



City of Santa Barbara
Downtown Parking Committee

Memorandum

DATE: June 10, 2021

TO: Downtown Parking Committee

FROM: Brian Bosse, Waterfront Business Manager/Interim Downtown Plaza and Parking Manager

SUBJECT: Lobero Garage Basement Permit Policy

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee review and comment on the draft Lobero Garage Basement Permit Policy.

DISCUSSION

The basement level of the Lobero Garage, located on the 900 block of Anacapa Street, contains 27 parking spaces, including one accessible space. These spaces cannot be made available to the public at an hourly rate due to their location in the separate basement level of the garage, so they are available for permit parking only. Permits are not sold for the upper levels of the Lobero Garage due to high hourly parking demand, nor are they available in City Lot 8, located on the 1000 block of Anacapa Street. There are no public parking lots on the 800 or 700 blocks of Anacapa. Because of the central location of the Lobero Garage and the lack of permit parking in nearby lots, Lobero Garage basement permits are in very high demand.

Unlike other lots, which can be over-subscribed, permit availability in the Lobero Garage basement is limited to the total number of spaces. The spaces are unassigned, and permit holders may park in any available space. Five of these spaces are held privately, leaving 22 spaces open to sell as monthly permits. Currently, there are fourteen active basement permits. Due to the pandemic, several long-time permit holders canceled their accounts, leaving eight permits available for sale. Lobero Garage basement permits currently cost \$175 per month.

Current practice allows businesses to purchase permits on behalf of their employees, and then transfer the permit to new employees within the firm at their discretion. This practice has resulted in very little permit turn over – it has been over seven years since Downtown Parking was able to offer a basement permit for sale to the general public. Additionally,

businesses have not been consistent about providing new permit holder information when transferring permits, making it difficult to keep accurate records. Furthermore, due to the scarcity of the permits, businesses have held onto unused permits to avoid giving up that space, again limiting access to permits for employees of new businesses. Businesses have also allowed former employees to retain use of the permit even when they no longer work in the Downtown core.

PROPOSED CHANGES

Staff proposes implementing a new policy for issuing and managing permits in the Lobero Garage basement. The goals of this proposed policy are to:

- Increase permit turnover and availability for Downtown employees.
- Maximize usage of basement parking spaces.
- Establish an equitable, transparent process for basement permit issuance.

To achieve these goals, the proposed policy changes the current Lobero Garage permit issuance practice of allowing permits to be purchased by a business for an employee, to a requirement that permits be issued only to an individual working in the Downtown core. Businesses would no longer be able to reassign a permit when an employee leaves, thus creating more turnover. The existing business accounts will be required to conform to the new policy.

The proposed policy establishes a system for selling the initial group of available permits via a random selection process, followed by the establishment of a wait list. When an individual permit holder terminates their account, or when the City terminates the permit for cause, the permit will revert to the City and will be assigned to the next individual on the wait list. Following the initial permit allocation process, new applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and added to the wait list in the order received.

In order to maximize use of basement parking spaces, the policy also requires permit holders who no longer work in the downtown core to return their permits to the City so they can be offered to the next person on the wait list. Additionally, staff will periodically review permit usage. Permits that have not been used in more than three months will be terminated and permits may not be suspended or placed on hold. This ensures that permits will be made available to customers who will actively use them.

Additionally, numbers will be painted on the parking spaces and permit holders will be assigned a space to allow for more accurate record keeping of legally entitled spaces and city-owned spaces.