



Council Agenda Report

From: Thomas Frutchey, City Manager
Ty Lewis, Police Chief

Subject: Downtown Parking Permit Program, Timed Versus Paid Parking, and Other Options for Freeing On-street Customer Parking

Date: April 16, 2019

Facts

1. The shortage of available parking during peak business hours has been a persistent problem in the Downtown. This discourages residents and visitors, as well as limiting the success of Downtown businesses. For a variety of reasons, however, prior City Councils did not see fit to implement sufficient measures to successfully address the problems.
2. In early 2018, after hearing from numerous residents and businesses about the parking problem, the City Council committed to addressing the issues. The council adopted a pragmatic, phased approach, using data-based decision making and extensive ongoing public input. In addition, the Council decided to start with relatively minor measures, and analyze their effectiveness before deciding to implement more substantial measures.
3. On August 7, 2018, with the support of Main Street and numerous Downtown merchants, the City Council directed staff and the City's consultant, Dixon Resources Unlimited (Dixon), to move forward with a set of near-term measures to improve customer parking capacity downtown, all of which had been reviewed with the merchants and public, and were discussed in the City's *Parking Action Plan*.
4. The near-term measures included: identifying employee parking locations, improved signage, baseline data collection utilizing license plate recognition (LPR) technology, safety improvements, and ordinance updates to allow for these and other actions.
5. On October 16, 2018, the City Council approved the proposed 6-month voluntary Downtown Parking Permit Pilot Program. The goal of this program was to encourage employees of downtown businesses to free up convenient on-street parking for customers by offering employees the opportunity to park in reserved off-street parking.
6. The program began November 1, 2018 with data collection through the use of LPR technology to track parking usage downtown. Permits were issued for \$5/month beginning December 1, 2018. Dixon and city staff have provided monthly reports at Council meetings regarding the utilization of the program.
7. This entirely voluntary program is predicated on downtown employees and merchants recognizing that freeing up convenient on-street parking for customers, supports their businesses.
8. Enlightened self-interest proved to be sufficient incentive during December of last year and through the holidays, but utilization of the program has steadily declined from 211 in December to 157 in March.
9. Not only has there been a decline in utilization of the permit program, there has also been an increase in permit holders parking on the street rather than reserved permit spaces.
10. Prior to the downtown permit parking program the City lacked usage data to determine the most effective measures for increasing parking capacity downtown.
11. The most recent status report from Dixon (Attachment 1) states, "The observed parking patterns indicate that Paso Robles has a parking management issue, rather than a parking supply issue. It is the

industry standard that the target parking occupancy rate is 85%. At this level, there are enough vacant parking spaces to minimize congestion from drivers searching for a space. At the same time, the 85% rate ensures that a location is not providing too much parking supply, which is an inefficient and costly use of valuable land.”

12. The report analyzes both paid and timed parking options, in order to incentivize greater utilization of the permit parking program and better management of downtown parking. It is important to initiate these measures now so that they can be in place for the peak summer season.

Community Outreach

The City Council has received monthly updates on the Downtown Permit Parking Program since its inception. Staff presented the utilization information from the February report to the Main St. Board at their March meeting. The City hosted a stakeholder meeting of merchants and residents at City Hall on March 20, 2019 and again on May 6. Staff shared information door-to-door downtown merchants. In addition, the City has worked with traditional and social media outlets to provide information to the community.

Options

1. Take no action;
2. Direct staff to move forward with options for freeing up on-street parking for customers;
3. Provide alternative direction staff.

Analysis and Conclusions

Taking no action will likely result in a continued decline in utilization of the permit parking program and greater reductions in available parking spaces during the busy summer months.

Permit Parking Program – As utilization of the permit parking program continues to decline the City needs to consider options for the future of the program and additional actions to incentivize employees to utilize the program. There are a number of options for moving forward to free up convenient on-street parking for customers. Described in detail in the Dixon report (Attachment 1), there are two primary distinctions between the options, timed vs. paid parking and the boundaries of the parking area. They are summarized below.

While time limits and paid parking are being evaluated, the City has the opportunity to extend the IPS permit management agreement for an additional 90 days. This will enable the City to determine how to move forward with the permit parking operation based upon the pilot results and next steps. For Council consideration, Dixon recommends that the City make the following adjustments to the permit program:

- Eliminate the evening and residential permits due to low demand,
- Oversell the permits while proactively monitoring occupancy over time to maximize the efficiency of the City’s parking supply,
- Raise the monthly permit fee if a time limit-only model is introduced, or maintain the \$5.00 permit rate if a paid parking model is introduced.

Additional Necessary Steps to Free up On-street Parking for Customers – Along with the improvements to the employee permit parking program, Other steps will be necessary in order to free up the needed parking for customers. Five major options have been studied, and will be the focus of the stakeholder meeting on Monday, May 6. The outcome of that meeting will be reported to the Council.

Figure 1. Downtown Area On-Street Parking

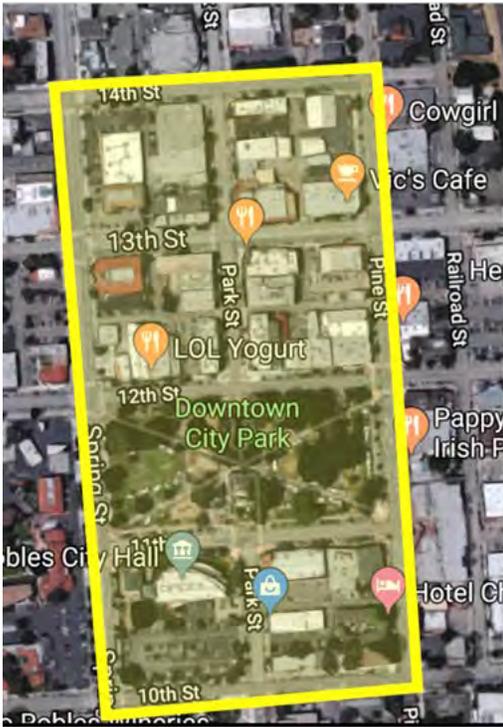
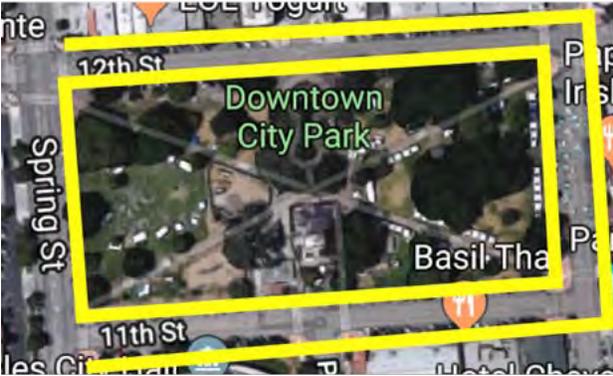


Figure 1. Park Area On-Street Parking (Yellow)



The five options are:

1. Time Limits (Park Area) – Option 1 is a 2-hour time limit for the on-street parking spaces around the Downtown City Park (Park) (Figure 1). The suggested operating hours are 9:00AM-5:00PM, Monday-Friday.
2. Tiered Time Limits (Downtown) – Similar to Option 1, Option 2 proposes a 2-hour time limit for on-street parking within the Park Area, but also a lengthier 3-hour time limit for the rest of the Downtown Area (Figure 2).
3. Paid Hourly Parking (Park Area) – Option 3 proposes paid hourly parking within the Park Area at a rate of \$0.75 per hour without time limits. Unlike the time limit-only scenarios (Options 1 and 2), a paid parking operation could address the core issue of employees parking on-street with fewer operating hours and without time limits.
4. Paid Hourly Parking (Downtown) – Option 4 proposes paid hourly parking within the entire Downtown Area at a rate of \$0.75 per hour without time limits.
5. Paid Parking – First 90 Minutes Free (Downtown) – Option 5 proposes a \$1.00 hourly rate with the first 90-minutes free throughout the Downtown Area.

