites

Deer Path Inn • Le Colonial • Sophia Steak • The Gallery • The Lantern

Things To Do

Walk through historic Market Square, enjoy the beaches and lakefront trails, golf at world-class courses, explore Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve, and attend community events throughout the year.

My Take

Lake Forest delivers one of the most luxurious lifestyles in Chicagoland. Large lots, beautiful architecture, and outstanding schools make it a favorite among executives and families seeking privacy and prestige.

Ideal For

Luxury buyers • executives • growing families • buyers seeking estate-style living

Suburb: Hinsdale

Median Home Price: ~\$1.2M

Typical Property Taxes: \$15,000-\$30,000+

Schools: 10/10

Walkability: 8/10

Downtown Area: 9/10

Commute to Chicago: 8/10

Family Friendly: 10/10

Airport Access: 8/10

Living Here Feels Like

Hinsdale offers a charming downtown, beautiful homes, exceptional schools, and a strong sense of community. It combines luxury living with one of the most walkable suburban downtowns in Chicagoland.

Vibe Tags

Luxury • Walkable • Historic • Family-Friendly • Upscale

Housing Mix

Historic homes • luxury custom construction • townhomes • newer developments

Notable Landmarks

Downtown Hinsdale • Katherine Legge Memorial Park • Hinsdale Golf Club • Burlington Park

Local Favorites

Fuller House • Il Poggiolo • Vistro Prime • Nabuki • Toni Patisserie

Things To Do

Shop and dine downtown, attend seasonal community events, enjoy local parks, and take advantage of quick train access to the city.

My Take

Hinsdale strikes a rare balance between luxury, convenience, and community. It's consistently one of the most desirable suburbs for families and professionals.

Ideal For

Luxury buyers • families • professionals commuting downtown

Suburb: Glenview

Median Home Price: ~\$850K

Typical Property Taxes: \$10,000-\$20,000

Schools: 9/10

Walkability: 6/10

Downtown Area: 7/10

Commute to Chicago: 8/10

Family Friendly: 10/10

Airport Access: 8/10

Living Here Feels Like

Glenview offers spacious neighborhoods, highly rated schools, beautiful parks, and convenient access to both Chicago and O'Hare Airport.

Vibe Tags

Family-Friendly • Convenient • Established • Polished • Active

Housing Mix

Single-family homes • newer construction • luxury homes • townhomes

Notable Landmarks

The Glen • Kohl Children's Museum • Gallery Park • Glenview Park Golf Club

Local Favorites

Oak at The Glen • Wildfire • Ema • Social Inn • Kurimu

Things To Do

Enjoy The Glen shopping district, walk Gallery Park, visit Kohl Children's Museum, golf, bike, and attend community festivals throughout the year.

My Take

One of the most balanced suburbs in Chicagoland, Glenview offers great schools, strong home values, and easy access to virtually everything.

Ideal For

Families • professionals • move-up buyers • relocators

Suburb: Northbrook

Median Home Price: ~\$800K

Typical Property Taxes: \$10,000-\$18,000

Schools: 9/10

Walkability: 6/10

Downtown Area: 7/10

Commute to Chicago: 8/10

Family Friendly: 10/10

Airport Access: 8/10

Living Here Feels Like

Northbrook is known for excellent schools, beautiful residential neighborhoods, abundant parks, and a family-focused lifestyle.

Vibe Tags

Family-Oriented • Convenient • Established • Comfortable

Housing Mix

Single-family homes • luxury homes • townhomes • condos

Notable Landmarks

Northbrook Court Area • Techny Prairie Park • Sportsman's Country Club • Downtown Northbrook

Local Favorites

Prairie Grass Cafe • Di Pescara • Francesca's North • Wildfire • Pinstripes

Things To Do

Enjoy golf, parks, community events, shopping, and easy access to both downtown Chicago and the North Shore.

My Take

Northbrook consistently ranks among the best suburbs for families thanks to its schools, amenities, and overall quality of life.

Ideal For

Families • professionals • buyers seeking convenience and strong schools

Suburb: Park Ridge

Median Home Price: ~\$650K

Typical Property Taxes: \$8,000-\$15,000

Schools: 9/10

Walkability: 9/10

Downtown Area: 9/10

Commute to Chicago: 9/10

Family Friendly: 9/10

Airport Access: 10/10

Living Here Feels Like

Park Ridge offers a unique blend of suburban charm and city convenience. Its vibrant downtown, highly rated schools, walkable neighborhoods, and proximity to O'Hare make it one of the most desirable suburbs for families and professionals alike.

