



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of February 21, 2026

DATE: January 20, 2026

SUBJECT: Ordinance to amend, reenact, and recodify Chapter 14.2 (Motor Vehicles and Traffic), (a) Article I (Motor Vehicle Code), Division 1 (Generally), Section 14.2-7.1 (Fines for Nonmoving Violations) and Division 2 (Regulation of Traffic), Subdivision D (Parking Meter Zones), Sections 14.2-44 (Parking Time Limits; When Parking Meters Operate) and 14.2-44.1 (Temporary Parking Meter Regulations for the Performance Parking Pilot Project in Certain Commercial Corridors) and (b) Article IX (Car-Sharing), Sections 14.2-109 (Free-Floating Car-share Program) and 14.2-110 (Reserved-Space Car-share Program) of the Arlington County Code to permanently establish the County’s performance parking program.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt an ordinance (Attachment A) with an effective date of March 1, 2026, to amend, reenact, and recodify Chapter 14.2 (Motor Vehicles and Traffic), (a) Article I (Motor Vehicle Code), Division 1 (Generally), Section 14.2-7.1 (Fines for Nonmoving Violations) and Division 2 (Regulation of Traffic), Subdivision D (Parking Meter Zones), Sections 14.2-44 (Parking Time Limits; When Parking Meters Operate) and 14.2-44.1 (Temporary Parking Meter Regulations for the Performance Parking Pilot Project in Certain Commercial Corridors) and (b) Article IX (Car-Sharing), Sections 14.2-109 (Free-Floating Car-share Program) and 14.2-110 (Reserved-Space Car-share Program) of the Arlington County Code to permanently establish the County’s performance parking program.

ISSUES: Staff has received feedback both for and against this management method. Therefore, both perspectives may be heard as part of the public process.

SUMMARY: The County Board may regulate the public right-of-way in the public interest to provide a range of transportation options to the community. Pursuant to guidance approved by the County Board in the Master Transportation Plan Parking and Curbspace Element, a fully VDOT-funded pilot program was initiated in February 2023. This pilot created new real-time occupancy data to inform metered-space management decisions and provides real-time occupancy and price information to travelers. In February 2024, the County Board authorized staff to use occupancy data from the approximately 4,500 sensors installed in parking spaces in Arlington’s two Metrorail corridors to strive to better match price to demand on the curb and learn how price could impact parking decisions and parking management. A total of six quarterly

County Manager: *MJS / Mic*

County Attorney: *RES* *Dominic Anthony*

Staff: Melissa McMahon, DES, TEO; Marietta Gelfort, DES TEO

administrative changes to metered parking rates attempted to achieve the project's established goals and those of the MTP's Parking and Curbspace Element.

The pilot successfully revealed diverse needs of parkers, the depth of challenge with compliance with curb regulations, and the potential untapped value of the curb. Price is one (but not the only, nor the most) important value for people parking. However, making parkers more aware of price options and more inclined to pay when they park may shift demand to ample, available, underused, nearby blocks.

This ordinance change authorizes the County Manager to continue performance-based management of metered parking spaces in the Performance Parking Area. The County uses prices and information from this program to improve parking options and choices. Continuing the program provides the extended time needed to raise awareness of rates and improve information tools. The program aims to offer decision-support to drivers to help them easily find the cheapest parking space or the closest spot based on their needs.

BACKGROUND: Background and detailed discussion on the project were provided in the [board report](#) for the request to advertise these ordinance changes.

DISCUSSION: It would have been impossible to learn all that we have over the past year and half without installing parking sensors, implementing performance-based meter rate changes, observing the subsequent parking activity, and receiving feedback from the community about this experience. This performance-based meter rate ordinance helps us manage the curb by acknowledging that:

- In some places and times of day, demand for metered curb space far outstrips supply.
- There is ample space available for parking during high demand hours just a few blocks away from popular destinations.
- Occupancy data can inform not just increases and decreases in price, but also how long a time limit should be or even whether spaces should be reallocated to another kind of use.
- Responsible adjustments are needed as enforcement, technology, and public awareness of the price shifts demand and reduces the highest peaks of activity to more manageable levels.
- There are other transportation options in our commercial areas with metered parking, including buses, Metrorail, biking, and even walking. These other options may help some visitors access their destinations without using a car. A performance-based price approach can help influence the choices people make across all these transportation resources.