There are also other actions that can improve the availability of parking. These actions are currently being analyzed and will be brought to Council; no decision is needed on May 7:

- Valet Parking – The City does not currently have a defined valet parking policy, but is in the process of developing the guidelines. Paso Robles frequently has events and a consistently busy summer season, which may support a valet program within the downtown core. Drivers are typically more willing to consider valet parking during events. Certain pricing structures could be used to encourage valet use by long-term parkers. The City could consider designating an underutilized parking lot, such as the Pine Street Lot, for a valet parking program. This lot has 30 spaces but could hold an estimated 40 total vehicles if valet parking is utilized. The pick-up and drop-off zone(s) could be conveniently located closer to the core of downtown such as in front of the movie theater along Pine Street, or elsewhere nearby the Park.

- Event Parking – Partnering with popular Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) like Uber and Lyft to establish passenger loading areas. The City can work with the TNCs to geo-fence the pick-up and drop-off zones for upcoming events. This gives the City the ability to establish passenger loading zones in safe locations to minimize the impact on traffic congestion and pedestrian safety. The upcoming Wine Festival may be an opportunity to test this solution.
- Shuttle Program – The Free Ride is a free shuttle program successfully implemented in several cities throughout the country. The Free Ride has provided a quote for a potential 26-week pilot program. The estimated net cost of the program, assuming that Ad revenue is shared, is a total of \$68,704 for the 26 weeks.

Fiscal Impact

Depending on Council direction, there is a range of fiscal impacts (as described in the Dixon report) for establishing parking time limits or a paid parking program, ranging from a 5-year net subsidy of \$168,205 to a net income of \$186,795. The potential fiscal impact of the FRED Shuttle program is \$68,704.

Recommendations

Direct staff to:

1. Extend the Permit Parking Program for an additional 90 days, with the recommended changes, including:
 - a. Eliminate the evening and residential permits due to low demand,
 - b. Oversell the permits while proactively monitoring occupancy over time to maximize the efficiency of the City's parking supply,
 - c. Raise the monthly permit fee if a time limit-only model is introduced, or maintain the \$5.00 permit rate if a paid parking model is introduced.
2. Establish a time-limited paid parking boundary downtown.
3. Return to Council with the necessary budget adjustments, as well as valet parking policy, event parking program, and a free shuttle contract for Council consideration.

Attachments

1. Report from Dixon Resources Unlimited

Paso Robles Downtown Parking Update

May 2019

Introduction

In March 2018, the City Council commissioned Dixon Resources Unlimited (DIXON) to conduct a Downtown Parking Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment Study and create a Parking Action Plan (PAP) based on the findings. The PAP was adopted in June 2018, and included near-, mid-, and long-term options for managing parking downtown. One of the key near-term items was a Downtown Employee Parking Permit Pilot Program, which was implemented in November 2018.

The goal of the program was to encourage employees to park in the off-street lots in order to create more on-street parking availability for customers. However, without time limits or paid parking on street, employees still have the ability to park on street. Thus, the pilot has relied upon voluntary compliance, which is a unique approach to parking management. This approach has incorporated a significant level of outreach, along with an affordable monthly permit price of just \$5.00. Meanwhile, the City has been piloting license plate recognition (LPR) technology, which has been an effective enforcement tool and has allowed for extensive data collection.

This Parking Update Report includes an overview of the data analysis results from throughout the pilot, a summary of stakeholder feedback, and a discussion of potential next steps options for the parking program.

On May 7, in preparation for the summer season, City Council authorization is sought to proceed with the following two items.

1. Implementation of a time limit or paid parking plan package (one of the following):
 - a. Time Limits (Area Around City Park)
 - b. Tiered Time Limits (Downtown)
 - c. Paid Hourly Parking (Park Area)
 - d. Paid Hourly Parking (Downtown)
 - e. Paid Parking – First 90 Minutes Free (Downtown)
2. Implementation of a downtown employee permit parking program.

For the first item—time limit or paid parking—Council is being asked to select one of the five proposed implementation packages. Each package includes budget amounts for the associated signage, infrastructure, technology, and staffing as applicable. (See the matrix on page 10 for a side-by-side comparison of the options.)

For the second item—the employment permit parking—approval is being asked to incorporate the lessons learned during the pilot period and fully implement the program going forward.

A number of other options for next steps are also included within this report, but will not require a decision on May 7. These other options will be incorporated for consideration at future Council meetings.

Data Summary

A high-level summary of results from the pilot period of the downtown parking program is provided below:

Table 1. Summary of Data Analysis Results

Findings	Takeaways
The total number of permits sold has steadily decreased each month (211 in December versus 174 in April).	Without on-street regulations, employees can continue to park on-street throughout the day without penalty. It is challenging to maintain support for a voluntary compliance-based program.
The public parking occupancy is consistently higher than the permit parking occupancy.	The goal of the program was to create more public parking availability; however the actual impact has been the opposite, largely due to permit holders parking on-street and the absence of an oversell (selling more permits than permit spaces).
On weekdays, the average on-street occupancy within the core area around the Park at noon has increased over time, reaching above 85%.	The peak demand period on weekdays is primarily around the lunch hour within the area around the Park.
Typically, around 50% of permit holders were observed parking on street during the permit parking hours at least once per month.	It is common for permit holders to be observed within the public parking areas meant for customers.
Despite being designated for permit parking, the Pine Street and Train Station Lots had no utilization throughout the pilot period.	A significant amount of permit parking supply is unused throughout the day, displacing at least 55 total spaces that would otherwise be available to the public.

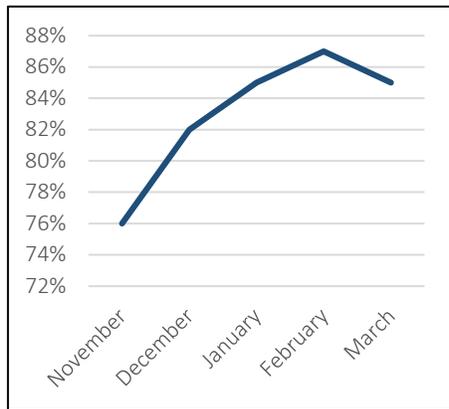
The observed parking patterns indicate that, other than during periods of peak demand (e.g., the Wine Festival), Paso Robles has a parking management issue, rather than a parking supply issue.

