

MEMORANDUM

Date:

September 23, 2010

DRAFT

Re:

West Loop Parking Study – Memorandum No. 3
Refined Parking Management Strategies

This memorandum presents potential parking management strategies for the West Loop study area. The purpose of the West Loop Parking Study, and current parking conditions in the study area, were defined and described in Memorandum No. 1, dated February 17, 2010. Proposed strategies were initially described in Memorandum No. 2, dated June 2, 2010. The initial strategies were developed in response to existing physical conditions, extensive data collection regarding current on-street parking supply and use patterns, and community feedback collected during the first phase of the study and documented in detail in Memorandum No. 1. The strategies were refined based upon City feedback, and an additional discussion regarding implementation was developed. These potential strategies will be presented to the community-at-large at an upcoming community meeting, after which final recommendations can be documented to address parking management in the West Loop study area.

A variety of strategies are described in this memorandum, with the intention of establishing a “toolkit” of sorts that will assist the City in addressing the unique hybrid nature of the West Loop neighborhood. The neighborhood is experiencing an evolution to more mixed use, and needs regarding parking management will continue to evolve over time. The pending addition of the new Morgan Street Green Line station may also have an impact on parking use patterns in the study area. This station offers residents and area employees another transit option.

The “fixed” nature of on-street parking restrictions will need to be monitored and adjusted over time to effectively address ever-changing conditions. At present, the primary issue is the appropriate allocation of existing on-street capacity, so it can be used by those with a legitimate need for it in reasonably convenient locations. As redevelopment activity continues, the issue of limited on-street parking capacity may emerge as well. For this reason, more long-term strategies with regard to increasing off-street capacity and reducing on-street parking demand are also discussed.

Many of the strategies and future considerations described herein will require cooperation among City departments, delegate agencies, partner agencies and/or private property owners. Generally speaking, these strategies and considerations address establishing improved mechanisms by which to manage the existing on-street parking supply and increasing the supply of available parking over time. The development and application of several of these initiatives goes beyond the consultant’s scope for the West Loop Parking Study, but they are mentioned as potential components of a broader long-term strategy to better utilize the supply of on-street parking.

This memorandum contains five sections, as follows:

- A. **Parking Management Principles** are presented to provide a rationale for policies, which form the basis for the development of strategies;
- B. **Partners in Parking Management** are discussed to highlight the need for close and ongoing collaboration between City departments and local stakeholders;
- C. **Administrative and Enforcement Considerations** are outlined as a potential determinant of which strategies might be most appropriate to encourage desirable on-street parking patterns;
- D. **Parking Management Strategies** are proposed to address issues associated with parking meters, parking permit zones and posted parking restrictions, providing a “toolkit” of solutions for application in the study area; and
- E. **Potential Future Considerations** are included to supplement the strategies recommended for immediate action, acknowledging the dynamic nature of the study area and the need for ongoing assessment of parking management needs.

A. Parking Management Principles

The following *Parking Management Principles* have been developed for the West Loop to provide a basis for the implementation of *Parking Management Strategies* in both the short term and the long term. As the West Loop neighborhood continues to evolve over time- well after the adoption of the West Loop Parking Study recommendations- these Principles will continue to aid in determining how and where to apply strategies, and whether the development of new strategies may be warranted.

1. **Parking Prioritization:** In a neighborhood as diverse as the West Loop, the needs of those who live, work, attend school, patronize businesses and visit civic amenities within the neighborhood must be carefully balanced. The needs of these users will be prioritized over those who park in the West Loop when their destination lies outside the neighborhood. In a neighborhood with competing demands for a limited supply of on-street parking, thoughtful parking management is essential for effective utilization.
2. **Effective Parking Management:** City efforts to manage on-street parking in the West Loop will seek to:
 - a. Provide appropriate parking policies that address issues pertinent to the area,
 - b. Enact these policies “on the ground” in a thoughtful manner,
 - c. Clearly communicate parking policies to drivers,
 - d. Enforce the policies put in place, and
 - e. Proactively respond to changing conditions as they arise.
3. **Area-Specific Parking Policies:** Parking management policies appropriate for the West Loop are those that will:
 - a. Promote rational choices among users about where to park, how long to park and whether one would choose to drive to the West Loop,

- b. Encourage the regular turnover of spaces in commercial and institutional areas during periods of high customer and visitor traffic,
 - c. Provide for the longer-term parking needs of local employees (primarily daytime),
 - d. Provide for both the short-term and longer-term parking needs of local residents (both daytime and night-time),
 - e. Ensure that available space is used as effectively as possible to meet varying local parking demand over the course of the day, and
 - f. Be readily enforceable in as efficient and effective manner as possible.
4. **Parking Space Allocation:** The supply of on-street parking in the West Loop is finite, while parking demands are ever-evolving. Available parking supply should be rationally allocated, while acknowledging that public on-street parking will not fully meet the parking demands generated within the West Loop.
- a. The City of Chicago plays a critical role in supporting: *vibrant business activity in designated commercial areas; accessible and livable residential neighborhoods; and strong civic and institutional uses*. Effective parking management that provides for reasonable availability and turnover of on-street parking is vital to this effort, in conjunction with efforts to make activity centers more accessible by multiple modes of travel.
 - b. The City of Chicago also plays a critical role in facilitating the creation of *additional off-street parking* to better serve the needs of all users in the West Loop, through a combination of development policies that ensure an adequate supply of private off-street parking to meet demands generated by new development, and partnerships or financial incentives to increase the supply of publicly accessible off-street parking as opportunities arise.
5. **Restricted / Special Use Parking:** Assigning use restrictions to specific on-street parking spaces- in the form of loading zones, standing zones or permit zones- restricts their use by the general public. The privilege of having a public parking space assigned to a special user type or purpose should be granted only with a commensurate commitment by the user to:
- a. Use the space only for its special purpose,
 - b. Make the space available for broader community use during periods when it is not needed for its special purpose,
 - c. Regularly demonstrate a continuing need to reserve the space from the public supply, and
 - d. Pay a user fee commensurate to the privilege being granted.