The proposed ordinance maintains all the same functionality we have been using for the past 1.5 years during the pilot. The proposed ordinance only differs from the current, temporary

ordinance by removing reference to a sunset date. The proposal is that meter rates in this area should be set based on curb management performance principles going forward.

Attachment A contains the proposed ordinance language. Amended language is shown as underlined or ~~struck~~. For clarity: all revisions to the County Code pursuant to this item that are not in Chapter 14.2, Article I, Division 2 are made to update references to 14.2-44 that also need to reference 14.2-44.1.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Level of Engagement: Communicate, Consult, and Involve

The public engagement and outreach for this project to-date has employed the Communicate, Consult, and Involve levels of engagement in the Six-Step Public Engagement Guide for Capital Projects at different points throughout the two-year pilot project.

Unlike many projects where the only way to get community input is through an engagement form or a special event, this project is somewhat unique in that every person parking in the pilot corridors was providing input with their actions whether they realized it or not: by deciding where to park and when, and whether or not to pay the price at the meter. Based on over 14.5 million parking sessions, we have “demonstrated preference” insights into what parkers value:

1. People want to park here and are willing to pay the prices at the meter. “Convenient” and “close” parking are just as valuable as “cheap” parking to the people who use our metered spaces, based on where they park and what they pay.
2. There is latent demand or price inelasticity in the busiest locations and times. There may be even more people who need to park in these areas. For some people and at some times and circumstances, being close is the most important thing.
3. Not everyone pays to park when they should be paying (on average only about 40% of drivers), but willingness to pay is not related to the price at the meter. Based on sessions and transactions, failure to pay may be related one’s estimation of getting caught, but overall compliance varies across meter rates.

To complement this foundational dataset of demonstrated parking preferences, the project team undertook extensive outreach and engagement throughout the pilot, as detailed below. The key strategy with early engagement focused on businesses adjacent to metered areas. An emphasis throughout the pilot has been to target communication tools when and where staff could reach people who are actively using the metered parking.

Key Insights:

- Early engagement revealed: curiosity and openness to making parking better; people seeking clarity about what the pilot would and would not change; community perception that there are many curb uses competing with parking and a desire for remaining parking areas to be more efficient; the hope to reduce safety issues such as double parking in bike

lanes; an interest in what the data would say and a hope that the project would share learnings; and importance of building outreach to as wide a range of people as possible.

- Mid-project feedback during price changes highlighted: issues with the parking payment mobile application (ParkMobile, not a part of the pilot project); awareness of higher price areas growing in the later price change phases; a continued lack of knowledge about the lower-price options and trip planning tools to find them; interest in better tailoring time limits to the activities adjacent to the curb area (*i.e.*, willingness to pay more for more time if they could have it); and general evidence of the difficulty in building awareness of or interest in the project despite corridor-wide static signage at meters, social media outreach, a direct mailer, and the prices themselves changing.
- By pilot conclusion:
 - People would prefer to not have to plan ahead for parking. By the end of the pilot there was clearly increased awareness of higher prices (and not liking them or thinking they are not fair) and increased awareness of the digital signs and online planning tools. However, there was only scattered interest in using trip planning tools to avoid higher prices or making parking easier (less interest from feedback form respondents and more interest from people encountered at events).
 - In an ideal world, people want parking to be easy, cheap, and close. However, our commercial corridors are in high demand and the relative importance of these things varies depending on driver age, habits, physical abilities, the weather, and the purpose of a particular trip. When staff offered examples of trade-offs, community members reflected on their relative preferences and expressed greater interest in the trip planning tools we offer. Mentioned tradeoffs included, for example, free parking in front of a favorite restaurant likely means everyone wants it, and the space will not be available when you need it (cheap, close, but not easy) or cheap parking a few blocks away requires more walking, but the space is likely to be available when you get there (cheap, easy, but not close).
 - When asked to rank key parking priorities, 1,186 respondents participated in the exercise across several mediums. The result was remarkably uniform with a third selecting “close” as their top priority, a third selecting “easy to find” as their top priority, and a third selecting “cheap” as their top priority. Functionally it tells us, curb management should ensure parkers have ways to combine these options depending on their needs.
 - Interest in more parking enforcement unabated. Despite the high share of parkers who don’t pay for parking, respondents who engaged with us throughout the project want to see more enforcement of metered parking to make payment patterns fairer, reduce double parking, and make the curb work better.

