

Downtown Santa Rosa Parking and Rate Adjustments

November 4, 2025

City of Santa Rosa
Finance Department, Parking Division

Current Issues Facing Parking Enterprise Fund

- First-Hour-Free Parking has not incentivized garage use over street parking. Premium Zone occupancy is higher since implementation of First-Hour-Free, generating a large deficit in garage revenue
- First-hour-free increases loitering and safety issues in the garage
- Voucher use at all time low
- Validation program is only being used by two companies, and only for employee parking
- Safety concerns require funds and staffing to address
- Revenues have not returned to pre-covid levels, although expenditures continue to rise.
- Requests for residential development permit options
- Increase in requests for enforcement in residential permit program zones with staffing limitations

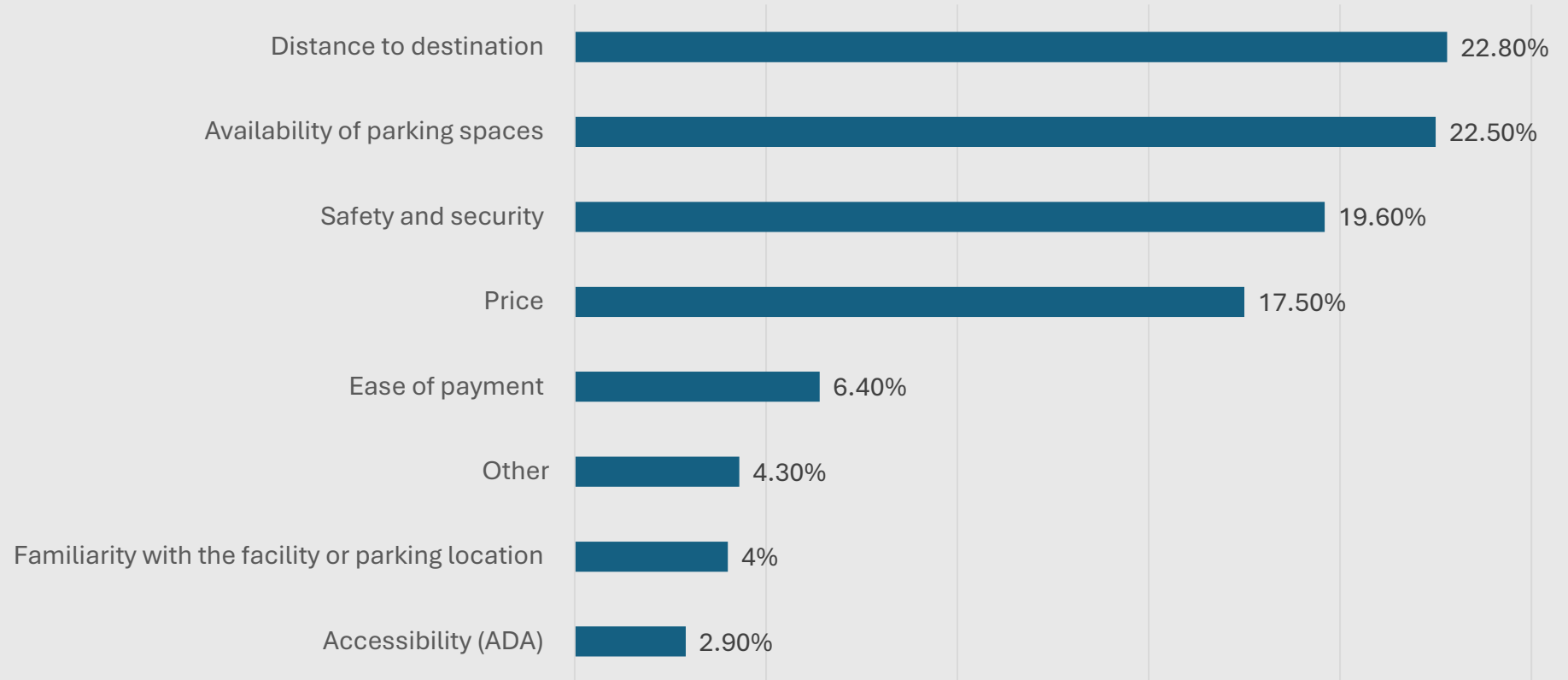
Summary of Parking Issues - MTC Focus Group

- Employees find it difficult to access affordable long-term parking. Business owners pay high costs for employee parking, and some employees are forced to park far from their workplaces.
- Safety in parking garages, particularly at night, was a significant concern, with reports of homeless individuals, car break-ins, and poor lighting.
- Participants noted difficulties with finding available parking, especially near businesses and during peak times. Construction workers take up spaces early in the day which also impacts availability.
- Visitors, especially seniors, find parking signage unclear, particularly around the use of kiosks and long-term parking options. Many participants noted frustration with inconsistent parking rules across different zones.
- Confusion around inconsistent pricing, limited hours for metered parking, and dissatisfaction with the cost, particularly for longer stays and for employees who have to park regularly.
- Few businesses offer parking validation, which could help drive more foot traffic to downtown. There is also a lack of incentives for employees to use parking garages instead of occupying street parking.

