Santa Rosa Downtown Progressive Parking Strategy & Railroad Square Parking Plan

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NELSON NYGAARD

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Purpose

To address the following issues in Santa Rosa:

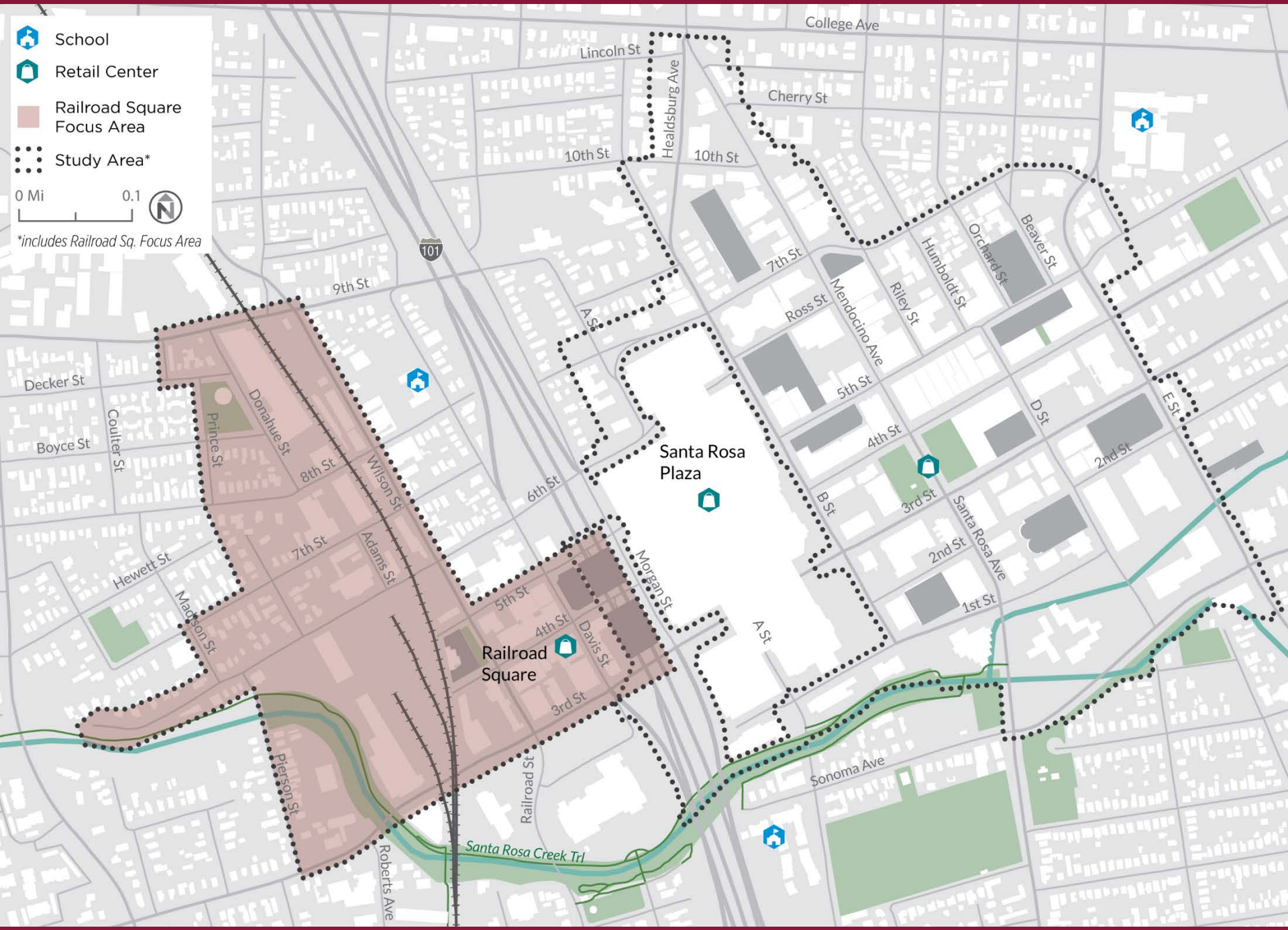
- Need for more availability of spaces in prime retail areas
- Underutilized off-street parking
- Parking spillover into residential areas
- New SMART station and anticipated development
- Need for affordable parking options for low-wage employees

Goals

1. Create more open parking spaces across downtown and Railroad Square
2. Reduce circling for parking in busy areas
3. Ensure customers can easily access local businesses during busy hours
4. Reduce congestion and spillover parking into residential areas
6. Use parking resources efficiently
7. Encourage people to spend time downtown
8. Ensure there is enough parking to accommodate future growth
9. Provide incentives for employees to park in underutilized garages
10. Keep parking regulations easy to understand
11. Ensure parking investments and policies anticipate changes in vehicle technology and travel behavior

Project Process

- Extensive public outreach:
  - Stakeholder meetings
  - Public meetings
  - Wednesday Night Market
  - Community Advisory Board
  - Intercept and online surveys
- Review existing conditions
- Project future demand in Railroad Square
- Review of best practices