B. Partners in Parking Management

Partners in the effort to implement appropriate parking management policies in the West Loop study area could include:

- Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Chicago Department of Community Development (DCD)
- Chicago Department of Revenue
- Ward offices (2nd and 27th)
- West Loop Community Organization (WLCO)

- Local stakeholders (Property owners, businesses, residents, institution representatives)
- Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)
- Chicago Police Department (CPD)
- Chicago Parking Meters, LLC (parking meter concessionaire)

C. Administrative and Enforcement Considerations

The West Loop study area, like all City neighborhoods, is continually evolving. Developing a “one-time” solution to respond to a dynamic situation will quickly become obsolete. Equally important to understand is that the current parking controls do not reflect current West Loop neighborhood parking needs. Thus there is a need for appropriate policy tools to be available, and an appropriate process to be in place, to better facilitate a response to parking management needs currently and on an ongoing basis. The practices and procedures described in this section are intended to provide an outline and framework from which the City could develop a more complete administrative program to facilitate implementation of West Loop parking recommendations, and to ensure enforcement of restrictions.

Administrative Recommendations

Ongoing parking management in the West Loop, including consideration of any proposed changes, should follow an established procedure as generally described below:

1. CDOT, in coordination with other City departments and the Ward offices, will maintain and modify as needed the available “toolbox” of parking management strategies. This will include initiating modifications to the municipal code to incorporate the parking management strategies included in this report, and considering future additions or modifications as needs arise to ensure that a comprehensive and reasonably flexible array of tools are available.
2. DCD will coordinate with CDOT regarding the potential on-street parking management implications of proposed developments in the West Loop neighborhood, so that appropriate City-initiated adjustments to on-street parking restrictions can be developed, implemented, and updated as appropriate. CDOT, upon the advice of DCD, will determine the potential need to adjust parking management strategies to reflect evolving land use patterns in the study area as a result of new development.
3. The Department of Revenue will review any requests related to parking meters, coordinate with Chicago Parking LLC, and conduct revenue impact assessments as appropriate, in order to advise CDOT and DCD whether requests that would modify, add or eliminate metered parking in the West Loop neighborhood can be accommodated.
4. The CTA and/or CPD will be asked to review any requests which would impact existing posted parking restrictions (such as bus standing zones or rush hour restrictions), to determine whether adjustments can be made to accommodate the request.
5. The Ward office(s) will consider all applications received, make a preliminary determination of appropriateness, and forward on to CDOT for a full assessment. Upon CDOT approval after necessary departmental reviews, the Ward office(s) will initiate the established City Council ordinance approval process.

It is important to note that any partner should be enabled to initiate a proposed parking management change in the West Loop neighborhood. CDOT, DCD, Revenue, CPD or the CTA

may identify needed adjustments to on-street parking management as a result of new development or other changes in the West Loop. WLCO or other local stakeholders may also identify parking management changes to submit for City review.

Any applicant will provide to the Ward office a request for a change to existing on-street parking restrictions which includes, at a minimum, the following documentation:

1. A specific indication of the location(s) of the requested change;
2. Documentation of current on-street parking conditions and regulatory restrictions in the affected area;
3. An explanation of the requested action;
4. A description of the issue the requested action seeks to address, and why the change will improve localized on-street parking conditions;
5. Documentation of the net change to the number of on-street parking spaces, and of what types, resulting from the request; and
6. A demonstration of how the Parking Management Principles are better achieved by the proposed change.

The appropriate Ward office will review the request and, if it supports such request, will forward the submitted documentation on to CDOT for review and assessment. CDOT will determine whether or not the request can be approved and undertaken administratively or will require City Council action. Appropriate City departments and other agencies will review and comment on applications as noted above, and forward comments to CDOT for consideration.

Enforcement Recommendations

Each parking management strategy type has unique enforcement considerations which must be weighed against their potential impacts on business operations, revenue, and safety. Metered parking, permit parking and posted parking restriction options are all addressed within this memorandum, and are each discussed briefly below.

Meters should be consistently enforced to influence driver behavior over time, with emerging technologies making meters the most readily enforced management strategy. Ideally, the City and parking meter concessionaire/leaseholder should coordinate efforts to implement the use of GIS-enabled handheld technology for enforcement, to enable tracking of vehicles that are abusing time limits and/or circumventing meter restrictions by paying for additional time without moving their vehicle.

Proper use of permit zones should also be consistently enforced to influence driver behavior over time. Diligent control of the release of parking passes is important, but should also be matched by monitoring of use of the permit zones, to ensure that those who have paid for the privilege of using permit spaces have access to them. For the most part, however, the City could rely upon permit holders to bring violators to their attention.

Consistent enforcement is especially critical to the effectiveness of posted parking restrictions. The enforcement burden is directly related to the extent and/or complexity of the posted time limitations. For example, a posted time limit that is in effect at all times is much harder to enforce than a parking ban in place during a defined time period during the day. Equally important are: 1) regularly re-assessing the need for the restrictions, with adjustments made as

appropriate to meet evolving neighborhood needs; and 2) educating local residents, business owners and employees about the appropriate use of restricted areas (for example, clarifying that per the current municipal code, loading zones are to be available for use by all businesses on the block).

In short, parking management efforts will only be as effective as the enforcement that impacts driver compliance with the restrictions.

D. Parking Management Strategies

Parking Management Strategies that should be applied in the West Loop are described in this section. Most of these strategies are immediate “action items” which can be pursued under existing authority granted by the municipal code. Application of some of the strategies may require changes to City parking policies.

1. **Expansion and Refinement of Metered Parking:** Parking meters can dramatically impact on-street parking behavior while being relatively efficient to monitor for violations. Parking meters are most appropriate for areas in which a high rate of turnover is encouraged. For this reason, parking meters are most appropriate for use near clusters of retail, restaurant and service activity. However, effective use of parking meters goes beyond simply deciding where to place meters. Variable time limits and variable rates can and should be utilized in order to encourage desired parking patterns and behaviors while allowing for user flexibility.