It is the industry standard that the target parking occupancy rate is 85%. At this level, there are enough vacant parking spaces to minimize congestion from drivers searching for a space. At the same time, the 85% rate ensures that a location is not providing too much parking supply, which is an inefficient and costly use of valuable land.

While certain areas of the downtown did not reach 85% occupancy during the pilot period, with the upcoming summer season, the City can anticipate an increase in parking demand. Many

stakeholders have reported that locations such as the Train Station Lot and Pine Street, which were underutilized during the pilot, experience high demand during the summertime.

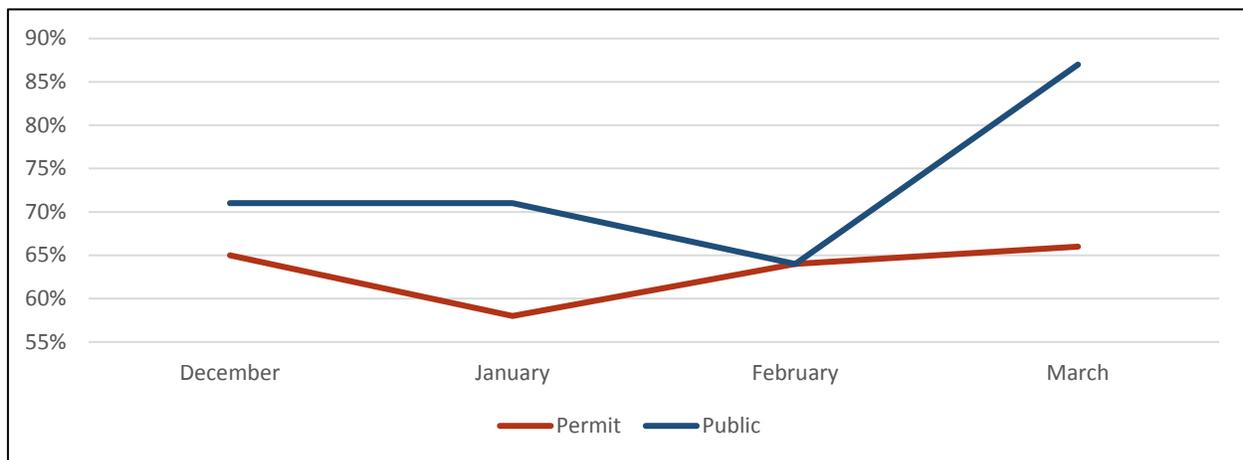
Figure 1. Average Weekday Core On-Street Occupancy at Noon



Additionally, the on-street occupancy in the core of downtown surrounding the Park has increased over time since the implementation of the pilot (Figure 1). The goal of the permit program was to create more on-street parking availability; however, it has had the opposite impact. This was largely because a significant portion of permit parking supply was consistently underutilized. Figure 2 compares the average weekday occupancy at 12PM for permit versus public parking stalls. The public parking supply had significantly higher occupancy rates than the permit parking supply, meaning that it was harder for customers to find parking than it was for employees. The permit stalls were typically only around 65% occupied or less. It is also important to note that this data does NOT include the Pine

Street or Train Station permit parking lots, which were reported empty the majority of time. When taking this additional permit parking supply into account, the average permit parking occupancy decreases even further.

Figure 2. Average Weekday Occupancy by Month: Permit vs Public Parking

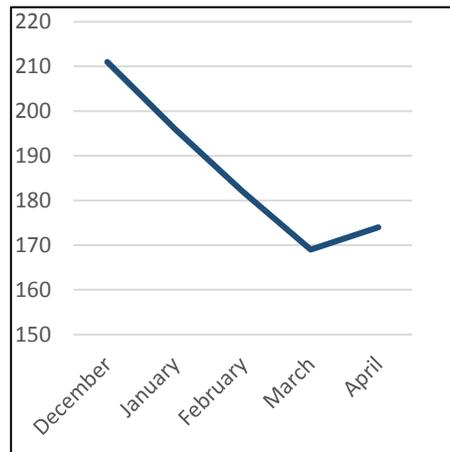


Meanwhile, there has been a decrease in permit sales over time (Figure 3), which may be due to the lack of on-street parking policies. It is likely that as participating employees realized that they could continue to park on street without penalty, the demand for permits decreased. This pilot has proven that it is challenging to consistently achieve voluntary compliance over time.

Another concern is the frequency at which permit parking spaces are not being utilized. Throughout the pilot, approximately 50% of permit holders were observed parking on street in a public parking area during the permit parking hours at least once, with many permit holders observed repeatedly in public parking stalls.

While there may have been a sufficient overall parking supply to accommodate this behavior during the pilot, there still have been visitors to the downtown who have become frustrated at the lack of readily available spaces. This reduces business activity both then and in the future, because those people are not as likely to return. Once parking demand increases in the summer season, and as the popularity of downtown Paso Robles grows over time, this will be a growing issue.

Figure 1. Total Permits Sold by Month



The City should take a proactive approach to parking management to maximize the efficiency of the downtown parking supply, while always considering the impacts of the surrounding areas including the residential neighborhoods. In order to prepare for the approaching season, the City must act efficiently and strategically. The data analysis results of the pilot measures demonstrate a need for either (1) on-street time limits or (2) paid parking to encourage participation in the permit-parking program and create on-street parking availability for customers.

Stakeholder Feedback

The City has received ongoing feedback from a Parking Steering Committee, parking permit holders, business owners, employees, and visitors throughout the pilot period. A project email address, parking@prcity.com was provided to the public for input. Additionally, the City created monthly surveys for permit holders to inquire about the permit program and feedback, as well as online social media surveys and polls. A March 20 community meeting was also well attended and gave stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback about the permit program and make suggestions for next steps. A summary of common stakeholder feedback and suggestions are provided below:

Feedback & Suggestions	Potential Actions
The Downtown could benefit from additional ADA accessible parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Public Works Department is already planning to address accessibility concerns in certain off-street lots. The City could consider adding more on-street ADA stalls along angled parking blocks.
The existing permit parking signage is confusing to visitors, especially on the weekend.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary signage could be placed at parking lot entrances indicated "Free All-Day Visitor Parking" on weekends.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing signage could be updated or replaced with clarified wording.
The City should construct a parking garage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A parking structure would not be cost effective when on-street parking is free. The City will be able to evaluate the feasibility of constructing a parking structure in the future, after additional elements of the overall parking program have been fully implemented.
Time limits should be implemented for on-street parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options 1 and 2 in the next section consider this approach.
Employees are continuing to park on street in front of certain businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time limits and/or paid parking on street would help address this issue by offering long-term parking options only in off-street parking lots or outside of the downtown core.
If paid parking is implemented, a period of free time (such as 1 hour or 90 minutes) should be offered as a customer convenience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This approach is considered within Option 5 in the next section.
If either time limits or paid parking is implemented around the Park only, this may result in spillover parking impacts for businesses outside of that area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options 2, 4, and 5 address this concern, as described in the next section.
Time limits would make visiting downtown challenging for those with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADA placard holders are not subject to the time-limited restrictions per California State law.
The City should consider reaching out to permit holders that are not parking in the permit areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based upon this suggestion, the City developed friendly reminder flyers that were placed on vehicle windshields in cases where permit holders were observed parking in public parking areas.

