



Parking Impact Study

PUBLIC FACILITIES BUILDINGS PROJECT CITY OF SAUSALITO

Prepared for:

Pacific Municipal Consultants

1440 Broadway, Suite 1008

Oakland, CA 94612

Attn: Janet Palma

Prepared by:

Abrams Associates

1660 Olympic Boulevard, Suite 210

Walnut Creek, CA 94596



Abrams Associates
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING, INC.

APRIL 2006

Parking Study of the **Proposed City of Sausalito** **Public Safety Facilities Buildings**

(Abrams Associates – April 2006)

Introduction

This report documents the results of a study conducted by Abrams Associates Traffic Engineering to evaluate the potential parking impacts of the planned Sausalito Public Safety Facilities Buildings. The base assumptions and methods are described in this report along with a summary of the findings from the parking surveys, which were conducted as part of the environmental documentation being prepared for the proposed project.

This report presents a description of the existing and planned baseline parking supply serving the project area, parking demand projections for the existing and future land uses contained in the area, and a parking impact analysis comparing the projected future demands to the parking supply. This information has also been compared to the results of the previous traffic study conducted for the project in June of 2001. In addition, a section has been included to provide a summary of potential options for increasing the parking supply and improving utilization of the existing spaces in the area.

Project Description

The proposed Public Safety Facilities Buildings would consist of two buildings on two separate parcels adjacent to the intersection of Johnson Street with Caledonia Street. The project would include a new 8,371 square foot Police Department Building that would replace the former 9,066 square foot facility. The new Fire Department Building is planned to be 11,703 square feet, which would replace the existing 9,027 square foot facility.

The proposed buildings would only include off-street parking spaces for fire trucks, parking for all other vehicles would be provided in designated on-street parking spaces and in nearby parking lots, as discussed later in this report. Based on our review of the project a net total of about 10 on-street parking spaces that are currently available to the public would become reserved spaces for police and fire department vehicles and visitors. However, up to five of these reserved parking spaces could potentially be made available to the public after 7:00 PM.

Existing (Baseline) Parking Conditions

The study area for this parking analysis is shown on Figure 1. To determine the impacts of the proposed project the study area was selected based on an average two-block radius from the project. Extensive surveys of pedestrian characteristics in central business districts indicate that