The outreach program extended over 2.5 years with clear phases of effort for the kickoff and infrastructure installation phase (first year), the price change phase (the second 1.5 years), and

culminating with a pilot conclusion phase this fall and winter. All methods are summarized in greater detail below.

Outreach Methods in Detail:

Webpage, Virtual Public Meeting, and Initial Feedback Form at Kickoff. The project kicked-off initial public engagement by launching a webpage and hosting a virtual community meeting on February 23, 2023. At this meeting, and on the webpage, we introduced the project team, shared the project goals, and covered the basics of the technology and tools that will be used to meet those goals.

The virtual meeting was also the kick-off for the first online feedback form used to gather community input. This form was open during the hardware installation process, from February 24, 2023, through July 31, 2023. The form was designed to gather input to help staff prioritize among the project goals and understand which goals resonate most with community members today. 135 people responded during this period.

At this initial stage, most responses came from people who live or work in the project corridors, people who drive, walk, and take transit in the corridors, and people who visit the area at least weekly by car. When asked how important various factors are in determining how they would travel in the area, between 40-50% of all responses listed travel time, ease of finding parking, cost of parking, and personal comfort and safety as “very important” factors. When asked to rank project goals in order of their importance, the top three goals were:

- Spending less time looking for metered parking.
- Being more confident that they will find metered parking in the first place they look.
- Wanting metered parking to be easier to find where it is difficult to find today.

Throughout the course of the pilot, the [Performance Parking Pilot project webpage](#) has been a repository for price change updates, links to digital parking planning tools, photos, feedback form access, recorded presentations, and more. To date, the webpage has had more than 86,000 views, with most traffic arriving from Happy or Not intercepts, newsletters sent through GovDelivery, and social media platforms. QR codes on meter decals, handouts, signage, and more resulted in over 17,000 of those click-throughs to the project page.

Door-to-Door Outreach and Meter Decals during sensor installation and first two price changes. Activities included: (a) door-to-door outreach in the designated commercial corridors reaching over 260 businesses and large apartment buildings, (b) project decals installed on all multimeters in the project area, and project signs on all single-space meters. All printed materials contained a QR code with a link to the project webpage. The initial door-to-door outreach created an email contact list of over 150 businesses that then received direct notifications and project updates in advance of each price change. With execution of the first two price changes, additional door-to-door business outreach was conducted in areas where meter rates were going up, to raise awareness and provide information about parking options.

Price Change Packets Distribution. Each quarter during price changes, the project team published a price change summary packet at least one week before price changes took effect, which was posted on the project page and distributed via email to stakeholder groups including BIDs, civic

associations in the project corridors, and the email list of businesses developed during door-to-door outreach.

Pop-Up Events. The project team conducted 14 pop-up events over the course of the pilot, targeting areas in the project corridors where people would gather and providing opportunities to share project details and to listen to feedback about the public experience using the curb.

