

Commuter Parking and Access Work Plan 2019 Tasks

Goal: Modify the permit holder registration requirements and carpool program to eliminate the potential for secondhand permit transfers.

Permit holders are responsible for ensuring that their account information is current and are required to submit an Account Update Form when changes need to be made. Permit holders may include up to three Illinois license plates on their account; however, proof of the plates being registered to the permit holder's address is not required. In addition, the City offers a carpool program to encourage multiple-occupant vehicle trips to and from the stations. The program allows permit holders to designate up to two carpoolers on their accounts. Each carpooler can have three license plates listed, for a total of six additional plates per account. The intention of the program is that the permit holder would provide rides to other commuters who do not have a permit and that the carpools could use the permit in their own vehicles on the rare occasion that the permit holder does not drive to the station (i.e. when on vacation or traveling for business).

The lack of registration proof and the carpool program are key sources of secondhand permit transfers. To confirm this assumption, staff analyzed permit holder account information, collected carpool data and conducted audits of vehicles parked in the commuter lots.

Permit Holder Account Statistics

The City issues quarterly permits for three parking lots at the Naperville Metra Station (Parkview, Burlington, Kroehler) and the City's lot at the Route 59 Metra Station. The table below summarizes the percentage of permit holders in each lot that have carpools listed on their account. The Parkview and Burlington lots, which share a 14-year waitlist, have a high percentage of permit holders who have listed carpools on their accounts, at 41% and 33% respectively. The Kroehler lot, which has a 7-year waitlist, also has a significant percentage, at 17%, particularly when compared with Route 59 where there is no waitlist for quarterly permits.

	Parkview	Burlington	Kroehler	Route 59
No Carpool	59%	67%	83%	98%
1 Carpool	34%	27%	14%	2%
2 Carpools	7%	6%	3%	0%

Carpool Data

Metra periodically surveys commuters to determine transportation mode shares. Based on Metra's 2016 *Origin-Destination Survey*, carpool passengers comprise 3% of commuters and carpool drivers comprise 2% of commuters using the Naperville Metra Station. These numbers differ widely from the percentage of permit holders who have carpools listed on their account; therefore, staff collected data at the Naperville Metra Station to confirm the amount of carpool activity actually occurring.

On Tuesday, April 23, 2019, City staff counted vehicles parking at the Burlington and Parkview lots from 6:30 to 8:00 a.m. This time period represents the morning commuting peak and includes five express trains, including the four with the highest ridership. Of vehicles parking in the Parkview and Burlington lots, 5% and 6% respectively were observed to have multiple occupants. These numbers are more consistent with the Metra survey data than the actual number of permit holders with carpools on their accounts.

Vehicle Audits

Field audits of vehicles parked in the permit spaces of the commuter lots were conducted to gain an understanding of the extent to which permits are being used by someone other than the permit holder. Two audits were conducted on Wednesday, April 17, 2019 and Monday, April 29, 2019, during which 10 vehicles were randomly selected in each of the permit lots (Parkview, Burlington and Kroehler), for a total of 20 different vehicles in each. The permit hang tag number and license plate number for each vehicle were recorded and then compared for a match. The table below summarizes the results, indicating the percentage of plates that matched either the permit holder's or the carpool's license plate on file and the percentage where the license plate did not match any listed on the account.

	Parkview	Burlington	Kroehler
Permit Holder's Vehicle	15%	50%	85%
Carpool's Vehicle	50%	25%	15%
Vehicle not on Account	35%	25%	0%

The data supports that not requiring proof of vehicle plate registration for the permit holder and the carpool program are significant contributors to the proliferation of secondhand permit transfers. To address this, staff recommends the following tasks be completed during 2019:

- Require permit holders to submit vehicle registration information to demonstrate that vehicles included in the account are registered to their address.
- Eliminate the option to designate carpools through a commuter permit account.
- Establish a process to allow call-in exemptions for carpools to “borrow” the permit one time per quarter for a period of up to two weeks to encourage legitimate carpool activity.

These changes can be accomplished through a modification to the Commuter Parking Rules and Regulations.

Goal: Regularly audit permit holders to eliminate potential for secondhand permit transfers.

The Commuter Parking Rules and Regulations clearly state that permits are not transferable and that the City will periodically perform audits. Audits may come in the form of a field audit of the tag and license plates, as described in the preceding section,

or an audit of the permit holder information. When the permit holder information is audited, the City typically requests that the permit holder provide the necessary documentation in person. Audits are currently conducted on an as needed basis when suspicious activity is noted on an account. Staff recommends the following tasks be initiated during 2019:

- Conduct spot field audits each month by randomly selecting ten vehicles per Naperville Station parking lot. The hang tag and license plate for each vehicle will be noted and photographed, and the information will be reviewed for a match. Where a match does not occur, the permit holder will be notified that they need to submit an Account Update Form, and possibly appear in person to provide the required documentation. At such time that a vehicle is subject to a subsequent audit, and tag and plate match is not made, the permit will be revoked.
- If necessary based on the results of the spot audits, conduct a detailed audit of all vehicles parked in the lots on a quarterly basis.

