

Background & History

What is the Residential Parking Permit program?

San Francisco's Residential Parking Permit program was established in 1976 to reduce commuter traffic and parking impacts in residential neighborhoods. The program makes it easier for residents to find parking in their neighborhoods by exempting permit-holders from on-street parking time limits. Though it gives priority for parking to residents, a permit does not guarantee a parking space.

Residential parking permits have most often been used in neighborhoods close to major transit lines and stations, hospitals, colleges, attractions, employment centers, and other parking generators where spill-over onto residential blocks occurs.

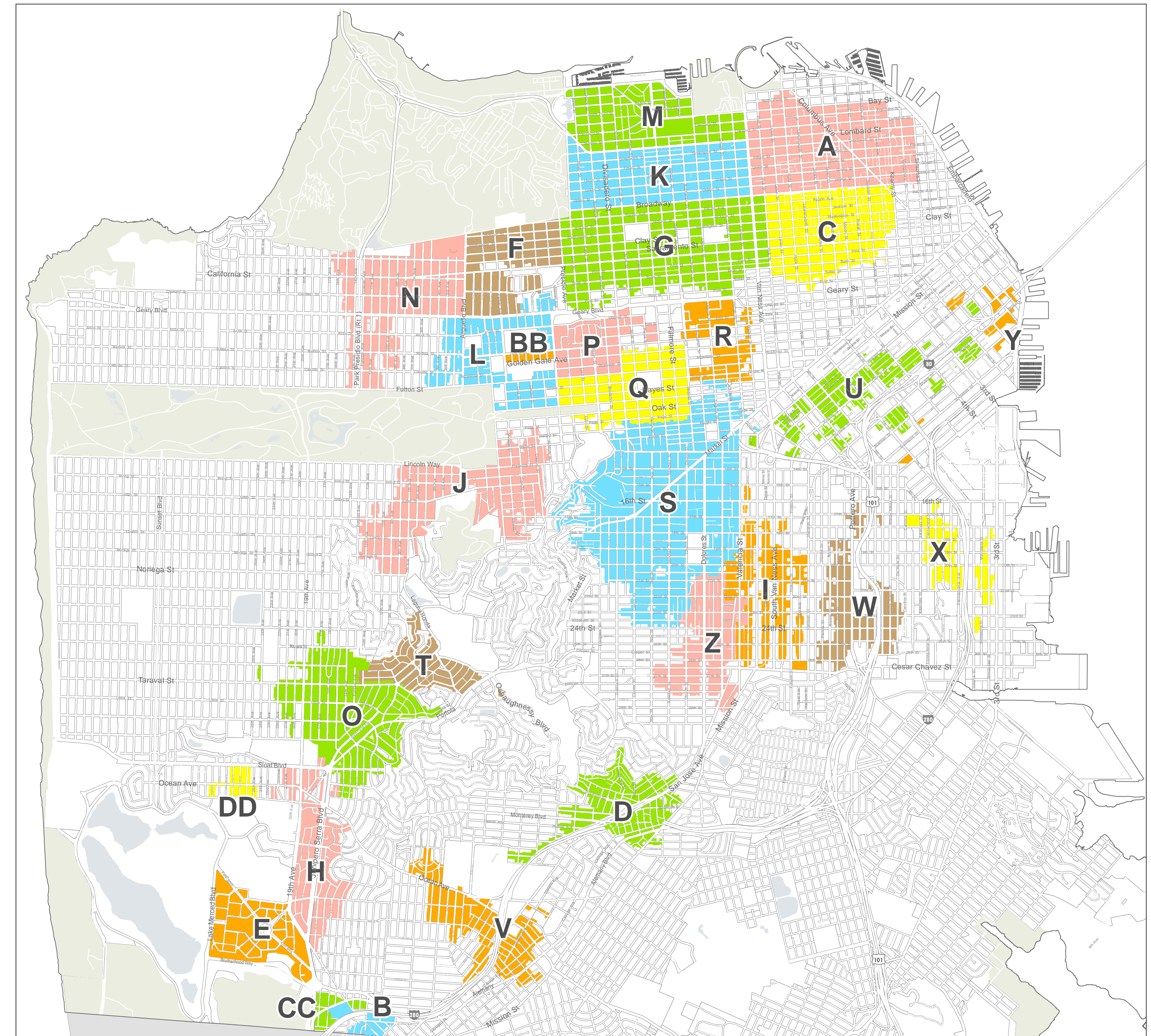
Permits are also available for residents' guests, businesses, medical and child caregivers, teachers, and others.