School
Retail Center
Railroad Square Focus Area
Study Area*
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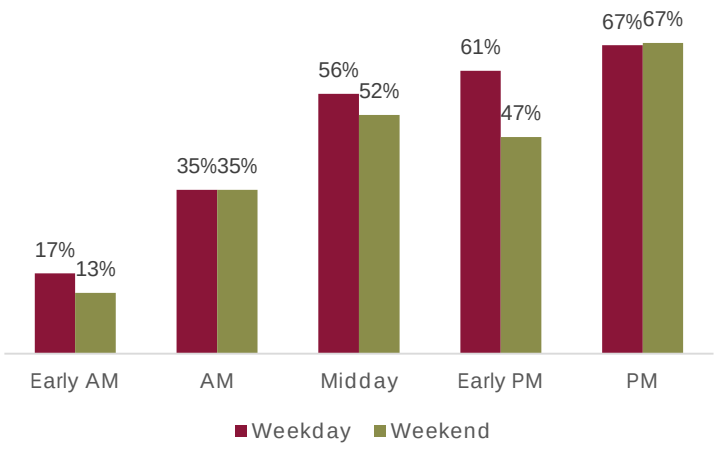
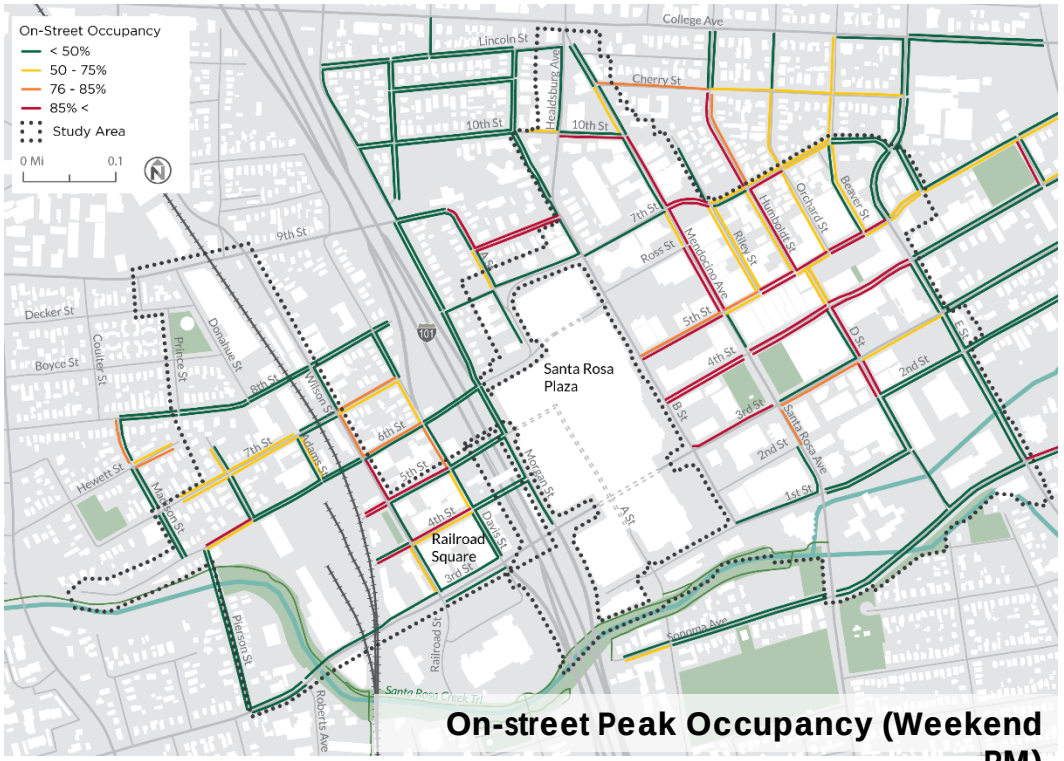
0.1
*includes Railroad Sq. Focus Area
College Ave
Lincoln St
Healdsburg Ave
Cherry St
10th St
10th St
7th St
Ross St
Mendocino Ave
Riley St
Humboldt St
Orchard St
Beaver St
9th St
A St
101
Decker St
Boyce St
Coulter St
Prince St
Donahue St
8th St
Wilson St
6th St
Santa Rosa Plaza
5th St
4th St
3rd St
2nd St
1st St
B St
D St
E St
Santa Rosa Ave
Hewett St
7th St
Adams St
Madison St
5th St
4th St
Davis St
3rd St
Railroad Square
Morgan St
A St
Pierson St
Railroad St
Roberts Ave
Santa Rosa Creek Trl
Sonoma Ave

PARKING ANALYSIS

On-street Occupancy (Study Area)



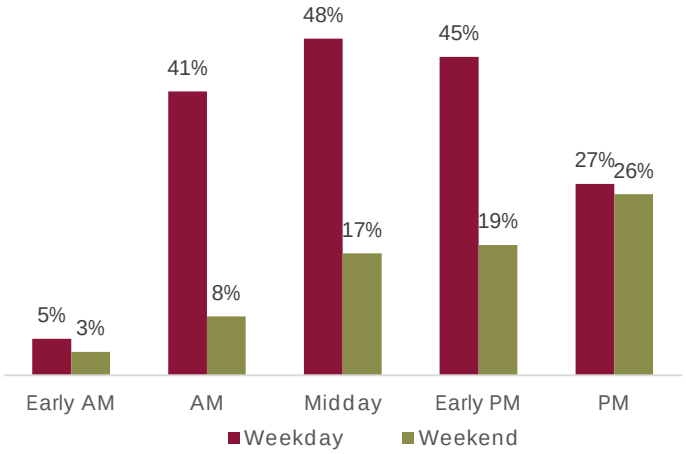
- Highest occupancy (67%) is during the Weekend PM
- Most blockfaces on 4th and 5th streets in downtown exceed 85% occupancy during the Midday, Early PM, and PM periods.



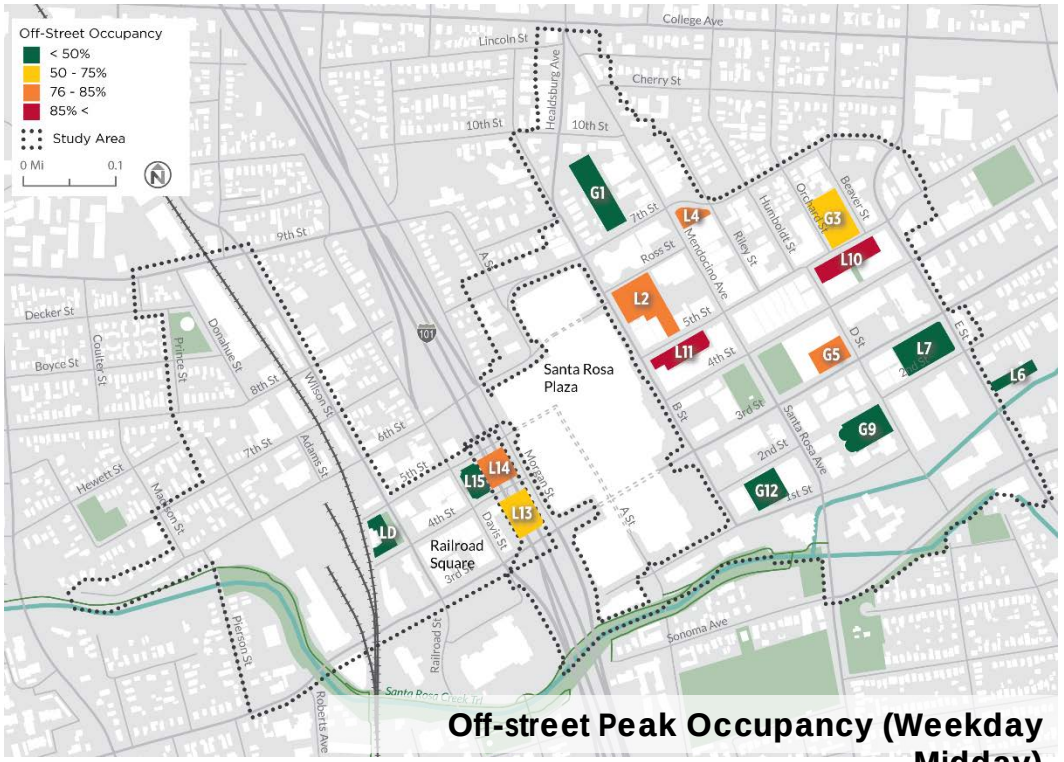
On-street Peak Occupancy (Weekend PM)

- On-street occupancies at or above the optimal peak standard of 85% were also observed along Humboldt Street, Mendocino Avenue, and D Street during peak hours.

