



ZONING ANALYSIS APPLICATION

Date Received: _____ ZONING OFFICE USE ONLY
 Ward: _____
 Zoning District: _____
 Preservation: _____
 Case Number: _____

I am applying for a zoning review of a:

- Construction project of less than 10,000 sq. ft. Determination of Use
 Construction project of 10,000 sq. ft. or more Other

PROPERTY

Address: 1501 Central St., Evanston, IL 60208

- Mixed-use
 Non-Residential
 Residential # of Units _____

For projects required to comply with Inclusionary Housing Ordinance:

- In TOD Area Outside of TOD Area

(for more information visit: <http://www.cityofevanston.org/IHO>)

Proposed Project:

The Chicago Stars are filing a unique use application to play at Ryan Field upon its completion for five years beginning in the fall of 2026 for a total of 5 years. This application will be for five years with the option to extend at year three. Stars' seasons will run from March to November with a total of 15-17 matches per season. Match times will vary with start times of 11am to 7pm and are two (2) hours at length. Pre or post match clinics will be offered for select matches and will begin either three (3) hours prior to the start of the match or 15-minutes after the match. Clinics will run for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

APPLICANT

Name: Noelle Schmitt

Organization: Chicago Stars FC

Address: 820 W Jackson Blvd, Suite 700 City, State, Zip: Chicago, IL 60607

Phone: 312-497-1842 Cell: _____

E-mail: noelle@chicagostars.com

Please circle the primary means of contact.

PROPERTY OWNER (if different than applicant)

Name: Northwestern University

Address: 2200 Ridge Avenue, Suite 250 City, State, Zip: Evanston, IL 60201

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

What is the relationship of the applicant to the property owner?

- same builder/contractor architect real estate agent
 attorney lessee other: _____

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS

Please submit the following:

- (This) Completed Application Form**
- Completed Inclusionary Housing Plan Proposal Form**
If the project includes five (5) or more new residential units in TOD Areas or ten (10) or more residential units outside of TOD Areas. This includes new for sale, or rental developments, and condominium conversions.
- One (1) Copy of Plat of Survey** Date of Survey: _____
Plat of survey must be completed by a licensed surveyor and must be current so that it displays every structure, patio, deck, walkway, etc. that is currently on the property. Copies must be legible for all dimensions and details.
- One (1) Set of Building Plans** Date of Drawings: _____
Building plans must be drawn to scale and must include interior floor plans and exterior elevations. For simple projects such as flat-work patios, plans may be hand drawn to scale directly onto the Plat of Survey.
- Determination of Use Description**
If you are applying for a Determination of Use, skip to the end of the application, sign and date, include a simple site plan of the proposed use (interior floor layout, seating, parking, etc.) and a one page letter that describes all aspects of the use (employees, hours of operation, loading/unloading, deliveries, parking, noise, etc.).
- Application Fee:** Once the application is received, a follow-up email will be sent to pay the application fee online.

Email this form and documents noted above to:

zoning@cityofevanston.org

Zoning Analysis Applications take up to 10 business days for initial review. Alterations or modifications that require re-review may take longer. Feel free to contact the Zoning Office directly at 847.448.8230 with any questions.

PROPERTY INFORMATION

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Lot Area		
Lot Width (frontage)		
Dwelling Units / Rooming Units		
Open Parking Spaces		
Enclosed Parking Spaces		
Off-site Parking Spaces		
Loading Berths - Short		
Loading Berths - Long		
Employees		

BUILDING SETBACKS

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Front yard		
Street side yard (if corner lot)		
Interior side yard (1)		
Interior side yard (2)		
Rear yard		

RESIDENTIAL & TRANSITIONAL CAMPUS DISTRICTS ONLY**BUILDING LOT COVERAGE**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Principal Structure Footprint (excluding front porch)		
Roofed Front Porch (receives 50% credit)		
Detached Garage Footprint		
Other Accessory Structures' Footprints		
Other Roofed Areas		
TOTAL BUILDING LOT COVERAGE		

IMPERVIOUS SURFACE COVERAGE (hard surfaced areas not under a roof: asphalt, concrete, decks, brick pavers, etc.)

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Patios & Terraces (brickwork receives 20% credit)		
Sidewalks		
Driveways		
Decks		
Stairs/Landings		
Other Impervious Areas		
SUB-TOTAL		
+ Building Lot Coverage		
TOTAL IMPERVIOUS SURFACE AREA		

BUILDING HEIGHT

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Principal Structure – Peak Height		
Principal Structure – Number of Stories		
Detached Garage – Peak Height		
Other Accessory Structures – Peak Height		

ALL OTHER DISTRICTS (Business, Commercial, Downtown, Industrial, Mixed Use, University)

	EXISTING								PROPOSED						
	Parking/ Loading	Dwelling Units	Hallways/ Elevator/ Stairs/Lobby	Mechanical/ Accessory Space	Non- Residential Gross Leasable area	Other	Gross Floor Area*		Parking/ Loading	Dwelling Units	Hallways/ Elevator/ Stairs/Lobby	Mechanical/ Accessory Space	Non- Residential Gross Leasable area	Other	Gross Floor Area*
Basement															
1st floor															
2 nd floor															
3 rd floor															
4 th floor															
5 th floor															
Total															

*GROSS FLOOR AREA: The sum of areas of all floors of a building measured from the exterior walls or from the center line of walls separating 2 buildings. The gross floor area of a building shall also include but not be limited to: basements, interior balconies and mezzanines, enclosed porches, and attic space finished or unfinished having minimum 5-foot floor to rafters height. The following areas shall be excluded from the calculation of gross floor area: elevator shafts, stairwells, space used solely for heating, cooling, mechanical, electrical and mechanical penthouses, refuse rooms and uses accessory to the building, off-street parking and loading.

BUILDING REGULATIONS

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Principal Structure – Peak Height		
Principal Structure – Number of Stories		
Other Accessory Structures – Peak Height		
FAR (Floor to Area Ratio)		

AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE

"I certify that all of the above information and all statements, information and exhibits that I am submitting in conjunction with this application are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge."

Noelle Schmitt

Print Name

Noelle Schmitt

01/08/2026

Applicant's Signature

Date

Please refer to the Zoning Ordinance at www.cityofevanston.org/zoning for all City of Evanston zoning regulations. To determine which zoning district a property is located in, visit the City's website at www.cityofevanston.org, click on the Resident link on the City's home page, then click on About My Place from the drop-down menu. Enter the house number in the field provided and select the street from the drop-down menu. Press the "Get Info" button. This will either take you directly to the information for the property, or a list of all tax parcels at the inputted address that may be selected for information on the property.

Chicago Stars
1501 Central Avenue
Response to Unique Use Standards

The request complies with the Standards for Unique Uses of Section 6-3-7-10 as follows:

- (A) *Evidence of special and extraordinary need for the unique use which shall include evidence of unique characteristics of the subject property, proposed use, and/or the neighborhood surrounding the subject property.*

Answer: The use of Ryan Field by the Chicago Stars is a unique opportunity for the City of Evanston. Ryan Field is classified as a stadium located in the U2 District in which “intramural, intercollegiate or amateur sports and athletic events” are allowed. While not intramural, intercollegiate or amateur, there is no distinction from a land use perspective between the Stars use of Ryan Field and these other types of sports users and, in fact, their use is arguably less impactful from a land use and planning perspective notwithstanding the fact that their players are professionals.

- (B) *Evidence that the unique use will be of some affirmative benefit, from a land use or economic standpoint, to the City and its residents.*

Answer: As shown in the economic impact study, use of Ryan Field by the Stars will generate over \$500,000 in annual taxes and almost 100 jobs with no new construction impacts.

- (C) *Evidence that authorization of the use would not be appropriate through a zoning amendment.*

Answer: Ryan field is located in the U2 University Athletic Facilities District, which is a Special Purpose District in the City. The intent of this District is “...to permit the utilization of university facilities within the district in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding development, which is predominantly residential.” As a result, it may not be appropriate to permit all types of professional sports users, which would be the effect of a zoning amendment. However, use of the stadium by the Chicago Stars is consistent with this purpose and is a less impactful use than others that are permitted by-right, notwithstanding the fact that Stars players are paid and their games are targeted to the general public.

- (D) *Evidence that the project is designed to be reasonably compatible with surrounding properties and neighborhood.*

Answer: Not applicable; No new construction is proposed as part of the request.