Program statistics

- 29 permit areas (most recent: *Area Q* est. in March 2015)
- 87,000 permits issued in FY 2014-15
- 153,000 eligible households (44% of S.F. households)
- 78,000 permitted parking spaces (28% of on-street parking)

There is enough permitted parking to stretch along California's coast from San Francisco to San Luis Obispo!

Existing permit areas



Regulation sign



Annual permit sticker

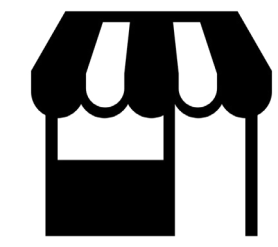
How It Works Now

Permit types



Residents

Each household within a permit area is eligible to purchase up to 4 annual permits.



Businesses

Each business within a permit area is eligible to purchase 1 annual permit for either the owner or an employee, and up to 3 additional permits for commercial delivery vehicles.



Medical caregivers

Up to 3 permits are available for in-home medical caregivers. These count against the maximum 4 permits per household.



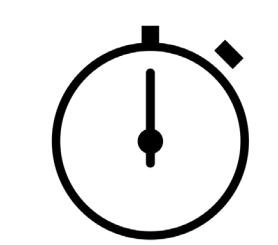
Child caregivers

1 transferable permit is available for in-home child caregivers. These permits are only available on specially designated blocks and count against the maximum 4 permits per household.



Educational institutions

Schools with at least 15 credentialed teachers are eligible to purchase up to 15 transferable permits, limited by the number of parking spaces fronting the facility.



Short-term permits

Each household within a permit area may purchase up to 20 1-day permits each year for guests, rental/shared vehicles, service providers, and other purposes. 2, 4, 6, and 8 week permits are also available.

Permit pricing

Resident annual	\$111
All other annual	\$111
1-day (1-5 per order)	\$13
1-day (6-15 per order)	\$11
1-day (16-20 per order)	\$9
2-week	\$38
4-week	\$56
6-week	\$73
8-week	\$95

Typical regulations

Residential parking permit regulations vary by neighborhood. Time limits can be 1, 2, 3, or 4 hours. A typical block has a 2-hour time limit in effect Monday through Friday from 8 or 9am until 6pm.

Planning process

It takes 2-3 months to process an extension of an existing permit area and up to three years to establish entirely new areas. Following are the main requirements for establishing residential permit parking:

- At least 80% of spaces are occupied during the times of proposed enforcement
- Parking supply is shown to be significantly impacted by non-residents of the area
- Petition in favor of permit parking is signed by over 50% of residents on each block
- For new permit areas: 1 mile of continuous street frontage
- For extensions: blocks are adjacent to an existing permit area



Icons courtesy of The Noun Project and created by (top to bottom): Nicholas Menghini, Joshua Mormann, Luis Prado, Michael Thompson, PJ Souders, and Michele Zamparo

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Evaluation Project

Why an evaluation?

The Residential Parking Permit program has changed little since it was first established 40 years ago. San Francisco also faces different challenges on the street today than back in 1976. The SFMTA recognizes it is time to update the program to meet the needs of an evolving city.

Much has changed with transportation in 40 years:

- There are more cars in the city (over 500,000 on the street daily), resulting in a growing demand for limited curb space
- The population has increased from roughly 686,000 people in 1976 to more than 850,000 – making S.F. the second-most densely populated city in North America after New York City
- San Francisco's daytime commuter population has grown to 1.3 million people
- By 2040, San Francisco is projected to absorb over 100,000 new households and 190,000 new jobs
- Vehicle sharing services such as City CarShare, Getaround, and Scoot Networks were established

The Transportation Code governing the program was not designed to account for population and car ownership growth, vehicle sharing, or the challenges of residential development in once-industrial areas.

This is why the SFMTA wants to conduct a comprehensive, data-driven review of the program, with ample opportunities for public input.