Santa Rosa MTC Parking Study Focus Group Report, 2024

Community Engagement Survey - MTC Grant with TYLin and Convey

What is your main priority when it comes to parking?



Total responses: 1572

Study Recommendations

1. Revised public parking fee structure
2. New residential fee schedule
3. Construction management planning amendments
4. Wayfinding
5. Garage space allocation for employees working in downtown and railroad square

Other Parking Division Priorities

6. Curb management - identifying shared parking spaces for delivery drivers and rideshare vehicles
7. EV implementation

Parking Meter Fees

Progressive Parking Model: The Parking Division's goal is to set the prices to achieve 85% occupancy in the Premium and Value Zones.

An occupancy rate of 85% means each block has a couple of open spaces at any given time, giving parkers the choice to park close and pay a bit more, or park a few blocks away and save some money.

- Reduces GH Emissions via circling for spots
- Parking fees invested back into the community for improvements

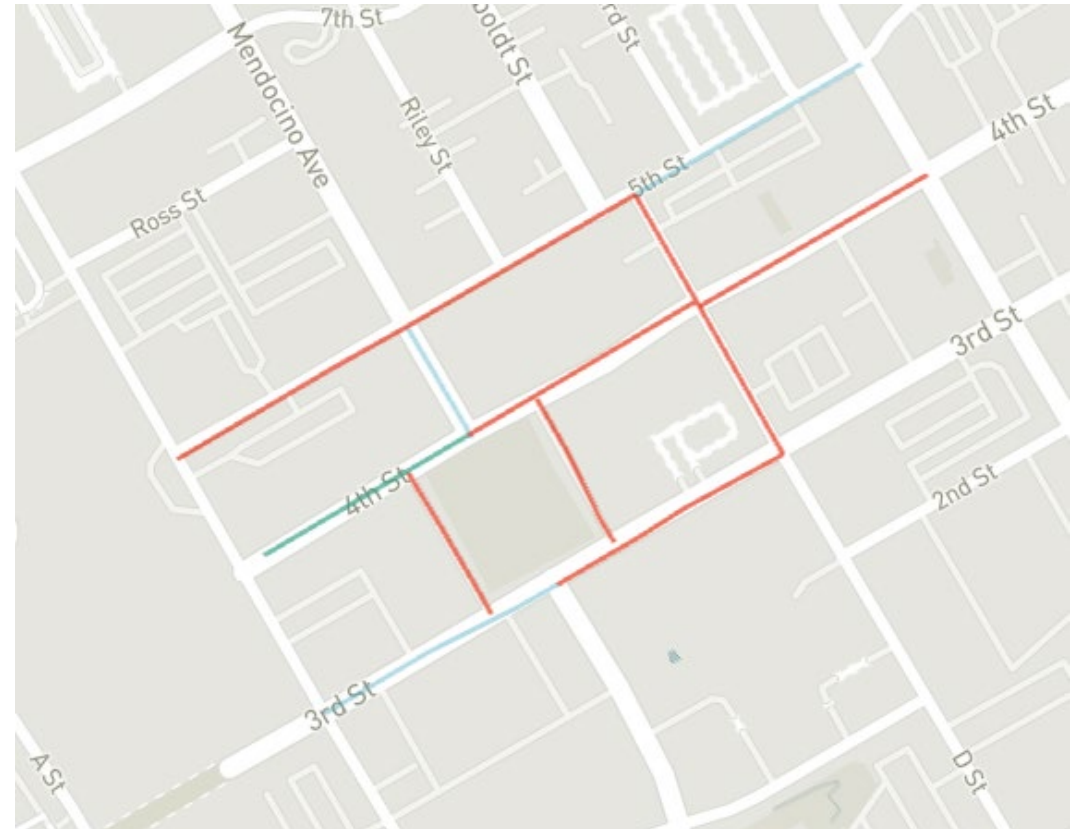
Meter rates were last updated in 2018 when the Progressive Parking Model was adopted.