- (E) *Evidence that the proposed use and the development are consistent with and implement the planning goals and objectives of the City, as contained in the adopted comprehensive general plan and other pertinent policy resolutions, particularly in terms of: (1) Land use intensity (2) Housing goals (3) Preservation goals and policies (4) Population policies (5) Traffic impact and parking and (6) Environmental goals and policies.*

Answer: The requested unique use would allow for additional utilization of an existing facility with no new construction and less impact on the surrounding neighborhood. This additional use of an existing significant asset in the City is consistent with sound land use planning and environmental policies.

- (F) *Each unique use application shall address the planned development standards of Section 6-3-6-9 of this Chapter, the public benefit standards of Section 6-3-6-3 of this Chapter, and the standards for special uses of Section 6-3-5-10 of this Chapter.*

Answer: See attached responses to the special use/planned development and public benefits standards.

- (G) *Applications for unique adaptive use within an existing building envelope shall be exempt from the off-street parking, loading, and maximum density requirements outlined within this Title.*

Answer: Noted.

- (H) *Existing building setbacks, height, and lot coverage for applications for unique adaptive use shall be permitted to remain and be considered legally non-conforming regardless of a change in use or intensity of use.*

Answer: Noted.

Chicago Stars
1501 Central Avenue
Statement of Public Benefits

The proposed unique use is consistent with Section 6-3-6-3 of the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

- a) *Preservation and enhancement of desirable site characteristics, open space, topographic and geological features, and historic and natural resources;*

Answer: Not applicable; The proposed unique use involves reuse of an existing facility and will have no impact on site characteristics, open space, topographic and geological features, or historic and natural resources.

- b) *Use of design, landscape, and architectural features to create a pleasing environment;*

Answer: Not applicable; The proposed unique use involves reuse of an existing facility and will have no impact on design, landscape and architectural features.

- c) *Provide a variety of housing types in accordance with the City's housing goal;*

Answer: Not applicable; No housing is being proposed.

- d) *Eliminate blighted structures or incompatible uses through redevelopment or rehabilitation;*

Answer: Not applicable; No structures or incompatible uses are being impacted as part of the proposed unique use.

- e) *Business, commercial, and manufacturing development to enhance the local economy and strengthen the tax base;*

Answer: As detailed in the economic impact study, the proposed unique use will enhance the local economy and strengthen the tax base through [INSERT DETAILS FROM REPORT].

- f) *Efficiently use land resulting in more economic networks of utilities, streets, schools, public grounds, and other facilities; and*

Answer: The proposed unique use is located on property that has historically been used for athletics and the proposed unique use is consistent with that longstanding use in the future, arguably with less impact given the anticipated attendance at the Applicant's events. The operations will be consistent with those coordinated by Northwestern and the City for football games.

- g) *Incorporate recognized sustainable design practices and building materials to promote energy conservation and improve environmental quality.*

Answer: Not applicable; The proposed unique use involves additional use of an existing facility and will have no impact on design or building materials. However, such additional use promotes sustainability by allowing for enhanced utilization of an existing structure.

h) Additional benefits related to transit alternatives, public art, public space improvements, etc.

Answer: The Applicant's additional use of the stadium will enhance utilization of transit alternatives implemented as part of the stadium's construction and additional opportunities for the attendees and the public to enjoy the public art and open space improvements being implemented. Additionally, the Stars are committed to the community and intend to continue their work in schools and collaborations with other institutions to promote women's sports and correct historic inequities.

Chicago Stars
1501 Central Avenue
Response to Planned Development/Special Use Standards

The application complies with the Standards for Planned Developments in Section 6-3-6-9 as follows:

Standards for special uses pursuant to Section 6-3-5-10:

- a) *Is the requested special use one of the special uses specifically listed in the Zoning Ordinance? What section of the Zoning Ordinance lists your proposed use as an allowed special use in the zoning district in which the subject property lies? (See Zoning Analysis Review Sheet)*

Answer: Planned developments are permitted special uses in the U2 District pursuant to Section 6-15-1-9 of the Zoning Ordinance.

- b) *Is the requested special use in keeping with purposes and policies of the adopted comprehensive general plan and the zoning ordinance as amended from time to time?*

Answer: Yes, one goal of the 2000 Evanston Comprehensive Plan is to enhance neighborhood assets. The proposed unique use will allow for additional use of a significant neighborhood asset in a manner that is compatible with historic and future use of the site.

- c) *Will the requested special use cause negative cumulative effect, when its effect is considered in conjunction with the cumulative effect of various special uses of all types on the immediate neighborhood and the effect of the proposed type of special use upon the City as a whole?*

Answer: No, the requested special use is consistent with the existing use of the subject property and will cause no negative cumulative effect.

- d) *Will the requested special use interfere with or diminish the value of property in the neighborhood?*

Answer: No, the proposed unique use does not involve any new construction and will allow for limited additional use of an existing facility.

- e) *Will the requested special use be adequately served by public facilities and services?*

Answer: Yes, the Applicant will work with the City and relevant agencies to coordinate any incremental additional services required by the additional events.

- f) *Will the requested special use cause undue traffic congestion?*

Answer: As outlined in the enclosed Traffic Study, the Applicant will be able to coordinate traffic similar to football traffic, provided similar resources.

- g) *Will the requested special use preserve significant historical architectural resources?*

Answer: Not applicable; No new construction is proposed as part of the requested unique use.

h) *Will the requested special use preserve significant natural and environmental features?*

Answer: Not applicable; No new construction is proposed as part of the requested unique use.

i) *Will the requested special use comply with all other applicable regulations of the district in which it is located and other applicable ordinances, except to the extent such regulations have been modified through the planned development process or the grant of a variation?*

Answer: Yes, the requested unique use will comply with all applicable regulations.

Additional standards for planned developments:

1. *The requested Site Development Allowance(s) will not have a substantial adverse impact on the use, enjoyment or property values of adjoining properties that is beyond a reasonable expectation given the scope of the applicable Site Development Allowance(s) of the Planned Development location.*

Answer: No Site Development Allowances are being requested.

2. *The proposed development is compatible with the overall character of existing development in the immediate vicinity of the subject property.*

Answer: No new development is being proposed as part of the requested unique use. The proposed additional use of the stadium is consistent with the historic use and character of the property and surrounding vicinity.

3. *The development site circulation is designed in a safe and logical manner to mitigate potential hazards for pedestrians and vehicles at the site and in the immediate surrounding area.*

Answer: Not applicable; No new development is proposed as part of the unique use. However, the use will benefit from the careful design and site circulation implemented as part of the new stadium.

4. *The proposed development aligns with the current and future climate and sustainability goals of the City.*

Answer: Not applicable; The proposed unique use involves additional use of an existing facility and will have no impact on climate or sustainability goals. However, such additional use promotes sustainability by allowing for enhanced utilization of an existing structure.

5. *Public benefits that are appropriate to the surrounding neighborhood and the City as a whole will be derived from the approval of the requested site development allowance(s).*

Answer: Not applicable; No site development allowances are being requested. See enclosed regarding public benefits.



Chicago Stars FC 2027-2032 Seasons

Summary of Request

The Chicago Stars is seeking approval of a Unique Use to allow them to host their 2027-2032 seasons at Ryan Field beginning in the fall of 2026/spring of 2027 (depending on stadium construction and opening).

The requested Unique Use is critical to assist in remedying the historic inequitable access to infrastructure faced by women's professional sports franchises. However, in an attempt to address residents' concerns regarding the open-ended, potentially precedential nature of this application, the Stars would accept a condition that the Unique Use be limited solely to this applicant and for a limited duration.

Dates: Fall 2026/March 2027 – November 2032 (Avg. 16 matches/season + potential playoff match)

- Upon Ryan Field's opening in the Fall of 2026/March 2027, the Stars request the permit be extended to Fall 2026 dates, which will be 4-8 matches.
- All dates TBD, subject to the NWSL schedule
- The Stars request a review of the Unique Use at year three, with the option to extend to an agreed upon period of time.

Event Time: The Stars 2026 season schedule will be released in January 2026. Match days will vary but are typically scheduled at the following dates and times:

- Wednesday - 7pm
- Friday - 7pm
- Saturday - anytime from 11am to 8pm
- Sunday - anytime from 11am to 7pm

*All times are Central

Information about the Club

The Chicago Stars Football Club is the premier women's soccer club in Chicago. Formerly known as the Chicago Red Stars, the team is a founding member of the NWSL. The team received its charter in 2006, chose a name in 2008 and played the first match in 2009 in the Women's Professional Soccer (WPS) league. Following the end of the WPS, the club joined the Women's Premier Soccer League (WPSL) before helping found the NWSL in 2013.