As noted, the Commuter Parking Rules and Regulations provide for audits; therefore, the practice of increased auditing does not require any modifications to the Rules and Regulations. However, staff recommends that language be added to outline the audit process described above.

Goal: Improve permit offer acceptance rates by requiring active account management to discourage commuters from unnecessarily remaining on the waitlists.

Demand for quarterly permits for the Naperville Station lots exceeds the available supply; therefore, commuters must be placed on a waitlist prior to obtaining a permit. The City manages two waitlists: one for the Kroehler lot and a combined list for the Burlington and Parkview lots. Commuters may place their name on one or both of the waitlists by completing the Commuter Parking Permit Application and paying a non-refundable administrative fee. The fee is \$25 per waitlist. Following application and payment of the fee, commuters do not need to take any additional action to remain on the waitlists, with the exception of responding to the occasional waitlist audit.

City staff periodically conducts audits of the waitlists. The most recent audit was completed in 2016, during which staff audited both waitlists. Notices were provided to all waitlisted commuters requesting a response indicating whether they wanted to remain on the waitlist or not. Commuters who did not respond were sent additional correspondences. Commuters were removed from the waitlist either at their request in their response or if they did not respond after three correspondences from the City. The audit resulted in removing only 251 commuters from the waitlists and did not influence the waitlist times. The following table summarizes the number of commuters on the waitlists before and after the audit.

	Before Audit	After Audit
Burlington/Parkview List Only	841	681
Kroehler List Only	120	118
Both Lists	442	353
Total	1,403	1,152

Despite most commuters requesting to remain on the waitlist when audited, permit offer acceptance rates continue to average 80% or less. For offers made during 2016 through 2018, the average acceptance rates were 76% for the Burlington Lot, 80% for the Parkview Lot, and 74% for the Kroehler Lot.

To address this, staff recommends transitioning to active account management by the waitlisted commuters by completing the following tasks during 2019 and 2020:

- Conduct an audit in 2019 in advance of implementing an active account management requirement and include notification of new requirements.
- Require all waitlisted commuters to re-apply each year beginning in 2020. The commuter's position on the waitlist will be maintained if the application process is followed. The re-application process will be conducted in the fourth quarter each year to prepare for the first permit issuance of the following year.

These changes can be accomplished through a modification to the Commuter Parking Rules and Regulations.

Goal: Encourage higher utilization of the Route 59 Station.

The demand for quarterly permits for the City of Naperville lot at the Route 59 Metra Station is currently accommodated by the number of permit parking spaces available. The average occupancy of the permit spaces in the Route 59 lot during 2018 was 78%. Commuters can immediately obtain a permit for the Route 59 Station. They do not need to place their name on a waitlist first.

To encourage higher utilization of the Route 59 Station quarterly permit parking, staff recommends promoting the availability of permits to select waitlisted commuters. This would be accomplished through targeted communications to waitlisted commuters residing in close proximity to the Route 59 Station.

Goal: Implement technology to allow commuters to make space reservations online.

Commuters who choose to drive to the Naperville and Route 59 Metra Stations and park have two options: quarterly permit or daily fee parking. The long waitlists for quarterly permits for the Naperville Station, combined with higher utilization of daily fee spaces than permit spaces, demonstrate that the current options do not efficiently meet the needs of the commuter population. A new parking management program is needed to provide commuters better access to parking based on their commuting needs.

Parking technology is growing, and online reservations system have the potential to improve the City's commuter parking program. While some options exist today, it is important to first address the current operational issues and abuses so that legacy challenges are not brought into a new program. The tasks previously described are intended to address this. While these improvements are underway during 2019, staff recommends that available reservation technology be researched and evaluated.

Goal: Emphasize multi-modal access to the Naperville Station.

Public transit within Naperville is provided by Pace Suburban Bus. Pace operates 11 commuter feeder routes that provide service between the Naperville Metra Station and various residential neighborhoods during peak commuting times. Pace also operates 3 feeder routes that provide direct express service between the Route 59 Metra Station and the City's park-n-rides during peak commuting times.

According to Metra's 2016 *Origin-Destination Survey*, 11% of commuters using the Naperville Station and 5% of the commuters using the Route 59 Station use Pace Bus as their primary means of access. Public transit is an important mode of access that provides commuters an alternative to personal vehicle use for longer trips and reduces the number of single-occupant vehicle trips within the station areas and on the roadways to and from the stations. Staff recommends the following tasks to encourage a growth in Pace ridership:

- Promote City programs that compliment bus use, such as the Guaranteed Ride Home Program.
- Work with Pace to market available services, particularly on routes experiencing declining ridership.