Project components



Strategic Goals & Guiding Principles

SFMTA Strategic Goals

- 1 Create a safer transportation experience for everyone
- 2 Make transit, walking, bicycling, taxi, ride-sharing, and car-sharing the preferred means of travel
- 3 Improve the environment & quality of life in San Francisco
- 4 Create a workplace that delivers outstanding service

Evaluation Guiding Principles

Active parking management is essential to maintaining an effective transportation system for a growing and inclusive San Francisco.

The Residential Parking Permit Program Evaluation and Reform Project will be guided by the following six over-arching principles:

1. Customer service

The SFMTA delivers excellent customer service in all facets of parking operations by providing ready access to availability and cost information, efficient payment and permit processing, and effective and fair enforcement.

2. Sensitivity to local uses

In predominantly residential areas or blocks, the SFMTA prioritizes access to parking for nearby residents. In mixed use areas or blocks, the SFMTA balances parking access among multiple allowable uses, whether commercial, industrial, or residential.

3. Equity

The SFMTA strives to provide equitable access to efficient transportation services, including on-street parking when no other reasonable alternative is available.

4. Achieving transportation goals

The SFMTA manages parking to achieve the agency's and the City's transportation goals, which prioritize travel by foot, public transit, bicycle, taxi, carpooling, and vehicle sharing.

5. Reduced congestion, improved transit, and increased safety

The SFMTA manages parking to reduce circling for parking, double-parking, and the need to drive for every trip. This decreases congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, makes the public transit system faster and more reliable, and improves safety for all users of the streets.

6. Neighborhood commercial vitality

The SFMTA balances the demand for on-street parking with the need to support the vitality of neighborhood commercial districts.