The Stars have been home for legends of the game including Formiga (BRA), Carli Lloyd, Julie Ertz, Christen Press, Sam Kerr, Lori Chalupny and Megan Rapinoe, who was the club's first draft pick. The team is currently home to Olympic gold medalists Alyssa Naeher, Mallory Swanson and Julia Grosso, and Olympic silver medalist Ludmila. The Chicago Stars have made the NWSL playoffs in eight of the league's twelve seasons (2015- 2019, 2021-2023, 2024), the second most in league history behind only the Portland Thorns. The Stars made the NWSL Championship match in 2019 and 2021, as well as the first iteration of the league's Challenge Cup in 2020.



The Chicago Stars played their first three seasons at Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois, before moving to SeatGeek Stadium in Bridgeview, Illinois. The Stars have been second, third and even fourth tier tenants at their previous stadiums, which has led to challenges with scheduling, maximizing the fan experience and recruiting talent. Since the change in ownership, the Stars have been seeking a new place to play with the ultimate goal of building a stadium of their own.

In September of 2023, Laura Ricketts, along with a group of investors from the Chicagoland area, purchased the Club, marking a new era in the Club's history. In the first year of ownership, the team hired former Chief Legal Officer at the U.S. Soccer Federation, Karen Leetzow, as President. From the players on the field to the staff behind the scenes, the entire Chicago Stars FC organization is working tirelessly to level the playing field on and off the pitch. Although our performance on the field is a top priority, the Stars are also committed to being active members of the community and empowering young women. Through partnerships with youth development organizations and non-profits dedicated to improving the lives of those they serve, the Stars proudly use their platform to provide access and opportunity.

Expected attendees

Match days will include a pre-match fan zone where fans will participate in games and vendor activations. A pre- or post-match clinic will be offered for select dates for young athletes to learn and enhance their soccer skills. A ticket will be required for everyone entering the fan zone and/or participating in the pre- or post-match clinic.

- Stars Players/Team Staff – 75
- Visiting Players/Team Staff – 75
- Stars Event Staff – 150
- Ryan Field Vendors – 250*
- Luna Security – 200*
- Parking Staff -25*
- Broadcast – 25-30
- Fans/General Public – 6,000-10,000

*These staff will be managed by Ryan Field stadium management.

Parking/Transportation

Based on the projected attendance and a traffic study conducted by Kimley Horn, the Stars will utilize the Ryan Field parking lots as the main source of parking with a projection of 1,500-2,000 parked cars per match. Being accessible by public transportation, it is anticipated that Stars fans will select the CTA and Metra as other modes of transportation. Additionally, the Stars anticipate a high percentage of fans will travel on bicycle. The Stars intend to employ the use of a bike valet to increase bicycle ridership. To accommodate the cyclists, the team will ensure that there are an adequate number of bike racks where fans can store their bikes safely and securely.

The Stars will comply with the agreement between Northwestern University (landlord) and the City of Evanston regarding traffic management. Additionally, the Stars will also comply with rideshare standards and geofencing Ryan Field has established.



The traffic study conducted by the Chicago Stars FC and Kimley Horn attached in **Appendix A** for reference.

Street Closure

The Stars will abide by street closure processes established by Northwestern University and the City of Evanston.

Match Day Arrival/Opening Times

Chicago Stars staff – 3-4 hours prior to kick-off
Pre-match clinic – 3 hours prior to kick-off
Fan zone – 90 minutes prior to kick-off
Gates open for match – 1 hour prior to kick-off

Departure Times

Fans/General Public – 2-2.5 hours after kick-off
Chicago Stars staff – 3-4 hours post-match

Auxiliary offerings

All programming (F&B, vendors, fan fest, etc.) will occur within the footprint of Ryan Field and will only be available for ticket buyers.

A pre-match Fan Zone will take place 90 minutes prior to kickoff. Currently included in the fan zone are listed below. All offerings are subject to change.

- Soccer darts (inflatable)
- Inflatable welcome arch
- Lawn games
- Eight (8) 10x10 tents for vendor activations
- DJ
- 1-2 merchandise tent(s)
- Food and beverage portables – The Stars will leverage the existing food & beverage infrastructure established by Northwestern.
- Mini pitch with inflatable walls
- Other family friendly activations (such as facepainting, selfie photo stations, poster making, etc.)
- Active member of Kulture City and will staff and maintain a sensory room at all Ryan Field matches

Broadcast

The Stars will comply with existing Northwestern broadcast infrastructure and processes. At least one (1) broadcast truck will be on site per match.

The Stars are subject to the NWSL broadcast deal, which includes CBS, ESPN, Amazon Prime, and Victory+. The Stars are currently partnered with Marquee Sports Network and FOX 32 for local coverage and storytelling. Stars/Evanston news coverage can be viewed in **Appendix B**



Event Operations Plan

The Stars are subject to other Ryan Field's users' schedules, and these timelines are subject to availability. All vendors will utilize the loading dock for load-in and load out.

- Pending other Ryan Field users' schedules, our Event crew will perform setup duties either the day before the match or the day of the match. The Stars Event crew will be on site preparing the stadium and meeting with vendors. All staff will either take public transit or park on site and operate within the footprint of Ryan Field.
 - Load-In – 8 hours
 - Load-Out – 3-4 hours
- TGI is the Stars vendor for LED field boards. Pending match time and the Ryan Field schedule, TGI will be on site the day before or the day of the match. The Stars will adopt Northwestern's agreed upon process with the City of Evanston for truck routes to Ryan Field
 - Load-in – 8 hours
 - Load-out – 3-4 hours
- The Stars will utilize match presentation offerings available at Ryan Field as a condition of lease between Stars and Northwestern

Security

The safety of all Stars fans and guests is paramount to our operation. The Stars will work with Northwestern, the City, and a third-party security agency to achieve this. Per municipal code 6-15-7-2, the Stars will comply with Northwestern University's (landlord) agreement with the City of Evanston regarding match-day security and intend to participate in regular pre-match meetings with the appropriate stakeholders.