Chicago parking meters are making the transition from traditional coin-operated individual meters to a “pay and display” pay box format as part of city-wide parking meter management under the City’s lease agreement. Potential changes to meter locations, rates and periods of enforcement will have to be assessed by the City based on the net revenue impact to the parking concessionaire/leaseholder on a city-wide basis. Changes in the West Loop study area can potentially off-set, or be off-set by, concurrent changes made in other areas.

Meter expansion strategies recommended for application in the West Loop study area are described below. These changes would ideally be implemented concurrently with the posted parking restrictions described in the next section, to most effectively impact parking behavior.

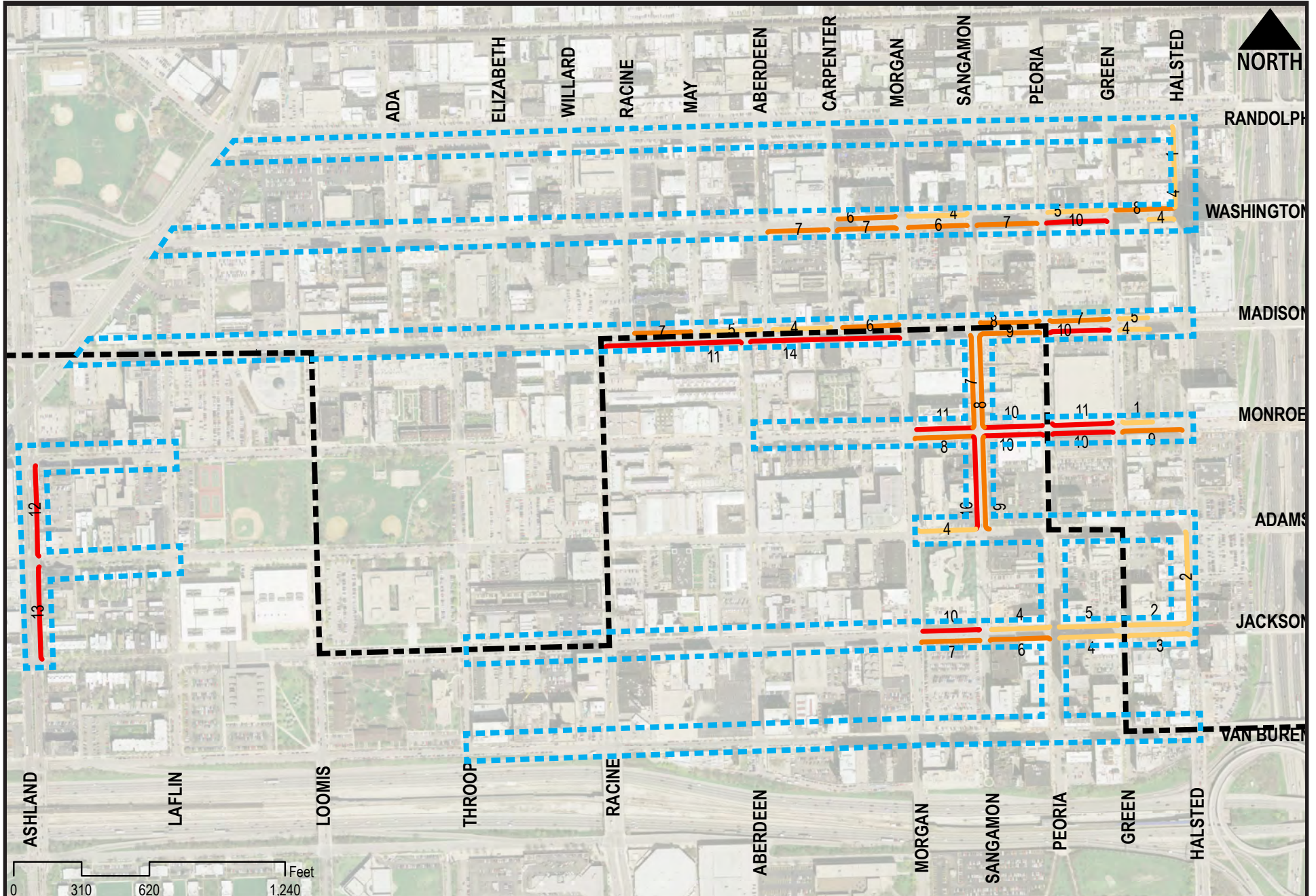
- a. **Expansion of Meter Coverage and Use of Graduated Rates:** Meters should be installed on streets with ground floor commercial activity, and on select adjacent side streets (usually extending up to one-half block off of the commercial street). Side street installation is recommended primarily if rush hour restrictions or other public safety needs displace on-street parking on the primary commercial street; decisions regarding the installation of meters on side streets should be made with sensitivity to potential impacts of “cruising” traffic during busy periods. Meters should also be installed in select locations within walking distance to areas of commercial activity, institutional uses and other generators of employee and visitor traffic. Meters should have at least a three-hour time limit during business hours, but charge steadily increasing “graduated rates”

beyond the first hour, as most business patrons typically need not park for an extended period of time. These spaces will therefore be encouraged to turn over regularly, while still providing the option of longer duration parking for an increased cost. See [Figure 1](#) for general locations where meter coverage could potentially be expanded (overlaid on the locations of meters that were in place already in January 2009). Meters installed in expansion areas would likely be meters available for relocation from other areas within the 2nd or 27th Wards, respectively.