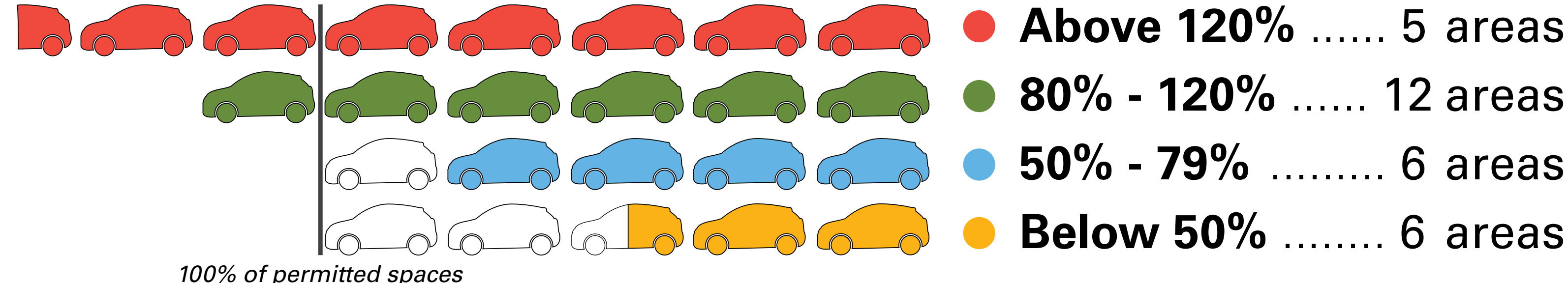
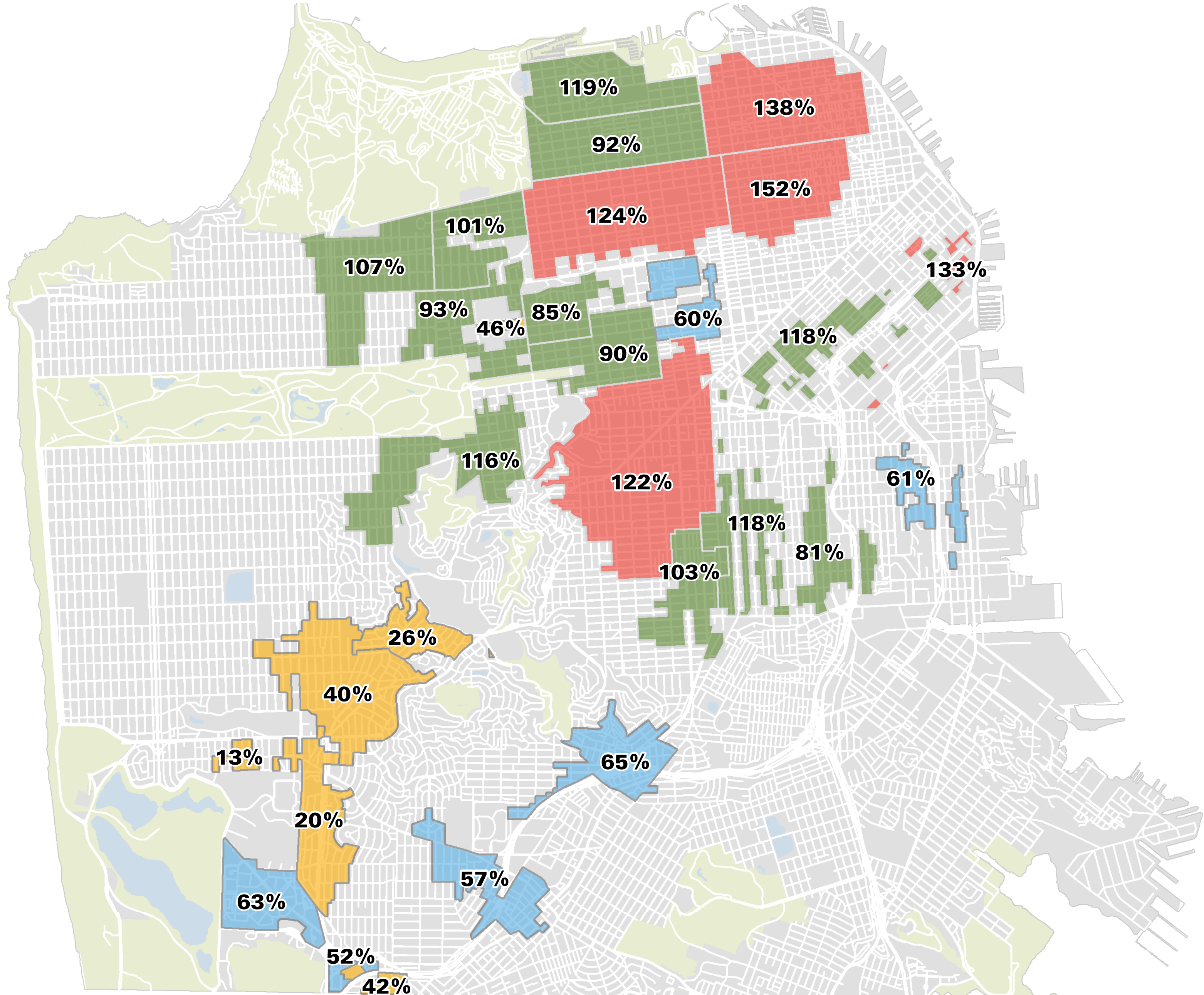