Premium Zone Occupancy

Railroad Square – Reaches Peak Occupancy (over 95%) 1pm through dinner, Thur-Sat



Central Parking – Reaches Peak Occupancy (over 95%) 2pm through Dinner, Mon-Sat



Proposed Hourly Fee Changes

Parking Availability & Pricing			Rates			
			Capacity	Current	Capacity	Proposed Pricing (Hr)
On-Street (Visitor)		Premium & Depot Lot	449	\$1.50	520	\$2.50
		Value	718	\$1.00	531	\$1.50
		Free**		n/a	187	\$0.00
Off-Street (Visitor)	Lots	Premium Lots (Lots 10 & 11,)	187	\$1.50	138	\$2.00
		Value Lots (Lots 2, 4, 7)	278	\$1.00	278	\$1.50
		Economy Lots 13 & 14 in RRSQ	155	\$1.00	155	\$1.00
	Garage	Value	2834	\$.70*	2834	\$1.00

*Adjusted for variable prices in each garage (.50 to 1.00)

** 158 Meters in outer Value Zone have been identified to move to timed parking, including Sonoma & 1st St

Proposed Garage Permit Fee Changes

Type	Current Fee (Monthly)	Proposed Fee (Monthly)
Evening Employees (3pm to 1am)	\$10	\$10
Discount for New Business Accounts (terms in development)	N/A	\$25
Low-wage Permits – All Garages (Currently in G1 and G12) Makes less than 60% of Sonoma County Median Income, currently \$30	\$31	\$25
Part-Time Permits – All Garages monthly garage use capped at 96 hours	N/A	\$25
Unreserved Permit G's 1, 3, 9, 12	\$62-\$95	\$60
Unreserved Permit G5	\$120	\$120
Reserved Permit All Garages	\$135 - \$160	\$160

Proposed Lot Permit Fees/Downtown & Railroad Square

Type of Permit	Current Fee (Monthly)	Proposed Fee (Monthly)
Lot 2 (near capacity, closer than garages, high demand, sold and spaces to be replaced when developed)	\$95	\$95
Lot 6 (Permit Only)	\$62	\$62
Lot 7 (under capacity, currently on list to be developed)	\$85	\$70
<i>Lot 13/14 is near capacity in evenings and shared use needed for residential permits for Stewart Cannery Apts, New Residential Permit for Cannery added on Next Slide</i>		
Lots 13 and 14 (under Hwy 101) Railroad Square Daytime Employee Permit During Meter Hours Only. Incorporate separate Morgan Street permits as same permit.	\$50	\$25
SMART Commuter L14 (cannot park in reserved evening spaces past 5pm)	\$31	\$25

Proposed New Permit Fees/Types for New Residential Development and Changes to RPP Fees

Type of Permit	Current Fee (Monthly)	Proposed Fee (Monthly)
Permit Spaces for 800 Block of 4 th & Hope St for 888 Apts	n/a	\$80
Residential Unreserved Downtown Garage – (ie, 420 Mendo Apts)	n/a	\$60
Residential Reserved Downtown Garages*	n/a	\$120
Lot 13 (Between 3 rd and 4 th) Residential Reserved Spaces in Lot 13 for the Stewart Cannery Apartments Evenings 5pm – 9am	n/a	\$50
Residential Permit Program change from transaction to vehicle fee	\$20 per transaction	\$30 per vehicle
Approximate Change in Revenue to Parking Fund – Net Total		\$1,033,039

**None currently planned, but anticipating need for upcoming developments near Garage 3*

Free Parking Options

In all meters, lots
and garages

- **Free Sundays, Free City/State/Federal Holidays**
- Currently there is a mix of locations that offer free Sundays

Removing meters
from following
areas

- 600 Block of 1st Street
- 600 Block of Sonoma Ave
- 900 Block of 7th Street
- 800 Block of 5th Street
- 200, 300 and 400 Blocks of Morgan St

Meters already
removed

- 400 Block of Riley Street for developments
- A Street in front of Caritas House
- 6th Street in RRSQ

Proposed Validation Program Incentive

- Replace First Hour free with a targeted incentive for people coming to stores, restaurants and businesses downtown.
- First Hour Free safety issues include loitering, vandalism, and other crimes. People have access to garage for purposes other than parking and visiting downtown.
- City works with Metro Chamber to onboard accounts into Validation system (outreach, trainings, support)
- City will offer \$30 of free validations a month to businesses using the validation system.
- Parking will work on collaborations with DAO and RRSQ boards to support businesses
- Cost of program to the Parking Enterprise Fund will be approximately \$5400 a year

Parking Citation Fines

- Citation Fines were last increased in 2012
 - Citation processing costs the City \$93,000 each year
 - California Vehicle Code CVC 40203.5 (a) states “to the extent possible, issuing agencies within the same county should standardize parking penalties”
- A **\$12.50** surcharge is paid to the **County of Sonoma and State of California** for every citation (regardless of fine amount) – average \$300,000 each year
 - **County** - General Fund Pkg Assessment, Courthouse Construction Fund, Criminal Justice Facilities Construction Fund: **\$5.00** (GC 76000(c)), (GC 76100), (GC 76101)
 - **State** - Immediate & Critical Needs Construction Fund, Court Facilities Construction Fund, Trial Court Trust Fund **\$7.50** (GC 70372(b)), (GC 70372(b)), (GC 76000.3)