- b. **Extended Hours of Meter Operation:** All meters, both existing and new, should remain in operation whenever there is potential business or institutional activity, including evenings and weekends, to encourage parking turnover during peak activity periods. As the parking meter concessionaire/leaseholder converts existing meters to “pay and display” extended enforcement hours are already being implemented city-wide that extend meter hours until at least 9:00pm (and to 24-hour operation in some other neighborhoods), and from six-day to seven-day operation. West Loop meters should remain in effect until at least 9:00pm (as they are currently), and later in areas where restaurants and businesses operate until later in the evening. Free parking in metered spaces after business hours will facilitate overnight parking by West Loop residents and their guests. Consideration should also be given to starting meter enforcement later than 8:00am on blocks with a significant number of residential units to further facilitate overnight parking by residents and guests.
2. **Posted Restrictions in “Pilot Areas”:** In areas of currently unrestricted parking which are being utilized heavily by day trippers, it is recommended that a two-hour parking ban period be established in several “pilot areas” which would effectively prevent parking by those whose destination is elsewhere (presumably the Loop) and make the spaces more readily available for those who live and work in the study area. The posted restrictions would seek to have an effect similar to a permit zone in that they would effectively reserve the spaces for those with a legitimate need to park on-street overnight and during the day, without the additional administrative burden of creating and monitoring a permit zone.

It is recommended that these areas have posted restrictions that ban parking between 10:00am and 12:00pm on one side of the street, and between 12:30pm and 2:30pm on the other side of the street. In this way, parkers whose ultimate destination is a workplace outside the study area would be prevented from utilizing the spaces. Local residents and employees, however, could utilize the spaces if they made arrangements to move their vehicles during mid-day (most likely during their lunch break), or only need to park during the morning or afternoon period. In addition, those coming in to the area by car during the lunch hour to patronize local restaurants would be encouraged to utilize metered spaces. Enforcement would consist of twice-daily sweeps to ticket violators during the ban periods. See [Figure 2](#) for general locations where these “Pilot Areas” could potentially be established. In areas with unique conditions, local stakeholders could work with CDOT to determine different restriction periods, if an overlapping time period other than during the lunch hour was determined to be more appropriate.

Figure 1: Proposed Meter Expansion Locations



<p>WEST LOOP PARKING STUDY</p>	<p>LEGEND</p> <p>Existing Meters</p> <p>1 - 5 6 - 9 10 - 16</p> <p>Illustrates the total number of restricted parking spaces that are restricted by meters (as of January 2009).</p> <p>Proposed Locations for Expanded Meter Coverage</p> <p>Ward Boundary</p>	<p>DRAFT</p> <p>Sept 23, 2010</p> <p>HNTB</p> <p>CDOT</p> <p>CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION</p>
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Ideally these posted restrictions would be implemented in conjunction with the new meters proposed immediately above to most accurately assess the impact on parking behavior. It is important to note that both the “pilot areas” and surrounding streets that continue to have unrestricted spaces would need to be monitored both before the restrictions are put in place and after they have been in place for a reasonable period, in order to understand their effectiveness and determine whether this solution is sufficient to make more on-street parking available for local businesses and residents ([Figure 2](#) also depicts suggested monitoring areas). If the effectiveness of these restrictions is in question after the pilot implementation period, other potential solutions can be considered (see Potential Future Considerations). If the restrictions appear to be working well, the strategy could then be expanded onto additional streets in the West Loop.

3. **Adjustments to Other Posted Restrictions:** Loading, standing, police parking and other restrictive zones are currently used throughout the City to “reserve” on-street parking spaces for specific user types through the use of posted time or vehicle type limitations. These restrictions fulfill the need for short-term parking availability in close proximity to specific destinations, or address public safety needs for restricting on-street parking in specific areas. Unique parking solutions may be appropriate in the immediate proximity of schools, parks, police stations and other significant activity generators or uses with unique security concerns.

These types of restrictions, in particular, must be *regularly and consistently enforced* in order to be effective at influencing driver behavior and fulfilling their intended purpose. Data collected during the first phase of the West Loop Parking Study suggests that in many areas of the West Loop, posted parking restrictions are regularly violated, and may in some cases be obsolete. Data was not collected with regard to how effectively violations are identified and ticketed by the City. Posted parking restrictions that are not monitored for appropriateness or enforced are only slightly more effective at influencing driver behavior than unrestricted parking.

As parking restrictions are defined and applied, consideration should be given to the enforcement implications of the restrictions, to ensure that the enforcement burden can be effectively handled. For example, a 24 hour parking restriction has broader implications for enforcement needs than a restriction that identifies a shorter time span during which a daily “sweep” can be conducted to curb violations, but which also may effectively prevent the long-term parking activity the restriction is seeking to discourage. In any event, the number of spaces reserved for specific users should be minimized in favor of broader access to on-street parking, except where a need for the reservation can be clearly demonstrated.

Other strategies recommended for application in the West Loop study area include the following:

- a. **Loading / Standing Zones:** Existing loading and standing zones should be regularly audited, with renewal required about every two years with a demonstration of continuing need. If property ownership changes, the new owner should be required to re-apply for the zone. An appropriate annual or bi-annual charge for loading and standing zones should be applied to all property

owners who benefit from it, commensurate with the value of the scarce public asset being reserved for limited use. Property owners who can develop cooperative agreements with adjacent businesses to consolidate and share zones will then benefit by sharing in the cost of creating and maintaining the zone. Additionally, zones should be approved at a lower cost if the area is only reserved for limited time periods; for example, overnight permit parking might be allowed if the zone is clear by a designated time in the morning, and/or permit parking might be allowed after a designated time each day to provide for loading activity only in the morning. The Department of Revenue is already considering raising the cost of loading zones to be commensurate with the lost potential meter revenue for each space reserved for loading use.

