

SFpark Rate Adjustment Policy: On-Street Parking

Revision #1: June 8, 2011 (Original version approved March 22, 2011)



Introduction

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), as part of the SF*park* pilot project, will use a demand-based approach to adjusting parking rates at metered parking spaces in the SF*park* pilot areas. The goals include:

- Having a consistent, simple, and transparent approach for setting meter rates;
- Using those rates, including demand-responsive pricing and off-peak discounts, to help manage congestion, improve Muni speed and reliability, and achieve other transportation-related benefits;
- Improving customer service, experience, and convenience at SF*park* garages to help attract more people to the garages and thereby reduce demand for on-street parking; and
- Achieving parking availability targets to reduce the number of drivers who double park or circle while looking for parking.

This document contains a summary of the:

- Current parking meter policies; and
- Plan for improving the management of metered parking spaces in SF*park* pilot areas.

Current Parking Meter Policies

Rates

Currently, parking meters in San Francisco charge a single hourly rate regardless of the time of day or year. Meter rates vary by neighborhood, with the most expensive rates downtown, and the cheapest in the neighborhood commercial districts:

Zone	Price per hour
Downtown	\$3.50
Downtown periphery	\$3.00
Fisherman's Wharf	\$3.00
Neighborhood commercial districts	\$2.00



Method of Rate-Setting

At present, the SFMTA Board of Directors sets meter rates via periodic price changes based on recommendations made by SFMTA staff, mainly during the budget-planning process. There is no set formula or approach for setting meter rates, and changing meter rates is often a difficult and contentious process.