Citation Revenue and Expenses

Revenue	21/22	22/23	23/24
Gross Citation Revenue	\$1,164,004	\$1,583,423	\$1,446,734
County/State Surcharge Fees	(\$253,663)	(\$306,800)	(\$322,038)
Refunds/Adjudication	(\$19,495)	(\$31,102)	(\$25,673)
Returned Checks	(\$320)	(\$355)	(\$690)
Revenue	\$890,526	\$1,245,167	\$1,098,334
Expenses	21/22	22/23	23/24
Salaries and Benefits	\$623,939	\$768,344	\$836,475
Citation Processing Contract	\$92,022	\$104,493	\$82,210
Enforcement Operational Costs (uniforms, equipment, supplies)	\$137,031	\$141,375	\$145,696
Total Expenses	\$852,992	\$1,014,212	\$1,064,380
Net Revenue	\$37,534.49	\$230,955	\$33,953

Proposed Fine Increases

Violation	Current Fine Amount	Avg. Annual Citations	Estimated Revenue	Proposed Fine Amount	Estimated Revenue
Expired Meters	\$35	21,871	\$765,473	\$50	\$1,093,533
Overtime Parking	\$40	3,375	\$135,013	\$55	\$185,643
Not within Designated Space	\$40	403	\$16,107	\$55	\$22,147
Parallel Parking & Vehicle Facing Wrong Way	\$40	269	\$10,760	\$55	\$13,450
Permit Use Violation	\$40	107	\$4,293	\$55	\$5,903
Unattended Vehicle w/ Motor Running	\$40	28	\$1,120	\$55	\$1,540
Parking over 72 hrs – Facility	\$40	23	\$907	\$55	\$1,247
Yellow Curb/Loading Zone	\$50	739	\$36,933	\$65	\$48,013
Unpaid Fee at Attended Facility	\$50	278	\$13,917	\$65	\$18,091
White Curb/Passenger Loading	\$50	87	\$4,350	\$65	\$5,655

Proposed Fine Increases

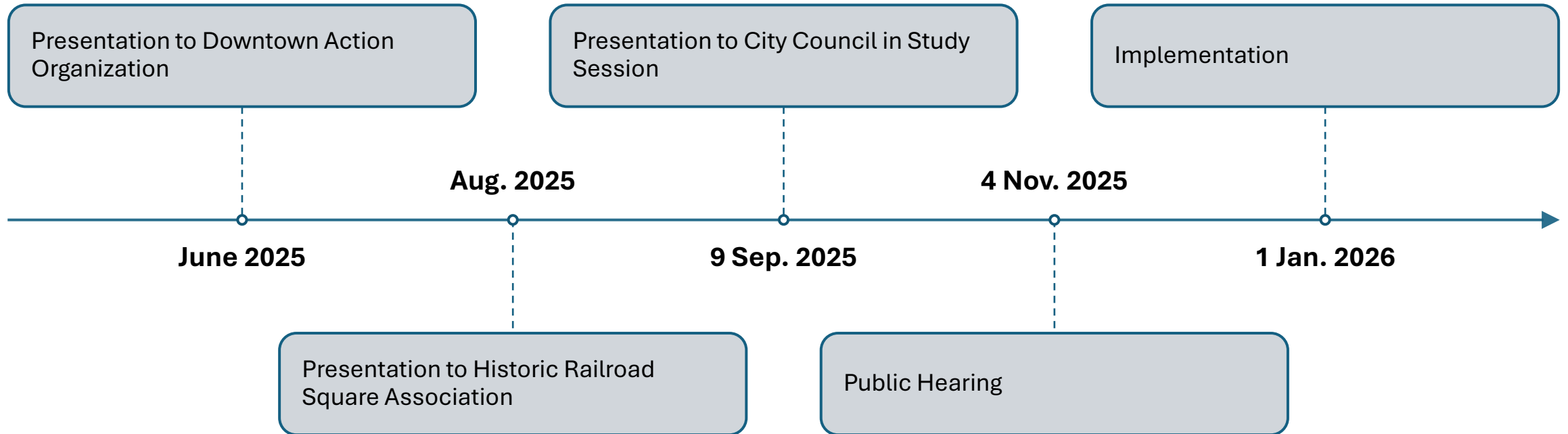
- Note: Processing Costs and Surcharge Fees are dependent on number of citations issued and not dependent on citation fees. Number of citations issued are dependent on staffing and can vary due to vacancies and turn-over.

**Average Yearly Collection
Rate**

86%

Current Revenue Estimate	\$1,324,069
Projected Revenue (\$15 increase on citations \$35-\$50)	\$1,674,687
Additional Revenue to General Fund	\$350,618

Rate Adjustment Schedule



Questions?