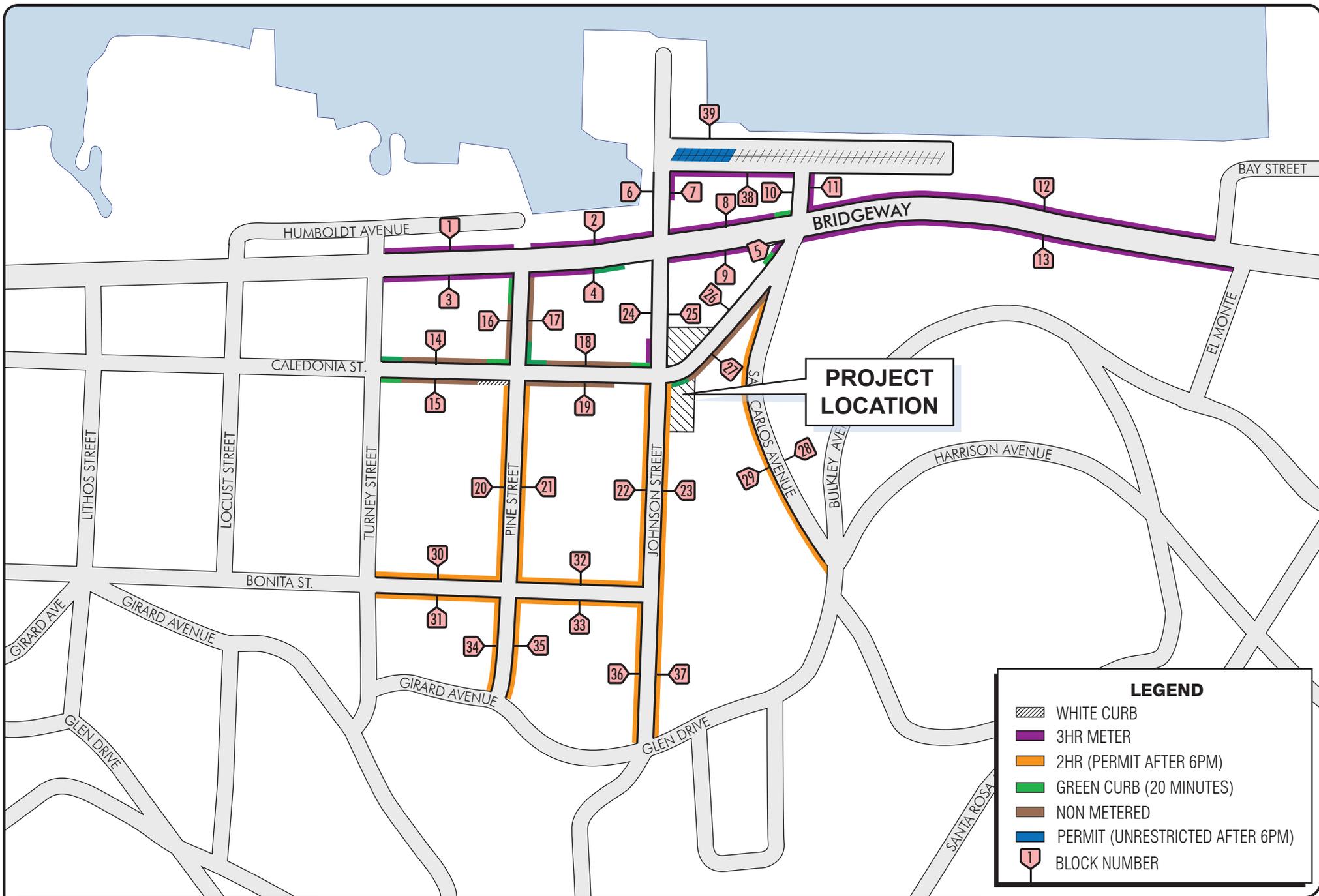


FIGURE 1 | PARKING SURVEY BLOCK NUMBERS
 PARKING SURVEY
Public Facilities Buildings Project
 City of Sausalito

75% of all pedestrian trips are no more than about two blocks in length.¹ Bridgeway was surveyed all the way down to Bay Street because it was observed that those metered parking spaces provided a good indicator of the parking conditions on that side of the study area. Figure 1 also presents the different parking restrictions within the study area and summarizes the block numbers used to identify street blocks in the data summary tables. Within an approximate two-block radius of the proposed project there are a total of 352 public parking spaces.

Figure 2 shows an inventory of the public parking in the area. As seen in this figure, the parking areas along Bridgeway are generally controlled by 3-hour meters while the parking in the commercial areas along Caledonia Street are not metered but are restricted to 2 hours maximum between 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM. As you head up the hill into the residential area from Caledonia Street, the same 2-hour maximum restriction is in place but, in addition, from 6:00 PM to 7:00 AM there is no parking allowed except for vehicles with the appropriate residential permits. During our surveys we observed that some patrons of the businesses in the area ignore this restriction in the evening. This was determined through additional monitoring of the area that included checking vehicles for parking permits and observations of pedestrians to verify that some people were indeed parking in the permit area and then heading straight down to enter one of the local businesses. However, it should be noted this did not appear to be causing any noticeable problems. While this could result in some residents not being able to park directly in front of their property, our surveys revealed that there were always available parking spaces less than a block away.

In addition to extensive field observations, about 15 detailed surveys of parking occupancy in the area were conducted on five different days. The surveys included both weekdays and weekend peak periods and a summary of the results are presented in Table 1.

The impacts on parking were shown to be very different depending on the day of the week and the time of day. All surveys were conducted during clear weather conditions. Based on the results we have separated the survey data into three general time periods: 1) normal conditions, 2) peak conditions, and 3) off-peak conditions. For the purposes of this study, normal parking conditions are considered to be weekdays from 9 am to 6 pm, peak parking conditions are considered to be most evenings from 6 pm to 10 pm and also weekends and holidays from 1 pm to 10 pm. Off-peak parking conditions are considered late night and all other time periods not included above.