- b. **Pick-Up / Drop-Off Zones:** Designate a limited area as a drop-off lane adjacent to entrances to parks, schools, police stations and other municipal facilities where activity levels warrant pedestrian safety measures. Upon the request of institutional uses within the study area, consider the creation or expansion of pick-up / drop-off areas for private facilities which can demonstrate a need based on facility operations. Such facilities could include significant traffic and activity generators such as the McDermott Center, Merit School of Music and Hubbard Street Dance Company. To the extent feasible, locate pick-up / drop-off zones within permit zones, identify time periods during which activity is allowed to occur, and enable permit holders to utilize the area for parking at other times.
 - c. **Cab / Valet Zones:** Work with local property owners to verify the need for both existing and new cab / valet zones, designate as limited an area as feasible, and consolidate zones within each block face to be shared between nearby businesses.
 - d. **Bus Standing Zones:** In conjunction with the CTA, review all existing bus standing zones to determine if any can be potentially consolidated, reduced in size or eliminated based upon current and forecasted transit service levels.
 - e. **Rush Hour Restrictions:** Complete the ongoing CDOT review of all existing posted rush hour restrictions. Expand, contract, modify or eliminate existing rush hour restrictions as appropriate based on the outcome of this review.
4. **Facilitate More Efficient Use of Existing Off-Street Parking Capacity:** CDOT, the Aldermanic offices and/or WLCO should pursue or “broker” mutually beneficial partnerships with the owners of private off-street parking lots to increase their utilization rate. WLCO might consider creating a “Parking Task Force” comprised of interested members to undertake this ongoing coordination effort to increase off-street parking capacity for both employees and event visitors. Actions could potentially include the following:
- a. Public or private shuttle services between remote lots (such as at the United Center) and the Loop and/or West Loop destinations (including special events at Harpo Studios, Hubbard Street Dance, and the Merit School of Music) should be considered, as a means to reduce the pressure on on-street parking capacity by employees and event visitors.

- b. Union Halls in the western portion of the West Loop study area could consider charging a reasonable daily/weekly/monthly fee to allow both local and Loop employees to park off-street.
 - c. The WLCO or Aldermanic offices could coordinate or facilitate provision of a valet service for business patrons in high-activity areas.
 - d. The WLCO or Aldermanic offices could help identify opportunities for off-street parking lots to be used by local employees during the daytime, and restaurants and/or event venues during evenings and weekends.
5. **Increase Enforcement Efforts and Cost of Infractions:** A key element of parking management will be consistent enforcement. As new strategies are applied, the City should be sensitive to the implications for enforcement- in some areas a “sweep” several times daily to identify violators may be warranted, and in others the City might rely solely on responding to 311 reports of violators. The use of emerging GIS-enabled handheld technology, including license plate recognition software, could streamline and improve enforcement efforts.

Enforcement efforts and fines should seek to alter driver behavior. If on-street parking spaces are reasonably allocated and controlled, parking policies are readily apparent to drivers, and the cost of infractions is high enough to exceed the cost of parking legally elsewhere, the number of violations should diminish over time. Coupled with the planned increases in meter rates already in process by the concessionaire, increasing the cost of fines for some or all parking infractions may also induce more potential drivers to utilize public transit.

6. **Proactively Manage Parking in Partnership with the Community:** Institutions, both public and private, within the West Loop study area should be required to develop and present a complete plan for meeting their own parking needs, drop-off needs and security needs with a minimal impact on on-street parking capacity in order to merit special consideration for posted parking restrictions.

In addition, regular coordination with the Chicago Transit Authority should occur with regard to the continuing need for bus standing zones and/or rush hour restrictions which constrain the on-street parking supply. The potential long-term impacts of CTA initiatives such as bus rapid transit (BRT) or other service upgrades should be carefully reviewed for their potential impact on the on-street parking supply.

7. **Improve Communications and Marketing Efforts:** To encourage more effective use of available parking and transit options, the following initiatives could be undertaken by the City and/or WLCO:
- a. Install coordinated and improved informational signage regarding parking restrictions and locations of available off-street parking.
 - b. Publicize information on bike routes, bike parking facilities, carpooling and car-sharing options, public transit and shuttle services in a user-friendly brochure format that businesses can hand out to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation. This could be provided in conjunction with a West Loop map and business directory.

- c. Encourage local businesses and institutions to make CTA “bus tracker” displays available in their storefronts adjacent to bus stops, to facilitate use of public transit.
 - d. Educate community stakeholders about issues related to on-street parking on an ongoing basis, so that they become effective “eyes and ears” throughout the West Loop study area that will bring emerging issues and constructive solutions to the attention of policy-makers through regular communication with WLCO and the Ward offices.
8. **Support Sustainable Practices:** The City should engage in or support a variety of initiatives to reduce overall parking demand, as part of the City’s ongoing commitment to environmentally friendly policies and practices. These City efforts could include the following:
- a. Work with partner agencies to promote the use of public transportation and other environmentally friendly modes of transportation, including walking and bicycling.
 - b. In select metered areas, preferred spaces and/or reduced meter rates could apply for car-sharing vehicles (such as I-Go vehicles), carpool vehicles (such as Pace vans), hybrid vehicles, SmartCars, motorcycles and scooters. Similarly, reduced permit costs for such vehicles could be implemented in permit zones. Encouraging the use of carpooling options, car-sharing and smaller vehicles will indirectly result in reduced on-street parking demand in the City over time.

E. Potential Future Considerations

Additional potential responses to on-street parking needs that could be applied in the West Loop at a later time are described in this section. These strategies would require changes to the municipal code, and/or new administrative procedures. After the effectiveness of implementation of the Parking Management Strategies described in the previous section has been assessed, and if further action in some or all areas is warranted, these strategies should be considered. Moving forward with these initiatives would require identifying a “champion” to take on the additional administrative burden inherent with each. However, given the unique and ever-changing nature of the West Loop, such actions may be found to be warranted in the future to more fundamentally address the on-street parking management issues in the West Loop.

1. **Establish a West Loop Special Service Area or Parking Management District:** Working with the West Loop Community Organization (WLCO) and Ward offices, the City of Chicago could pursue creation of a Special Service Area (SSA) or Parking Management District (PMD) that encompasses some or all of the West Loop study area. While some communities utilize a “Parking Benefit District” model in which local parking meter and/or enforcement revenues are redirected for reinvestment in local improvements, the citywide meter lease precludes this option in Chicago. Instead, funding for local management of parking issues would need to be provided by a property tax assessment on some or all properties within the defined SSA or PMD.