Vibe Tags

Walkable • Family-Friendly • Community-Oriented • Convenient • Charming

Housing Mix

Classic Chicago bungalows • colonials • newer construction • luxury homes • condos

Notable Landmarks

Pickwick Theatre • Uptown District • Maine Park • Park Ridge Country Club

Local Favorites

Holt's • Harp & Fiddle • Fire + Wine • Pennyville Station • Beer on the Wall

Things To Do

Catch a movie at the historic Pickwick Theatre, explore the downtown shopping district, attend summer events, enjoy local parks, and take advantage of quick access to both the city and O'Hare.

My Take

Park Ridge is one of the best all-around suburbs in Chicagoland. It offers a true downtown feel, excellent schools, beautiful housing stock, and unmatched convenience.

Ideal For

Families • city-to-suburb relocators • professionals • frequent travelers

Suburb: Evanston

Median Home Price: ~\$650K

Typical Property Taxes: \$8,000-\$20,000+

Schools: 9/10

Walkability: 10/10

Downtown Area: 10/10
Commute to Chicago: 10/10
Family Friendly: 8/10
Airport Access: 7/10

Living Here Feels Like

Evanston offers the perfect blend of city energy and suburban living. With lakefront access, Northwestern University, vibrant shopping districts, and excellent transit options, it attracts a wide variety of residents.

Vibe Tags

Walkable • Diverse • Lakefront • Academic • Vibrant

Housing Mix

Historic homes • condos • apartments • townhomes • luxury lakefront properties

Notable Landmarks

Northwestern University • Lighthouse Beach • Downtown Evanston • Central Street

Local Favorites

Found Kitchen & Social House • Oceanique • Campagnola • The Barn Steakhouse • Peckish Pig

Things To Do

Enjoy the lakefront, attend Northwestern events, explore local boutiques, dine downtown, and take advantage of CTA and Metra access into Chicago.

My Take

If you're looking for a suburb that feels the closest to city living while still offering more space and a strong community feel, Evanston is hard to beat.

Ideal For

Young professionals • families • academics • city lovers

Suburb: Naperville

Median Home Price: ~\$650K

Typical Property Taxes: \$8,000-\$15,000

Schools: 10/10

Walkability: 8/10

Downtown Area: 10/10

Commute to Chicago: 6/10

Family Friendly: 10/10

Airport Access: 6/10

Living Here Feels Like

Naperville is one of the most recognized suburbs in America, known for exceptional schools, a thriving downtown, beautiful neighborhoods, and strong community involvement.

Vibe Tags

Family-Friendly • Established • Community-Oriented • Walkable Downtown • High-Achieving

Housing Mix

Single-family homes • newer subdivisions • luxury homes • townhomes

Notable Landmarks

Riverwalk • Downtown Naperville • Centennial Beach • Naper Settlement

Local Favorites

Mesón Sabika • Santo Cielo • Allegory • Gia Mia • Catch 35

Things To Do

Walk the Riverwalk, enjoy downtown shopping and dining, attend seasonal festivals, explore parks, and take advantage of one of the most active community calendars in the region.

My Take

Naperville consistently ranks among the best places to live in America. It's especially appealing to families prioritizing schools, amenities, and long-term value.

Ideal For

Families • professionals • relocators seeking top-rated schools

Suburb: Elmhurst

Median Home Price: ~\$800K

Typical Property Taxes: \$10,000-\$18,000

Schools: 9/10

Walkability: 8/10

Downtown Area: 9/10

Commute to Chicago: 8/10

Family Friendly: 9/10

Airport Access: 9/10

Living Here Feels Like

Elmhurst combines a thriving downtown, beautiful neighborhoods, strong schools, and excellent transportation access. It offers many of the conveniences of city living while maintaining a distinctly suburban atmosphere.

Vibe Tags

Walkable • Family-Friendly • Convenient • Established • Upscale

Housing Mix

Historic homes • newer construction • luxury homes • townhomes

Notable Landmarks

Downtown Elmhurst • Wilder Park • Elmhurst Art Museum • York Theatre

Local Favorites

Victory Meat & Seafood • Roberto's Ristorante • Primos Locos • FFC Elmhurst District restaurants • Cottage Hill Station

Things To Do

Explore downtown, visit local museums, enjoy community festivals, spend time in the parks, and take advantage of easy Metra access.

My Take

Elmhurst has become one of the most sought-after suburbs for buyers looking for strong schools, a great downtown, and a convenient commute.

Ideal For

Families • professionals • city-to-suburb relocators

Suburb: Schaumburg

Median Home Price: ~\$450K

Typical Property Taxes: \$6,000-\$12,000

Schools: 8/10

Walkability: 5/10

Downtown Area: 6/10

Commute to Chicago: 7/10

Family Friendly: 8/10

Airport Access: 9/10

Living Here Feels Like

Schaumburg is a convenient, diverse suburb known for shopping, entertainment, corporate employers, and relatively affordable housing compared to many surrounding communities.