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Permit Issuance

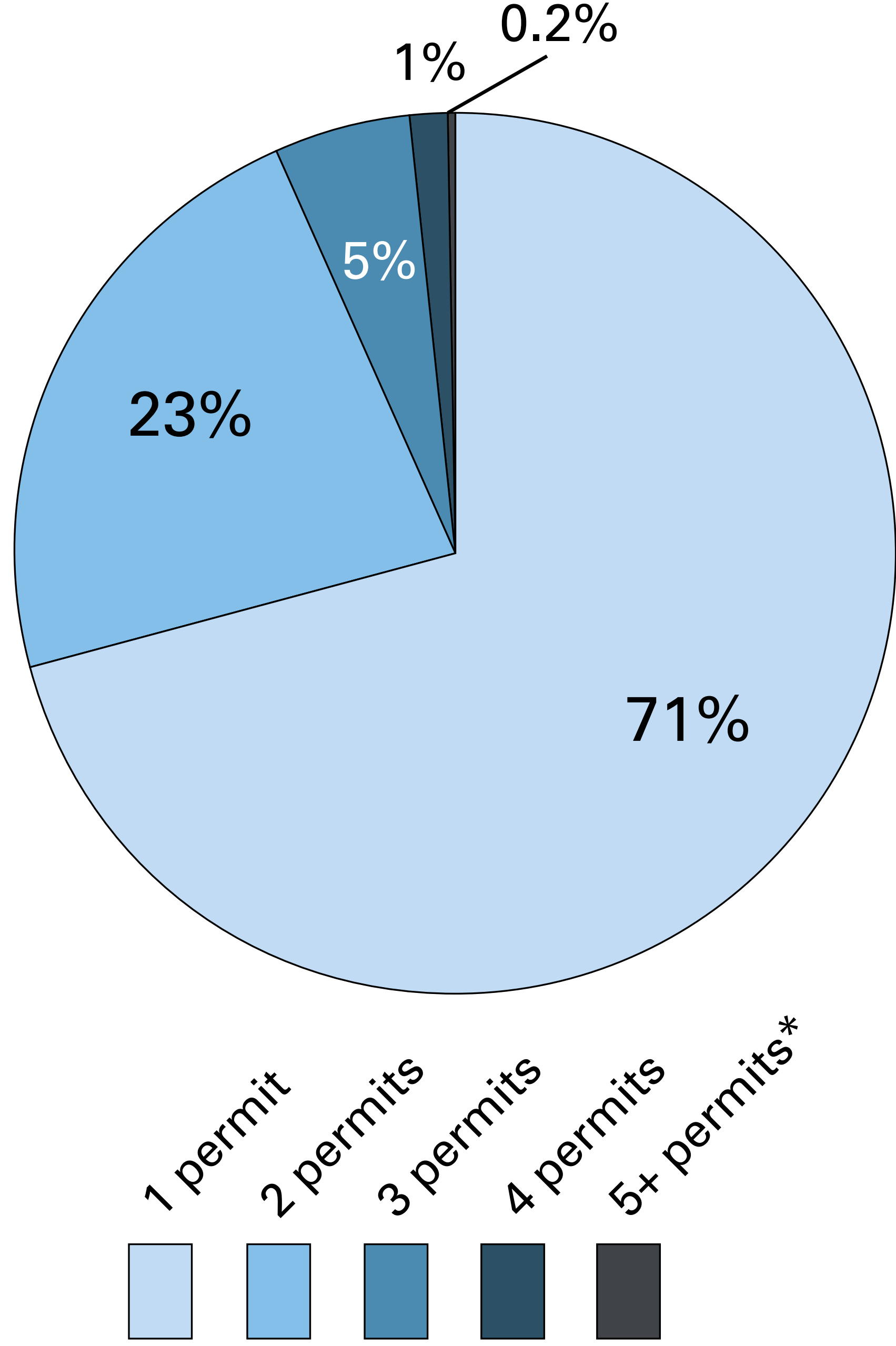
Permit saturation

Permit saturation compares the number of annual permits issued in a permit area to the number of permitted parking spaces.



Permits sold per household

94% of households with a residential parking permit purchase only one or two permits (each household is allowed to purchase up to four). Nevertheless, acute local impacts can occur when a single household has permits to park several vehicles on-street in a neighborhood.



*Additional permits above 4 may be requested upon petition.

Tailoring Residential Parking Management

The Residential Parking Permit program applies the same rules to all permit areas, yet parking conditions vary greatly between them. Some areas see high permit saturation, high parking occupancies, and high parking search times. In other areas, the SFMTA issues fewer permits than there are spaces, and occupancy rates and search times are lower.

Some permit areas are more or less impacted than others

- Some permit areas have high occupancy rates despite residential parking permit regulations, such as Areas A and N.¹
- Other permit areas see lower occupancy rates, like Area X.¹

Neighborhood	Permit Area	Weekdays				Weekends	
		4:30am-5am	10am-12pm	2pm-4pm	7pm-9pm	2pm-4pm	7pm-9pm
Nob Hill & Telegraph Hill	Area A	95%	91%	90%	94%	92%	96%
Inner Richmond	Area N	95%	91%	88%	92%	No data collected	
Inner Sunset	Area J	86%	80%	83%	88%		
Southern Noe Valley	Area Z	86%	89%	88%	90%		
Potrero Hill	Area X	63%	67%	67%	74%		