Off-street Occupancy (Study Area)



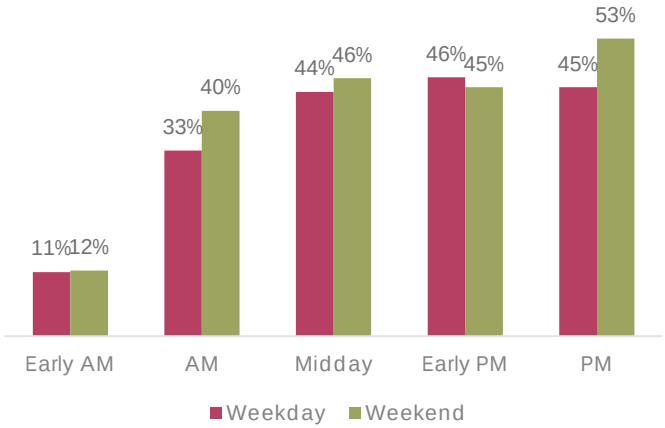
- Highest observed occupancy (48%) is during the Weekday Midday
- Highest off-street rates are at Lots 10 and 11 (above 85%)



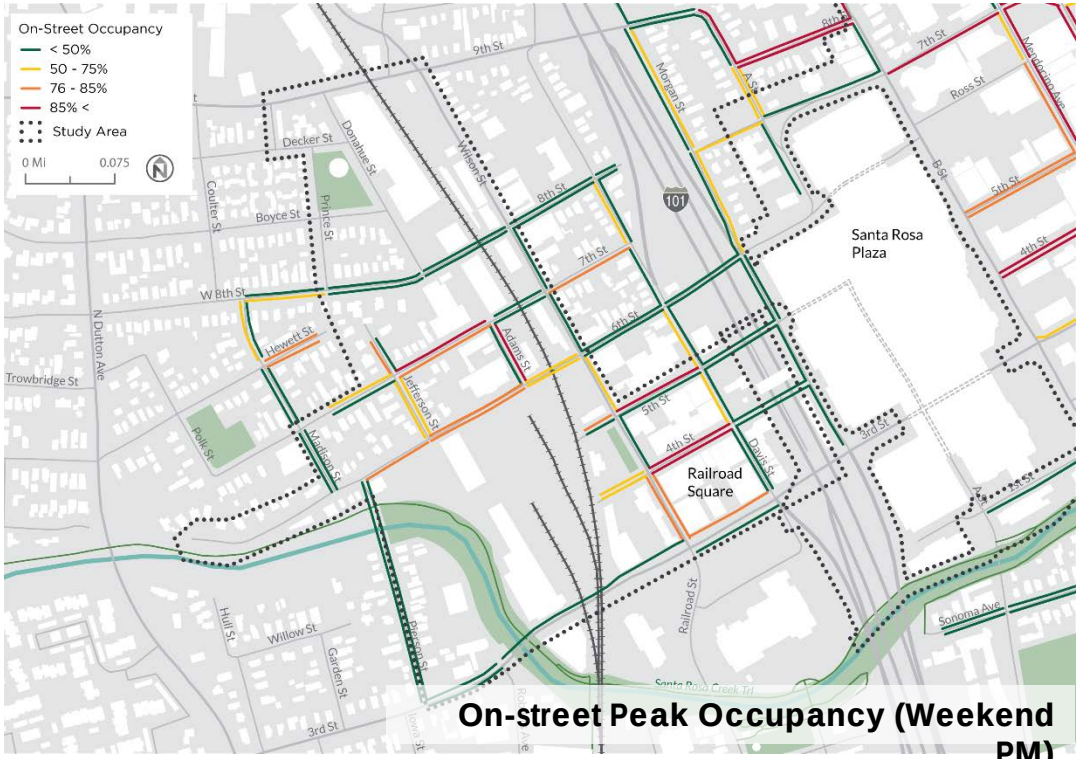
Off-street Peak Occupancy (Weekday Midday)

- Garage 1 and 12 have the largest off-street parking supply, and are two of the most underutilized garages, rarely exceeding 50% occupancy

On-street Occupancy (Railroad Square)



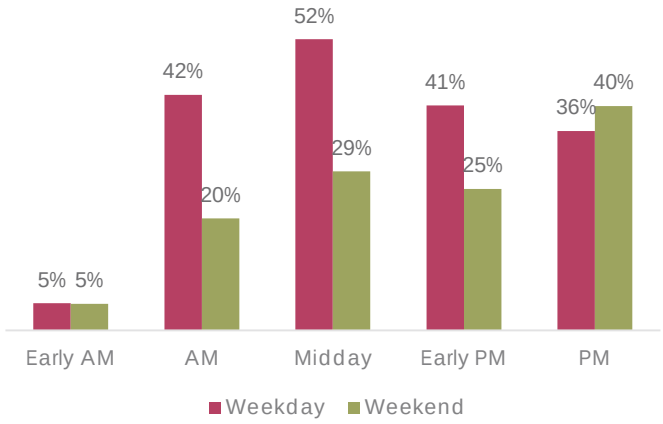
- Highest occupancy (53%) is during the Weekend PM
- On weekends, the peak hour parking demand is similar to that on weekdays, but with slightly less demand around Railroad Square