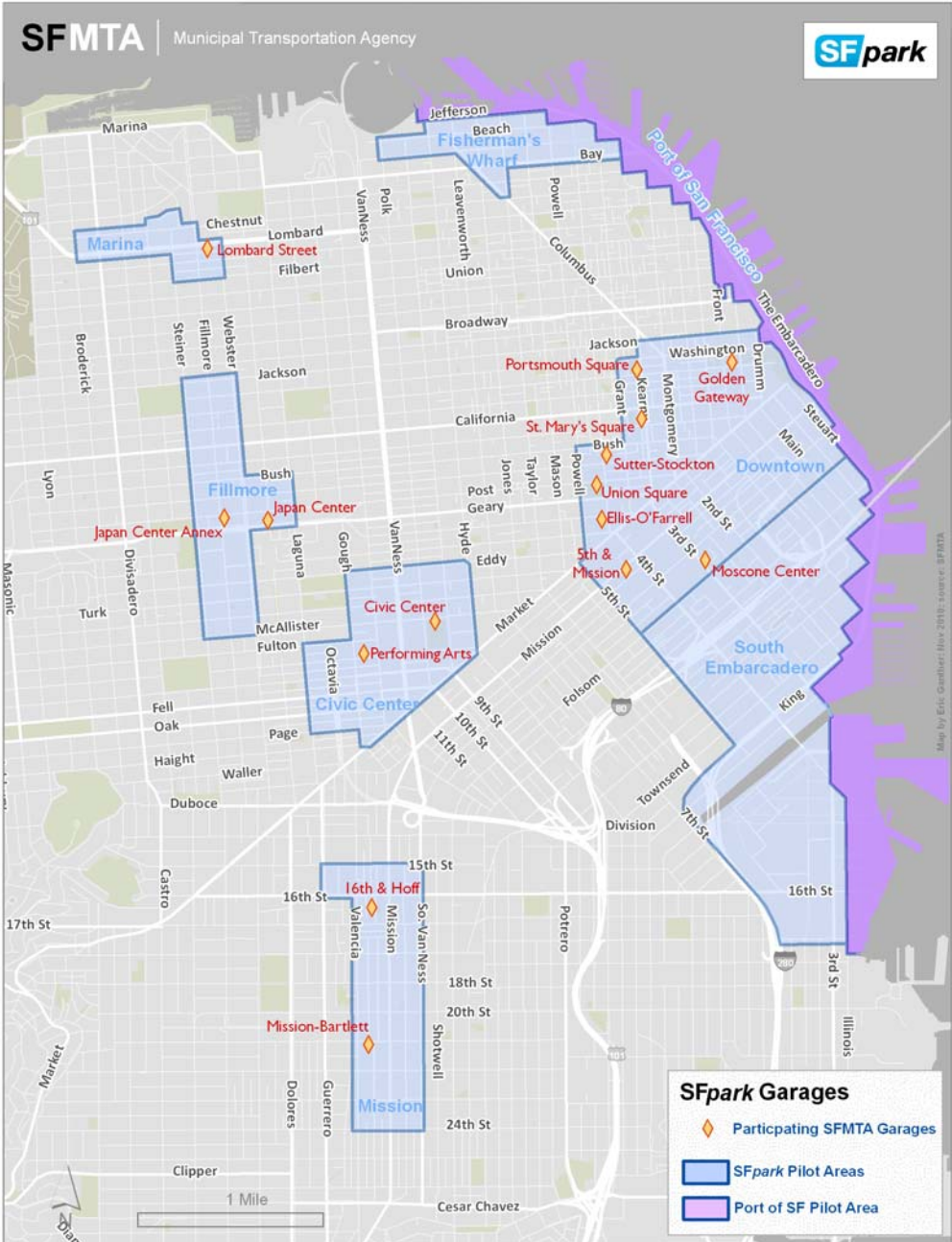
Current hours and days of operation

Most parking meters in the city are operational from Monday through Saturday, from 7am to 6pm or 9am to 6pm. Meters in Fisherman's Wharf are operational every day, from 7am to 7pm, and meters in areas administered by the Port of San Francisco (mostly along the Embarcadero) are operational every day from 7am to 11pm.



SFpark On-Street Pricing Plan

The SFpark program will control parking meter rates in the SFpark pilot areas. The pilot areas appear in the map below:





In SFpark pilot areas, meter rates will vary based on time of day and day of week, and rates will be adjusted over time in response to demand. Rates will be adjusted on a block-by-block basis, using the occupancy data provided by the parking sensors that have been installed in all on-street parking spaces in the SFpark pilot areas.

Adjusting Rates

1. Meter operational hours will be split into distinct rate periods

In order to help ensure that parking is available in metered parking spaces, SFpark meters may charge different rates based on the time of day in which a car is parked. To facilitate this demand responsive time-of-day pricing, the meter operational hours will be split into distinct rate periods throughout the day.

Most meters in the City operate on a 9am to 6pm schedule. Those meters will be split into the following rate periods:

9am-Noon
Noon-3pm
3pm-6pm

Meters operating on a 7am to 6pm schedule will be split into the following rate periods:

7am-Noon
Noon-3pm
3pm-6pm

Meters in Fisherman's Wharf operate every day from 7am to 7pm. For those meters, the rate periods will be:

7am-Noon
Noon-3pm
3pm-7pm

Meters in the areas of the City overseen by the Port of San Francisco (generally along the Embarcadero), operate every day from 7am to 11pm. For Port meters, the rate periods will be:

7am-7pm
7pm-11pm



These rate periods are as consistent as possible across meters, which increases ease of use for drivers when using meters in different parts of the City. Because SFpark meters will charge different hourly rates at different times of day, if a driver arrives at a meter during one time frame but leaves during another, he must pay the correct hourly rates for each time frame in which he parks. Thus, a driver who arrives at a meter at 11am and wishes to park until 1pm must pay for one hour at the 9am-Noon rate, and one hour at Noon-3pm rate.

2. Weekend rates will differ

Because weekend parking trends differ significantly from weekday parking trends, demand-responsive rate adjustments will separate weekdays from weekends. This will help ensure that parking is available in metered parking spaces.

3. Rates will respond to demand over time

Rates for parking meters will change gradually and periodically based on demand. Changes to the rates will be made no more often than once per month. When prices are updated, the update will be made on or near the first day of the month. At the outset of the SFpark program, rates at meters will respond to demand as shown by occupancy in the previous month. As SFpark continues to collect occupancy data from the parking sensors, however, SFpark staff will consider including occupancy data from earlier months and years to assist in making pricing determinations and, if necessary, possible adjustments to analysis of occupancy to correct for concentrated use of disabled parking placards on particular blocks.

In order to achieve the goal of at least one available parking space per block, meter rates will be adjusted with the goal of maintaining no more than 80% occupancy on any given block. Rates will be adjusted using the following formula:

- When occupancy is 80-100 percent, the hourly rate will be raised by \$0.25.
- When occupancy is 60-80 percent, the hourly rate will not be changed.
- When occupancy is 30-60 percent, the hourly rate will be lowered by \$0.25.
- When occupancy is less than 30 percent, the hourly rate will be lowered by \$0.50.

In accordance with the SFpark enabling legislation approved by the SFMTA Board of Directors in November 2008, the SFMTA will notify the public of price changes no less than seven calendar days before the change in prices via the SFMTA and SFpark websites.



4. Rates will be adjusted on a block-by-block basis

Price changes made to meters will be made on a per-block basis. Larger areas were considered but blocks were chosen to allow parking rates to respond to rapidly changing parking demand patterns that sometimes shift block to block in San Francisco. Pricing changes on a block-by-block basis is also expected to more effectively help to redistribute parking demand within a neighborhood to better achieve availability targets and therefore the larger parking management goals of SFpark.

5. Special event pricing

The SFMTA Board resolution that enabled the SFpark program designated three “special event areas,” or areas that tend to host large, well-publicized events that generate a significant, short-term demand for parking. Special events include baseball games, concerts, conventions, major parades and street festivals, entertainment/cultural shows, exhibitions, and other similar events.