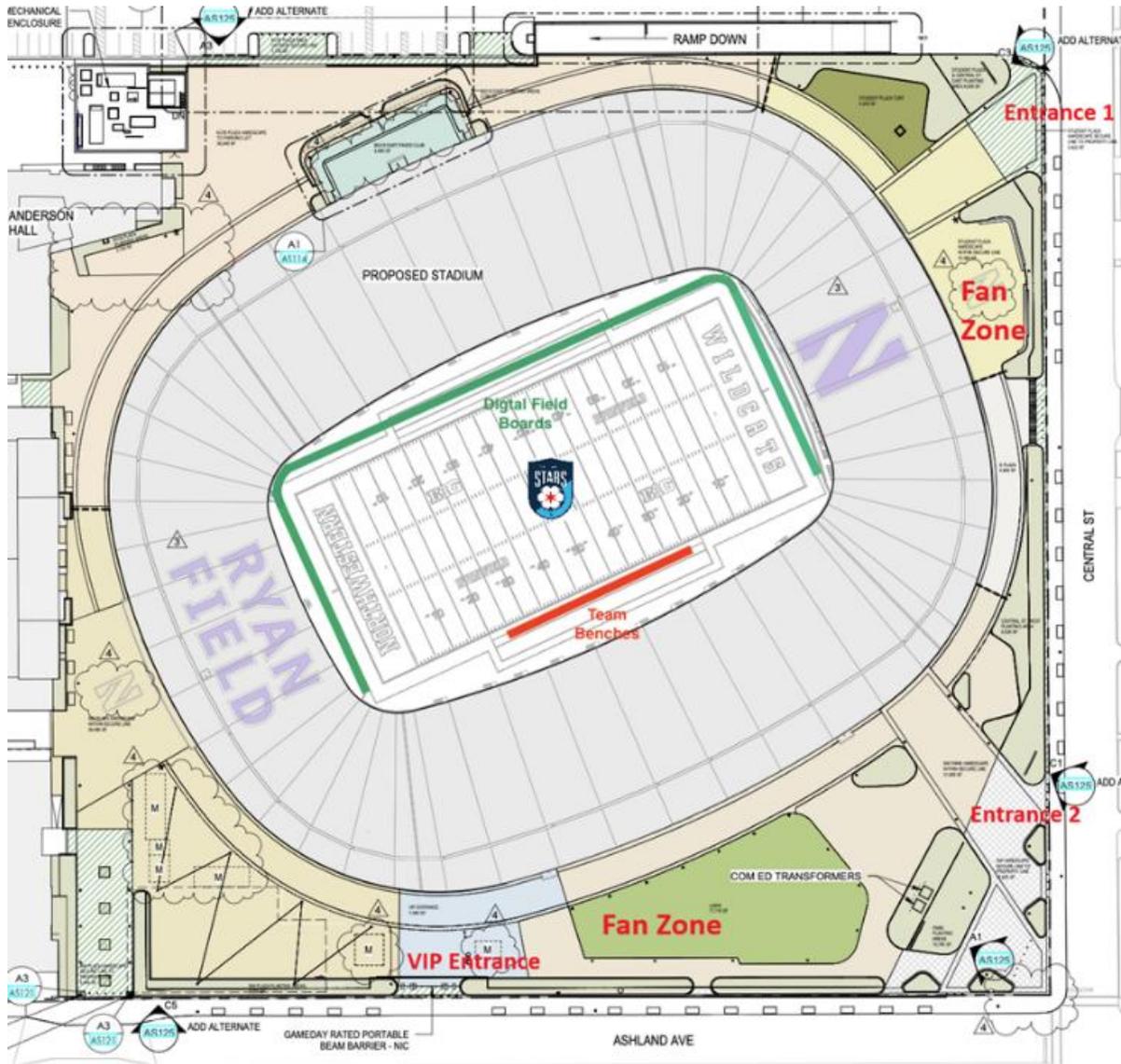
Stadium Configuration

We will operate under the confines of our lease with Northwestern and will focus on selling seats in the lower bowl. Northwestern will agree to configure to a standard soccer field with two goals, benches for home and visiting players and officials score table.

The Stars will not open all gates and determine the number of gates based on attendance. Entrances 1 and 2 are outlined in the site map below.

The fan zone will operate within the footprint of Ryan Field.

The Stars intend to only utilize the first level of Ryan Field for ticketed fans.



Economic Impact

As a tax-paying tenant of Ryan Field, the Stars will bring in significant tax revenue to the City of Evanston, as well as benefit local businesses from matchday vendors, tourism from Stars fans, hotel stays for the away team, and more. The Stars anticipate almost \$550,000 in tax revenue from ticket sales, parking, and concessions. The full economic impact study can be found in **Appendix C**



Appendix A



MEMORANDUM

To: Catherine McManmon
Chicago Stars Football Club, Inc.

From: Peter Lemmon, P.E., PTOE
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

Date: September 25, 2025

Subject: Chicago Stars at Ryan Field
Transportation and Parking Review
Evanston, Illinois

Introduction

Starting in Spring 2027, the Chicago Stars of the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) propose to play their home games at Northwestern University's (NU's) new Ryan Field in Evanston. Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. (Kimley-Horn) was engaged by the team to perform a high-level assessment of expected transportation characteristics associated with Chicago Stars games at Ryan Field relative to other planned events at the venue and similarly attended events in the University's surrounding athletic campus.

This memorandum summarizes key operational data and transportation characteristics of Chicago Stars games, presents a comparison of key transportation characteristics for Chicago Stars games with those of planned events at Ryan Field, and outlines highlights multimodal transportation and parking management considerations for such games along with strategies to manage the arrival and departure of attendees in the context of other events planned at the venue.

Background

The Chicago Stars, one of 14 teams competing in the NWSL, currently host home matches at SeatGeek Stadium in Bridgeview, Illinois. In 2026, the club will play home matches at Northwestern Medicine Field at Martin Stadium on NU's campus. The club seeks to move its home matches to NU's Ryan Field starting in 2027.

Each season, generally running from late March until early November, the Chicago Stars typically host 13 regular season matches with the potential for 15-18 total matches, including possible post-season matches or friendlies with other clubs. NWSL games are largely hosted on weekends (Saturday or Sunday) with most matches starting in the early afternoon and consistently lasting two hours.

The new Ryan Field, set to open in Fall 2026 for the start of NU's football season, will provide seating capacity for up to 35,000 for NU football games, while concert events will accommodate up to 28,500 attendees. Attendance for Chicago Stars games is significantly less than the venue's capacity (average attendance expected to be less than one third of the stadium's capacity).



Kimley»Horn

Chicago Stars fans attend matches from throughout the Chicago area and beyond, but a significant portion of attendees live in Chicago, Evanston, Wilmette, and other nearby communities. As such, fans exhibit a mix of transportation mode choices, leveraging vehicular, transit, walking, and biking infrastructure available in the area.

Ryan Field and Evanston offer a stadium location that is long familiar with hosting athletic events, maintain a mix transportation options for fans to access matches, and is proximate to a significant portion of Chicago Stars fans.

Key Characteristics

This section details several key characteristics that influence the transportation and parking conditions associated with a Chicago Stars match.

Attendance

In 2025, average attendance for NWSL matches is approximately 10,000. For most teams, the average attendance generally ranges between 8,000 and 12,000 per match. At the high end, a select few teams experience attendance figures of approximately 15,000 to 16,000 per match with some matches attracting up to 18,000. This season, the Chicago Stars are averaging approximately 3,000 fans per match.

At Ryan Field, the team expects attendance of approximately 6,000 per match to start, growing to the league average of 10,000 over time. For some limited high-profile matches, attendance may reach up to 18,000.

Schedule / Match Times and Durations

The NWSL regular season begins in the Spring, typically in late March, and ends in the Fall, typically in early November. A mid-season break spanning a few weeks off in July is a notable schedule feature.

Each season, the Chicago Stars host 13 regular-season matches. In total, 15-18 matches may be hosted with potential post-season and friendly matches. Almost all matches are played on Saturdays and Sundays with occasional matches scheduled on a Wednesday or Friday. **Table 1** below summarizes the distribution of match days over the past three seasons.

Table 1. Match Day-of-Week Distribution

Season	Match Day		
	Saturday	Sunday	Wednesday / Friday
2023	7	4	0
2024	8	4	1
2025	4	7	2
Total	19 51%	15 41%	3 8%

Match times vary based on television scheduling, but weekend matches typically start in the afternoon (1:00, 2:00, or 3:00 PM) with occasional evening matches starting at 5:00 or 6:30 PM. Wednesday and Friday matches typically start at 7:00 PM. Between two 45-minute halves, a 20-minute halftime, and approximately 10 minutes of stoppage time, Chicago Stars matches are reliably two hours long.



Kimley»Horn

Match Day Events

Historically, tailgating is not a common activity at Chicago Stars matches. Limited tailgating occurs among a small group of club supporters while other pre-match programming, including family-oriented fan zone activities and youth skill clinics, is often scheduled. These types of activity and programming helps to broaden the time period that fans arrive and limit the concentration and impact of traffic in the area.

Mode of Transportation

The club's current home at SeatGeek Stadium in Bridgeview is not a representative benchmark in terms identifying how fans are expected to travel to and from matches at Ryan Field. However, during a recent game played on September 7th at Northwestern Medicine Field at Martin Stadium in Evanston, the club performed intercept surveys of attendees to collect information on where they live and how they travelled to the game. **Table 2** summarizes the survey results for ticketholder primary mode of transportation.

Table 2. Ticketholder Mode of Transportation (September 7, 2025¹)

Mode	Ticketholders	%
Vehicle	1,031	77%
CTA Train	99	7%
Walk	59	4%
Bike	58	4%
Rideshare	27	2%
Metra	21	2%
CTA Bus	10	1%
Other	38	3%
Total	1,343	100%

¹ Match held at Northwestern Medicine Field at Martin Stadium in Evanston, IL vs. Orlando Pride

As shown above, a majority of ticketholders drove and parked. Collectively among Metra and CTA, 10 percent of ticketholders used public transportation. Another 8 percent walked and biked to the match.

These mode of transportation characteristics are assumed to be generally representative of what could be expected in 2027 at Ryan Field. However, two considerations suggest the potential for some shift towards higher transit use. First, the September 7th match at Martin Stadium was a unique event during the 2025 season, being the first time fans attended a Chicago Stars match in Evanston. As fans become more familiar with the surrounding area, match day transportation and parking conditions, and communication of strategies to manage transportation, ticketholders may shift to use available options other than driving.

Second, Ryan Field is more conveniently accessible via transit options than Martin Stadium is on the lakefront. The Central Street Metra station is located approximately 1,500 feet west of Ryan Field. The Chicago Transit Authority's (CTA's) Central Street station on the Purple Line is located approximately 1,800 feet east of the stadium. By contrast, Martin Stadium is an approximately 3,600-foot walk east of the CTA's Noyes Street station and approximately 1.7 miles from the Central Street Metra station. Given its closer



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proximity to Metra and CTA stations on Central Street, matches at Ryan Field may generate a higher use of transit when compared to Martin Stadium.