Paso Robles Parking Program: Next Steps Options

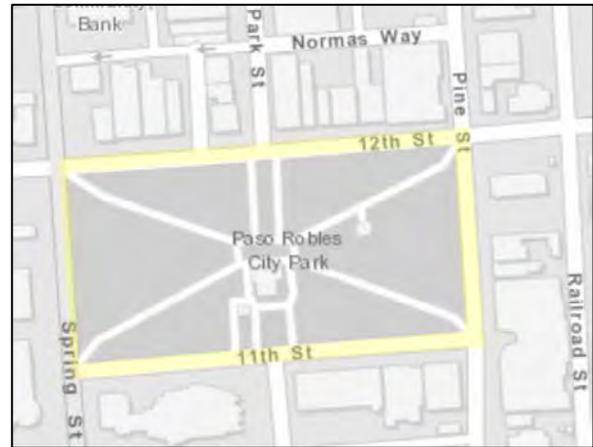
During the May 6th Stakeholders meeting and May 7th City Council meeting, five options will be presented for the next phase of the Paso Robles parking program:

1. Time Limits (City Park Area)
2. Tiered Time Limits (Downtown)
3. Paid Hourly Parking (Park Area)
4. Paid Hourly Parking (Downtown)
5. Paid Parking – First 90 Minutes Free (Downtown)

For each of the above options, a Monday-Friday model is assumed because many of the office employees do not work downtown on the weekends. However, each of the above options could be expanded to the weekend to address weekend parking demand. The City could easily budget for an increase in weekend enforcement staffing depending on the determined parameters of the program.

The City should consider the long-term financial sustainability of each option. While time limits (Options 1 and 2) could prevent employees from parking on street, there is no paid parking revenue to sustain the operation. A paid parking operation would provide the City with a revenue stream that can be allocated for the ongoing equipment and operating costs. Paid parking also presents a number of opportunities to the City to provide creative incentive programs like a merchant validation, free parking vouchers for locals, and discounted off-peak season pricing. The City would also have the opportunity to utilize the paid parking equipment to charge a flat rate for parking during special events such as the Mid-State Fair.

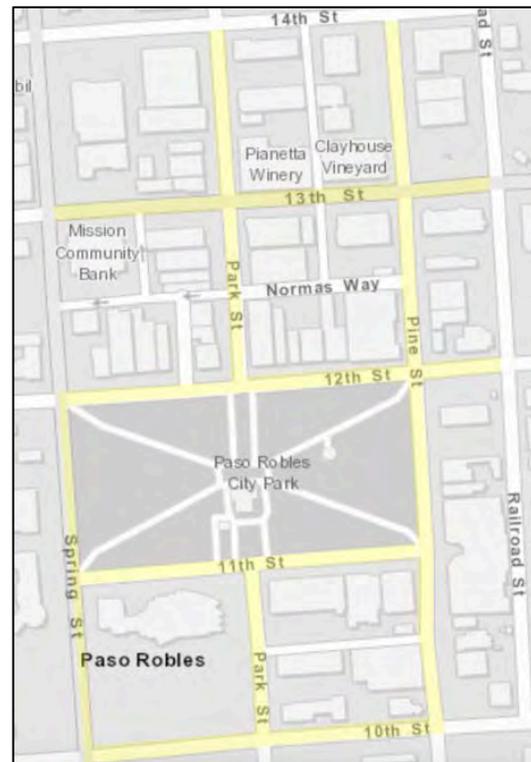
Figure 4. Park Area On-Street Parking



Option 1: Time Limits (Park Area)

Option 1 is a 2-hour time limit for the on-street parking spaces around the Downtown City Park (Park) (Figure 4). The suggested operating hours are 9:00AM-5:00PM, Monday-Friday. While parking demand does not peak until mid-day, with a time limit-only model the operating hours must be longer to discourage employee parking. For example, shorter operating hours like 11:00AM-2:00PM (as provided in the paid parking models) would allow employees who arrive for work at 8:00AM to park from 8:00AM until 1:00PM (5 hours) without being required to move their vehicle, because the time limit would only be applicable beginning at 11:00AM. The goal of this model is to ensure turnover in the time-limited spaces, while still providing a number of long-term parking options on street. The drawback to limiting the implementation to around the Park only is that the businesses outside of the zone will likely experience spillover parking impacts. Unless the entire downtown area is addressed, employees may continue to park long-term on street in front of businesses not located adjacent to the Park.

Figure 5. Downtown Area On-Street Parking



Option 2: Tiered Time Limits (Downtown)

Similar to Option 1, Option 2 proposes a 2-hour time limit for on-street parking within the Park Area, but also a lengthier 3-hour time limit for the rest of the Downtown Area (Figure 5). The intent of expanding time limits throughout Downtown is to minimize spillover parking impacts on businesses not located adjacent to the Park. The tiered approach, with 2- and 3-hour time limits, will likely discourage employees from parking on street, while providing visitors with two options for their length of stay. Time limits beyond 3-hours are not recommended, as they are less effective at preventing employee on-street parking. Longer-term parking options would be available both at off-street parking lots and outside of the Downtown Area boundaries. Time limits, combined with a no re-parking requirement, will encourage parking space turnover to create more parking availability for customers within the convenient on-street spaces.

While time limits do address the employee parking problem, a downside is that visitors will have fewer long-term parking options. This may limit a visitor's ability to leisurely shop, dine, and see a movie, among other activities downtown. Additionally, a time limit-only parking operation will offer no opportunity for incentive-based programs like merchant validation or discount codes. Without a baseline value assigned to parking, the City has minimal flexibility from a parking management perspective.

Achieving compliance with time limits will require consistent and effective enforcement. To do so, there will be a substantial staffing and resource costs to the City for enforcement and administrative staffing, technology, and signage. It is possible that parking citation revenue and the permit parking rates may be sufficient to sustain the enforcement program, but financial sustainability and the ability to invest in program enhancements and technology may be hindered without the implementation of paid parking. Therefore, with the implementation of a time limit model, the City would need to consider raising the employee permit parking rate above the existing \$5.00 monthly rate to ensure a sustainable operation.