Table 1
Summary of Parking Occupancy Studies

Time and Date of Survey	Time Period	No of Occupied Spaces	Percent Spaces Occupied
4:15 pm – Thursday (3/30/06)	Normal	179	51%
6:30 pm – Thursday (4/6/06)	Peak	191	54%
4:30 pm – Saturday (4/1/06)	Peak	206	59%
7:30 pm – Saturday (4/1/06)	Peak	233	66%
2:45 pm – Sunday (4/2/06)	Peak	255	72%
7:30 pm – Sunday (4/2/06)	Peak	234	66%

¹ Parking – Weant and Levinson, Eno Foundation for Transportation, Westport, CT, 1990.

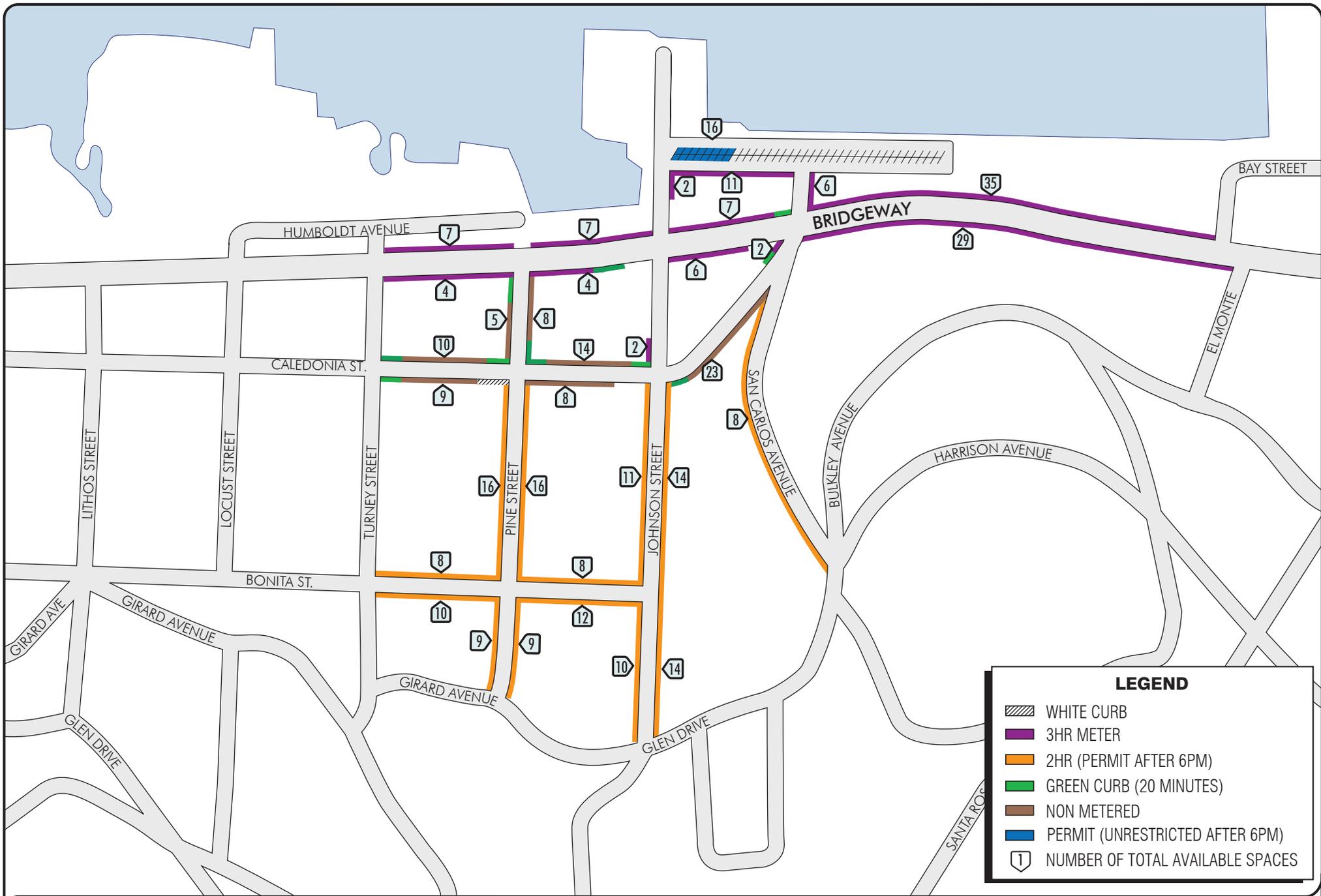


FIGURE 2 | INVENTORY OF PUBLIC PARKING IN THE PROJECT VICINITY
 PARKING SURVEY
Public Facilities Buildings Project
 City of Sausalito

As seen in Table 1, the overall on-street occupancy level was never more than about 70% of the supply during any of our surveys. Although certain blocks of Caledonia Street and Bridgeway were often close to 100% occupied during peak periods, there were always spaces available nearby. Figure 3 shows the parking occupancy in the area for the heaviest conditions during our surveys that were observed on a Sunday afternoon and Figure 4 shows the peak conditions recorded on a weekday afternoon.