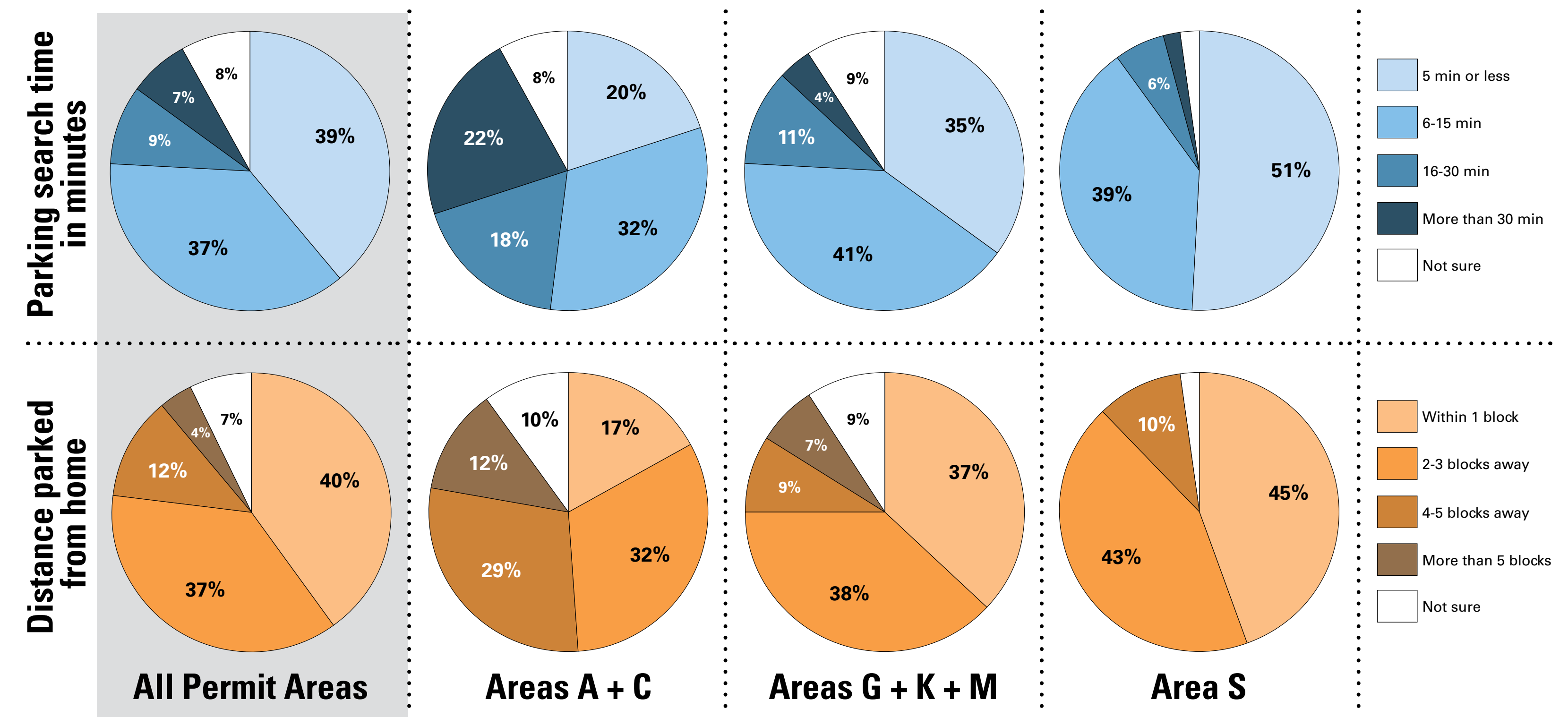
Prevailing effective hours of residential permit parking: Area A – Monday-Saturday, 8am-9pm
Areas N, J, Z, and X – Monday-Friday, 8am/9am-6pm

Even with residential parking permits, occupancy rates are high all-day in Areas A and N

Parking search times vary by permit area

Finding a parking space within 5 minutes and 1 block is considered excellent; search times above 15 minutes and 3 blocks is unsatisfactory.