Vehicle Occupancy

For those that drive, a key variable that influences traffic and parking conditions is the number of people in each car. For many special events including sports and concerts, average vehicle occupancy rates often range between 2.7 and 3.2 people/vehicle. However, various factors such as parking price, parking availability, demographic and cultural characteristics, and others influence this rate.

During in-person surveys of ticketholders at the September 7th match played at Martin Stadium, the number of tickets per intercept survey were documented. With each intercept survey assumed to represent a vehicle, the resulting vehicle occupancy for those driving was 3.8 people/vehicle, representing a higher-than-typical rate lowers traffic volumes and parking demand compared to most events.

Ticketholder Origin Distribution

Another data point collected from the September 7th match is home zip code information for ticketholders. Just over one half of ticketholders live in the ten most represented municipalities. **Table 3** summarizes the ten most represented home communities of Chicago Stars ticketholders for their recent match in Evanston.

Table 3. 10 Most Represented Ticketholder Home Zip Codes (September 7, 2025¹)

Rank	Municipality	Ticketholders	% of Total Tickets ¹
1	Chicago	3,063	31.9%
2	Evanston	864	9.0%
3	Wilmette	312	3.2%
4	Glenview	175	1.8%
5	Oak Park	107	1.1%
6	Naperville	87	0.9%
7	Winnetka	86	0.9%
8	Highland Park	81	0.8%
9	Berwyn	78	0.8%
10	Libertyville	76	0.8%
Total		4,929	51.3%

¹ Data includes zip code information for 2,227 ticketholders. Zip codes are not available for 402 ticketholders (22.1%).

Distribution of Pre/Post-Match Attendees

For special events, not all attendees arrive and depart at the same time or even within the hour before and after an event. Each event has different characteristics and influences, but arrivals and departures can often stretch across a broad timeframe, and thus spreading out the overall traffic impacts. Before an event, fans arrive early to tailgate, participate in pre-event fan zone experiences and programming, watch players



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warm up, or visit nearby businesses, restaurants, and vendors. For a variety of reasons, a portion of attendees also arrive after the start of an event. Similarly, at the end of an event, some portion of attendees tend to leave a little early to beat the exit rush or due other personal schedule reasons. Attendees may also tailgate, visit restaurants, or just hang around afterwards to wait out the initial rush of traffic. The start and end times of events also influence this behavior, particularly the end time. Events that end during the day or around a meal time are more likely to retain attendees at the venue or in the surrounding area whereas night events that finish later in the evening tend to have more concentrated departure traffic as visitors look to get home at the end of the day.

Evaluation

The following section presents key characteristics that influence anticipated transportation and parking conditions for proposed Chicago Stars matches at Ryan Field in comparison with a sample of other special events planned at Ryan Field (i.e., football games and concerts) and that occur in NU's surrounding athletic campus (i.e., men's basketball games). Additionally, a high-level assessment of the traffic and parking projections is outlined.

Event Comparison

Table 4 presents a summary of key characteristics that influence transportation and parking conditions across four events – Chicago Stars matches, NU football games, and concerts at Ryan Field and NU men's basketball games at Welsh-Ryan Arena.



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Table 4. Comparison of Key Characteristics

Characteristic	Chicago Stars (Ryan Field)	NU Football (Ryan Field)	Concert (Ryan Field)	NU Men's Basketball (Welsh-Ryan Arena)
Attendance	Start: 6,000 Goal: 10,000 Rare: 18,000	Capacity: 35,000	Capacity: 28,500	Capacity: 7,039
Schedule	Season: Late March – Early November #: 13 regular-season matches. 15-18 total potential games with post-season and friendlies Days: Saturday, Sunday, and 1-2 Wednesdays or Fridays Time: Typ. 1, 2, or 3 PM with occasional 5 or 6:30 PM starts on weekends. 7 PM start on occasional Wednesday and Friday dates. Duration: 2 hours	Season: Late August – Late November #: 7 regular-season games in 2025. Days: Saturdays with occasional Friday Time: Typ. 11:30 AM or 2:30 PM. Occasional night on Friday or Saturday at 6:30 PM. Duration: Approx. 3.5 hours	Season: Late Spring – Early Fall #: Up to 6 per year Days: Weekday or Weekends Time: 7:00 PM start 10:00 PM end time Duration: Approx. 3 hours	Season: Late October - Early March #: 17 regular-season games in 2025-26. Days: Weekdays and Weekends Time: Typ. 7 PM on weekdays. Noon, mid-afternoon, or evening starts on weekends. Duration: Approx. 2.5 hours
Pre/Post-Event Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited tailgating for club supporters Fan-Zone activities Pre-game clinics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailgating pre/post-game Wildcat Alley activities Nearby restaurants/bars Interior club dining/social 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearby restaurants/bars Interior club/social Opening acts before headliner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearby restaurants/bars Interior club/social



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Table 4. Comparison of Key Characteristics (cont.)

Characteristic	Chicago Stars (Ryan Field)	NU Football (Ryan Field)	Concert (Ryan Field)	NU Men's Basketball (Welsh-Ryan Arena)
Distribution of Pre/Post-Event Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive during 2 hours prior to event • A great majority (85% or more) leave in the hour following the event. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive during 3-4 hours prior to kick-off • Post-game, some tailgate or visit nearby restaurants, while others leave right away. • Post-game is dependent on game time – evening game exit is more concentrated than midday and afternoon games. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive during 2 hours prior to event • A great majority (85% or more) leave in the hour following the event. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive during 2 hours prior to game. • A great majority (85% or more) leave in the hour following the event for evening games. For afternoon games, some may stay in the area to patronize local restaurants.
Ticketholder Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largely Chicago and nearby suburbs • Some out-of-town fans from region and visiting club cities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Chicago and nearby suburbs • Opposing school cities and alumni hubs (largely Big Ten) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily Chicago and suburbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Chicago and nearby suburbs • Opposing school cities and alumni hubs (largely Big Ten)
Mode of Transportation	Vehicle: 77% CTA/Metra: 10% Walk/Bike: 8% Rideshare: 2% Other: 3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full mode share information not available. • CTA/Metra: +/- 5% • Parking Shuttle: +/-6% • The remainder is a mix of driving, walking, biking, rideshare, and charter bus. 	Estimated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle: 52% • CTA/Metra: 30-40% • Rideshare: 5-10% • Limo/Black Car: 1% • Party Bus/Trolley: 1% • Walk/Bike: 1% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mode share information not available. • Primarily comprised of driving with lower share of walking, rideshare, and transit. • Winter season and many weeknight games limits walking to campus and shorter distances
Vehicle Occupancy	3.8 people/vehicle	2.7 people/vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies by performer. • Typical range of 2.5-3.4 people/vehicle • Assuming 2.5 people/vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumed to be similar to football • Potentially lower on weeknight games as people come to the game after work and don't ride together



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Attendance

Chicago Stars attendance figures are expected to primarily range between 6,000 and 10,000 per match, starting at the lower end and increasing over time. For infrequent occurrences, such as post-season playoffs, attendance may reach up to 18,000. The typical attendance range represents only 17 to 29 percent of Ryan Field's capacity and potential football game attendance. The typical Chicago Stars attendance range is generally consistent with busy crowds for NU basketball games at Welsh-Ryan Arena.

Schedule

The NWSL schedule overlaps with the college football schedule for two months, but is completely complementary with the college basketball season with one starting right when the other is ending. Relative to concerts, the two event types overlap to an extent over the Summer; however, the NWSL takes a few weeks off midseason in July.

In terms of the number of scheduled events, the Chicago Stars are expected to host 15-18 total matches in a season. This represents more than NU football (7 games) and more than the upper limit of allowed concerts (6 events), but is similar to men's basketball (17 games).

Match times for the Chicago Stars are typically on Saturdays or Sundays in early to mid-afternoon, lasting for 2 hours. NU Football games kick off primarily on Saturdays late morning to mid-afternoon. Basketball games typically tip off on weekday evenings with fans arriving during the typical evening peak period or on weekend afternoons/evenings. Concerts are expected to occur during weekday or weekend evenings, starting around 7 PM.

As such, relative to time of day, Chicago Stars matches are most similar to football games at Ryan Field with a few exceptions – fans don't arrive as early for Chicago Stars games to tailgate and the matches are shorter in duration. Although attendance is generally more similar to men's basketball games, Chicago Stars matches are focused on weekend afternoons and generally avoid starts on weekday evenings when traffic can mix with regular evening peak period traffic.