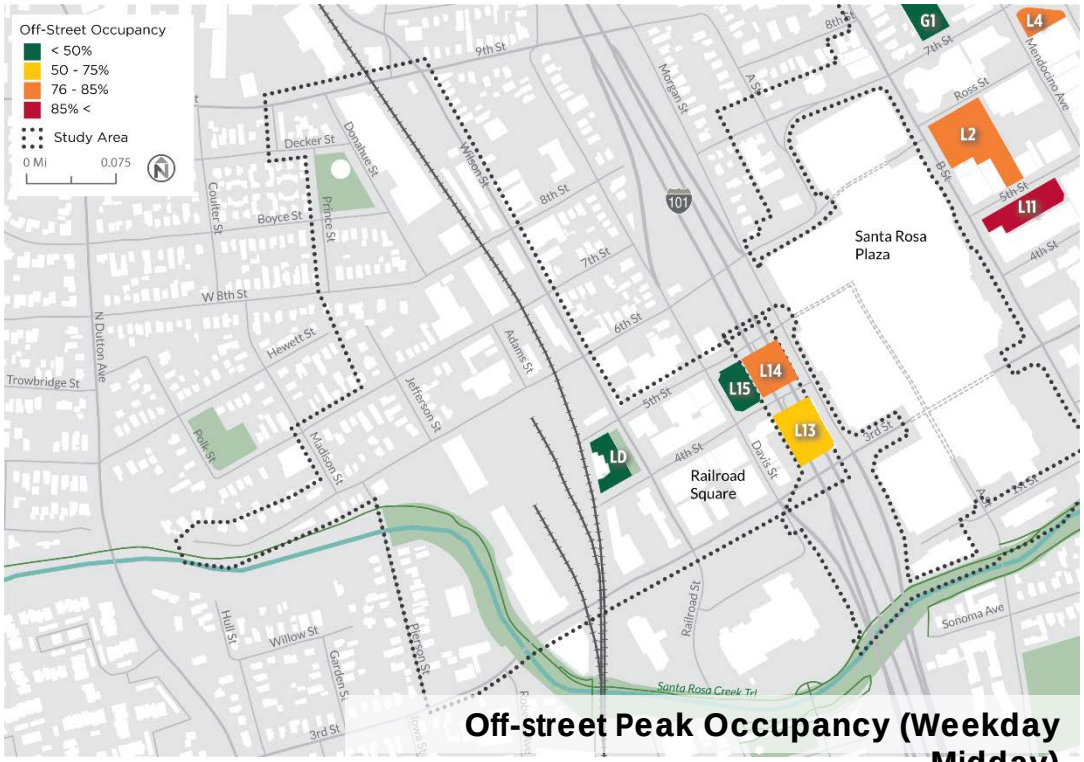


On-street Peak Occupancy (Weekend PM)

- Demand is highest on streets adjacent to the Railroad Square along 3rd, 4th, Davis, and Wilson streets

Off-street Occupancy (Study Area)



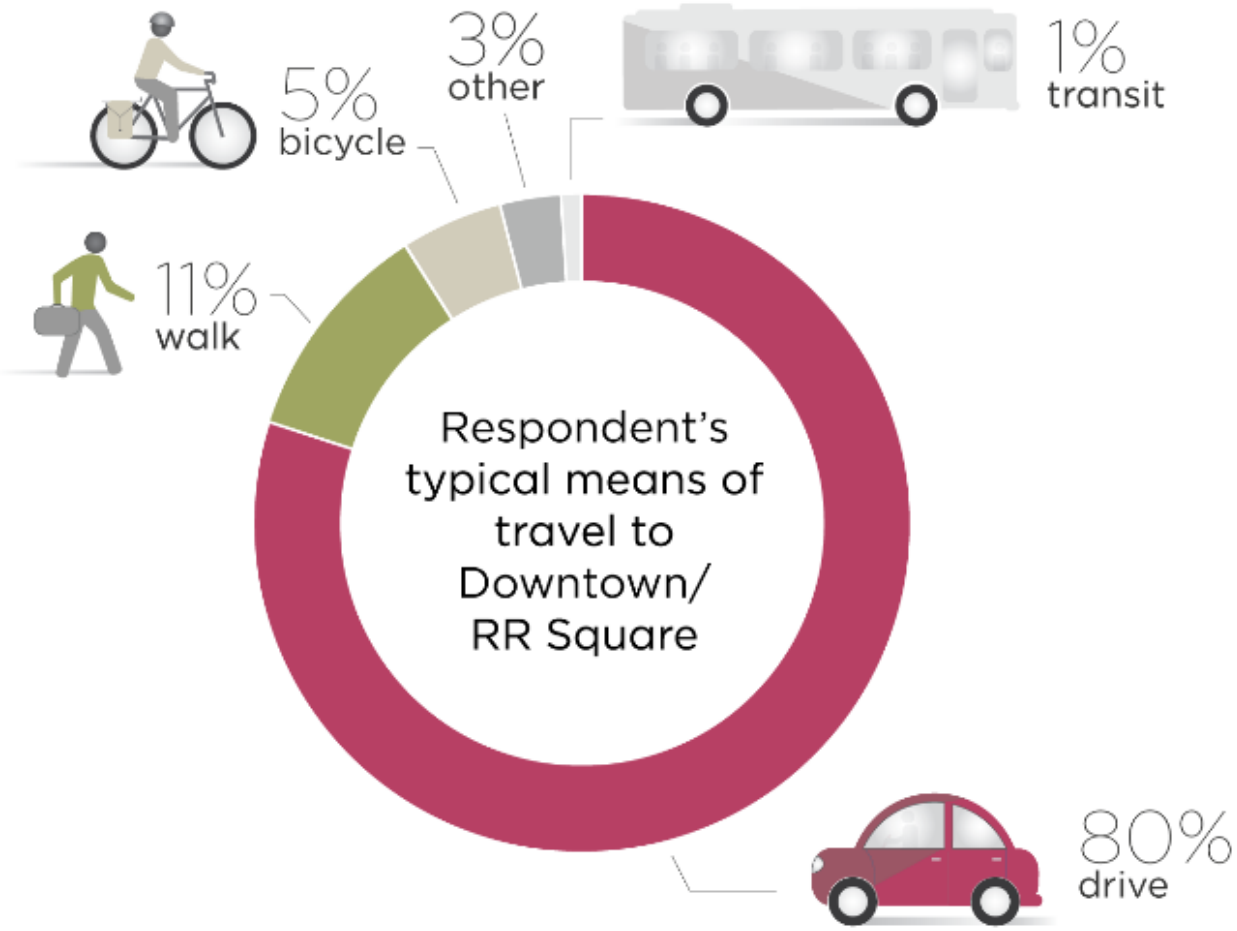


Off-street Peak Occupancy (Weekday Midday)

- Highest occupancy (52%) is during the Weekday Midday
- Lots are underutilized during the weekday, even during peak-hour occupancy
- Occupancy rates in Railroad Square are comparatively lower than the overall study area, peaking at approximately 50% for both on- and off-street

PUBLIC INPUT FEEDBACK

Survey results



Public Input Results

Question	Top Answers (can pick more than option)
How do you choose your mode of travel?	**Convenience: 57%** Cost: 17% Time: 15%
What would make you visit/shop in Downtown Santa Rosa more often?	**More parking availability: 50%** More public space/parks: 44% More retail stores and restaurants: 39% Better bicycle access: 28%
What influences where you park?	**Proximity to destination: 80%** Cost: 39% Security of car: 35% Personal safety: 31%
Where do employees park?	Private lot/garage: 32% Public on-street unmetered space: 25% Public garage: 21% Public on-street metered space: 14% Public lot: 8%
What makes parking difficult for you?	Top 2 responses: **Parking is located in areas that don't feel safe** **Worried about getting a ticket**

RECOMMENDED PARKING STRATEGIES

Progressive pricing

- Price parking according to the level of convenience and demand
- Gradual and periodic changes to match demand and find the lowest possible prices