In the vicinity of the proposed project some of the businesses have become very successful which has increased the demand for parking in the area, particularly in the evening and on weekends. The demand for parking in a downtown area like the Caledonia area is directly correlated to growth or decline in the availability of business, employment, shopping and dining opportunities. It is clear that some of the higher on-street occupancy levels in the evening are a sign of the success of businesses in the area.

Project Parking Demand

City Zoning Parking Requirements – The Sausalito Municipal Code provides no typical or standard off-street parking requirements for police stations or fire stations. In many cases there is a secured, enclosed area where these activities take place. Several parking guidelines suggest the need for one (1) parking space per 400 square feet for government buildings (or 2.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet), but this is an average overall parking rate. The parking demand for any individual public building project can actually vary from 1.5 to over 5 spaces per 1,000 sq ft. Relative to the experience of other cities, it would appear that Sausalito would be at the lower end of the scale, and would generate a parking demand of about 2.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet.

Applying this rate to the Sausalito projects would indicate a need for about 21 off-street spaces for the Police Facility, and 29 off-street spaces for the Fire Department. While these might be realistic estimates for government offices, they are not necessarily representative of the needs of a Police or Fire facility and should not be considered applicable to this project.

Extensive surveys of a public safety facility conducted in Santa Monica in 1999 indicated a peak parking demand of 0.63 spaces per employee.² This rate included both employee and visitor needs but did not include the parking spaces required for official vehicles. For this project it is assumed that there would be an average of 20 employees on-site for both departments at any one-time. The maximum number of employees on-site at any one time is not expected to be more than about 25. Using this information it is estimated the project should require about 17 off-street spaces to accommodate the employee and visitor parking needs. Currently two on-street spaces adjacent to the police station are planned to be designated as visitor spaces. This would indicate a need for about 14 additional employees parking spaces, which will be provided in Lot 4. It should be noted that the police department is planning to require all employees personal vehicles to be parked in Lot 4 at all times.

Estimated Parking Demand – The actual parking demand for the proposed project can be more accurately estimated based on information available about the operations at the current police and fire department buildings. It is our understanding that the approximate current staffing levels will be maintained at the new locations. Any changes to the staffing for these departments would be unrelated to the size of the buildings since the staffing levels are determined by the funding,

² Parking Study for the Santa Monica Civic Center Specific Plan EIR, Kaku Associates, Santa Monica, CA, May 2004.