Ballston Farmers Market	6/22/2023
Rosslyn Farmers Market	6/28/2023
Jazz @ MET NLBID	6/29/2023
Courthouse Farmers Market	7/8/2024
Clarendon Day	9/28/2024
Clarendon Music by the Metro	5/15/2025
Arlington Palooza at Lubber Run	5/17/2025
Arlington County Fair	8/13 – 8/17/2025
Rosslyn Jazz Fest	9/6/2025
Clarendon Day #2	9/27/2025
Parking Day Tabling, all day in four neighborhoods (Ballston, Courthouse, Rosslyn, and Crystal City)	10/2/2025

Small Group Conversations with Retail Workers. In July 2024, staff coordinated with the Rosslyn and National Landing BIDs to host two small group conversations targeted to retail workers to get their insights on the project and its potential impacts on them. Despite promotion through the BIDs and through the project business email list, the event only generated participation from a few employees. Nonetheless, participating employees expressed appreciation for the chance to engage.

DPR 55+ Program “Performance Parking 101” Sessions. The project team conducted project introductions and demonstrations of project technology tools for participants in the Department of Parks and Recreation’s “55+ Program,” first on September 9, 2024 at Lubber Run Community Center and then again with a series of three sessions throughout September 2025 at Arlington Mill Community Center, Lubber Run Community Center, and Langston-Brown Community Center. In all, these sessions reached over 30 community members.

Code the Curb: A Parking Data Hack Showcase. The County partnered with Northeastern University in Arlington to host a special event on November 16, 2024, where participants used their skills and creativity to show what could be done with the project open data feed (API) to a relevant peer and professional audience. The question staff posed: How would you use data to make the parking experience better at metered parking spaces?

The Performance Parking Pilot project has several data tools available that prove how visualization and data can improve the parking experience (ParkMobile's “Availability” layer; eXactnav app; CurbIQ website). However, the project team wanted to know what else data scientists and enthusiasts could do with data to make parking better for drivers and other road users in Arlington--and how else this data could be used or displayed to achieve the pilot

project's goals. Nine students/hobbyists prepared projects for the event with close to 40 people in attendance. In addition to receiving constructive feedback on their work, participants and attendees had the opportunity to network and discuss their data tools and how these could make the user experience better for people parking or for other road users where parking is located.

[Open House and Author Talk](#). On September 9, 2025, the programming team at Arlington Public Library and the DES Performance Parking Pilot project team co-hosted an Author Talk at Central Library. For the event, DES interviewed Henry Grabar, a journalist and author of “Paved Paradise: How Parking Explains the World” (2022). 115 people were in attendance, which included an open house public meeting to kick off a month of engagement for the project. The event was livestreamed by Arlington Video Group for 50 people and is available on the County’s [YouTube channel](#).

[Curb Intercepts](#). The project team conducted intercepts of parkers along some of our busiest curbs throughout the month of September, totaling over 3,600 interactions, and of those 371 in Spanish. 331 people took our poll about parking priorities, and over 2,600 flyers about the project were distributed.

Pentagon City	9/9/2025	11am-2pm	Metropolitan Park
Crystal City	9/10/2025	11am-2pm	National Landing Water Park
Clarendon (West)	9/11/2025	4pm-8pm	Clarendon Metro / Trader Joes
Clarendon (South)	9/12/2025	4pm-8pm	Clarendon Metro / Trader Joes
Courthouse (East)	9/13/2025	9am-12pm	Courthouse Farmers Market
Ashton Heights	9/16/2025	11am-2pm	Mosaic Park
Rosslyn	9/17/2025	11am-2pm	Rosslyn Metro
Ballston (South)	9/19/2025	11am-2pm	Outside Ballston Quarter
Pentagon City	9/20/2025	10am-2pm	Metropolitan Park
Courthouse (West)	9/23/2025	11am-2pm	Clarendon Blvd & N Adams
Clarendon (East)	9/24/2025	11am-2pm	Retail Shopping Area
Ballston (North)	9/26/2025	3pm-7pm	Ballston Metro Area
Ashton Heights	9/27/2025	10am-2pm	Mosaic Park

[Direct Mailer](#)¹. The project team sent 11,366 direct mailers in English and Spanish to nearby Equity Emphasis Areas adjacent to the pilot project area, to increase awareness of the pricing and decision support tools.