Benefits

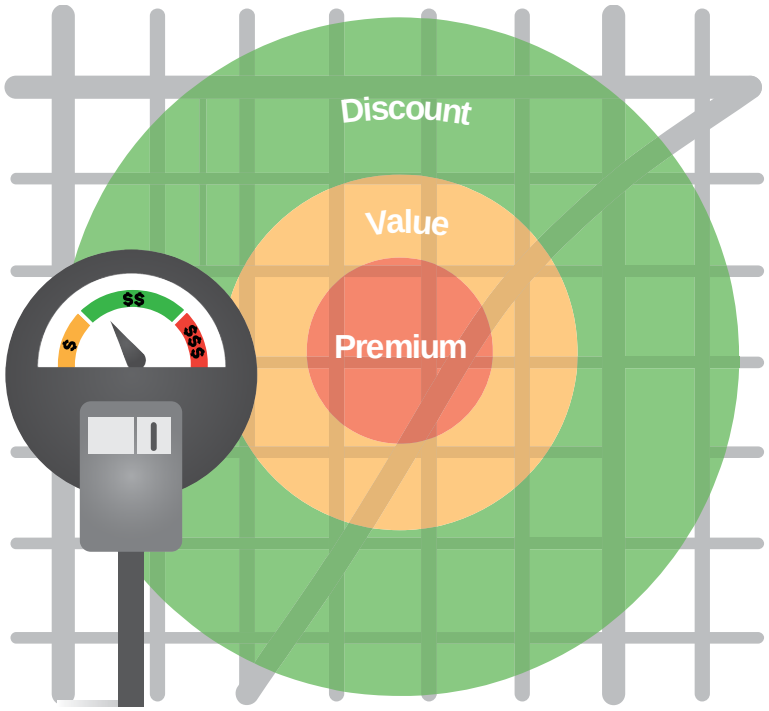
- Easier for drivers to find parking spaces
- Supports Santa Rosa's economic vitality
- Reduces illegal parking/double parking
- Improves safety for all road users
- Reduces congestion and improved flow
- Better air quality

Progressive pricing best practices: key lessons

- Change the perception that no parking is available
- Make parking clear and simple
- Adopt policies and technology gradually
- Integrate parking policies with TDM measures
- Facilitate adaptive reuse

Implement progressive pricing

1



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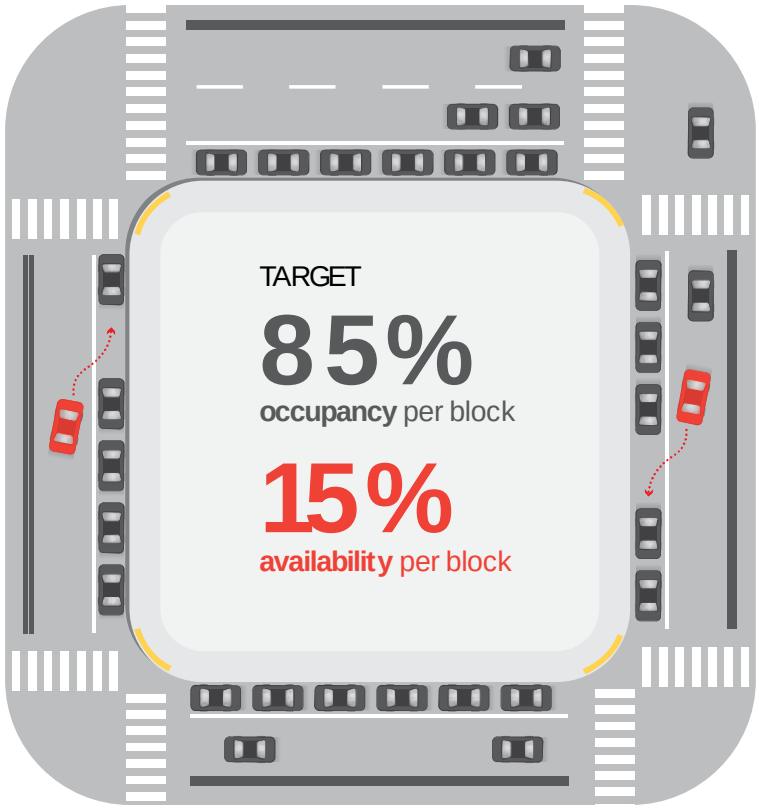
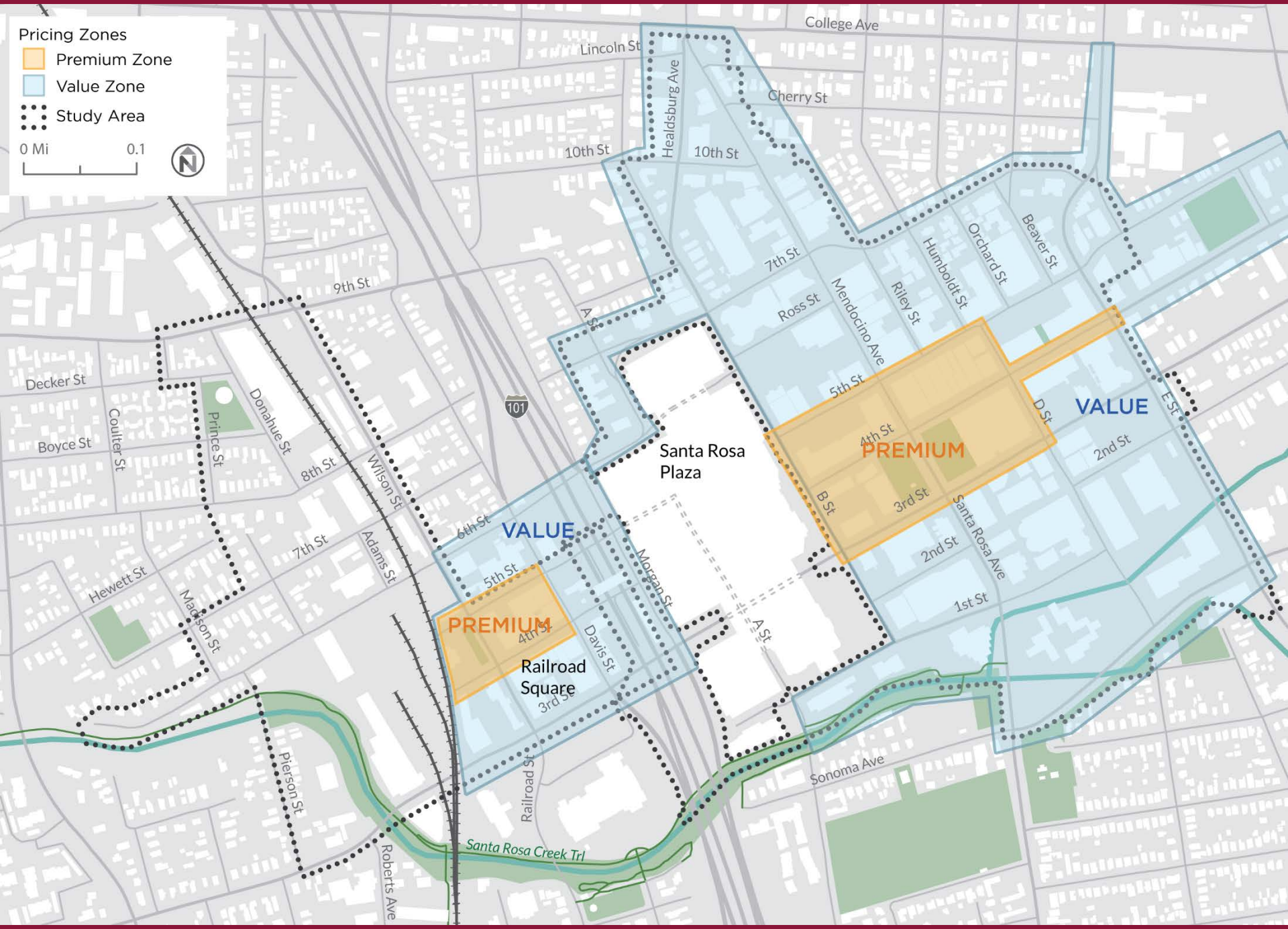