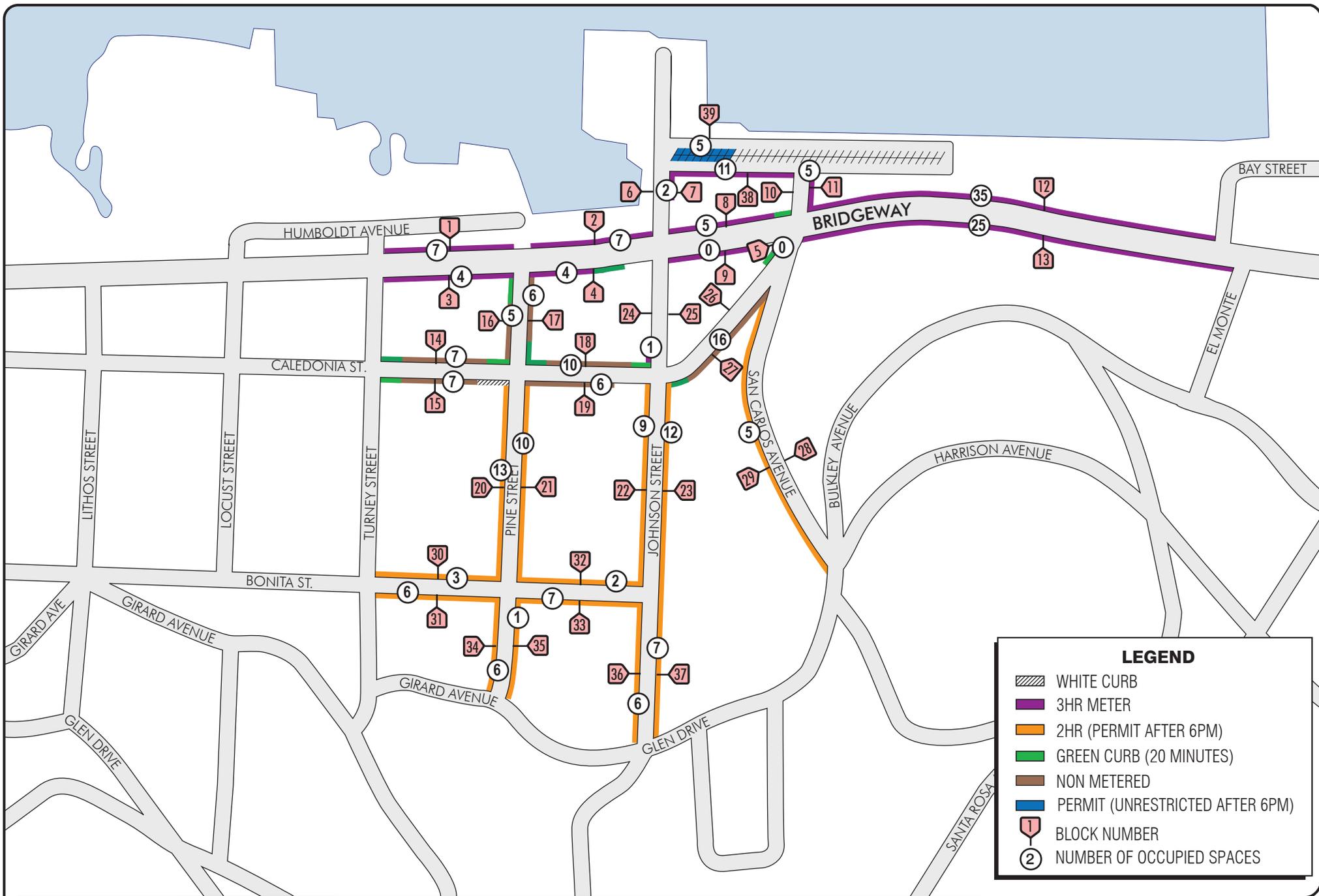


FIGURE 3 | PARKING SURVEY, SUNDAY, APRIL 02, 2006 - 2:50 PM
PARKING SURVEY
Public Facilities Buildings Project
 City of Sausalito

LEGEND

-  WHITE CURB
-  3HR METER
-  2HR (PERMIT AFTER 6PM)
-  GREEN CURB (20 MINUTES)
-  NON METERED
-  PERMIT (UNRESTRICTED AFTER 6PM)
-  BLOCK NUMBER
-  NUMBER OF OCCUPIED SPACES

