

# City of San Rafael

**City Type:** Suburban Center/Town Center  
**Purpose:** To achieve appropriate parking standards in the vicinity of the future transit rail stops in San Rafael.

## Goals:

- Achieve appropriate parking standards for downtown and future mixed use developments
- Optimize use of underutilized surface lots in downtown for housing and public parking
- Develop infill policy for Northgate Mall to incorporate mixed use development, while retaining parking and minimizing costs

## Findings:

- On-street parking during Friday and Saturday evenings operates below practical capacity
  - ❖ Average occupancy of 66 percent (both days)
- Off-street parking in the downtown is significantly underutilized
  - ❖ Friday evening average occupancy: 26 percent
  - ❖ Saturday evening average occupancy: 30 percent
- Select centrally located off-street lots operate near target levels of occupancy
  - ❖ Lot #5: Friday Evening: 83 percent; Saturday Evening: 75 percent
  - ❖ Lot #6: Friday Evening: 90 percent; Saturday Evening: 97 percent
- Structure #2: Relatively new at time of study causing reduction in overall occupancy rates, thus parking utilization should be revisited as demand in area stabilizes

## Stakeholder Participation:

- Stakeholders representing business and residential interests in downtown San Rafael provided helpful feedback regarding shared parking, in lieu fees, parking management and unbundling parking from rents. Outreach was limited in the Northgate Mall Area.
- Downtown patrons are unwilling to walk great distances from their parking space.
- Most people do not understand the relationships between smart parking policies, traffic congestion, environment, and urban development. Communication and education are key.
- Shared parking is generally favorably accepted. Downtown residents should be allowed to use City-owned parking lots in downtown for overnight parking.
- Shared parking has been discussed in San Rafael for 10 years and is allowed in the Zoning Code. It has faced resistance from homeowners groups due to traffic concerns.

## Recommendations:

- Non-motorized connectivity
- Graduated On- and Off-Street Pricing
- Parking facility design guidelines
- Parking Technology
- Strong Stakeholder Outreach