Establishing simple rate zones

- Simple zones
  - Premium and Value
- Higher in Premium, Lower in Value
  - $1.50 in Premium
  - Remains $1 in Value, may decrease after first evaluation period if occupancy is still low
- Zones (and their rates, time limits, hours of operation) simply, clearly communicated via signage in those areas

Source: goBerkeley.info


Pricing Zones
Premium Zone
Value Zone
Study Area
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College Ave
Lincoln St
Cherry St
10th St
Healdsburg Ave
9th St
7th St
Ross St
Mendocino Ave
Riley St
Humboldt St
Orchard St
Beaver St
A St
Decker St
Boyce St
Coulter St
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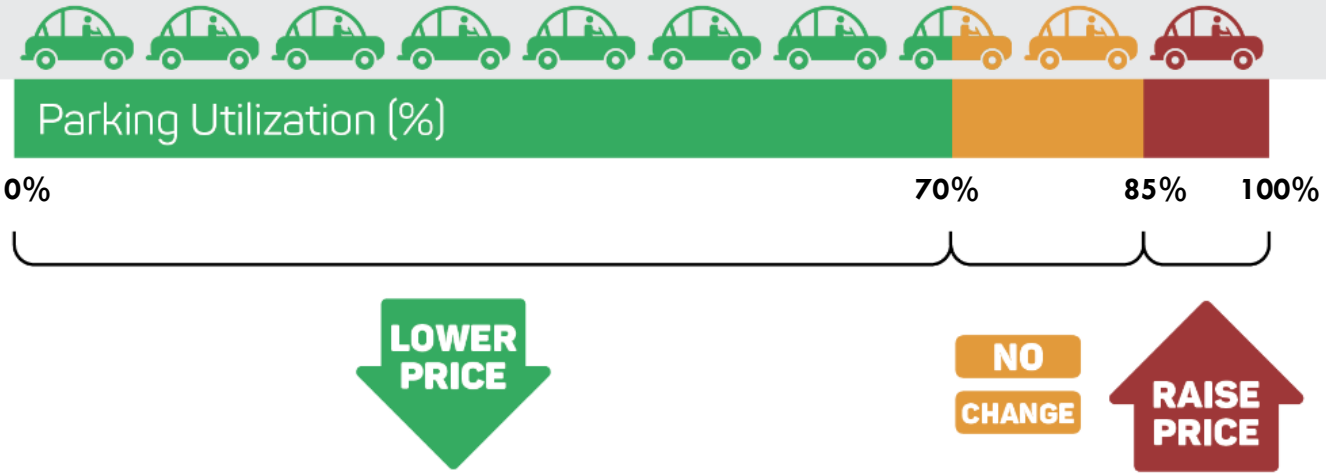
Donahue St
8th St
Wilson St
6th St
5th St
4th St
3rd St
2nd St
1st St
B St
D St
E St
Santa Rosa Ave
Hewett St
Madison St
7th St
Adams St
Morgan St
Davis St
Railroad St
Pierson St
Roberts Ave
Sonoma Ave
Santa Rosa Creek Trl
101
VALUE
PREMIUM
Santa Rosa Plaza
Railroad Square

Parking meter adjustments



Adjust meter policies to match need for open spaces

- Relax time limits
- Tailor hours of operation to need
- Add new meters where needed

Benefits

- Help manage parking demand
- Increase parking availability
- Reduce overall congestions by reducing circling

How to conduct parking meter rate adjustments

Rate Adjustment Protocol

- Depoliticize, delegate rate adjustments via City Ordinance
  - Set parameters on adjustments – maximum, minimum rates
- Transparent, data-driven decision making, public dashboard
- Biannual data collection & adjustments
  - Enable rate adjustments to occur starting 6 months after establishment of Premium and Value zones
- Utilize regular parking data counts
  - Routine LPR data collection or manual parking occupancy data counts
  - Study relationship with meter data to consider long-term model
  - License Plate Recognition
- Increase/decrease rates by $0.25 based on demand