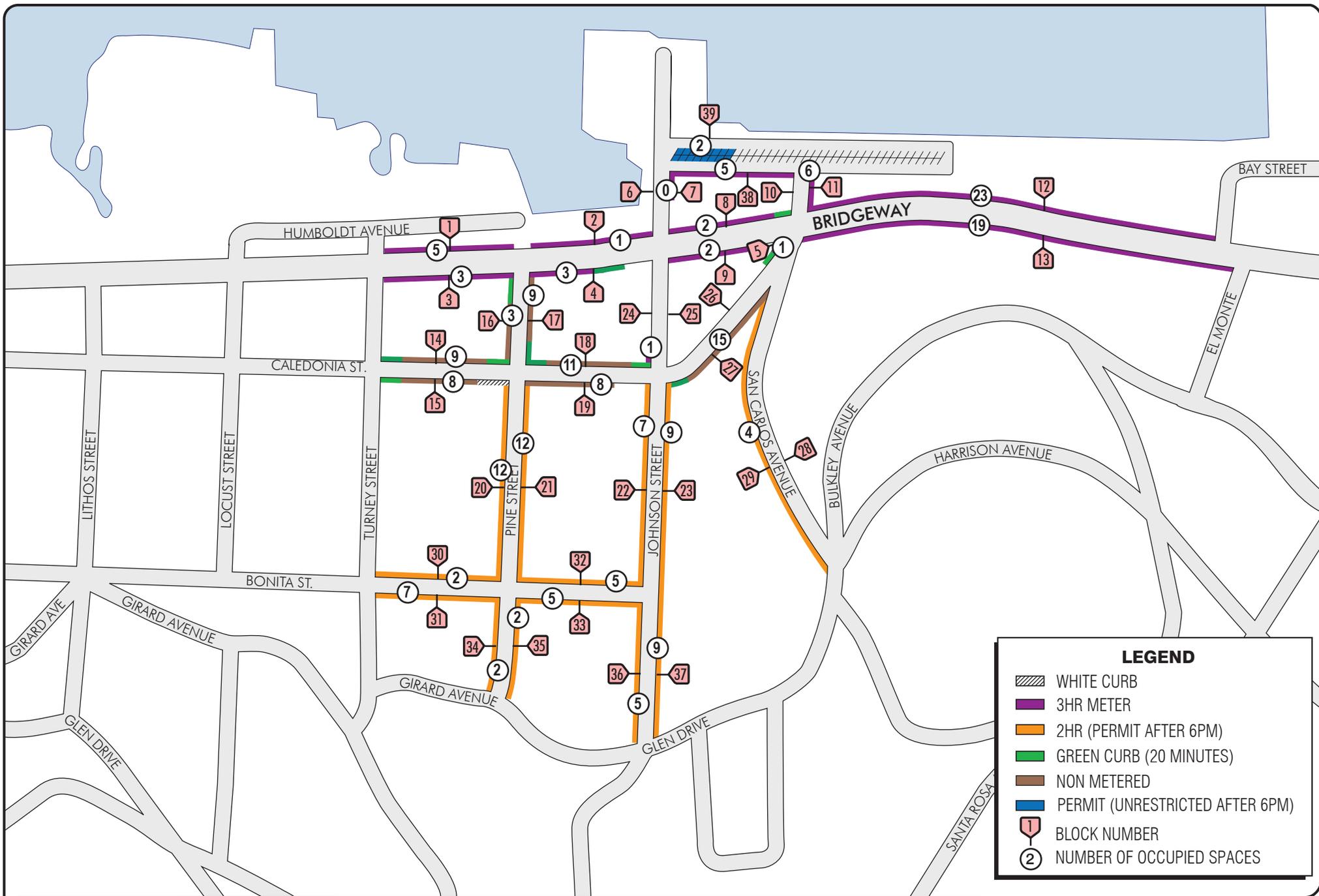


FIGURE 4 | PARKING SURVEY, THURSDAY, APRIL 06, 2006 - 5:50 PM
 PARKING SURVEY
Public Facilities Buildings Project
 City of Sausalito

which is established by the City Council. At the current time there is no reason to assume that substantial changes to the funding for either department are forthcoming.

Based on the current Police Department needs it is estimated that a maximum of approximately 25 off-street parking spaces are required to accommodate normal weekday operations. This would include the use of 10 on-street spaces adjacent to the police station (three on Johnson Street and seven on Caledonia Street) and the 12 planned employee parking spaces in Lot 4. In addition, the department would maintain a secure off-site storage lot for approximately 8 parking spaces.

Based on the current staffing levels the Fire Department is expected to require 6 parking spaces to accommodate their normal parking needs. One space would be provided for the fire chief in one of the new on-street parking spaces that would be created adjacent to the current Fire Department building (one on Johnson Street and two on Caledonia Street). The remaining five spaces for fire department employee personal vehicles would be provided in Lot 4.

