

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: KIM NADEAU, PARKING MANAGER
FINANCE DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: COVID-19 RELATED TEMPORARY PARKING USER FEE
REDUCTIONS

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Finance Department that the Council, by resolution, authorize the extension of a temporary reduction of certain parking user fees to June 30, 2021 which was previously authorized by Council on December 15, 2020, and set to expire on the earlier date of June 30, 2021, or when Sonoma County reaches the Yellow Tier of California's COVID-19 restrictions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Certain business operations have been required to cease or dramatically reduce all indoor operations since March 2020 due to either social distancing requirements or specific restrictions on indoor operations set forth in State and County health orders. To assist the business community, the City authorized a temporary reduction of certain parking user fees and a waiver of parking reservation fees associated with outdoor seating areas.

It appears that Sonoma County may reach the Yellow Tier prior to June 30, 2021. To continue support of the downtown as it recovers from COVID-19 impacts, it is proposed to extend the following parking user fee waiver through June 30, 2021: (1) Free parking at all five garages, Monday – Friday from 5 PM to 6 AM; (2) Free parking at all five garages on Saturday and Sunday; (3) First hour of parking free at the 3rd Street, 5th Street and D Street garages (the 1st and 7th Street garages already have the first hour free); (4) One free metered parking session using the Passport mobile payment application, up to \$3.15 in value; (4) Waiver of meter reservation fees for temporary parklets, outdoor seating and retail to expand business footprint to meet physical distancing requirements related to COVID-19 health order. This would be a continuation of parking reduction fees have been in place since December 15, 2020 (RES-2020-225).

BACKGROUND

As part of the State's response to address the global COVID-19 outbreak, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency on March 4, 2020 to formalize emergency actions across multiple state agencies and departments. The declaration required all residents within the State to immediately heed the State public health directives and shelter at their place of residence except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of the federal critical infrastructure sectors.

On March 17, 2020, the County of Sonoma Health Officer issued a shelter-in-place order which required the closure of any business or service deemed non-essential to the health and welfare of the community as it relates to COVID-19. Businesses small and large have reported a collapse of their revenue streams, reduced sales, and the need to reduce workforce hours or lay off staff completely.

Since March of 2020, the County of Sonoma Health Officer issued four additional health orders that either modified existing restriction or brought forward additional requirements.

On April 14, 2020, the City first reduced parking fees. On June 16, 2020, the City Council approved a variety of parking fee reductions and waivers intended to encourage activity and support the downtown economy. Specific waivers were implemented to remove the meter reservation fees associated with the placement of outdoor seating or parklets within existing areas designed as paid street parking. Council extended most of the parking fee reductions on December 15, 2020 through June 30, 2021 or when the County reaches the Yellow Tier of the State's COVID-19 restriction levels, whichever comes first.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On April 14, 2020, the City Council approved the waiver of hourly parking fees at the City's five public garages and all parking meter fees until the Shelter in Place Order was lifted for the City of Santa Rosa (RES-2020-059):

On June 16, 2020, the City Council approved the following parking user fee reductions effective July 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020 (RES-2020-087).

- Parking meter rates in the Value Zone reduced to \$0.75/hour
- Free parking at all five garages, Monday – Friday from 5 PM to 6 AM
- Free parking at all five garages on Saturday and Sunday
- First hour of parking free at the 3rd Street, 5th Street and D Street garages (the 1st and 7th Street garages already have the first hour free)
- One free metered parking session using the Passport mobile payment application, up to \$3.15 in value

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- Waiver of meter reservation fees for temporary parklets, outdoor seating and retail to expand business footprint to meet physical distancing requirements related to COVID-19 health order

On December 15, 2020, the City Council approved the extension of the following parking user fee reductions, effective January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021 or when Sonoma County reaches the Yellow Tier of the California state COVID-19 restriction levels, whichever comes first (RES-2020-225):

- Free parking at all five garages, Monday – Friday from 5 PM to 6 AM
- Free parking at all five garages on Saturday and Sunday
- First hour of parking free at the 3rd Street, 5th Street, and D Street garages (the 1st and 7th Street garages already have the first hour free)
- One free metered parking session using the Passport mobile payment application, up to \$3.15 in value
- Waiver of meter reservation fees for temporary parklets, outdoor seating and retail to expand business footprint to meet physical distancing requirements related to COVID-19 health order

ANALYSIS

It appears that Sonoma County may reach the Yellow Tier prior to June 30, 2021. To continue support of the downtown as it recovers from COVID-19 impacts, it is proposed to extend the following parking user fee waiver through June 30, 2021:

- Free parking at all five garages, Monday – Friday from 5 PM to 6 AM
- Free parking at all five garages on Saturday and Sunday
- First hour of parking free at the 3rd Street, 5th Street and D Street garages (the 1st and 7th Street garages already have the first hour free)
- One free metered parking session using the Passport mobile payment application, up to \$3.15 in value
- Waiver of meter reservation fees for temporary parklets, outdoor seating and retail to expand business footprint to meet physical distancing requirements related to COVID-19 health order

The reductions described above are set forth in Addendum 2 to the Schedule of Parking User Fees attached to the Resolution as Exhibit A. Specific to the one free metered parking session with mobile payment: The City currently offers a mobile payment option for metered parking through Passport Parking. To support use of the Passport Parking smart phone application, it is recommended the City continues to offer mobile payment users through Passport Parking, a one-time use per account, free validated metered parking session, up to \$3.15 in value, to parkers who utilize the mobile payment option. This is the equivalent of a 3-hour parking session in the Value Zone and a 2-hour

parking session in the Premium Zone, including the \$0.15 convenience fee on a first-come, first-serve basis up to a total amount of \$31,500.

Specific to the waiver of meter reservation fees (meter covers) for parklets, outdoor seating and retail: The Schedule of Parking User Fees charges meter reservation fees of \$12/day per Value Zone metered parking space, and \$15/day per Premium Zone metered parking space (referred to as "Meter Cover"). It is recommended to continue to waive these fees for City encroachment permit holders for the duration of the permit, where the permittee is temporarily using the right of way for parklets, outdoor seating and retail to allow businesses to expand their footprint into adjacent parking spaces to meet physical distancing requirements under the Sonoma County Public Health Order.

Termination of Temporary Waiver Period

The intent behind the proposed temporary parking user fee reductions under this action is to provide support to a segment of the business community that is currently experiencing significant impacts due to COVID-19. It is proposed that all temporary fee waivers or reductions or associated with this action sunset on June 30, 2021.

A further extension of these temporary fee waivers may be brought before the Council for further consideration prior to the sunset date if alternative sources of funding are identified to replace the Parking Fund revenue reductions.

FISCAL IMPACT

Revenue reduction from the first hour free in the garages is estimated at \$10,000 per month. The estimated revenue reduction from free parking in all five garages on Saturday and Sunday is estimated at \$10,000 per month. The estimated revenue reduction from free parking after 5 pm in the garages is \$5,000 per month. The estimated revenue reduction from the waiver of meter reservation fees for the temporary parklets is \$10,000 per month. The maximum revenue reduction from the free mobile payment session offer is \$31,500. There is no impact to the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378. Construction activities associated with the specific permits experiencing fee modifications under this action will remain subject to environmental review under CEQA.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Downtown sub-committee reviewed and provided input on these actions.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution/ Exhibit A- Reduced Parking Fee Schedule

CONTACT

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