The SFpark special event areas for on-street parking are:

- South Embarcadero
- Civic Center
- Fillmore

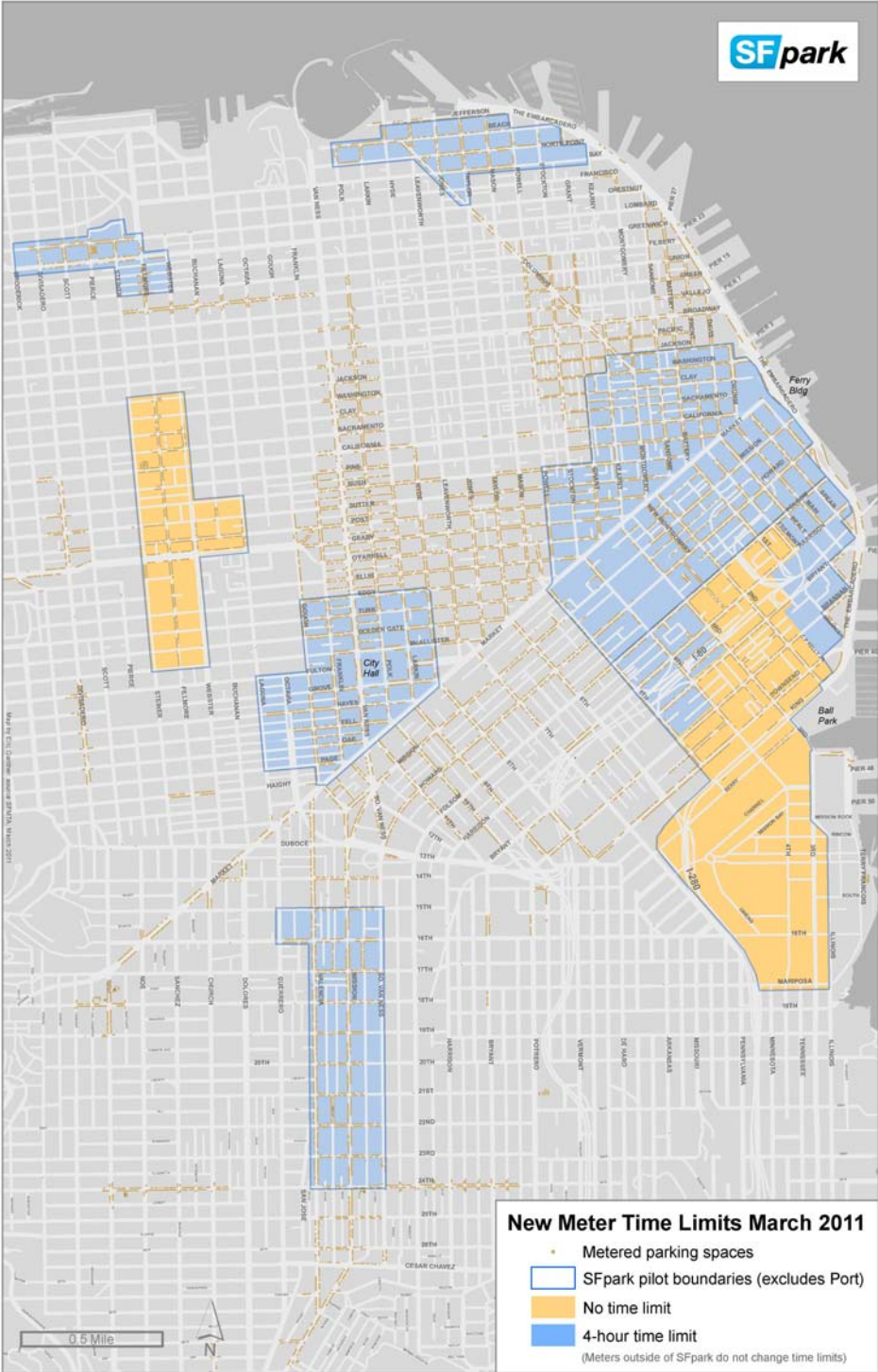
In these special event areas, meter rates could range from \$0.25 to \$18.00 per hour. SFpark staff will determine rates for particular events based on the parking demand the event is expected to generate, including surveys of rates at nearby private off-street parking facilities.

Changes to meter time limits

Currently, meters in SFpark pilot areas limit parking to durations between 30 minutes and two hours. The allowed length of stay at meters is unpredictable; the short time limits are difficult and expensive to enforce, and often force people to cut their trips short or risk receiving a parking ticket. To address these problems, the SFpark program will lengthen time limits in the pilot areas to four hours in most places, and eliminate time limits altogether in the Fillmore and parts of the South Embarcadero.



The map below shows where the new SFpark time limits will apply:





Motorcycle meter rate adjustments

The SFMTA will also implement demand-responsive pricing for metered motorcycle parking in order to achieve occupancy targets. Motorcycle rate adjustments involve manual surveys rather than in-ground sensor data and thus will occur less frequently (approximately four times per year). The same occupancy thresholds used for regular metered spaces apply to motorcycle spaces. Details are contained in an attachment to this document.