The special assessment within the West Loop study area could potentially be applied to leasing and operating off-street parking lots and/or providing valet services. A SSA could provide a funding mechanism to pursue broader objectives also related to marketing the West Loop and pursuing streetscape improvements, while a Parking

Management District would have a more defined role related directly to parking issues. The WLCO or a newly created delegate agency could take on these new responsibilities.

2. **Metered Parking:** Additional new meters or further adjustments to installed meters should be considered on an ongoing basis, based on performance and revenue patterns and to reflect emerging concentrations of retail and service activity in the West Loop. It is anticipated that a gradual expansion of metered parking to the west will be warranted as retail and service uses continue to increase.
3. **Posted Restrictions:** Expansion of posted mid-day restrictions beyond the initial “pilot areas” should be considered based on a follow-up assessment to determine whether day-tripper use is effectively discouraged, and on positive local stakeholder feedback. If the posted restrictions are found to not adequately address local needs and concerns, the strategies that follow below should be considered.
4. **Establish a “Mixed Use” Permit Zone and Refine Permit Procedures:** Parking permit zones are located throughout the City to “reserve” on-street parking spaces for specific user types through the use of residential or industrial permit zones, fulfilling the need for longer-duration parking for nearby residents or industrial employees. Both permit types are already in use in the West Loop in the very limited locations that qualify under current City policy. The fact that so few areas within the study area qualify for residential or industrial permit zones reflects the unique nature of the West Loop - and strongly suggests that meeting the on-street parking needs of mixed use neighborhoods such as the West Loop warrants the creation of one or more new permit types.

No street in the West Loop study area can truly be considered a “residential street”, where resident-only parking all day every day is an appropriate or effective policy solution. However, the need to maintain adequate access to on-street parking for residents and visitors to residential properties is important to maintaining a livable neighborhood. It is important to note that “urban” living in a dense environment is a lifestyle choice in which there should be an expectation that residents will incur a cost – or inconvenience – associated with limited public goods such as on-street parking, and that residents and visitors may often have to park some distance from their ultimate destination. West Loop residents face the choice of investing in high-priced private off-street parking options, or taking a chance that a convenient on-street parking space will be available when and where they desire it.

To assist in more effective utilization of available resources, the type and location of parking permit zones should be expanded and strategically applied in the West Loop area, to include the following:

- a. **Mixed Use Permit Zones:** Establish a new “Mixed Use” permit zone type to more effectively address the “hybrid” nature of neighborhoods such as the West Loop, by meeting the parking needs of both local residents (primarily in the evenings and on weekends) and local employees (primarily during weekdays). These zones would allow for residents or business owners to purchase a parking permit to post in a personal vehicle. Provide an array of potential permit type options to best meet local needs. For example, a potential continuum of options could include:

- i. Allow both resident and business owner parking anytime. Guests, employees and clients would rely on parking spaces outside the permit zone.
- ii. Allow resident parking anytime and business owner parking during weekdays only. Guests, employees and clients would rely on parking spaces outside the permit zone.
- iii. Allow parking by all permitted users anytime- residents and documented guest parking, and business owner and documented employee/client parking.
- iv. Allow resident and documented guest parking anytime, and business owner and documented employee/client parking during weekdays only.

The appropriate enforcement periods and allowable quantity of permits and guest passes should be determined on a case-by-case basis to reflect potentially unique conditions within each requested permit zone.

Consideration should be given to adding one or more Mixed Use permit types if an assessment of the “pilot areas” that receive posted restrictions indicates that a more closely managed solution is warranted. However, the City would need to assess potential City-wide implications prior to Council action to create a new permit type that could be applied for by stakeholders in other neighborhoods, as well.

- b. **Residential Permit Zones:** Assess the current residential zones for continued applicability; stakeholder feedback indicated some permit areas restricted to resident parking only are often empty. If existing conditions have changed significantly, it may be appropriate to remove the existing zones and require re-application by current property owners. There are few if any locations within the West Loop study area where parking spaces should be restricted for resident use only all day, every day. In all likelihood, making parking spaces available on a controlled basis to other legitimate user types during weekdays, in particular, is appropriate.
- c. **Industrial Permit Zones:** Assess the current industrial zones for continued applicability. If existing conditions have changed, remove the existing zones and require re-application by current property owners. There are few if any locations within the West Loop study area where parking spaces should be restricted for industrial-related use only all day, every day. In all likelihood, making parking spaces available on a controlled basis to other legitimate user types during off-peak periods, in particular, is appropriate.
- d. **Permit Zone Administration:** Establish an appropriate application process and regular monitoring of all permit zone parking compliance, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - i. Require annual application for all zone permits by residents and business owners, to ensure the permit zones are only being used by current and eligible residents and business owners who can provide proof of property ownership or a current business lease located within the zone, and proof

of a current City vehicle sticker. In existing residential permit areas, this is already required.

- ii. Establish an appropriate pricing structure, which reflects the value of gaining preferential access to a highly sought after public asset, while reflecting price sensitivity of living wage employees in the West Loop. Depending on the size and capacity of the permit zone, also consider limiting the number of vehicle permits issued and distributing them on a first-come, first-served basis in zones where demand exceeds supply.
- iii. Release a limited quantity of guest/employee/client passes to each permit holder, based on the size and parking capacity of the permit zone and their demonstrated need. For example, each resident could be issued one or two transferable guest passes to be displayed in guests' vehicles (currently, residents in permit zones can purchase up to 30 passes every 30 days at a cost of \$8 for 15 passes). Business owners should be required to provide proof of current employment for employees for whom vehicle passes are being purchased. The cost of guest/employee/client passes should also reflect the value of preferential access to on-street parking, with guest and client parking passes in particular being commensurate to the cost of occasional use of parking meters. Business owners can then make an individual determination as to whether they will subsidize employee/client parking costs or require reimbursement for use of the passes.

