

Downtown Ukiah Parking Improvements

Nov. 2018

New meters coming to Ukiah

What does this mean for you?

By now, you've likely heard that parking meters will be installed downtown...and you may have mixed feelings about it. What does this mean for your customers? Your employees? You?

Yes—meters are coming. But so is lots of FREE, unrestricted parking! So please...hear us out.

The improved parking plan includes:

- Smart parking meters in the downtown core—they can take coins, credit cards, and work with a smartphone app that can even send you notifications and allow you to add time when your meter is about to expire!
- Lot of free, unrestricted parking in Lots C (near the Library) and D (near S. School and Henry), plus on-street outside the metered area.
- A limited number of permitted spaces in Parking Lot A (near the old Post Office) and B (at Stephenson and Oak)

Think about going to a Giants baseball game or a theater. You'd expect to pay more for the better seats, right? Parking is no different.

There are over 1,000 public parking spaces downtown—more than enough to serve everyone. We don't need a parking garage. We just need to use the spaces more efficiently, and that's what the new plan does.

Full implementation of the improved parking plan is scheduled for the summer of 2019.

To ensure that you receive all of the updates, please send an email to sriley@cityofukiah.com.



Let's make our downtown beautiful!

Revenue from the Parking District STAYS in the Parking District

You'll see positive impacts immediately. Revenue from the meters will be used for projects like:

- Fixing up the planters and the tree lighting
- Maintenance and repaving of the parking lots
- Replacing the garbage/recycling containers
- Re-funding the Façade Improvement Program, which provides matching **grants** for awnings, new paint, and other types of façade improvements



City of Ukiah

We understand you have concerns...

Frequently asked questions

I shouldn't have to pay a meter just to pick up a to-go order or drop off a prescription!

We agree. The new meters will be programmed to be free (or one cent, depending on the type of meters purchased) for the first 15 minutes. This allows for those quick trips while still providing the option to stay longer.

It's not fair to punish employees of the downtown by making them pay for parking.

We agree. But it's *also* not fair for employees of the downtown to monopolize the parking that is intended for the customers. Therefore, there will be plenty of free, unrestricted parking in public lots and outside the metered area for employees and anyone else who doesn't want to pay a meter.

I'm afraid my customers won't pay for parking and will shop elsewhere!

With any change, there will be a learning curve, and you can help with that. Remember--you also have potential customers who don't shop at your store because they "can never find a place to park downtown." The improved system will ensure that there is convenient parking close to their destination—customers want convenience. You have also likely missed customers who *would* have shopped at your store, but they had already had lunch and they were afraid they would get a ticket if they stayed longer. The new plan puts the customers in charge of how long they can stay—up to three hours in the downtown core or as long as they want if they park just a couple of blocks away!

Where can I get more information?

The City of Ukiah maintains a dedicated section on its website for Projects and News. Go to www.cityofukiah.com/projects and select "Downtown Parking." Here, you'll find a summary of each of the public workshops that were held, the entire parking study that was done in 2008, and more.

Also, please notify Shannon Riley, Deputy City Manager, if you would like to be included in email updates: sriley@cityofukiah.com.



Compare: distance to free parking

- Parking Lot C to Boutique 120: 600 ft
- Parking Lot D to Savings Bank: 578 ft
- Pine St. to Mendocino Book Co: 668 ft
- Walmart – parking lot to inside store: 600 ft
- Home Depot – parking lot to inside store: 670 ft

What's wrong with our current system?

A picture's worth a thousand words...

Lot A (near the old Post Office) – peak parking time

This lot is comprised of mostly permitted spaces, with a handful of 10-hour meters. The permits are completely sold out, with a waiting list...yet the lot is only about half full.

These two-hour spaces go largely unused. Customers “cruise” for closer spaces; also, they’re considered too far away for the people who shuffle their cars repeatedly during their work day. Plus, they still don’t provide enough time for people who want to shop AND dine.



Note all the empty spaces. Where are those cars? Most of them are in the 90-minute spaces...because those spaces are free and more convenient. That means that those people are taking up TWO spaces, neither of which can be used by a customer.

These are the highly-coveted five-hour spaces. They tend to be used by employees of the downtown who can't get or don't want to pay for a permit. Here, they only have to move their car once per day. These spaces fill up early in the morning and are not typically available for customers who might want to park longer than 90 minutes.

How did we get here?

...and haven't we been here before?

Yes, there *have* been parking meters in the downtown before. In fact, in many areas, the poles are still there! Most of them were removed decades ago in response to the fear that the “big box” stores coming to town would destroy the downtown.

The truth is that historic downtowns—and retail in general—are cyclical in nature and must continue to evolve with the changing times in order to remain relevant. Future development opportunities and e-commerce are just two of the factors that impact downtown businesses today...and yet, Ukiah's downtown is still strong.

Parking is a critical part of a downtown's success, and must meet the needs of the customers *and* the employees. Ours currently does neither.

In a 1992 study, the following problems were

identified with downtown parking: the inefficient utilization of parking resources, the public's perception that there is a lack of parking, and the tendency of downtown employees to fill the downtown parking spaces. Those things were true before 1992 and they are still true today. The proposed plan addresses all of those issues, including the need to provide plenty of free parking for employees and visitors of the downtown.

Parking meters have come a long way since they were first installed in Ukiah in the 1970's. The new meters are fully programmable and can accept multiple types of payments—including through an app on a smart phone. In short, they are an integral part of the parking solution that gives Ukiah's downtown the flexibility to evolve with the changing times.



Stuck in time

- The cost of a parking permit in Ukiah has been the same for over 15 years
- The existing meters only take coins, and the cost to park for an hour is as low as eight cents!

These prices obviously haven't kept up with the times, and one of the results of that is a significant amount of deferred maintenance in the Parking District. The new system is designed to generate appropriate revenue to make the necessary improvements in our downtown.

Other important features of the improved plan:

- Because the available parking meets the needs of the various users, people are less likely to get parking tickets
- There will still be no enforcement on weekends or evenings
- Additional electric vehicle chargers are being installed
- Dedicated, van-accessible handicap parking



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