¹¹ *This initiative was unintentionally omitted from the engagement summary in the RTA Board Report and have been added here for completeness.*

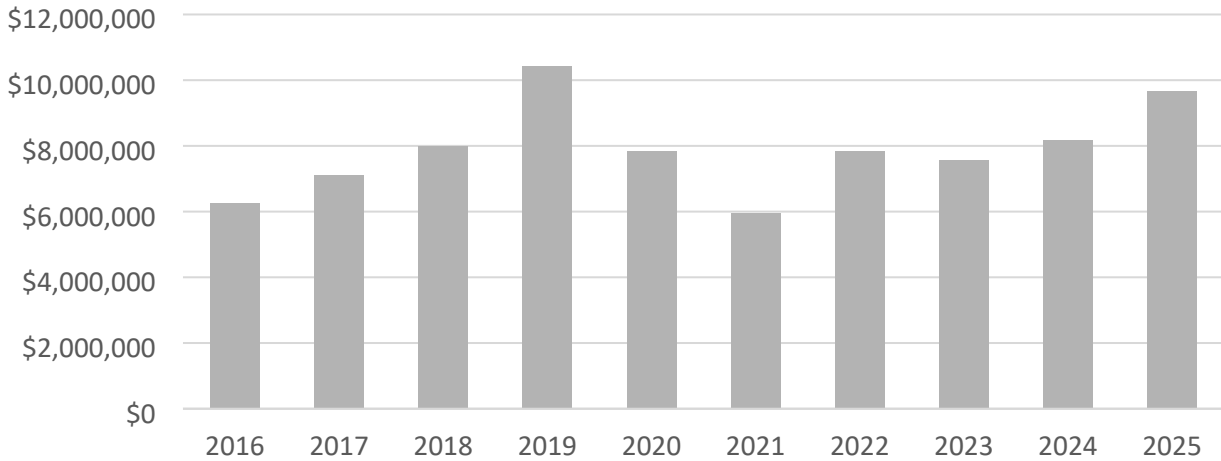
Presentations to Commissions and Stakeholder Organizations. In addition to the above engagements, staff presented 40 times throughout the pilot period to established stakeholder groups with a potential direct interest in the management of metered parking spaces, as follows:

Transportation Commission Meeting #1	2/2/2023
Rosslyn BID Staff Intro Call	2/6/2023
Chamber Staff Introduction Call	2/7/2023
Latino Economic Development Center Call	2/7/2023
Arlington Community Federal Credit Union Call	2/8/2023
Disability Advisory Commission Meeting #1	2/21/2023
Ballston BID Meeting	2/22/2023
NLBID Roundtable Featured Project	3/22/2023
CC/PC Transportation Open House	3/27/2023
Planning Commission Meeting #1	4/10/2023
Information Technology Advisory Commission Meeting #1	5/24/2023
Chamber Government Affairs Subcommittee Meeting #1	6/21/2023
NLBID Transportation Subcommittee Meeting #1	10/12/2023
Information Technology Advisory Committee Meeting #2	10/25/2023
Transportation Commission Meeting #2	10/26/2023
Planning Commission Meeting #2	10/30/2023
Rosslyn BID Staff Meeting #2	11/3/2023
Disability Advisory Commission Meeting #2	11/21/2023
Ballston BID Meeting #2	11/29/2023
Transportation Commission Meeting #3	2/8/2024
Ballston BID Property Manager's Luncheon Presentation #1	2/14/2024
Chamber Government Affairs Subcommittee Meeting #2	2/21/2024
NLBID 23rd St Subcommittee Meeting	2/22/2024
Clarendon Alliance Exec Director Introduction Call	4/10/2024
Commission on Aging Meeting #1	6/17/2024
Ballston Property Manager's Luncheon Presentation #2	8/21/2024
Disability Advisory Commission Meeting #3	2/17/2025
Chamber Government Affairs Subcommittee Meeting #3	2/19/2025
Transportation Commission Meeting #4	3/13/2025
Information Technology Advisory Committee Meeting #3	3/26/2025
Commission on Aging Meeting #2	4/21/2025
Ballston BID Property Manager's Luncheon Presentation #3	4/24/2025
Commission on Aging Meeting #3	10/20/2025
Disability Advisory Commission Meeting #4	10/20/2025
Transportation Commission Meeting #5 Discussion	10/30/2025
Information Technology Advisory Committee Meeting #4	11/19/2025
Transportation Commission Meeting #6 Endorsement to Advertise	11/20/2025