5. **Establish Parking Management Zones:** *Parking Management Zones* (PMZs) have been defined for the West Loop and are described in this section and depicted in the attached Figure. The mapping of PMZs in the study area would provide a framework within which appropriate restrictions could be identified and applied for the 72% of on-street spaces (2,580 spaces) that are currently unrestricted, along with considering potential adjustments to existing restrictions on the 28% of on-street spaces that are currently restricted (1,010 spaces).

For the sake of discussion, there is a “continuum” of potential responses to the challenge of assigning parking management strategies in the West Loop, including (but not limited to):

- A “business as usual” scenario in which parking restrictions are not changed. Previous research undertaken in the first phase of this study has borne out the concerns of the community with maintaining this scenario, however.
- An “all meters” scenario, in which all currently unrestricted parking spaces are metered, potentially with varying rates and enforcement periods applied. In some areas of the West Loop, however, meters are not the optimal strategy to support optimal use patterns.
- An “all permits” scenario, in which all currently unrestricted parking spaces are subject to permit restrictions. While significantly increasing the administrative burden on Aldermanic offices, this approach would also not best support optimal use patterns in several areas.
- An “all posted restrictions” scenario, in which all currently unrestricted parking spaces are subject to posted user or time duration limits. While significantly

increasing the enforcement burden on the City, this approach would also not best support optimal use patterns in several areas.

- Implementing the existing WLCO proposal, which would provide for a combination of meters (on east-west streets) and residential permits (on north-south streets). While acknowledging the need for a combination of strategies, this approach also has limitations with regard to currently allowed permit types and the need to address both the contrast in land use patterns across the study area and the need to accommodate local employee parking.

The range of options presented above serves to highlight that a “middle ground” solution is needed; a solution in which a variety of existing and new parking management approaches are applied across the study area, in a manner that can be monitored and adjusted as appropriate over time.

The PMZs described below share common parking needs and challenges; a unique subset of strategies should be applied in each zone to address these needs and challenges. The new and/or existing strategies to apply in each PMZ type may include parking meters, parking permit zones and/or posted parking restrictions. There are very limited instances in the West Loop where the on-street parking supply serves only one user type; nearly all are mixed in use but characterized by a dominant use that defines the area and its operation. The PMZ approach offers a combination of thoughtfully applied parking strategies most appropriate in these varying West Loop land use character areas.

From an administrative standpoint, it is recommended that CDOT establish and maintain a PMZ map for the West Loop study area, which would serve as a guide for CDOT and the Ward offices in considering parking restrictions requested or applied for by community stakeholders. The Implementation Matrix and Criteria for Application described further below would then provide guidance as to the appropriateness of each request, and allow for a balance of on-street parking types to be maintained over time.

Proposed Parking Management Zones are recommended to be established as follows:

- **Mixed Use 1 - Commercial / Residential:** This PMZ type is intended to be applied in areas with a “core” of ground floor commercial activity- including retail, restaurant and service uses- with residential and/or office uses at upper stories. On-street parking in this PMZ should support business development by providing for high turnover access to short-term parking for business patrons, and also longer-term parking for local residents and employees. During business hours in these areas, drivers will be willing to pay more for a convenient parking space.
- **Mixed Use 2 – Commercial / Employment:** This PMZ type is intended to be applied in areas with more limited ground floor commercial activity- including retail, restaurant and service uses- and wholesale uses such as food distributors or restaurant suppliers. These areas can also provide for employee parking that serves employers and guests within adjacent commercial “core” areas, by enabling longer term parking either at meters or by permit.
- **Civic / Institutional:** This PMZ type is intended for areas dominated by single use civic facilities such as schools or police stations, and institutional facilities such as union halls, Hubbard Street Dance, the Merit School of Music, the

McDermott Center or the Mexican Consulate. The balance to be struck is between employees of the facilities and visitors/patrons who may be attending classes or special events that extend beyond traditional business hours. The very limited instances of single use residential areas should also be included within this PMZ, with residential permit parking applied.

Figure 3 on the next page depicts the recommended application of these Parking Management Zones within the study area. As the West Loop neighborhood continues to evolve, these zones will serve as an organizing device within which the City can apply appropriate strategies to adjust parking regulations, and address emerging parking issues as needs arise. In the future, it will likely be appropriate for CDOT to make periodic adjustments to the boundaries between the established Parking Management Zones as use patterns evolve, with related implications for which parking strategies are appropriate to consider applying.

Preliminary Implementation Matrix

The matrix presented below as Table 1 summarizes the appropriate on-street Parking Management Strategies to potentially allocate within each Parking Management Zone. The matrix visually clarifies the relationship between the “menu” of strategies and the use areas where they are most appropriate.

Table 1: Strategies Applicable to Each PMZ Type

Strategy	PMZ Type		
	Mixed Use (Comm-Res)	Mixed Use (Comm-Emp)	Civic / Inst
Parking Meters			
1 High Turnover Meters			
2 Moderate Turnover Meters			
Parking Permit Zones			
1 Mixed Use Permit Zones			
2 Residential Permit Zones			
3 Industrial Permit Zones			
Posted Parking Restrictions			
1 Rush Hour Restrictions			
2 Loading Zones			
3 Standing Zones			
4 Pick-Up / Drop-Off Zones			
5 Cab / Valet Zones			
6 Bus Standing Zones			


