

## **Frequently Asked Questions Guide on User-Paid Loading Zone Pilot**

### **How are Loading Zones changing in Chicago?**

The City of Chicago continues to work to optimize the use of valuable curb space in high traffic areas as well as improve traffic flow in the Central Business District by restructuring the way commercial loading zones are managed.

Starting on March 15, the City is piloting the conversion of current business-paid commercial loading zones to user-paid commercial loading zones. With this conversion, commercial vehicles will be responsible for paying for parking in the user-paid loading zones through the ParkChicago mobile application or through nearby pay boxes.

Along with piloting the conversion to the user-paid model, the City will make block-by block assessments in the pilot area to evaluate curb space usage and traffic flow. The City anticipates taking steps based on those evaluations to further optimize downtown streets and the public way. In some cases, unused zones will be converted to parking spaces, and overused zones will be expanded to fit the demands of the area.

The City is starting the pilot in a designated area in the Central Business District bounded by the Chicago River on the north, Lake Michigan on the east, Randolph Street on the south and Michigan Avenue on the west.

Businesses directly impacted by these conversions have already been notified. As the City moves to other blocks within the pilot zone and expands to other areas, individual businesses will be notified that their loading zone will be converted and the current signage will be updated.

### **Why is the City piloting the conversion of loading zones to user-paid commercial loading zones?**

The City of Chicago took the first steps to reform the commercial loading zone process in 2016 by streamlining the process for businesses to apply for loading zones and reducing the time it takes for commercial loading zones to be installed. The conversion of business-paid commercial loading zones to user-paid commercial loading zones in high-demand areas (the Loop and Central Business District) is the next step in the City's reform efforts and will help to create more efficient loading zones.

### **When will this affect my business?**

Starting on March 15, 2017, the City is piloting the conversion to user-paid loading zones, and pay boxes and signs will be updated at that time. The current pilot area is in the Central Business District bounded by the Chicago River on the north, Lake Michigan on the east, Randolph Street on the south and Michigan Avenue on the west.

Businesses directly impacted by these conversions have already been notified.

The City will assess proper utilization of the loading zone spaces and examine whether the user-paid system improves access for deliveries, reduces double parking, and creates higher vehicle turnover in the commercial loading zones. Following evaluation of the current pilot locations, the City plans to expand the additional locations in the pilot area throughout the spring and summer of 2017. As the City moves to other blocks within the pilot zone as well as expands to other pilot

areas, individual businesses will be notified that their loading zone will be converted and the current signage will be updated.

#### **How long will the pilot last?**

The pilot is starting March 15, 2017, and following evaluation of the current pilot locations, the City plans to expand the additional locations in the pilot area throughout the spring and summer of 2017. The City also plans to expand to other pilot zones following the full implementation in the current pilot location.

#### **How is the City evaluating the success of the pilot?**

The City will assess proper utilization of the loading zone spaces and examine whether the user-paid system improves access for deliveries, reduces double parking, and creates higher vehicle turnover in the commercial loading zones.

Following evaluation of the current pilot area, the City plans to expand the pilot to additional locations in the spring and summer of 2017.

#### **What types of vehicles will be allowed to park in user-paid loading zones?**

For the purposes of this pilot program (which allows only commercial vehicles to park in a commercial loading zone), “commercial vehicles” means vehicles that are not public passenger vehicles and: (1) carry permits issued under 9-64-160(d); or (2) bear commercial vehicle license plates; or (3) are emblazoned with the name, logo or other identifier of a business affixed either permanently (e.g. stenciled or painted) or temporarily (e.g. a magnetic sticker, or a sign attached to the antenna or placed in a clear sleeve) to the vehicle in a manner identifiable from at least twenty-five feet away. Temporary, unaffixed identification (e.g. a sheet of paper or cardboard on the dashboard or rear window deck) is not sufficient to label a vehicle a commercial vehicle.

#### **How will commercial vehicles know they are parking in a commercial loading zone?**



When a zone converts from a business-paid loading zone to a user-paid loading zone, the parking signs will be changed to direct users to the pay-by-cell app (ParkChicago) or the nearest pay box. Users will follow directions on the app or pay box to complete parking payments. User-paid commercial loading zones will be 24 hour paid parking.