Relax parking meter time limits

Relax time limits to allow drivers to stay longer

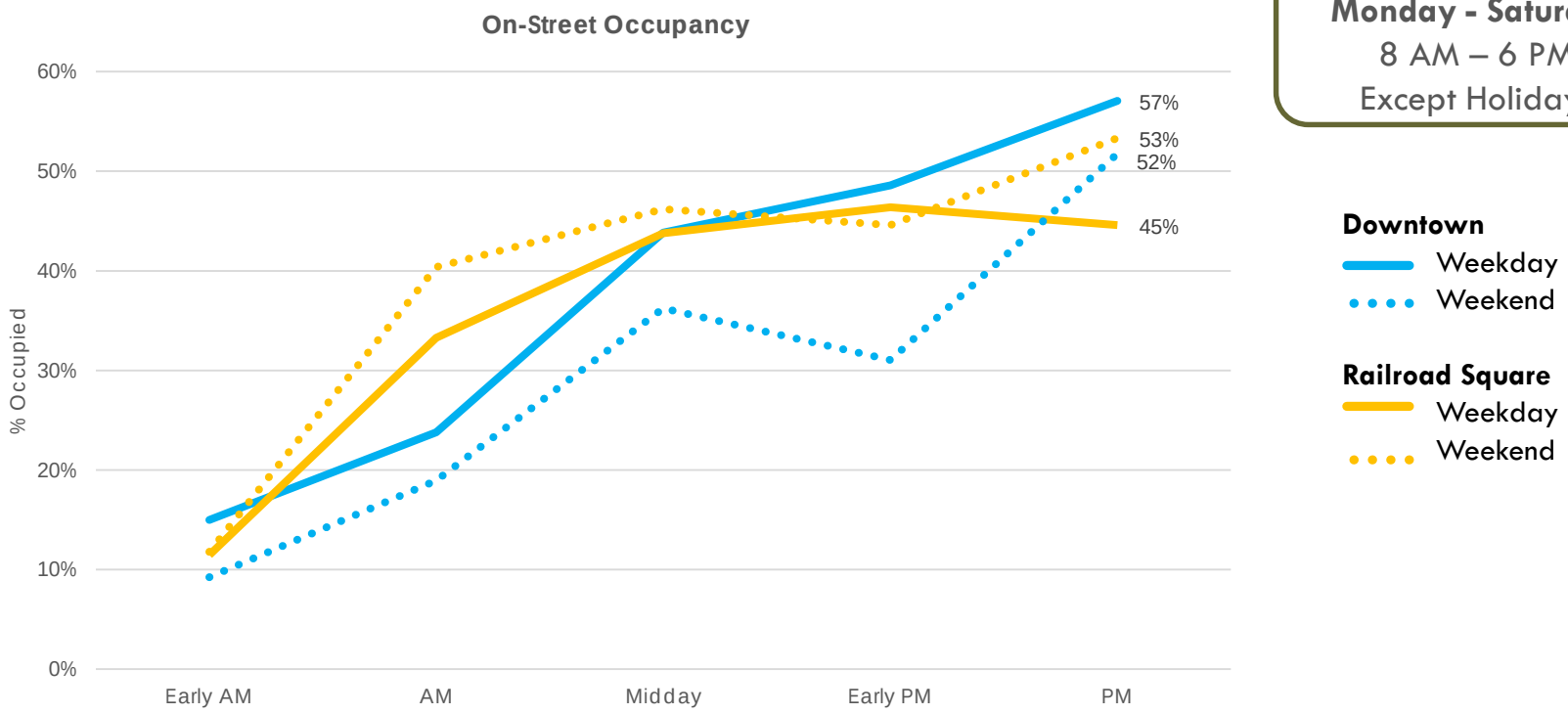
- Balancing simplicity and tailored approach
- Implementation
  - Relax to 3 hours in the Premium Zone, and 4 hours in the Value Zone
  - Monitor results
  - If proven successful, and certain blockfaces exceed 85% occupancy, consider expanding the Value Zone

Parking Meter Adjustments – Tailor hours of operation

Tailor hours of operation to need

- Charge for parking when and where it is needed to open up spaces for local businesses and reduce circling

Hours of Operation
Monday - Saturday
8 AM – 6 PM
Except Holidays



Tailor parking meter hours of operation

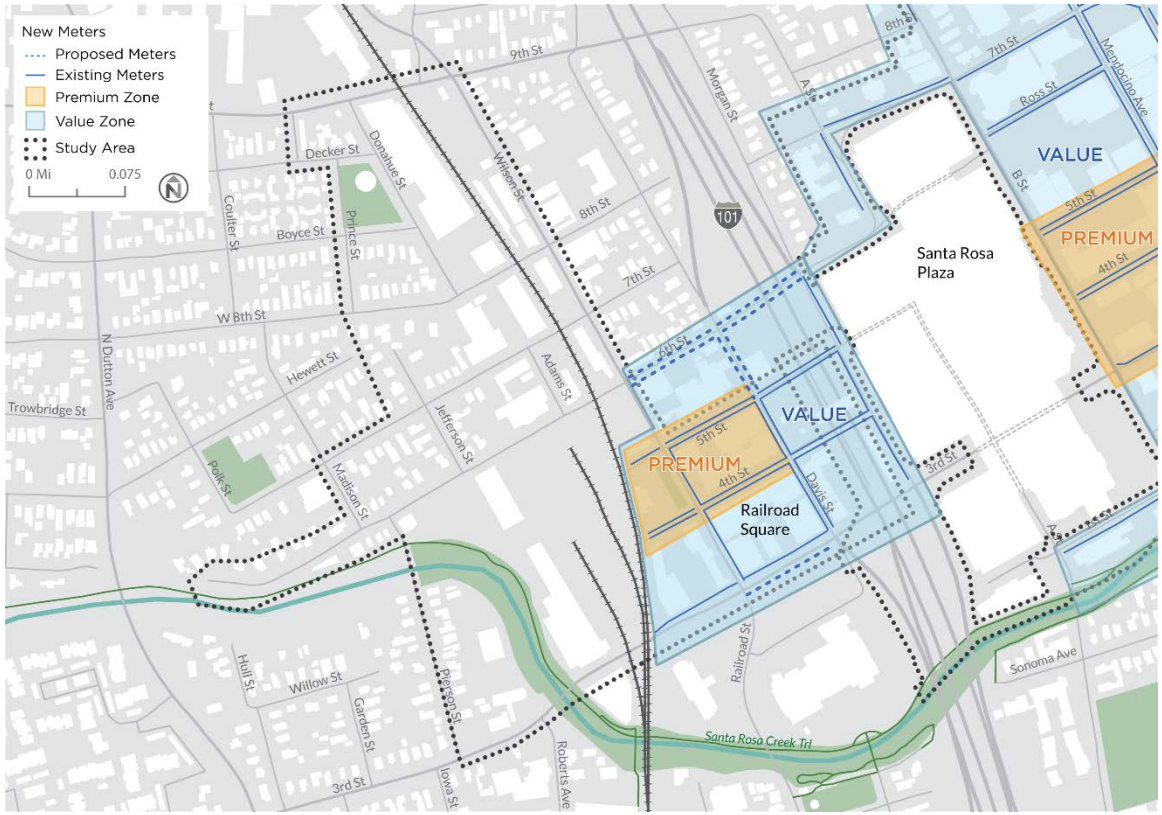
Tailor hours of operation to need

- Consistent hours of operation vs. slight variation in zones based on the actual need
- Coordinate updated hours with the zones
  - Premium Zone: 10 AM – 8 PM
  - Value Zone: 10 AM – 6 PM