Pre/Post-Event Activity

The Chicago Stars have pre-match activities with largely family-oriented fan zone programming and youth skill clinics along with limited tailgating for fan groups. This is less extensive than NU football games with tailgating and Wildcat Alley activities for fans. All events at Ryan Field and Welsh-Ryan Arena benefit from and draw attendees to nearby restaurants and businesses prior to their start, and if ending in the afternoon or early evening, post event. For events other than football games, a great majority of attendees leave in the hour afterwards. For football games that end in the afternoon or early evening, some portion of fans typically stick around for post-game tailgating and spread out the traffic load.

Distribution of Pre/Post-Event Attendees

Fans at Chicago Stars matches typically arrive over an approximately 2-hour period prior to the match. This is similar to what is expected for concerts and what generally happens for men's basketball games. Whether its pre-event fan activities or access to food/beverage options inside the venue and at nearby businesses along Central Street, these events are expected to have similar distributions. NU Football games attract fans over a broader period as a result of tailgating. Most post-event traffic across event types is focused in the hour after the event ends. For football games ending in the afternoon or early evening, the exit period is drawn out as some fans tailgate post-game beyond that first hour.



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Ticketholder Origin

Attendees for Chicago Stars matches are primarily coming from Chicago and the surrounding suburbs, with many of those represented by Evanston, Wilmette, Glenview, Skokie, Winnetka, and other nearby communities. For NU football and men's basketball games, attendees represent Chicago-area alumni and fans for both NU and the opposing teams. With so many Big Ten alumni living in the Chicago area, opposing team fans regularly traveling from both within the Chicago area; however, a considerable number of attendees from opposing teams travel to Evanston from outside the Chicago region. Concert attendees are largely expected to reside locally in Chicago and the surrounding area.

Mode of Transportation

The Chicago Stars attract a higher number of transit-based trips (10 percent) as a share of all modes when compared to NU football games (5 percent) and likely NU men's basketball games. The prevalence of tailgating for football games can limit the attractiveness of transit. Men's basketball games are expected to exhibit similar mode share characteristics to those of football games, but rather influenced by the schedule with regular weeknight games where fans may be arriving from work and want to get home more quickly by driving late in the evening. Concerts are expected to draw significantly more transit trips, with use varying depending on the performer.

Vehicle Occupancy

The vehicle occupancy exhibited by Chicago Stars ticketholders at the recent September 7th match at Martin Stadium (3.8 people/vehicle) is higher than the typical range for most sporting and concert events. NU football typically draws approximately 2.7 people/vehicle. NU men's basketball is expected to be similar to football. Concert vehicle occupancy often varies based on audience demographics and characteristics associated with the musical acts, typically ranging between 2.5 and 3.4 people/vehicle.

Based on this data, Chicago Stars matches are expected to generate less traffic and parking demand on a per-attendee basis when compared to the other comparison events.

Parking

Attendance for the Chicago Stars at Ryan Field is expected to average approximately 6,000 per match initially, growing to approximately 10,000 per match over time. This range in attendance will result in different levels of parking demand. For this exercise, match day parking locations assumed to be available include:

Ryan Field Parking Lots

Three surface parking lots are included in the planned redevelopment of Ryan Field – the west lot, east lot, and north lot. Collectively, these lots will provide 1,399 spaces.

1000 Central Street Parking Garage

This parking garage, owned by Endeavor Health Evanston Hospital is located on the south side of Central Street just east of the CTA's Purple Line Station. The parking garage includes approximately 300 spaces.

Poplar Avenue Metra Parking

Poplar Avenue runs north-south along the east side of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks west of Ryan Field, maintaining metered parking along the west side of the street between Livingston Street on the north and the North Shore Channel on the south. These three blocks of Poplar Avenue provide 197 parking spaces.



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North Campus Parking Garage

The North Campus Garage is located on NU's campus just west of Ryan Fieldhouse, providing just over 500 parking spaces.

South Campus Parking Garage

The South Campus Parking Garage, co-located with NU's Segal Visitor's Center, is located just off Sheridan Road next to NU's sailing center. Together with the adjacent Lakeside Parking Structure, just over 620 parking spaces are maintained.

Additional parking lots are available on NU's campus to provide additional parking capacity. Further, owners of businesses and other properties in the area surrounding Ryan Field along Central Street and Green Bay Road often sell parking for Ryan Field events. These entrepreneurial parking options are expected to be available as demand and conditions apply.

Consistent with football games and concert events at Ryan Field, it is assumed that event parking restrictions that prohibit attendees from parking in adjacent residential neighborhoods, both in Evanston and Wilmette, will also be in effect.

Considering the transportation mode share and vehicle occupancy data available through surveys completed at the September 7th game hosted at Martin Stadium, **Table 5** summarizes parking projections for the lower and upper limits of the expected average attendance range. Additionally, as a conservative approach, a second vehicle occupancy scenario that assumes the lower-end of a range experienced for sports and other special events (2.7 people/vehicle) is also presented. **Table 6** highlights the parking areas likely to be used to serve the lower and upper limits of these attendance and vehicle occupancy scenarios.

Table 5. Match Day Parking Projections

Scenario		Vehicle Mode Share	Attendees Drive / Park	Avg. Vehicle Occupancy (people/veh)	Projected Parking Demand
Stage	Attendance				
<i>Surveyed Chicago Stars Match Average Vehicle Occupancy - September 7, 2025</i>					
Initial	6,000	77%	4,620	3.8	1,216
Over Time	10,000		7,700		2,026
<i>Low-End Range Vehicle Occupancy for Sporting Events</i>					
Initial	6,000	77%	4,620	2.7	1,711
Over Time	10,000		7,700		2,851



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Table 6. Match Day Parking Locations

Scenario		Projected Parking Demand	Parking Location ^{1 2} (capacity)				
Stage	Attendance		On-Site (1,399 spaces)	1000 Central Garage (300 spaces)	Poplar Avenue Metra Parking (197 spaces)	North Campus Garage (500 spaces)	South Campus Garage (621 spaces)

Surveyed Chicago Stars Match Average Vehicle Occupancy (3.8 people/vehicle) - September 7, 2025

Initial	6,000	1,216	*				
Over Time	10,000	2,026	*	*	*	*	

Low-End Range Vehicle Occupancy for Sporting Events (2.7 people/vehicle)

Initial	6,000	1,711	*	*	*		
Over Time	10,000	2,851	*	*	*	*	*

¹ Additional parking options are available on the NU campus and can be included in a final plan

² Does not include entrepreneurial event-day parking sold on private lots in the surrounding area

As shown above, the parking available on-site at Ryan Field is capable of accommodating the projected parking needs for the initial expected attendance levels using similar mode and vehicle occupancy characteristics exhibited at the September 7th match held at Martin Stadium. Over time, as attendance grows, additional off-site parking will be needed.

If a lower vehicle occupancy that is consistent with fans attending NU football games at Ryan Field is applied, the initial attendance levels for Chicago Stars matches is expected to be handled by parking on site, along Poplar Avenue near the Metra station, and within the nearby garage south of Evanston Hospital. As attendance grows over time, parking garages on NU’s campus would provide additional capacity. For the South Campus Garage, a free shuttle is recommended to provide convenient access between the garage and stadium.

Again, this initial review assumes no parking within nearby residential neighborhoods and does not include entrepreneurial parking on private lots. Further, additional parking lots are available on NU’s campus that may be available to provide more proximate parking options. Particular parking arrangements will need to be confirmed with NU.

Transportation and Parking Management Measures

A range of strategies and measures can be applied to assist in managing transportation and parking conditions associated with Chicago Stars matches at Ryan Field. Many of these measures will be in place for NU football games and concerts. Since Chicago Stars matches will draw significantly lower attendance than those events, these strategies should be scaled appropriately. A preliminary selection of measures to consider for managing traffic and parking conditions for Chicago Stars matches is outlined below. Additional measures may be appropriate.

Metra Fare Integration with Event Tickets

Metra has established a program to partner with venues and allow event attendees to ride Metra for free by showing their event ticket in lieu of purchasing a fare to and from the event. Metra enters into



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an agreement with the venue or event organization to financially cover the cost of ridership. This program can be advertised to promote use of Metra to and from Chicago Stars games and reduce both traffic impacts and parking demands. A modest increase to the cost of each ticket allows the collective attendance to subsidize and encourage Metra as a desirable mode choice for matches. One ongoing example of this program is in place for Metra rides to/from concerts at Ravinia in Highland Park.