Vibe Tags

Convenient • Diverse • Affordable • Accessible • Active

Housing Mix

Single-family homes • condos • townhomes • subdivisions

Notable Landmarks

Woodfield Mall • Spring Valley Nature Center • Schaumburg Boomers Stadium • Topgolf

Local Favorites

Chicago Prime Italian • Wildfire • Shaw's Crab House • Perry's Steakhouse • Kuma's Corner

Things To Do

Shop at Woodfield Mall, enjoy entertainment venues, explore nature preserves, attend sporting events, and take advantage of easy highway access.

My Take

Schaumburg offers tremendous convenience and value. It's a great option for buyers seeking affordability without sacrificing amenities.

Ideal For

First-time buyers • professionals • families • commuters

Suburb: Skokie

Median Home Price: ~\$450K

Typical Property Taxes: \$7,000-\$12,000

Schools: 8/10

Walkability: 7/10

Downtown Area: 6/10

Commute to Chicago: 8/10

Family Friendly: 8/10

Airport Access: 8/10

Living Here Feels Like

Skokie offers a diverse community, strong park district, excellent shopping, and easy access to both Chicago and the North Shore.

Vibe Tags

Diverse • Convenient • Established • Community-Oriented • Accessible

Housing Mix

Ranch homes • split-levels • colonials • condos • townhomes

Notable Landmarks

Westfield Old Orchard • Emily Oaks Nature Center • Illinois Holocaust Museum • Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park

Local Favorites

Libertad • Pita Inn • Kaufman's Deli • Village Inn Pizzeria • Ascione

Things To Do

Shop at Old Orchard, explore local parks, visit museums, enjoy community events, and take advantage of convenient transportation options.

My Take

Skokie offers a lot of value, especially for buyers seeking convenient access to both the city and northern suburbs without North Shore pricing.

Ideal For

First-time buyers • families • commuters • relocators

Suburb: Niles

Median Home Price: ~\$400K

Typical Property Taxes: \$6,000-\$10,000

Schools: 7/10

Walkability: 6/10

Downtown Area: 5/10

Commute to Chicago: 8/10
Family Friendly: 8/10
Airport Access: 9/10

Living Here Feels Like

Niles is a practical, affordable suburb known for its convenience, accessibility, and strong sense of community. Residents appreciate its central location and proximity to shopping, transportation, and neighboring suburbs.

Vibe Tags

Affordable • Convenient • Established • Accessible • Family-Friendly

Housing Mix

Ranch homes • split-levels • brick single-family homes • condos • townhomes

Notable Landmarks

Leaning Tower of Niles • Golf Mill Shopping Area • Tam O'Shanter Golf Course • Pioneer Park

Local Favorites

Une Année Brewery • Kouklas • Renga Tei • Bringer Inn • Kabul House

Things To Do

Visit the Leaning Tower, explore local parks, golf, enjoy neighborhood restaurants, and take advantage of quick access to O'Hare and major expressways.

My Take

Niles is one of the most underrated suburbs in Chicagoland. It offers affordability, convenience, and a central location that's difficult to beat.

Ideal For

First-time buyers • downsizers • commuters • buyers seeking value

Want Suburbs Tailored to You?

If you send me these 3 things:

1. **Budget range** (rent or purchase price)
2. **Timeline** (month you want to be here)
3. **What you want your day-to-day to feel like**
(ex: “I want to walk to coffee + gym,” “I want calmer streets and top-rated schools,” “I want to be near the lake and easy commute to the city,” etc.)

...I'll send back **personalized suburb suggestions** and a starting list of areas to explore.

CONTACT ME TODAY

While this guide highlights some of the most popular and highly rated suburbs in the region, there are many other wonderful communities that may be an even better fit depending on your budget, commute, lifestyle preferences, and future plans.

That's where I can help.

As a Chicagoland Realtor® and member of the Urbane Home Team at @properties | Christie's International Real Estate, I combine local market expertise, strategic guidance, and a personalized approach to help my clients make confident real estate decisions. Our team closed over \$12.5 million in sales during the second half of 2025 alone, and we're committed to delivering exceptional service whether you're buying, selling, investing, or relocating.

Real estate is more than finding a house—it's finding the right place to build your life.

If you're considering a move and would like personalized recommendations based on your goals, I'd love to be a resource for you.


Let's find the suburb that feels like home.

— Jade Mosak

REALTOR®

Urbane Home Team | @properties Christie's International Real Estate

 Jademosak@atproperties.com

 312-843-2171

 <https://jadesellschicago.com/> (You can book a call with me directly through my website)

