
People Over Parking Act Policy Approach

This document details the “People Over Parking Act” policy interpretation and the methodology used to determine areas subject to the “People Over Parking Act” as part of the Northern Illinois Transit Authority (NITA) Act.

Background

On December 16, 2025, Governor JB Pritzker signed the Northern Illinois Transit Authority (NITA) Act, a significant transit funding and reform package that will bring an estimated \$1.2 billion in new annual operating funding to the regional transit system, marking a historic investment that will protect the essential service of today and allow for future service improvements and expansion. Article 5 of the new law is creation of the People Over Parking Act (POPA), a new Illinois law effective June 1, 2026.

The new law no longer allows municipalities to impose or enforce any minimum automobile parking requirements for new developments located near transit stations and high-frequency bus routes and applies to new development projects located within one-half mile from a public transportation hub or one-eighth of a mile from a public transportation corridor.

POPA defines “public transportation corridors” as streets on which “one or more bus routes have a combined frequency of bus service interval of 15 minutes or less during the morning and afternoon peak commute periods.”

POPA defines “public transportation hub” as “(i) a rail transit station, (ii) a boat or ferry terminal served by either a bus stop or rail transit station, or (iii) an intersection of 2 or more public transportation corridors.”

Purpose

To support implementation of POPA, NITA initiated the development of new tools, guidance, and technical assistance resources aimed at helping municipalities achieve compliance with POPA, including [a map depicting all the locations](#) in the region to which the Act applies. Being the agency that oversees transit services in the region, NITA is best equipped to accurately interpret the POPA language and to map locations that apply to the Act. The map is an interactive tool that municipalities can use to understand where new developments in their communities would be subject to POPA and subsequently revise parking regulations in those locations. Users of this map can:

- Search by municipality
- View buffers of transit service and stations
- Identify areas where parking minimums are prohibited
- Toggle on and off various layers including transit services

Methodology

NITA staff worked together to interpret the new law, in coordination with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and with the three Service Boards, CTA, Metra and Pace.

A variety of approaches were used to determine areas subject to POPA, including identifying rail station locations in the region, utilizing Remix software, and reviewing schedule data from each Service Board, resulting in a spatial representation of each transit corridor and station currently in the region. The following subsections describe the approach to identifying Public Transportation Corridors and Public Transportation Hubs as defined by POPA.

Public Transportation Corridors

Remix software was utilized to identify CTA and Pace fixed bus routes with frequencies of 15 min or less in a fixed hour period in the AM and PM peak periods. AM peak is defined as 6am to 9am and PM peak is defined as 3pm to 6pm. Any route with frequencies of 15 minutes or less for any hour period in AM or PM peak was included.

Remix calculates frequency for a given hour as the difference between the start time of the last trip and the start time of the first trip divided by the total number of trips minus 1.

$$Frequency = \frac{Start\ Time\ of\ Last\ Trip - Start\ Time\ of\ First\ Trip}{Total\ Trips - 1}$$

Not all bus routes meeting the frequency threshold were categorized as public transportation corridors. Some bus routes and route segments are seasonal and meet specific demand at specific times of the year (such as tourism needs), limiting year-round access for residents and commuters.

Portions of bus routes operating on expressways were not included since they do not meet the definition of street; expressways and streets differ significantly in their purpose. These portions operate on Interstate right of way, are not within municipal control and are located where the service is non-stop and not accessible by the traveling public. Many of these routes use Park-n-Rides and other facilities utilized by multiple bus routes for their stop locations. Facilities with an intersection of 2 or more bus routes with a combined frequency of 15 minutes or less during peak commute periods were designated as Public Transportation Hubs. For a detailed list of such facilities see Table B-4 in Appendix B.

For a detailed list of Public Transportation Corridors see Appendix A. Public Transportation Hubs are listed in Appendix B.

Combined Frequencies

Corridors with overlapping routes were identified throughout the region. Routes operating on streets with service overlaps of one mile or greater and cumulative frequencies of 15 minutes or less in AM and PM peak periods were included in the analysis. Overlap primarily occurs near the city of Chicago border where CTA and Pace both provide bus service. In cases where combined frequencies of overlapping routes equaled 15 minutes or less, the overlap portions were included in the buffer. For a detailed list of combined frequency public transportation corridors see Table A-3 in Appendix A.

Public Transportation Hubs

According to POPA's definition of Public Transportation Hubs, each CTA rail station, Metra rail station, South Shore Line station and Amtrak station located in the six county northeastern Illinois region was included in the coverage and buffered by ½ mile. The Metra station in Kenosha, WI was not included as it is not subject to POPA. Areas meeting POPA's definition of a Public Transportation Hub based on the intersection of two Public Transportation Corridors (see below) were included in the analysis: locations with intersecting CTA and/or Pace bus routes that contain stops with average headways of 15 min or less were buffered by ½ mile.

Other Resources and Future Updates

NITA is committed to supporting local governments as they implement POPA requirements. Funds have been budgeted through its [Community Planning program](#) to provide technical assistance to municipalities who need support with implementing parking regulation changes. In addition, a model ordinance and a model ordinance amendment process will be developed in early 2027 for

municipalities to use as a guide when updating regulations on their own. The NITA also provides [additional toolkits and resources](#) for communities looking to establish or improve transit-supportive policies in their communities, including zoning and funding strategies and a guide that offers practical solutions for local decision-makers, developers, and community advocates to create vibrant spaces.

As service levels change, the map of areas impacted by POPA will need to be updated. The existing map identifies transit stations and high-frequency bus routes as of January 1, 2027. NITA anticipates the next update will be in 2029 after NITA completes a region-wide, consolidated transit service plan and service changes from the plan are being implemented. After 2029, periodic updates will be made based on the direction of the NITA Board.