Rideshare Geofence and Designated Pick-Up Locations

Consider partnership with transportation network providers (TNPs) such as Uber and Lyft to establish a geofence with designated drop-off and pick-up zones. The geofence will establish a boundary with the app where pick-up activity is restricted and one or more locations can be designated to control where pick ups may occur. This prevents rideshare vehicles from using the curbside lanes adjacent to the stadium and blocking key access routes and directs attendees hailing a ride to a safe location that limits impacts on traffic flows after a match. The need and sizing of a geofence and the location/layout of the designated pick-up zones should be scaled to serve the attendance of Chicago Stars games relative to those being planned for larger events at Ryan Field.

Remote Parking Shuttle

As attendance for Chicago Stars matches increases over time, parking beyond the on-site lots and nearby options within a few blocks of Ryan Field will likely be needed. Some potential parking locations, like the North Campus Parking Garage is generally walkable for fans, but some would benefit from a shuttle. Additionally, the South Campus Garage is more accessible for fans via a shuttle bus. At the recent Chicago Stars match held at Martin Stadium, complimentary shuttle service was available for fans. Shuttle buses are recommended to unload/load passengers along the east side of Ashland Avenue adjacent to the stadium. Shuttle routes would ultimately be defined based on the parking areas they serve, but would generally be recommended to proceed north and east on Isabella Street to Sheridan Road, where it could continue south towards campus. Return routes to the stadium could likely use Central Street to Ashland Avenue.

Personalized Transportation Communications

As part of the ticket purchase process, tailored transportation options can be communicated to promote transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access. Based on the location of pre-purchased parking and ticketholder zip codes, personalized travel routes can be provided to attendees via e-mail and text, helping to direct fans along preferred routes and limit unnecessary circulation of traffic in the area.

Bike Valet

At the September 7th Chicago Stars match at Martin Stadium, many fans from the surrounding area biked to the event. Bike parking racks were largely full while many others were secured to light poles, fencing, and small trees. To provide a safe and secure location to park bicycles, thus encouraging bikes as an attractive mode of transportation to matches, a bike valet location should be considered. Attendees check in their bicycles at the valet station where they are parked in a secured area. After the match, attendees simply pick up their bicycle, not dissimilar to a coat check.



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Conclusions

Kimley-Horn reviewed a range of characteristics that influence transportation and parking conditions associated with Chicago Stars regular-season matches. Much of this data was recently collected from surveys of attendees at a recent match held in Evanston on September 7th at Martin Stadium on Northwestern University's campus. These characteristics were compared with those of other events that occur or are planned to occur at the new Ryan Field or adjacent Welsh-Ryan Arena – NU football games, concerts, and NU men's basketball games. These key characteristics include attendance and capacity, event schedules and times, typical pre/post-event activity, the distribution of attendees arriving and departing an event over time, where attendees live, primary modes of transportation to/from events, and the average number of people per vehicle for those that drive.

Based on a high-level review of these characteristics and comparison to other planned events, key findings are outlined below:

- Overall, Chicago Stars matches at Ryan Field will be considerably less impactful from traffic and parking perspectives compared to NU football games, concerts, and NU men's basketball games. Attendance is significantly lower, games primarily occur on weekend afternoons outside of typical peak hours of background traffic in the area, and fans have used a wide range of transportation modes in addition to driving when attending a recent match in Evanston.
- Relative to attendance, Chicago Stars matches are expected to attract more than 70 percent fewer people than what NU football games can draw. As a matter of scale, Chicago Stars matches are more similar to a sold-out men's basketball game at Welsh-Ryan Arena.
- Chicago Stars games primarily are scheduled on weekends in the early-mid afternoon when background traffic volumes in the area are relatively low compared to typical weekdays. Sunday matches would have less traffic impact than Saturday matches.
- Fan-zone activities, youth skill clinics, and limited tailgating among a small group of team supporters occur before matches. These pre-match activities help to broaden the event arrival period, spreading out transportation impacts, but not to the extent of NU football games. Post-match activities are limited and most fans tend to leave right after the match. Opportunities to further attract fans in a more distributed manner prior to matches would help minimize impacts. Similarly, programming that keeps some fans around the stadium post-game would help to spread out the exit period with less overall impact.
- At the September 7th match held at Martin Stadium, 10 percent of ticketholders used Metra and the CTA as their primary mode of transportation. By moving from the lakefront to Ryan Field, Metra and CTA options become more attractive due to closer proximity of Ryan Field to Metra and CTA rail stations on Central Street when compared to Martin Stadium.
- Surveyed vehicle occupancy for those that drove to the September 7th match vs. Orland Pride was 3.8 people/vehicle. This is higher than typical sports events and what has been observed in the past for NU football games. Based on this vehicle occupancy and the mode of transportation data collection on September 7th, Chicago Stars matches are expected to generate less traffic and parking demand on a per-attendee basis when compared to the other events at Ryan Field and Welsh-Ryan Arena.



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- Parking for the initial attendance projections at Ryan Field are expected to be accommodated by the on-site lots. As attendance grows over time, additional off-site parking will be needed. Likely parking areas include spaces along Poplar Avenue, at the 1000 Central Street garage, and at the North Campus garage on NU's campus. Using a more conservative vehicle occupancy rate, parking will need to initially be provided on-site and within walking distance along Poplar Avenue and at 1000 Central Street. Longer term as attendance grows, off-site parking at NU's North Campus and South Campus garages will likely be needed.



Appendix B

2025 Evanston Community Outreach Clips

Chicago Stars FC News

Chicago Stars FC to play lakefront match at Northwestern University

FOX Chicago
Cassie Carlson
May 19, 2025

Chicago Stars to Play in Evanston in September

Univision Chicago
May 19, 2025

Chicago Stars to Play at Northwestern

WGN-AM
May 19, 2025

Chicago's NWSL Team Coming to Northwestern for Lakefront Faceoff

Sports Illustrated
Ryan Cole
May 19, 2025

Chicago Stars FC vs Orlando Pride Will Be Played at Martin Stadium in Evanston on September 7

On Tap Sports
Joe Chatz
May 19, 2025

Chicago Stars Looking to Play 2026 in Evanston

ABC Chicago
May 20, 2025

Chicago Stars Approved to Play in Evanston in 2026

NBC Chicago
May 21, 2025

Chicago Stars soccer team to 'test run' Evanston stadium at Northwestern as they consider move there

Chicago Tribune
Phil Rockrohr
May 23, 2025

City greenlights Chicago Stars to play at NU's lakefront stadium

Evanston Roundtable



Alex Harrison
May 19, 2025

[Pro soccer coming to lakefront stadium](#)

Evanston Now
Bill Smith
May 20, 2025

[‘People don’t feel like they have to win games’ at Unity Soccer Festival](#)

Evanston Roundtable
Alexis Rogers
July 12, 2025

[Chicago Stars FC to Unveil Plans for 2026 Season](#)

NBC Chicago
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars Announce Plans to Move for 2026 Season](#)

NBC Chicago
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars Announce It Will Play 2026 Home Games in Evanston](#)

ABC Chicago
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars FC Commissions Mural; Will Have New Home Field for 2026](#)

WGN
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars Move to Northwestern Medicine Field at Martin Stadium](#)

WLS-AM
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars Move to Northwestern Medicine Field at Martin Stadium](#)

WBBM-AM
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars Move to Northwestern Medicine Field at Martin Stadium](#)

WBEZ
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars to spend at least the 2026 NWSL season on Northwestern’s campus](#)

Sports Business Journal
Bret McCormick
September 3, 2025



[Chicago Stars FC reveal move to Northwestern Medicine Field at Martin Stadium in Evanston for 2026 NWSL season](#)

CBS Sports
Sandra Herrera
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars will play their 2026 NWSL season at Northwestern's lakefront Martin Stadium](#)

Chicago Tribune
Colleen Kane
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars to play 2026 season at Northwestern's Martin Stadium](#)

The Athletic
Melanie Anzidei
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars to play 2026 season at Northwestern Medicine Field](#)

Evanston RoundTable
Margo Milanowski
September 3, 2025

[Women's pro soccer moving to Evanston](#)

Evanston Now
Jeff Hirsh
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars FC Move to Evanston After 12 Years in Bridgeview](#)

Front Office Sports
Annie Costabile
September 4, 2025

[Chicago Stars announce new home stadium in Evanston for 2026](#)

Marquee Sports Network
Staff Report
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars FC to play 2026 home matches at Martin Stadium in Evanston](#)

On Tap Sports
Joe Chatz
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars leaving Bridgeview, moving to Evanston](#)

Southwest Regional Publishing
Mike Clark
September 3, 2025



[Stars FC will play 2026 home games at Northwestern's Martin Field](#)