Option 3: Paid Hourly Parking (Park Area)

Option 3 proposes paid hourly parking within the Park Area at a rate of 75¢ per hour, without time limits. Unlike the time limit-only scenarios (Options 1 and 2), a paid parking operation could address the core issue of employees parking on-street with fewer operating hours and without time limits. A common stakeholder concern was that 2- or 3-hour time limits would affect the ability of visitors to enjoy a meal, watch a movie, and/or shop during the same trip. While a longer time limit of 4 hours is an option to guarantee some turnover of parking spaces, this time limit would not be as effective at combating employee use of on-street spaces downtown. Instead, the City can use a paid parking model to provide visitors the ability to park for as long as they desire, while still encouraging employees to participate in the permit program. It is recommended that any paid parking operation be combined with a merchant validation program that would allow business owners to provide free or reduced parking to their customers (see page 11).

The initial proposed paid parking operating hours are 4 hours per day between 10:00AM-2:00PM. With a \$5.00 monthly permit option for employees, it becomes cost effective to participate in the

permit program compared to paying for parking on street, which costs \$3.00 per day. The cost savings to a downtown employee is significant since the monthly permit costs less than 2 days of on street paid parking. Meanwhile, the shorter operating hours still provide visitors the ability to park for free in the morning, late afternoon, and evening. Based upon the ongoing data collection results, the peak parking demand period in the Park Area is typically around noon, which the proposed operating hours are designed to address. This model would allow the City the adaptive tools to utilize paid parking during special events and provide the infrastructure needed to support future expansion of the paid parking operating hours.

Multi-space pay stations and mobile payment are recommended for paid parking in Paso Robles in order to minimize the necessary infrastructure investment and aesthetic impact, reduce maintenance requirements, and streamline revenue collections. Additionally, the pay stations can be configured for Pay by Plate, which means that drivers would enter their license plate number to pay for parking. Just as the employee permit-parking program is enforced by license plate number, a license plate-based system for paid hourly parking means that the City's enforcement team will use the same license plate recognition (LPR) equipment to enforce the entire parking program. The goal of consistent and effective enforcement is to achieve compliance.

As a customer convenience, the City should also offer mobile payment. A mobile payment solution allows drivers to pay for a parking session using their cellphone. They can either call a number to pay, or simply create an account on a mobile application to pay online. Zone numbers are assigned to each paid parking area for enforcement purposes, and the active paid parking sessions are tracked and verifiable by license plate number. A mobile payment solution can be provided to the City by a vendor at no cost to the City. Instead, the vendor is fully funded by the convenience fees charged to the user. The vendor provides pay station decals and City-approved signage and will support the education and outreach plan. Mobile payment vendors also offer robust merchant validation programs that can be used by the downtown businesses.

Option 4: Paid Hourly Parking (Downtown)

Option 4 proposes paid hourly parking within the entire Downtown Area at a rate of 75¢ per hour without time limits. The City could choose to take an incremental approach to paid parking by implementing it in the Park Area only to start (Option 3), however the benefit of implementing paid parking throughout the Downtown, rather than solely within the Park Area, is that spillover parking impacts will be minimized. In the Park Area-only scenario (Option 3), employees would still have the ability to park for free on street in front of non-Park adjacent businesses.

Additionally, with the high demand during special events and the anticipated increase in parking demand during the peak summer tourism season, the City will be better able to manage the impact if paid parking equipment is deployed throughout the Downtown Area. This way, if paid parking demand is consistently an issue across Downtown, the City will be equipped with the technology in order to charge for parking and adjust rates as needed. On the other hand, if parking demand remains clustered around the Park Area only, the City can easily lower the paid parking rates for the rest of the Downtown through the backend meter management system. Ultimately, the

broader implementation of paid parking would provide the City with additional flexibility to manage potential impacts and shifts in parking demand.

As described above, the City would implement paid parking through the use of pay stations in the Pay by Plate configuration, combined with a merchant validation and mobile payment option.

Option 5: Paid Parking – First 90 Minutes Free (Downtown)

Option 5 proposes a \$1.00 hourly rate with the first 90 minutes free throughout the Downtown Area. Offering 90 minutes free is a customer convenience that would provide visitors the ability to park short-term free of charge and provides the ability to extend their stay with payment. This type of rate model more effectively encourages turnover compared to the hourly rate model proposed in Options 3 and 4, but will be more difficult to enforce.

In order to offer a period of free parking at the beginning of each session, agencies have typically also installed parking space sensors that can detect whether a new vehicle has entered the space or if the original vehicle has remained. The sensors monitor space utilization and help prevent “meter feeding” where someone could initiate the first 90 minutes for free and then return to the meter to repay, as if it’s a new parking session, to be granted another free 90-minutes. Parking sensors are not only expensive, but they also are not 100% accurate. Introducing a sensor-reliant program could be problematic for the City and is not recommended at this time.

Alternatively, the City can require drivers to input the license plate number into the pay station or mobile payment solution to initiate a parking session during parking operation hours – even if they are staying for 90 minutes or less. While it is somewhat inconvenient for patrons to operate the pay station or utilize the mobile application for a free parking session, the input of their license plate number will initiate the parking session and allow the City to detect whether a vehicle has overstayed the 90 minutes of free time using the LPR enforcement technology. Patrons have the ability to pay for parking beyond the 90 minutes; however, based upon the no-reparking ordinance, downtown employees would not have the opportunity to utilize the parking spaces beyond 90 minutes without paying or being subject to a parking citation. This also provides customers the flexibility to extend their stay from their phone or any pay station. The opportunity to utilize a merchant validation program can help to promote longer parking sessions for patrons. Consistent LPR enforcement would be essential to the success of this parking option.

Offering 90 minutes of free parking provides flexibility for downtown patrons and discourages on-street parking abuse by downtown employees. Additionally, the City can use the pay stations to charge for parking during special events. Paid parking revenue during special events would help sustain the overall operation, while still providing affordable parking opportunities on a typical day. As described above, the City should implement paid parking by pay stations in the Pay by Plate configuration, combined with a merchant validation and mobile payment option.

The matrix on the following page summarizes the elements of each of the five options, as well as their projected benefits and costs.

