

Daley Seeks New Plates To Brand City's Fleet

By Fran Spielman
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The license plate reserved for government-owned vehicles would be redesigned to distinguish those registered in Chicago under a plan being floated by the Daley administration.

The move is aimed at speeding identification of city-owned vehicles to monitor performance and zero in on wrongdoing.

The city also plans to dramatically reduce the number of fuel depots and maintenance facilities to cut costs and minimize the opportunity for theft. The proposed two-year consolidation would reduce the number of refueling sites from 53 to 10, while the number of repair shops would drop from five to one.

The shake-up coincides with Mayor Daley's surprise decision to "un-privatize" repair of city garbage trucks and street sweepers in his proposed 1994 budget.

The work was contracted out three years ago in a highly publicized cost-saving move. Mayoral aides have since determined the city could save \$1.5 million annually by doing the work in-house.

Chicago accounts for 21.5 percent of the state's municipal plate registrations, with 16,685 taxpayer-owned vehicles.

Under the plan, which requires legislative approval, Chicago plates would bear special red lettering and would identify specific agencies or departments.

William T. Corbett, commissioner of the Department of Fleet Management, said the plates would help in identification of vehicles and for maintenance.

However, the state wants to reduce the number of categories of plates, which now exceeds 180.