GalPal Sports
Lesley Ryder
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars FC moves out of Bridgeview to Northwestern Medicine Field at Martin Stadium in Evanston](#)

CBSChicago.com
Sara Tenenbaum
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars to play 2026 season at Northwestern University](#)

Pro Soccer Wire/USA Today
Seth Vertelney
September 3, 2025

[NWSL's Stars announce move to Northwestern campus](#)

AP News
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars to play '26 season at Northwestern's stadium](#)

ESPN
Jeff Kassouf
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars Announce Move to Northwestern Stadium for 2026 NWSL Season](#)

Just Women's Sports
JWS Staff
September 4, 2025

[Chicago Stars FC announce Northwestern Medicine Field as new home for 2026](#)

All For XI
Melina Gaspar
September 3, 2025

[Soccer or no, stadium will go](#)

Evanston Now
Jeff Hirsh
September 3, 2025

[Chicago Stars FC Announces Activations for Wintrust Lakefront Faceoff Match](#)

BVM Sports
BVM Sportsdesk
September 4, 2025



[Recap: Chicago Stars vs Orlando Pride](#)

GN Sports

September 7, 2025

[Recap: Chicago Stars vs. Orlando Pride](#)

Fox Chicago

September 7, 2025

[Recap: Chicago Stars vs Orlando Pride](#)

Univision Chicago

September 7, 2025

[Recap: Chicago Stars vs Orlando Pride](#)

Fan Duel Sports Network

September 7, 2025

[Sam Staab with a Spectacular Goal vs. Orlando Pride](#)

Yahoo! Sports

September 7, 2025

[Chicago Stars dazzle Evanston crowd in win over Orlando Pride](#)

Evanston Roundtable

Astry Rodriguez

September 7, 2025

[Chicago Stars set season-high attendance in a win at Northwestern's lakefront Martin Stadium, their 2026 home](#)

Chicago Tribune

Kalen Lumpkins

September 7, 2025

[Photos: Chicago Stars defeat Orlando Pride in the 'Lakefront Faceoff' in Evanston](#)

Chicago Tribune

Eileen Meslar

September 7, 2025

[Chicago Stars defeat NWSL champs in match at NU](#)

Windy City Times

Andrew Davis

September 7, 2025

[Women's pro soccer achieves Lakefront goals](#)

Evanston Now

Jeff Hirsch

September 8, 2025



[A Chicago Stars-Filled Day](#)

Global Traveler Magazine

John Wroblewski

September 15, 2025

[Chicago Stars head to temporary home](#)

Coliseum News

September 22, 2025



Appendix C

Chicago Stars FC in Evanston
Estimate of Economic Impact

Overview

In September 2023, the City of Evanston commissioned a study by Johnson Consulting (the "Johnson Consulting Report") regarding the economic impact of events at New Ryan Field. The Chicago Stars FC team has leveraged the methodology used in the Johnson Consulting Report, along with club-specific data, to estimate the economic impact of hosting their matches in Evanston as calculated below.

Projected Visitation

	Year 1	Future State	Methodology Notes
Number of Events ⁽¹⁾	15	10	
Projected Average Attendance ⁽¹⁾	6,000	10,000	
Local	5,560	9,300	
Non-Local	420	700	
Total Event Spectators	90,800	160,000	
Local ⁽²⁾	83,700	148,800	
Non-Local ⁽²⁾	6,300	11,200	
Other Visitors ⁽³⁾	1,388	1,480	Johnson Consulting Report estimates 90 - 95 "Other Visitors" per event including visiting athletes, team officials, production staff, etc.
Total Visitors	91,388	161,480	
Local ⁽²⁾	83,700	148,800	
Non-Local ^{(2),(3)}	7,688	12,680	Johnson Consulting Report considers all Other Visitors as Non-Local.

Projected Room Nights

	Year 1	Future State
Non-Local Event Attendees	6,300	11,200
Percentage of Non-Local Event Attendees with Room Night Generating Potential ⁽³⁾	50%	50%
Occupancy for Non-Local Attendees ⁽³⁾	2.0	2.0
Nights per Room ⁽³⁾	1.0	1.0
Room Nights Generated by Event Attendees	1,575	2,800
Non-Local Other Visitors	1,388	1,480
Percentage of Non-Local Other Visitors with Room Night Generating Potential ⁽³⁾	100%	100%
Occupancy for Non-Local Attendees ⁽³⁾	1.0	1.0
Nights per Room ⁽³⁾	2.0	2.0
Room Nights Generated by Other Visitors	2,775	2,960
Total Room Nights	4,350	5,760

Projected Direct Spend

	Average Daily Spending (\$ / Day)	Year 1 (\$, 000s)		Future State (\$, 000s)		Methodology Notes
		Total	Evanston Specific ⁽²⁾	Total	Evanston Specific ⁽²⁾	
Spending by Non-Local Visitors						
Lodging ^{(1),(2)}	\$141	\$613.4	\$490.7	\$812.2	\$649.7	Johnson Consulting Report assumes 20% of guests stay elsewhere.
Meals & Incidental Expenses ⁽²⁾	\$53	481.0	408.8	750.5	637.9	Johnson Consulting Report assumes 15% of spending occurs outside of Evanston.
Tickets (For Event Attendees Only) ⁽¹⁾	\$44	276.7	276.7	492.0	492.0	
Shopping ⁽²⁾	\$28	236.0	200.6	368.2	312.9	Johnson Consulting Report assumes 15% of spending occurs outside of Evanston.
Matchday Parking (For Event Attendees Only) ⁽²⁾	\$5	31.5	31.5	50.0	50.0	
Total Non-Local Visitor Direct Spending	\$269	\$1,638.6	\$1,408.3	\$2,478.9	\$2,148.6	
Spending by Local Visitors						
Lodging ⁽²⁾	\$0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	
Meals & Incidental Expenses ⁽²⁾	\$15	1,295.5	1,067.2	2,232.0	1,897.2	Johnson Consulting Report assumes 15% of spending occurs outside of Evanston.
Tickets ⁽¹⁾	\$44	3,678.8	3,678.8	6,536.6	6,536.6	
Shopping ⁽²⁾	\$5	418.5	355.7	744.0	632.4	Johnson Consulting Report assumes 15% of spending occurs outside of Evanston.
Matchday Parking ⁽²⁾	\$5	418.5	418.5	744.0	744.0	
Total Local Visitor Direct Spending	\$69	\$5,769.3	\$5,618.2	\$10,266.6	\$9,610.2	
Facility Operations (Chicago Stars FC Events Only) ⁽²⁾		\$2,775.0	\$2,775.0	\$2,960.0	\$2,960.0	
Total Annual Direct Spending		\$10,182.8	\$9,701.5	\$15,695.4	\$14,618.7	

Total Economic Impact

	Multiplier ⁽¹⁾	Year 1 (\$, 000s)		Future State (\$, 000s)		Multiplier Notes
		Total	Evanston Specific ⁽²⁾	Total	Evanston Specific ⁽²⁾	
Direct Spending		\$10,182.8	\$9,701.5	\$15,695.4	\$14,618.7	
Increased Spending	0.370	3,767.7	3,608.6	5,907.3	5,518.9	Per \$1 of Direct Spending
Induced Spending	0.480	4,887.8	4,658.7	7,533.8	7,161.0	Per \$1 of Direct Spending
Total Annual Spending		\$18,838.3	\$17,947.8	\$29,036.4	\$27,699.7	
Increased Earnings	0.477	\$4,857.2	\$4,627.6	\$7,486.7	\$7,116.2	Per \$1 of Direct Spending
Employment	9.000	92 FTE	87 FTE	141 FTE	134 FTE	Per \$1 million of Direct Spending

Evanston Fiscal Impact

	Applicable Rate (Evanston Only) ⁽²⁾	Evanston Tax Revenue (\$, 000s)	
		Year 1	Future State
Sales Tax	1.3%	\$25.4	\$43.5
Hotel Occupancy Tax	7.5%	96.8	48.7
Taxes on Athletics Tickets	12.0%	474.4	945.4
Parking Tax	\$0.60 per Vehicle	13.5	24.0
Total Annual Evanston Tax Revenue		\$550.1k	\$969.7k

⁽¹⁾ Club projection based on a combination of historic performance and league performance benchmarking.

⁽²⁾ Based on data from Chicago Stars FC match held at Northwestern Medicine Field at Martin Stadium on September 7th, 2023.

⁽³⁾ Assumption based on Johnson Consulting Economic Impact Study commissioned in September 2023 by Evanston City Manager Luke Stowe (<https://www.cityofevanston.org/home/showdocument?id=911835&id=638303149546282362>).