Next Steps Options Matrix

	Option 1. Time Limits (Park Area)	Option 2. Tiered Time Limits (Downtown)	Option 3. Paid Hourly Parking (Park Area)	Option 4. Paid Hourly Parking (Downtown)	Option 5. Paid Parking - First 90 Minutes Free (Downtown)					
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-hour time limit applied to on-street spaces surrounding the park (see Figure 1) Monday-Friday 9:00AM-5:00PM No re-parking allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-hour time limit in Park Area (Figure 1) and 3-hour time limit in rest of Downtown Monday-Friday 9:00AM-5:00PM No re-parking allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75¢ per hour in the park area (no time limit) Multi-space pay stations Monday-Friday 10:00AM-2:00PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75¢ per hour throughout downtown (no time limit) Multi-space pay stations Monday-Friday 10:00AM-2:00PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1.00 per hour - first 90 minutes free throughout downtown (no time limit) Multi-space pay stations Monday-Friday 9:00AM-5:00PM No re-parking allowed 					
Benefits	Implementing only in the Park area will streamline enforcement	Minimizes spillover impacts to businesses not around the Park	Can measure impact of paid parking before expanding to the rest of Downtown	Paid parking regulations are evenly applied throughout downtown	90-minutes free is an added customer convenience					
	Options 1 and 2: Increased turnover; More short-term parking options for customers; Encourages employees to park away from the downtown core		Options 3 and 4: Rate structure easy to communicate; Shorter operating hours to be effective; Easier to enforce than time limits		-					
			-	Options 4 and 5: Encourages employees to participate in the permit program; Broader implementation of paid parking equipment provides more flexibility						
			Options 3, 4, and 5: Customers not subject to a time limit; Encourages employees to park away from the park area; Revenue supports operation; Can use pay stations to charge for parking during special events; Can be combined with validation and incentive programs							
Drawbacks	Spillover parking to non-time limited streets	Potential spillover into nearby neighborhoods	Spillover parking in front of businesses not adjacent to the Park	Without a tiered pricing structure, drivers will still aim to park in highest demand locations	Drivers required to enter license plate number to initiate free time to prevent re-parking; longer operating hours required					
	Options 1 and 2: Requires very consistent enforcement; Requires longer operating hours to be effective; No revenue to support operation; Fewer long-term parking options for customers		Options 3, 4, and 5: Does not guarantee turnover without time limits; Spillover parking to non-paid locations; Pay station maintenance and collections							
Costs*	Signage & Installation:	\$18,000	Signage & Installation:	\$50,000	Signage & Installation:	\$25,000	Signage & Installation:	\$78,000	Signage & Installation:	\$78,000
	Citation/Permit Management:	\$25,000/year	Citation/Permit Management:	\$25,000/year	Citation/Permit Management:	\$25,000/year	Citation/Permit Management:	\$25,000/year	Citation/Permit Management:	\$25,000/year
	LPR cameras:	\$28,000 +\$3,300/year	LPR cameras:	\$28,000 +\$3,300/year	LPR cameras:	\$28,000 +\$3,300/year	LPR cameras:	\$28,000 +\$3,300/year	LPR cameras:	\$28,000 +\$3,300/year
	Enforcement staffing:	\$100,000/year	Enforcement staffing:	\$100,000/year	Enforcement staffing:	\$100,000/year	Enforcement staffing:	\$100,000/year	Enforcement staffing:	\$100,000/year
	-	-	-	-	Pay Stations (equipment and operating costs):	\$150,000 +\$18,000/year	Pay Stations (equipment and operating costs):	\$340,000 +\$39,000/year	Pay Stations (equipment and operating costs):	\$340,000 +\$39,000/year
	-	-	-	-	Part time maintenance staff:	\$20,000/year	Part time maintenance staff:	\$20,000/year	Part time maintenance staff:	\$20,000/year
	Upfront Cost:	(\$171,000)	Upfront Cost:	(\$203,000)	Upfront Cost:	(\$348,000)	Upfront Cost:	(\$591,000)	Upfront Cost:	(\$591,000)
	Annual Cost (Years 2-5):	(\$128,300)	Annual Cost (Years 2-5):	(\$128,300)	Annual Cost (Years 2-5):	(\$166,300)	Annual Cost (Years 2-5):	(\$187,300)	Annual Cost (Years 2-5):	(\$187,300)
	Estimated Annual Paid Parking Revenue:	\$0	Estimated Annual Paid Parking Revenue:	\$0	Estimated Annual Paid Parking Revenue:	\$170,000	Estimated Annual Paid Parking Revenue:	\$260,000	Estimated Annual Paid Parking Revenue:	\$300,000
	5-Year Net Income:	(\$684,200)	5-Year Net Income:	(\$716,200)	5-Year Net Income:	(\$163,200)	5-Year Net Income:	(\$40,200)	5-Year Net Income:	\$159,800

*The costs section does not include citation revenue forecasts because the goal of the program is compliance. The City should not rely upon citation revenue to sustain an operation.

Pay Stations

To minimize the amount of infrastructure and street clutter, it is recommended that the City utilize pay stations for any paid parking option. While single space meters are convenient, they also require more ongoing maintenance and take up valuable curb space. It is also recommended that the City utilize the Pay by Plate configuration with any pay stations. Pay by Plate means that the driver must enter the license plate into the pay station to initiate a parking session. The driver is not required to return to the vehicle with a payment receipt – instead, the license plate number becomes the payment identifier. This would allow the City to enforce efficiently with the use of LPR technology.

Based upon the accelerated implementation schedule, it is recommended that the City piggyback off the City of Oceanside's recent pay station contract with Flowbird. Oceanside released a Request for Proposals (RFP) in December 2018 and received proposals from four vendors: Flowbird, IPS, MacKay, and T2. Oceanside staff and their consultant (also DIXON) reviewed the proposals and evaluated them based on compliance with the RFP specifications and cost. Flowbird was the top responder and City staff then engaged in contract negotiations. This is an opportunity for the City of Paso Robles to quickly execute an agreement with a fully vetted and qualified pay station vendor, within the desired timeframe. Additionally, it has been confirmed with Flowbird that sufficient equipment is already manufactured and available, which will allow for an expedited implementation process if the budget is authorized by Paso Robles City Council on May 7.

Flowbird is an international company with extensive experience in designing, building, deploying, and supporting parking payment systems. Their portfolio includes systems in 55 countries, 5,000 cities, 300,000 pay stations deployed, and 100 million daily users. Some US cities include Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Miami, New York, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas. Flowbird also has a mobile payment application and a robust merchant validation program, which are each described below.

Mobile Payment

It is also recommended that the City offer the Flowbird mobile payment feature, Way to Park, for customer convenience. A mobile payment solution allows drivers to pay for parking sessions using their cellphones and can be implemented with any rate structure. Drivers can either call a number to pay, or they can simply create an account on a mobile application to pay online. Users are able to complete one-time uses or establish accounts with the mobile payment provider that allow them to pay for parking and extend their stays without returning to their vehicles. Zone numbers are assigned to each paid parking area for enforcement purposes, and the active paid parking sessions are tracked and verifiable by license plate numbers.

Merchant Validation

Flowbird also offers a validation program through their ParkOnUs app. The ParkOnUs app is a mobile app extension of their Validation Code Solution, within which a code is typically entered at a pay station to receive validated parking. The new app can be used by businesses such as restaurants, real estate offices, store owners, and movie theaters, allowing their customers to skip

the pay station and validation their parking session through the application. The process is simple and easy to use. First, the operator of the parking system creates a validation code through Flowbird's web portal. That unique code is assigned a value of time and can be used on the ParkOnUs app for each individual merchant at that moment or based on a date range assigned by the operator.

If a patron is eligible for parking validation, they may provide the merchant their license plate number. Using the ParkOnUs app, the merchant enters the plate or space number and the corresponding time is sent electronically to enforcement officers, communicating that the vehicle complies with parking regulations. The merchant has the option of configuring the ParkOnUs app with Flowbird's E-Purse solution where each code use is debited down from an allotment of parking time, pre-purchased from the parking operator.