To better understand the parking needs of both departments additional detail is provided below in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

Table 2
Summary of Police Department Parking Requirements

12 stalls – Personal parking stalls at peak hours that will allow for shift changes.
10 stalls – Spaces dedicated at the Police Building Site for 5 patrol vehicles, 3 unmarked vehicles, and for 2 PEOs. This is broken down as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 7 spaces on Caledonia (2 @ 24 hours and 5 @ 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.)- 3 spaces on Johnson (3 @ 24 hours)
8 stalls – Storage of vehicles when not in use is broken down as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 3 PEO vehicles- 1 VIPs vehicle- 1 Jeep- 1 Trailer- 1 unmarked vehicle- 1 patrol car

Table 3
Summary of Fire Department Parking Requirements

5 stalls – Personal parking stalls at peak hours
1 stalls – Fire Chief parking stall, in front of Fire Station building

Table 4
Summary of Visitor Parking Requirements

2 stalls – Parking stalls for visitors of the Police and Fire Station buildings as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1 handicap stall- 1 convertible stall to be used for handicap or non-handicap purposes

Parking Impact Analysis

On-Street Parking Spaces Lost as a Result of the Project – The proposed project would create up to three new on-street parking spaces in the area but in order to provide sufficient parking for both departments the project is proposing that about 10 adjacent on-street parking spaces that are currently available to the public would become reserved spaces for the police department. The fire department would not require use of any existing public on-street parking spaces. However, five of these reserved parking spaces could potentially be made available to the public after 7:00 PM when the demand for these spaces is high (see Table 1). In addition, two (2) of these spaces could also be made available to the public on weekends and holidays due to reduced staffing levels. Although not assumed as part of the project, it is recommended that these spaces be made available to the public as described since the evenings and weekends are when some of the highest occupancy levels were recorded.

Project Impacts on On-Street Parking Occupancy Levels - The 10 reserved on-street parking spaces adjacent to the police station, one reserved stall adjacent to the fire station, the 17 reserved spaces proposed for Lot 4, and the secure off-site storage lot for police vehicles (about 8 parking spaces) would fully accommodate the forecast parking demand for the proposed project. In the project study area the loss of ten public parking spaces would reduce the total parking supply in the study area to 342 spaces. During the highest period of on-street occupancy recorded in the area (Sunday 3/02/06 2:45 PM) the loss of ten spaces from the supply would only result in a two percent increase in the neighborhood parking occupancy level. This would not be considered a significant change to the parking conditions in the area.

With the amount of designated parking provided and the loss of only 10 public on-street parking spaces there would be no significant parking impacts. Normal daytime conditions would not be significantly impacted since our surveys show the area can readily accommodate the loss of 10 on-street spaces during these periods. In the evening there would only be a reduction in the current parking supply of 5 spaces and that would not result in any significant impacts on the parking occupancy levels. The same would be true for peak weekend conditions when there would be a reduction of 8 public on-street parking spaces. Again, this assumes that these parking spaces would be made available when staffing levels allow for it, as described previously. In general, the effects of the proposed project on on-street parking occupancy would be minor and they would not be expected to extend more than about a block from the project site.

Parking Lot 4 - A portion of Parking Lot 4 has been identified as a location for relocated police parking. Up to 17 parking spaces in this lot would be reserved for police and fire department employees. Based on our surveys this lot can readily accommodate the loss of 17 spaces since the lot has never observed to be more than about 60% occupied during any of the surveys. Therefore, the removal of 17 spaces from public and/or private permit use would not result in any significant impacts to the parking occupancy levels in Lot 4. It should also be noted that the existing parking lot is currently striped with 45-degree angle parking. It has been proposed that additional parking spaces be added at this lot by changing the striping to 55-degree parking that could result in a potential gain of between 10-15 parking spaces. The exact number will be determined upon completion of a detailed design.

Based on our review, a conversion to 55 degree parking would be possible but could require some curb reconstruction and/or a few design exceptions. These would include the following: 1) It appears that the 11 metered parallel parking spaces (near the Cat & Fiddle) would need to be removed to allow for additional aisle width needed for the 55-degree spaces. 2) A section of

landscaped curb on the south side just west of San Carlos Avenue will probably need to be moved back by about two feet. 3) Some changes to the plan may be needed along the southeast edge of the lot where there is head-in, perpendicular (90 degree) parking against the fence and under an adjacent building. In this area it is likely that the aisle width may be substandard. Fortunately, the City would have some potential options for dealing with this. For example, the perpendicular parking could be angled to reduce the aisle requirements but this may not be possible without losing a few spaces. Another option would be to designate some spaces in this area as “compact” to allow more room for the drive aisle. It should be noted that a slightly substandard drive aisle should not necessarily be considered unacceptable. Since there is adequate room for turns at the end of the one-way aisle this should not result in any operational problems.