Open Houses. Open Houses on the pilot project have been held on December 6, 2023, February 7, 2024 (coinciding with the first ordinance board approval process) and then September 9, 2025 (coinciding with the kickoff of September engagement).

FISCAL IMPACT: Intentionally, there is no goal with this ordinance regarding revenue impact. This is because the code update is about nimbleness to enhance curb space performance from the community and customer perspective. However, we do have data regarding revenue before and during the pilot period (Figure 6). Project pricing activities occurred during fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

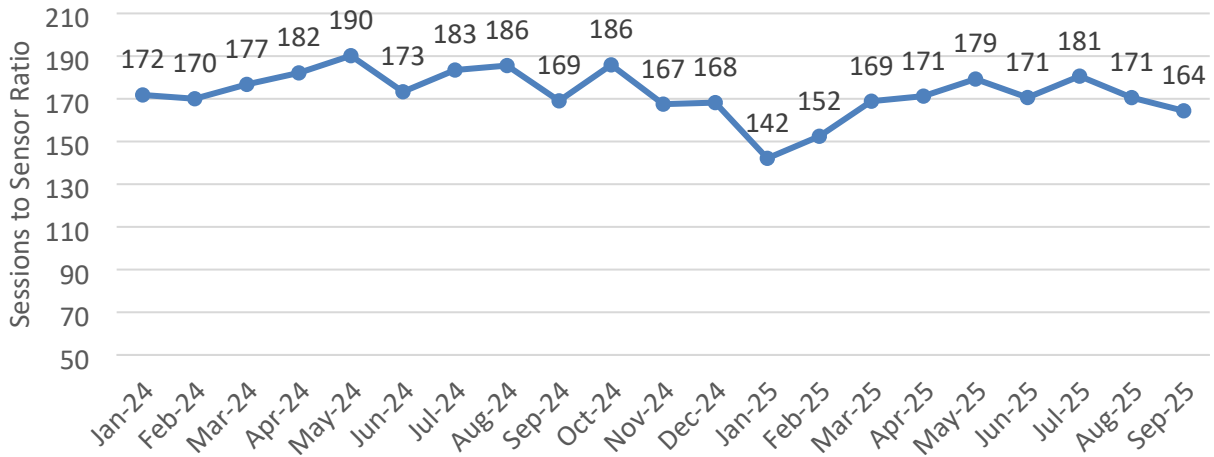
Figure 6: Value of Parking Meter Transactions in the Project Area, by Fiscal Year



Several factors can influence parking meter revenue over time. For example, if we look at parking meter revenue in 2020 and 2021 (Figure 6), there is a rather dramatic drop that seemed to relate to the COVID-19 period. Calendar year 2025’s ongoing federal workforce changes could have secondary effects on curb space demand, but they would be difficult measure. Based on session data during the project period, there is no clear evidence of a dramatic change in desire to travel to Arlington commercial corridors to do business, despite some areas and times having increased meter rates. There was a large dip during January/February appearing to be a result of a couple substantial snow events (Figure 7), but project or even wider market pressures are less visible.

² This meeting was unintentionally omitted from the engagement summary in the RTA Board Report and have been added here for completeness.

