



Milwaukee County

Legislation Text

File #: 11-92, Version: 1

From the Director, Department of Transportation and Public Works, and the Airport Director, requesting authorization to amend Section 4.05.04 of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances to establish a fee structure for courtesy vehicles to regulate commercial curbside operations at General Mitchell International Airport (GMIA). **(03/02/11: Referred to Corporation Counsel for follow-up report.)**

POLICY

Amendments to County Ordinances require County Board approval.

BACKGROUND

County Ordinance 4.05 defines “Courtesy Vehicle” as those vehicle(s) operated to and from General Mitchell International Airport incident to revenue-producing commercial or private activities of hotels, motels, parking lots or automobile rental offices or facilities located off of airport premises and not under contract at the airport. Courtesy Vehicles must be owned and operated by the specific company transporting its patron(s), without cost to its patron(s), and must be clearly indentified with its company name painted on both exterior sides of each vehicle(s).

Over the past year there has been a significant increase in passenger traffic at General Mitchell International Airport (GMIA), which has translated into a significant increase in passenger and vehicle traffic at the commercial curbside. Ground Transportation Coordinators have observed and informed Airport Staff of problems accommodating Hotel Courtesy Vehicles as well as Off-Airport Parking Courtesy Vehicles in the limited curb frontage that the Airport has to service these vehicles. The Airport is limited to 148 feet of curb space to accommodate the parking requirements of fifty-four (54) hotels operating sixty-three (63) Courtesy Vehicles and three (3) off-airport commercial parking lots operating twelve (12) Courtesy Vehicles (see Attachment 1). Our observation of the operations in this area has led Airport Staff to conclude that significant problems stem from the large number of Courtesy Vehicles using the curbside and the amount of time that some of those vehicles spend parked at the curbside.

In order to obtain a better understanding of the problem, Airport Staff commissioned a survey to count hotel and off-airport parking Courtesy Vehicle trips daily as well as the dwell time of every Courtesy Vehicle over a thirty (30) day period. The results of that survey are as follows:

	Hotel Courtesy Vehicles	Off-Airport Parking Courtesy Vehicles
Trips per day (avg.)	199.8	266.2
Minutes per trip at curb (avg.)	7.5	5.5
Total # of trips (30-day period)	5,995	7,987
Total # of hours (30-day period)	749.3	732.1

The volume and duration of Courtesy Vehicle traffic present an access problem at the curbside. Airport Staff has also found that in the past five (5) years there have been fourteen (14) hotels/motels built within five (5) miles of the Airport. Most of these establishments offer transportation to and from GMIA. A number of new hotels are planned to be constructed in the area with plans for additional off-airport parking operations.

The 2010 Airport Ground Transportation Association Survey shows that many of the nation's airports have installed Automated Vehicle Identification (AVI) Systems that require courtesy vehicles to pay a use fee as well as dwell time fees as a method for regulating and relieving traffic congestion at their curbsides. Airports have found that when hotels and parking companies are charged use and dwell time fees, both the number of trips into an airport and the duration of those trips are reduced, thus creating less congestion at the curbside. Airports have various ways in which they assess and record fees. Few airports, however, have the same fee structure. Figures 1 thru 5 are examples of fees at airports of similar size to GMIA.

An AVI system works on a simple design with sensors installed at specific locations that read Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID) tags that are attached to vehicles. The sensors read and identify vehicles as they enter and exit a specified area. The computer software managing the AVI system allows rates and charges to be adjusted as required to provide the desired effect on governance and control of vehicle operations. The most recognizable example of an AVI system in the area is the Illinois Tollway Express Lanes. In addition, by allowing the installation of a full AVI system at GMIA, Airport Staff would be able to make incremental changes to use and dwell time fees in order to better use the commercial curb space and monitor revenue more efficiently with no increase in manpower requirements.

Fees and charges for operating a Courtesy Car at General Mitchell International Airport will consist of the current \$500.00 permit fee per vehicle, per year. Each Courtesy Car Operator will be required to purchase a Radio Frequency Device (RFID) at a cost of \$30.00 each per vehicle per year. User Fees will be \$2.00 per trip onto the Baggage Claim Roadway. Any vehicle that dwells on the Baggage Claim Roadway for more than ten (10) minutes shall be charged twenty-five cents (\$.25) and fifteen cents (\$.15) for each three (3) minute increment thereafter. Any Courtesy Vehicle found attempting to pick up passengers in an area other than the area designated by the Airport Director shall be fined one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per occurrence. Any Courtesy Car caught making route deviations to circumvent detection by AVI equipment shall be fined one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per occurrence.

The Airport Director shall be permitted to adjust user fees in twenty-five cent (\$.25) increments and dwell time fees in five cent (\$.05) increments to regulate curb space utilization in the Courtesy Car parking area.

On February 8, 2011, Airport staff met with the operators of hotel/motel courtesy vehicles to review the proposed ordinance and receive input and answer any questions about the proposal. As a result of the meeting, Airport staff has modified its original proposal to include the following comments by the operators:

1. The operators requested that the ordinance effective date be delayed. The reason for this was that some of the shuttle operations are for airline crews, the costs of which have been previously negotiated, and the trip and dwell fees were not included in their cost proposal. Airport staff has modified the ordinance to be effective in one year.
2. The operators suggested that terminal road circulations and dwells could be mitigated if a holding area was provided. Airport staff agrees, and will develop a holding area for the shuttles over the next year.
3. The operators requested an extension to the initial 10-minute dwell time. Airport staff has modified the ordinance to a 15-minute initial “free” dwell time.

RECOMMENDATION

Airport staff recommends amending County Ordinance 4.05 to establish an AVI fee structure for Courtesy Vehicles that pick up arriving passengers at GMIA.

FISCAL NOTE

An estimated \$180,000 will be generated by courtesy vehicle fees.

Prepared by: John V. Moore, Airport Operations Manager - Landside

Approved by:

Jack Takerian, Director
Transportation and Public Works

C. Barry Bateman
Airport Director