Across all Residential Parking Permit areas, around 25% of people circle for over 15 minutes and park 4 or more blocks away from home. However, this varies greatly across permit areas – while 90% of people in Area S report finding parking within 15 min and 3 blocks, only around half of those living in Areas A and C are able to.¹



25% of people circle for over 15 minutes and park 4 or more blocks away from home

¹ Residential Parking Permit Evaluation Parking Utilization Study, Aug-Nov 2015

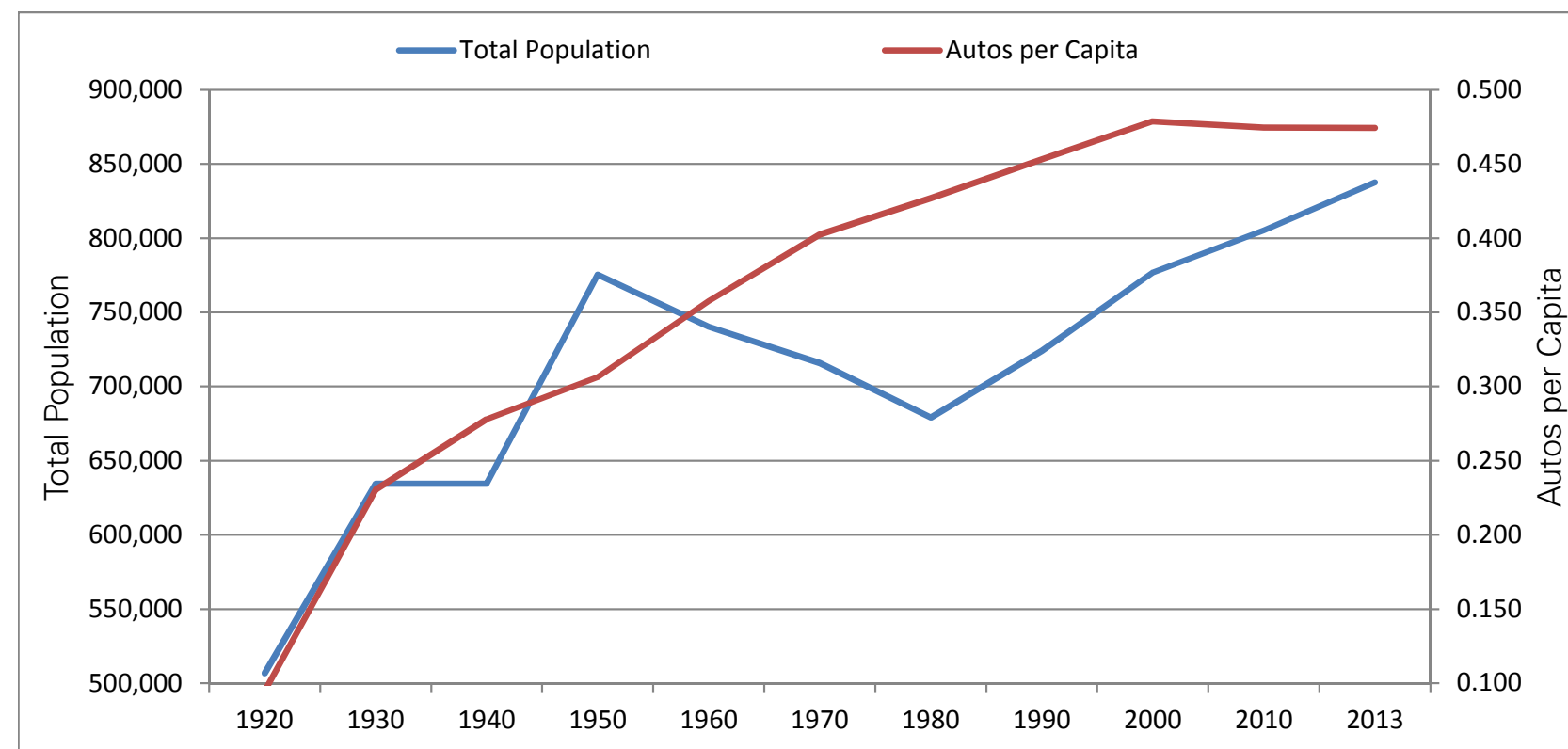
¹ Residential Parking Permit Evaluation Household Survey, Nov 2015