Figure 7: Parking Sessions per Sensor by Month, Regular Parking Spaces, All Metered Hours



Another factor that can influence parking meter revenue is overall metered space supply. The County has been slowly converting metered parking to other important curb uses, including unmetered short-term parking (5, 10, or 15 minutes), bike lanes, bus bays, scooter/bike corrals, parklets, loading/unloading areas, pedestrian crossing bulb-outs, etc. All of these changes chip away at direct revenue from parking meters in exchange for gaining other important community benefits. Partly mitigating those changes, the County adds parking meters to new street segments when those segments and their street furniture are delivered through major redevelopment projects. Figures 8 and 9 show changes in the number of metered spaces over time, as well as changes in average revenue per metered parking space.

Figure 8: Total Metered Parking Spaces in the County, by Year

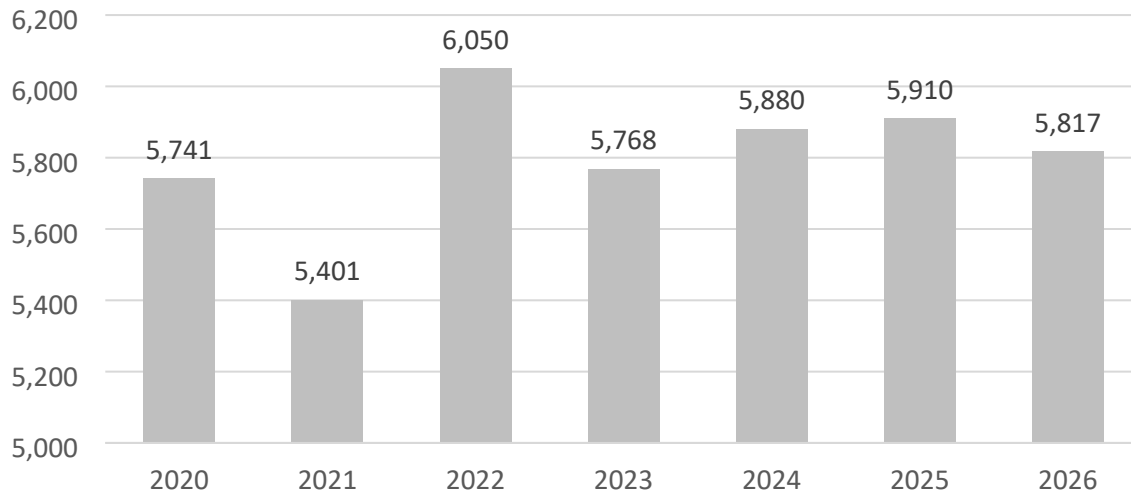
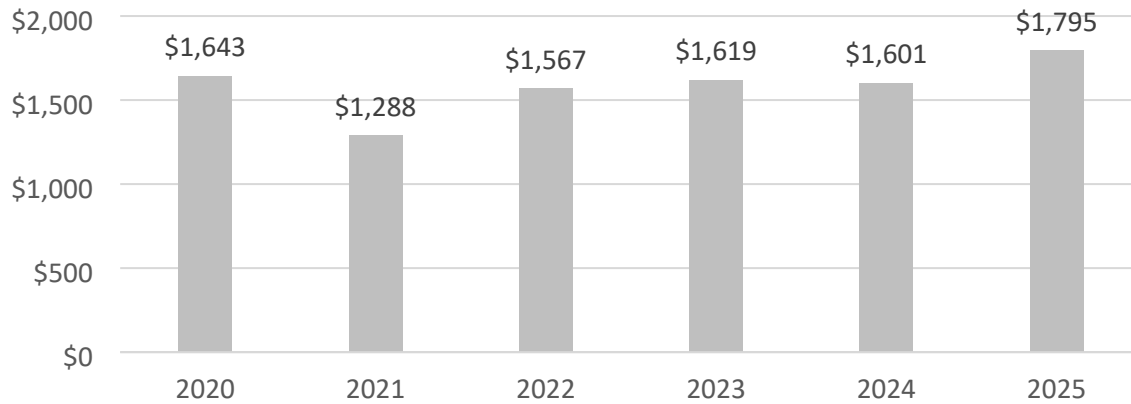


