



# Morro Bay Parking Study

The City partnered with Walker Consultants to conduct a comprehensive parking study of the City's Embarcadero and Downtown. The purpose of this study is to understand existing parking needs, how parking is currently being used, and how to best plan for parking needs in the future. The study presents an analysis of existing parking conditions and recommendations for parking management strategies. The study evaluated both summer and off-season periods.

## CURRENT PARKING CONDITIONS

**1.** There are 1,136 parking spaces on the Embarcadero, 457 in Downtown, and 384 at Morro Rock

**2.** During peak parking occupancy parking spaces are used as follows:

### Summer - Lunchtime

#### Weekday

Embarcadero - 67% of spaces utilized  
Downtown - 47% of spaces utilized  
Morro Rock - 54% of spaces utilized

#### Weekend

Embarcadero - 86% of spaces utilized  
Downtown - 72% of spaces utilized  
Morro Rock - 89% of spaces utilized

### November (Off-Season) - Lunchtime

#### Weekday

Embarcadero - 42% of spaces utilized  
Downtown - 38% of spaces utilized  
Morro Rock - 25% of spaces utilized

#### Weekend

Embarcadero - 67% of spaces utilized  
Downtown - 52% of spaces utilized  
Morro Rock - 67% of spaces utilized

### 3. How long do people park?

Majority parked for 1-2 hours. About 50 vehicles were parked for 3+ hours during the peak - if 50% of these cars represent owners or employees of businesses that could park elsewhere, 25 spaces could have parked customers. With a turnover of ~2 hours, this could mean a capacity of 75 to 100 or more customer cars which could = 150+ customers

## KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Summer was significantly busier than the off-season
- ▶ Lunchtime was the busiest period - restaurants & coastal access key drivers
- ▶ Embarcadero parking demand was much higher than Downtown
- ▶ Busiest areas of Embarcadero - between Beach St & Marina St & lots north of Beach
- ▶ Most people parked for 1-2 hours, but a sizeable number of vehicles parked long-term, likely employees and recreational fishermen/women
- ▶ Morro Rock parking demand was significantly higher during the summer





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Based on the existing conditions analysis, Walker in partnership with the City, developed a series of recommendations to help plan and manage parking both now and into the future.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### EMBARCADERO

1. Parking time limits (e.g. 3-hrs, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.)
2. Paid parking
  - Begin with pilot program in core areas & then expand
  - Pricing may be dynamic - based on time of day, time of year, area, etc.
  - Option to have longer or no time limits & allow people to pay for more time instead

3. Enforcement
  - Adopt a Parking Ambassador model of enforcement that is hospitality & customer-service driven

4. Improved pedestrian access
  - Morro Bay is incredibly scenic & walkable
  - Consider removing some on-street spaces on the Embarcadero to create wider sidewalks & devote more space to pedestrian access

5. Maintain a free parking area
  - If paid parking is implemented, maintain a free parking area in the unpaved lot south of the Stacks
  - This would increase utilization of an underutilized lot & provide a free parking option to those who don't mind the longer walk to the core of the Embarcadero

### MORRO ROCK

6. Paid parking at Morro Rock
  - Fee to park at Morro Rock
    - ~ May be based on time of day, year, etc.
  - Fees may go toward lot improvements, maintenance, amenities (e.g., bathrooms, bike & walking trails)
  - Roadway maintenance in/out of the Morro Rock area
    - ~ Area experiences heavy traffic during peak times

### DOWNTOWN

- Maintain existing 2-hr time limits
- Actively enforce 2-hr limit should utilization of the Embarcadero increase & significant spillover occurs

## BENEFITS OF PARKING MANAGEMENT & REGULATIONS

- ▶ More frequent turnover of prime parking spaces
- ▶ Increased access to parking
- ▶ Parking is easier to find for visitors (less time circling & searching for space)
- ▶ Increased coastal access
- ▶ Bring more visitors to shop, dine, & recreate in Morro Bay