Where to place additional parking meters

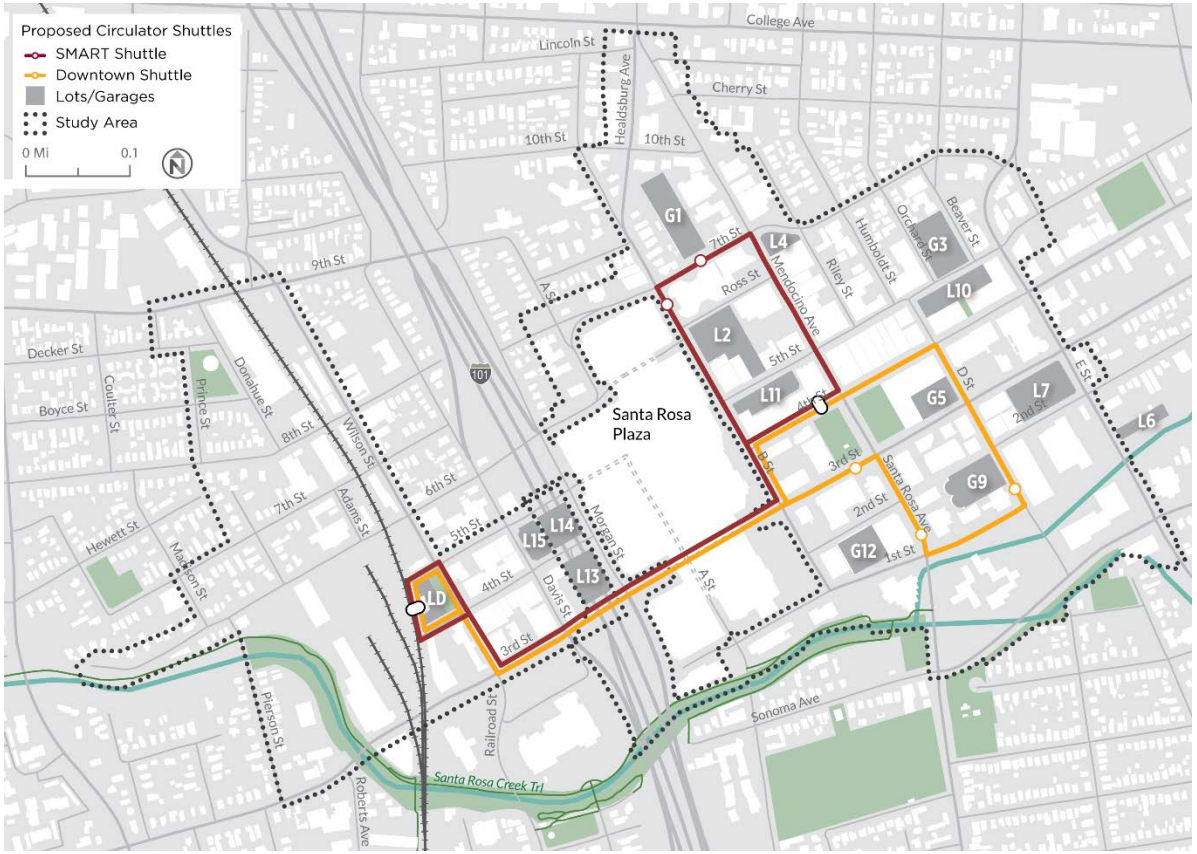
Add new meters where needed, based on: too-high parking occupancy (over ~85%) and proximity to prime destinations

- 6th Street from Wilson Street to Morgan Street
- Davis Street from 5th Street to 6th Street
- South side of 3rd Street between Railroad Avenue and Davis Street



Fund the Circulator Shuttle

- The City is developing a one-year pilot of circulator shuttle that will connect to the SMART station
- If successful, remote parking options may prove more viable throughout downtown and Railroad Square



Off-street parking management

- Rates should respond to changing demand over time
  - Set garage rates using quarterly demand trend, analyzing the publicly-available (rather than permits) supply of parking.
  - When occupancy is 80-100%, the hourly rate will be raised by $0.25.
  - When occupancy is 40-80%, the hourly rate will not be changed.
  - When occupancy is less than 40%, the hourly rate will be lowered by $0.25.
- Will likely result in off-street rates being slightly lower than on-street rates
- Use underutilized garages for Employee Parking Program
- Invest in awareness and marketing of garages
- Explore partnerships for Railroad Square supply

Employee Parking Program

- Incentivize affordable parking options for low-wage downtown employees

Benefits

- Designates employee parking areas in underutilized off-street facilities
- Frees up key retail spaces for customers
- Controls spillover parking into nearby residential areas

Employee Parking Program

- Flexible locations: allow employee parking in different locations that are underutilized (Garage 1, Garage 12)
- Discounted monthly permits offered to low wage employees; and
- Discounted hourly vouchers can be provided to low wage employees who work fewer hours (for whom a monthly pass may not be cost effective)
- Administration
  - City issues discounted permit to eligible low wage earners
  - Employees or employers apply monthly, show proof of employment
  - Hourly wage limits, ex. Sacramento has a limit of $16/hr
  - Qualifies for discount on daily payment

Railroad Square parking demand

- If decided to pursue new supply, partnerships and location key
  - Avoiding disruption of urban/retail fabric
  - Add pedestrians, not detract
  - If related to station use, adjacency matters
- Steps
  - Use demand management to improve convenience, availability
  - Monitor SMART impact
    - Key metrics: ridership, travel mode to/from station
    - Revisit at 1 & 2 year mark to see where these trends are headed
  - Work to bring down the drive alone rate to the station, and test circulator impact
  - Explore private supply partnerships – leasing is ideal if there is opportunity. Flexibility and minimizing length of financial investment key given changing transportation technologies.

Railroad Square recommendations

- Progressive pricing – consistent with downtown
- Minor additions to metered area and addition of management on streets surrounding station
- Leverage, strengthen SMART station access improvements
- Supply
  - Explore public private partnerships – investigate opportunities to build additional parking (likely as part of large development agreement, or requiring funding for it as part of development fee for large sites)
  - Explore cost benefit of constructing new garage ($9 million for 200 spaces) vs. les costly TDM programs (subsidized transit passes, Uber first/last mile pilot, bike facility improvements, streetscape and walkability improvements)
  - Monitor results of circulator shuttle
  - Pursue sharing strategies in meantime to bridge demand needs as policy changes/technology begin to make impact: with mall property and any other available/excess supply
- West End residents can petition for RPP if desired

Long-term parking strategies

- Shared parking
- Expand car share options
- User Information & Marketing
  - Wayfinding, branding, communications
- "Future proof" parking codes
  - Flexible parking requirements
    - Shared parking, density bonuses, unbundling
  - More Efficient Parking Technologies
    - Automated parking can reduce parking footprints by 40-80%
- Consider Railroad Square Parking Benefit District

Valet Parking Program (long-term strategy)

- Establish a valet strategy to manage spikes in parking demand
- Must be a public-private partnership
- RRSQ may be a good candidate given parking constraints
- The City should license one universal valet program, allowing motorists to drop their vehicle off in one part of RRSQ or downtown and pick it up elsewhere.

Financial implications

- Goal: financially self-sustaining
- Packaging of strategies is key – some are revenue positive, some revenue negative – and the combination of them is what delivers best improvements for drivers
- $ + : Establishing zones, rate adjustments, relax time limits, update hours of operation, add new meters
- $ - / investments: Shared parking, fund shuttle, Parking Benefit Districts, Employee Parking Program, Valet Parking Program, expand car share, visitor ambassador program, branding/communications wayfinding, new parking supply
- New supply is the largest potential impact
- Fluctuating nature of parking demand

MOVING FORWARD

Implementation timeline

- City Council Study Session – March 2017
- City Council Approval and adopt demand responsive policy – June 2017
- Implement rate zones, initial rates, address meter gaps – Summer 2017
- Employee Parking Program launch – Summer 2017
- First demand-responsive rate adjustment – January 2018

Q & A