Creation of New On-Street Parking Stalls - A number of locations have been recommended as candidates for new on-street parking stalls. The specific details of each proposal need to be considered but it appears that up to an additional 10 on-street parking spaces can be created by re-striping or other minor improvements. For the purposes of this analysis, and to be conservative, these spaces have not been assumed to be in place as part of the project. However, although not required by the project it is recommended that the City continue to pursue the creation of these spaces to increase the parking supply in the area.

Comparison to the Previous Parking and Traffic Study - A parking and traffic study was conducted by Robert L. Harrison Transportation Planning for the previous public facilities project in June of 2001³. We have reviewed this study and found that it is generally accurate and includes some useful information about the parking characteristics in the area. The limited parking survey in the report appears to show slightly lower parking occupancy levels in the evening than we recorded in our latest surveys. In general, most of the analyses in the report are no longer applicable since the project description has changed substantially.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Project Parking Impacts - The project will result in a slight reduction of on-street parking supply on the blocks adjacent to the project. Within about one-block of the project site there is currently about 70 on-street parking spaces, while following the completion of the project, there will be only about 60 spaces available. This 10-space reduction could potentially be off-set by the creation of additional on-street parking spaces currently under consideration. However, the effects of the lost parking spaces on streets beyond a one-block area are not expected to be noticeable. In addition, the project’s impact on parking occupancy during the peak evening and weekend time periods shown in Table 1 would be less than 2 percent.

With the proposed parking modifications to create new spaces in the area (currently being considered in Lot 4 and other locations), up to 20 new parking spaces could be created. However, the distribution of these spaces may not be evenly distributed throughout the area. Based on this analysis it can be safely concluded that the impacts on parking from the proposed project are not substantial and would not rise to a level that would be considered a significant environmental impact.

³ Sausalito Public Safety Building Parking and Traffic Study, Robert L. Harrison Transportation Planning, Tiburon, CA, June, 2001.

Parking Improvement Measures – Although not required by the project, there were a few items identified during our review of the area that are summarized below:

1. The parking in Lot 4 that becomes available after 6:00 PM appears to be underutilized and we would recommend that the City explore strategies to increase its use. For example, the signage program could be implemented to improve their visibility both at the spaces themselves and on the roadways leading to Lot 4. Another option would be to request that businesses ask employees to park in Lot 4. However, for this to work for employees working the evening shift the spaces may need to become available to the public a little earlier in the day. Getting employees to use these spaces may also require use of an incentive since it may be difficult to require employees to use the lot.
2. The residential permit program in effect south of Caledonia Street does appear to be justified by the parking surveys and we would recommend that any complaints about its enforcement be responded to in a prompt manner. It appears that some the patrons of the businesses along Caledonia Street have figured out they can get away with ignoring the residential permit parking restrictions in the evenings. As long as no complaints are received this should not necessarily be considered a major problem since it does relieve the parking pressure on Caledonia Street. However, if complaints are ever received we expect they will probably be legitimate since we have definitely observed violations of the permit parking program in this area.
3. On the north side of Caledonia Street adjacent to the Fire Station (just east of Johnson Street) it appear that there is space to create two additional parallel parking spaces. The one-way approach to the Johnson Street intersection currently has two turn lanes – a through-left lane and a separate right-turn lane. This approach only requires one shared lane to operate effectively and even with the parking spaces there will probably still be room for right turning vehicles to slip past anyone waiting to turn left. The safest design to accomplish this would probably require the reconstruction of about 50 feet of existing curb and the narrowing of the existing 10-foot sidewalk in this area to about 6 feet.
4. During our surveys it was determined that the highest demand in the area is for the 2-hour parking areas without meters, particularly in the evening. At no time did we identify any unusually high occupancy levels within the neighborhood permit parking area on Johnson Street. Since the occupancy levels in the residential permit area were the lowest at all times of the day we would recommend that the Police Department designate that up to four of the required on-street parking spaces be located directly across from the Police Station on Johnson Street. These spaces are not directly adjacent to any homes, they front against a commercial property and they appear to be often used by violators of the permit parking program. Based on our surveys, there is clearly more demand for the 2-hour spaces located outside the residential permit area (see Figure 4). In general, we recommend the City consider locating more of the reserved on-street spaces on Johnson Street rather than on Caledonia Street.