Citation and Permit Management

During the pilot, the City has been utilizing an automated citation and permit management system that provides the enforcement officers with a handheld citation issuance device, a citation management platform, and an online permit management portal. If the City moves forward with the implementation of an employee permit-parking program, time limits, and/or paid parking, it is recommended that the City continue to utilize an automated citation and permit management vendor to provide the efficiencies and management support required for an effective operation. The City is seeking Council authorization on May 7 (as described in the Next Steps Options Matrix) in order to move forward with either the existing or future vendor solution. The citation and permit management systems will be integrated with the proposed pay station equipment and LPR technology to allow for an efficient and automated parking operation.

License Plate Recognition Technology

Based upon a successful pilot period, it is recommended that Council authorize the purchase of one LPR unit from Vigilant. LPR technology can significantly improve enforcement efficiency, especially for time limit management. Rather than relying on physical chalking, the LPR cameras can automatically track license plate reads based upon their GPS location and notify the enforcement officer when there has been a violation.

LPR increases efficiency in several ways, including the automation of vehicle location and time occupied monitoring to enforce any time limits and the 72-hour parking rule that is currently being tracked manually with chalk. Additionally, digital license plate-based permits and a Pay by Plate configuration with any future parking pay stations can be enforced efficiently with the use of LPR because the license plate numbers are used to verify valid payment status. The LPR also allows the enforcement officers to verify active employee parking permits, which are each tied to a specific plate number.

Other databases can also be integrated with the LPR system for enforcing scofflaws and stolen or wanted vehicles. The LPR system also provides the opportunity for enforcement officers to more

efficiently manage scofflaw records and vehicles with five or more unpaid delinquent parking citations.

As utilized throughout the pilot period, LPR has the added benefit of providing occupancy and utilization data. Data can be exported to Excel for ongoing analysis and review. The City could develop a post-pilot data collection plan with fixed routes, days, and hours for ongoing review. Collecting data with LPR would be a cost-effective way for the City to understand on and off-street occupancy and utilization trends, which would allow for data-driven decisions about potential policy adjustments.

Permit Parking Program

The City should also consider implementing an employee permit-parking program similar to what has been offered throughout the pilot period. The City has the opportunity to extend the IPS permit management agreement for an additional 90 days, proceed with a longer-term agreement, or solicit a new vendor for a different permit management system. The City is seeking Council authorization for the budget required for ongoing citation and permit management, as described within the Matrix on page 10. Regardless of the vendor solution chosen, the following list is a summary of recommended program adjustments:

- Eliminate the evening and residential permits due to low demand,
- Oversell the permits while proactively monitoring occupancy over time to maximize the efficiency of the City's parking supply,
- Consider raising the permit rate if a time limit-only model is introduced, and
- Consider maintaining the \$5.00 monthly permit rate if a paid parking model is introduced.

Based upon the low demand for the evening and residential permits, the City should consider eliminating those permit options to simplify the operation. There is commonly an overlap in shift hours between the daytime and evening employees, which makes it challenging to allocate standalone hours of operation that will support both permit types. In the future if evening or residential permits are reintroduced, the operating hours and enforcement coverage will need to be evaluated and adjusted.

The City should also consider doing an oversell. An oversell occurs when the number of permits sold exceeds the total permit parking supply. This is a common method in most permit parking programs because it is rare that all permit holders will be utilizing their permits at the same time. However, the data collection has shown that a significant portion of permit stalls are going unused throughout the day. This is an inefficient use of parking, and it displaces parking that would otherwise be available to the public.

It is challenging to determine the appropriate level of oversell until time limits or paid parking are implemented on street. This is because, as it is today, some employees are parking on street with a permit. Once on-street regulations are implemented, it is anticipated that the demand for permit

parking will increase, so this should be monitored carefully. The City should conduct occupancy studies over time to determine the appropriate level of oversell moving forward.

Finally, the City should evaluate the existing \$5.00 monthly rate. The goal of the pilot program rate was to create an affordable parking option to encourage voluntary participation. However, this rate does not sustain the management, technology, and enforcement costs that are required for the parking operation. If the City proceeds with a time limit-only model for on-street parking, there should be consideration for increasing the employee permit-parking rate to \$10.00 per month, in order to offset some of the increased operational expenses. On the other hand, with a paid parking model, the paid parking revenue would help sustain the operation. In this case, the employee permit parking rates could be maintained at the lower rate without sacrificing the sustainability of the overall operation.

Follow Up Steps

The following sections describe additional steps that will need to be considered. In order to focus on the most urgent decisions on May 7 to prepare for a summer implementation, the remaining follow up items will be brought back to future Council meetings for consideration. These sections have been included in this update report for informational purposes.

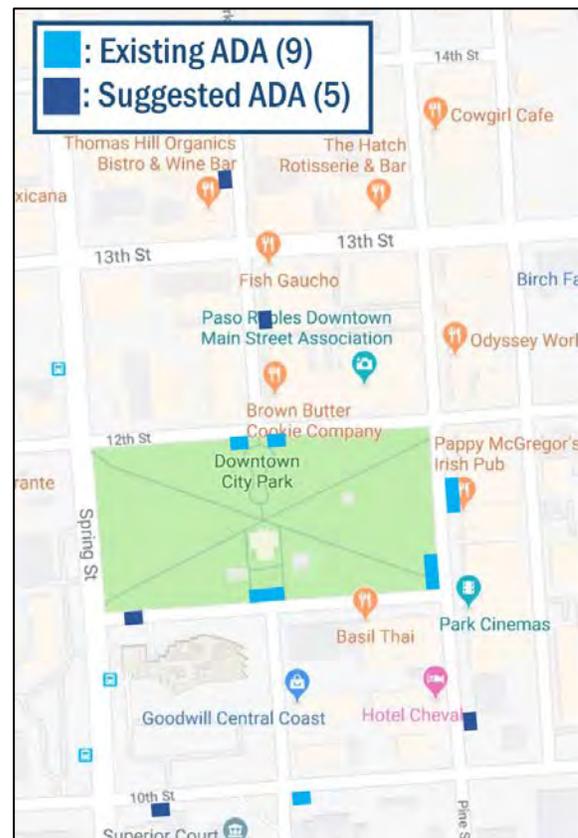
ADA Parking

Under California State law, ADA placard holders will not be subject to the paid parking requirements or time limit restrictions for any on-street stalls. However, stakeholders frequently requested additional ADA accessible parking stalls on-street throughout downtown due to their limited availability, especially during peak periods. As part of this assessment, a map of existing ADA stalls was developed. The map also highlights some potential locations for additional ADA stalls that may be considered. Whenever an ADA stall is implemented, this will result in the reduction of two regular parking stalls each.