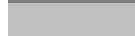
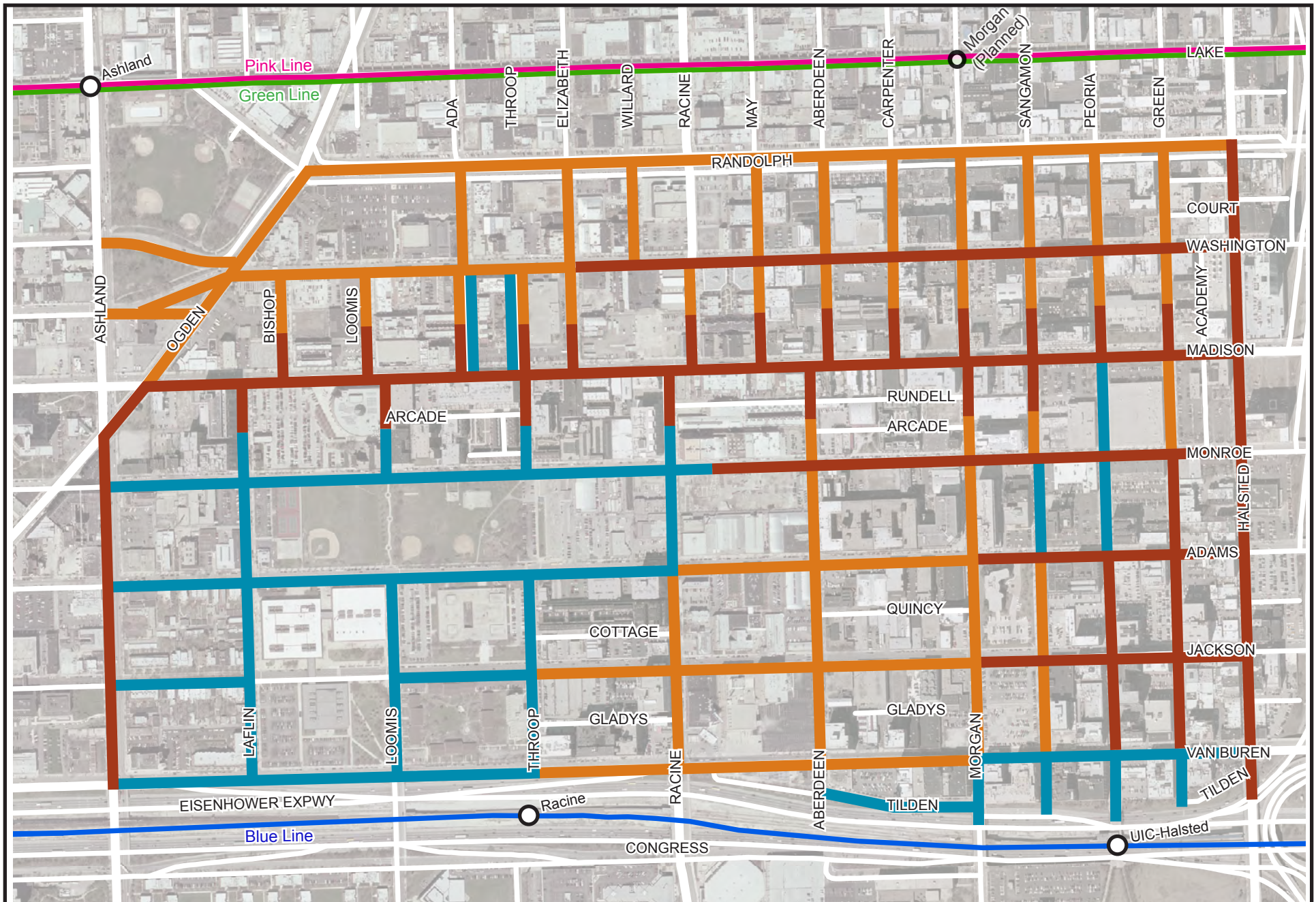
 Primary Management Strategy
 Secondary Management Strategy

Figure 3: Preliminary Parking Management Zones (PMZ) Map



**WEST LOOP
PARKING STUDY**

LEGEND

- Mixed Use 1 PMZ
(Commercial/ Residential)
- Mixed Use 2 PMZ
(Commercial/ Employment)

- Civic/ Institutional PMZ*
- * Includes existing residential permit zone on Ada/ Throop to remain

- Rail Line/ Stop

DRAFT

Sept 23, 2010



Recommended Criteria for Application of Strategies

The criteria outlined below in Table 2 are proposed to be applied in CDOT’s review of proposed changes. If the proposed changes fall within these established criteria, the request could be approved administratively by CDOT upon agreement by other impacted City departments or agencies. If the requested change falls outside these established criteria, Ward office review and approval would be required.

Table 2: Criteria for Application of Parking Management Strategies

Strategy	Criteria
Parking Meters	Not to exceed 60% of total on-street capacity within the PMZ ¹ , located within one block of commercial activity cluster(s)
Permit Zone (any type)	Not to exceed 60% of total on-street capacity within the PMZ ¹
Loading Zone	Maximum of 2 spaces per block face, on blocks where existing business operations require loading capacity, ideally restricted to defined time periods
Standing Zone	Maximum of 2 spaces per block face, on blocks where existing business operations require short-term walk-in customer traffic
Pick-Up / Drop-Off Zone	Maximum of 4 spaces per block face, directly adjacent to entrance to institutional facility
Cab / Valet Zone	Maximum of 2 spaces per block face, centrally located to commercial or institutional activity cluster
Rush Hour Restriction	Minimal as needed to maintain safety and timely CTA service, overlaid on spaces otherwise permit or meter controlled
Bus Standing Zone	Minimal as needed to maintain safety and timely CTA service
No Parking Zone	Minimal as needed to maintain safety, ideally restricted to defined time periods, overlaid on spaces otherwise permit or meter controlled
Police Parking Zone	Minimal as needed, ideally only for short-term use by current shift CPD vehicles

Notes:

1. Within any PMZ, the allowable range will allow local flexibility in accommodating more metered parking (up to 60% meters, with 40% other restriction types) or more permit parking (up to 60% permits, with 40% other restriction types). The appropriate allocation of on-street parking will vary based upon local conditions, and will likely change over time within each PMZ, however each PMZ should accommodate both metered and permit parking to some extent.