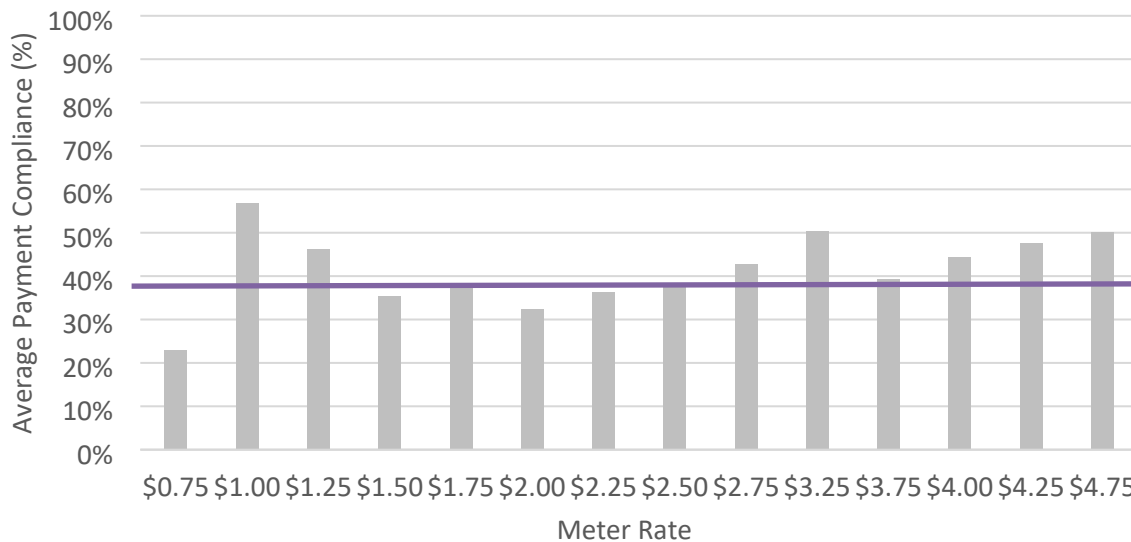
Figure 9: Average Revenue per Metered Space, by Fiscal Year



When we talk about uncertainty around revenue impacts, it is also because an increase in price does not necessarily mean an equal and opposite decrease in demand. This concept is called elasticity of demand. What we have seen in the pilot period is relative inelasticity of demand in some of the busiest areas. Lack of awareness of price options is one factor that may be contributing to people continuing to pay higher prices rather than shifting to nearby blocks. Other factors discussed in this report – latent demand, payment non-compliance – may also create uncertainty around the revenue impacts of performance-based management of the curb.

Early concerns that higher meter rates specifically would discourage meter payment appear to be unfounded. After 1.5 years of incremental price adjustments, meter payment compliance (payment transactions as a share of parking instances) in spaces with high rates (above \$2.50) is actually above the overall mean (Figure 10). Payment compliance may be more related to perceptions of visibility and enforcement activity than related to price.

Figure 10: Average Meter Payment Compliance by Meter Rate, PC6



If adopted, a permanent performance-based meter rate program would maintain the current meter rate structure and provide the possibility to modify it incrementally over location and time based

on parking performance data. In combination with improved enforcement, one could expect annual revenues, especially per metered space, to be steady even as parkers shift parking locations to use the spots at the best price point for them.

If the proposed code updates are not adopted and the performance-based program sunsets, rates across the project area will return to \$1.75/hr. for all 30-min, 1-hour, 2-hour, and 4-hour spaces (roughly 76% of the inventory and most of the spaces that would have seen rate increases), with rates for longer stay spaces going back to \$1.50. This could be expected to decrease our chances of shifting demand from the highest demand to lower demand blocks to improve performance and to result in a drop in annual revenue even in the presence of improved enforcement of meter payment.