**How will commercial vehicles pay for parking?**

Commercial drivers will pay through the ParkChicago mobile application or through the appropriate pay box. The hourly parking rates for the loading zones will be \$14. Once the commercial vehicle has paid for parking, this payment covers parking throughout user-paid loading zones.

Businesses using the commercial loading zones have the option to allow individual drivers to pay for their time, or allow multiple drivers to use the same company credit card to pay for commercial loading zone parking.

Those that choose to have their drivers pay up-front will be able to efficiently repay drivers, as the app provides a detailed receipt for each use automatically emailed to a designated account. Alternatively, under “payment history”, drivers can print and/or email their last 10 transactions and log in online to view all of their transactions.

**Will every loading zone in Chicago change? Are any loading exempts from this pilot?**

The City is exempting loading zones near hospitals, private residences, day care centers, government buildings, nursing homes, houses of worship, hotels and schools

Lawful standing zones and valet zones are also exempt from the conversion to user-paid zones.

**Will loading zones not in the Loop or Central Business District be impacted?**

Not at this time. The City is only examining the effectiveness of the conversion in the high traffic areas of the Loop and Central Business District.

**Will valet zones and standing zones also be impacted by this Pilot?**

At this time, valet zones and standing zones are not part of the pilot conversion from business-paid to user-paid loading zones.

**What is the difference between a standing zone and loading zone?**

A commercial loading zone is to be used for the loading and pick-up or unloading and delivery of materials from commercial vehicles, as described above.

A standing zone is for non-commercial vehicles or public passenger vehicles actually engaged in the receiving or discharging of passengers or the loading or unloading of property for a short period of time with flashers left on.

**The loading zone servicing my business is used for customer drop-off and customer pick-up; it is not used for commercial purposes or deliveries. What should I do to ensure customers can continue to be dropped off and picked up near my business?**

If a business wants to have a zone for drop-off or pick-up of customers, the business should apply for a standing zone. Commercial loading zones, as described above, are only to be utilized by commercial vehicles.

To apply for a standing zone, visit:

[https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdot/provdrs/traffic\\_signals\\_andstreetlights/svcs/loading-zones-and-standing-zones.html](https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdot/provdrs/traffic_signals_andstreetlights/svcs/loading-zones-and-standing-zones.html)

Note that the Chicago Department of Transportation will perform a field survey following the submission of the standing zone application to ensure there is appropriate space for a standing zone and to ensure the zone will be used for standing zone purposes.

**Following the conversion to a user-paid commercial loading zone, can businesses use loading zones for valet parking or customer loading and unloading when not receiving deliveries from carriers?**

No. User-paid commercial loading zones will be 24 hour paid parking.

Just as before, a commercial loading zone is to be used for the loading and pick-up or unloading and delivery of materials from commercial vehicles, as described above. Businesses should apply for a valet zone or standing zone, depending on their need.

Businesses can apply for valet zones and/or standing zones by visiting:

[https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdot/provdrs/traffic\\_signals\\_andstreetlights/svcs/loading-zones-and-standing-zones.html](https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdot/provdrs/traffic_signals_andstreetlights/svcs/loading-zones-and-standing-zones.html)

**How do I apply for a non-commercial loading zone parking permit?**

Section 9-64-160(d) states that “the comptroller may issue a curb loading zone permit to the owner or lessee of a passenger vehicle normally used to transport property in the furtherance of a commercial or industrial enterprise.”

The City of Chicago issues these Non-Commercial Loading Zone Permits to businesses that use vehicles for deliveries and fast service calls in commercial districts. The permits allow companies using vehicles with ordinary Illinois passenger license plates to park in any of the public-use loading zones throughout the City of Chicago. Commercial vehicles will still be required to pay for parking in the commercial loading zone. This permit allows personal vehicles that are being used for commercial purposes to pay for parking in the user-paid loading zone.

Examples of businesses using vehicles with passenger license plates which require the Non-Commercial Permits are: food delivery establishments, florists, printers and office machinery service firms. Vehicles already registered with the Illinois Commerce Commission do not need the Non-Commercial Loading Zone Permits to pay for parking in user-paid commercial loading zones.

For more information, visit:

[https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/fin/supp\\_info/revenue/parking\\_forms/non-commercial\\_loadingzonepermitinformationapplication.html](https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/fin/supp_info/revenue/parking_forms/non-commercial_loadingzonepermitinformationapplication.html)

**Who can I contact with questions?**

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