Parking Citation Fine Amounts

City staff conducted a comparative review of citation fine amounts in seven nearby communities: Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Grover Beach, Hollister, Morro Bay, Pismo Beach, and San Luis Obispo. The average standard parking fine amount amongst these locations (for violations such as prohibited parking, limited time parking, and

Figure 6. ADA Parking Map



parking over 72 hours) was \$47. The current standard parking citation fine amount in Paso Robles is \$33.

Two other violations that the City could consider increasing based on comparable city rates are included below in Table 2.

Table 2. Potential Parking Citation Fine Increases

Violation	Comparable Cities Average	Paso Robles Existing Fine	Potential New Fine Amount
Park blocking wheelchair access	\$196	\$139	\$170
Handicap parking	\$310	\$285	\$300

In some cases, a higher fine amount will help encourage compliance with parking regulations. The City could consider increasing these fine amounts over time to be consistent with the market rate. Some cities also choose to tie in an annual rate change based upon the Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustments.

Valet Parking

The City does not currently have a defined valet parking policy but is in the process of developing the guidelines. Paso Robles frequently has events and a consistently busy summer season, which may support a valet program within the downtown core. Drivers are typically more willing to consider valet parking during events. Valet can be used to achieve greater capacity out of existing parking facilities, as valet-parked vehicles can be organized into tandem arrangements (bumper to bumper) that increases capacity.

The City could consider designating an underutilized parking lot, such as the Pine Street Lot, for a valet parking program. This lot has 30 spaces but could hold an estimated 40 total vehicles if valet parking is utilized. The pick-up and drop-off zone(s) could be conveniently located closer to the core of downtown such as in front of the movie theater along Pine Street, or elsewhere nearby the Park.

Event Parking

In addition to offering a valet parking program during events, the City should consider collaborating with popular Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) like Uber and Lyft to establish passenger-loading areas. The City can work with the TNCs to geo-fence the pick-up and drop-off zones for upcoming events. Geo-fencing is accomplished by programming into the app the specific zones, based upon their GPS locations. This means that the application will automatically direct users and drivers to the designated zones. This gives the City the ability to establish passenger-loading zones in safe locations to minimize the impact on traffic congestion and pedestrian safety. The upcoming Wine Festival may be an opportunity to test this solution.

Shuttle Program

The Free Ride is a free shuttle program that has been successfully implemented in several cities throughout the country. The shuttle program is free to the users because the staffing and operating costs are completely funded by advertisements. There are moving billboards, videos for passengers and even sample products that are given out during the rides. The vehicles are all electric and each fit up to five passengers. Additionally, a mobile application will allow users to request a ride within certain boundaries; users are prompted to select their pick up and drop of locations, and the application provides real time driver ETAs and notifications. So far, The Free Ride has been implemented in South Florida, California, the Hamptons, and the Jersey Shore.

In the City of San Diego, The Free Ride operates under a partnership between the City, Civic San Diego and the Downtown San Diego Partnership. In San Diego, the program is called “FRED”, which stands for “Free Ride Everywhere Downtown”. The initial funding of \$500,000 for the program came from downtown parking meter revenue. The City purchased a fleet of 15 vehicles for \$200,000, and the additional \$300,000 of funding went towards storage, charging stations and start-up personnel costs. The shuttles operate between 7:00am and 9:00pm, Monday through Thursday, until Midnight on Friday and Saturday, and from 9:00am to 9:00pm on Sundays. The drivers earn \$14.66 per hour. The staffing and operating costs are funded by advertisement revenue.

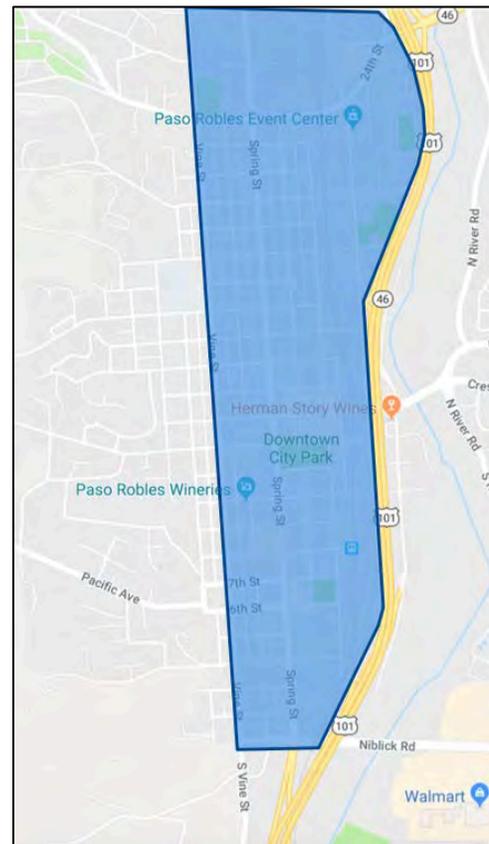
A program like FRED has the potential to be very successful in Paso Robles. The level of tourism would be ideal to support The Free Ride’s platform. The City could pursue a partnership with a free shuttle program such as FRED to improve access and mobility throughout downtown. These shuttles could be utilized for remote employee and visitor parking, and they would be a convenient service for any visitors who may have difficulty getting around the City by foot or bike. Extensive outreach will be necessary to inform visitors and employees about the shuttle service. Signage and flyers should encourage visitors to download the application. Typically, the FRED program is structured as an on-demand service; however, the City could solicit the company about the potential for a fixed route program if desired.

Alternatively, the hotels surrounding Downtown Paso Robles could collaborate to implement a shuttle program to access Downtown. This could be funded by the hotels, and potentially

Figure 7. The Free Ride Shuttles



Figure 8. Proposed Shuttle Service Area



supplemented by the City depending on the structure of the program. It is recommended that City staff continue to engage The Free Ride and the nearby hotel owners to develop a shuttle program to support Downtown.

For reference, The Free Ride has provided a quote for a potential 26-week pilot program. The estimated net cost of the program, assuming that Ad revenue is shared, is a total of \$68,704 for the 26 weeks. The proposed pilot program details and service area are described in Table 3 and Figure 8.

Table 3. The Free Ride Proposed Pilot Program Details*

Vehicles	2
Hours	10AM-8PM
Weeks	26
Monthly Funding	\$13,451
Total Funding Needed	\$80,704
Projected Ad Revenue	\$24,000
Revenue Share	50%
Potential Net Cost	\$68,704

* All of the program elements can be adjusted depending on the desired program structure.

Parking Structure

A number of stakeholders are in favor of constructing a parking garage to address parking availability in Paso Robles. While a parking garage may solve the occupancy issue, there is no guarantee that the convenient on-street spaces will improve in availability, which is the priority. Additionally, the construction of a parking garage would be a significant investment for the City. The average cost to build an above ground parking garage is around \$24,000 per space, but some garage designs have a per space cost upwards of \$60,000.

Instead, the City should focus on implementing parking management strategies such as time limits, paid parking, enforcement, and other demand management strategies that promote alternative modes of transportation. It is anticipated that if the City strategically manages the existing supply that the City can avoid constructing a parking garage for at least the near- and mid-term.