Adapting to Declining Vehicle Ownership

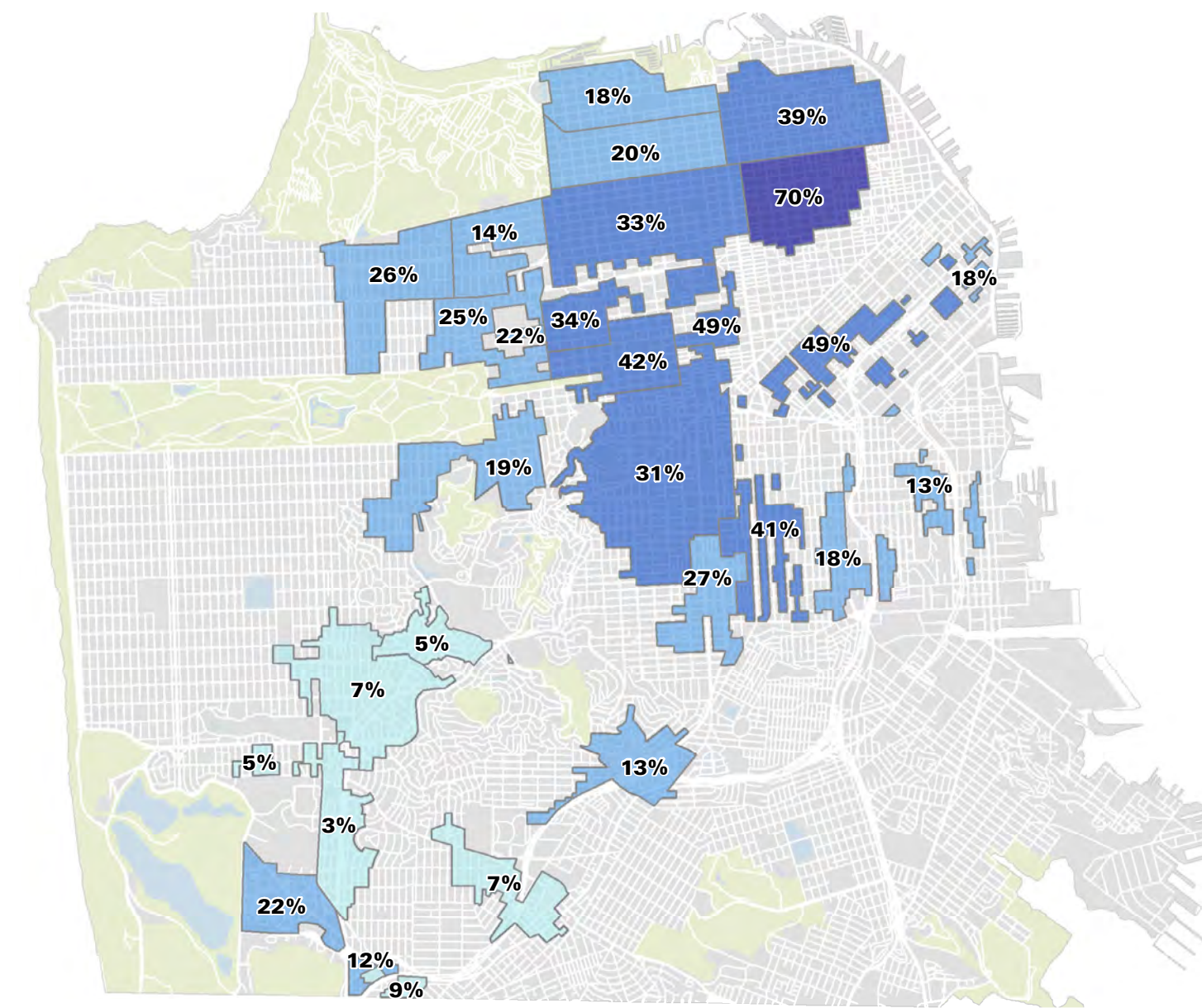
Declining vehicle ownership per capita

The number of vehicles registered in San Francisco per capita been declining since 2000. The city's population has increased by about 75,000 people since 2000, but only 30,000 new autos have been registered in the same amount of time.¹

San Francisco's Population and Autos per Capita by Decade



Percentage of Households with Access to 0 Vehicles



More households without cars

Several permit areas have a high proportion of car-free households²

Area C (Chinatown)	70%	} of households don't have a car
Area U (SOMA)	49%	
Area R (Hayes Valley, Cathedral Hill)	49%	
Area Q (Alamo Square, NOPA)	42%	
Area I (Mission)	41%	

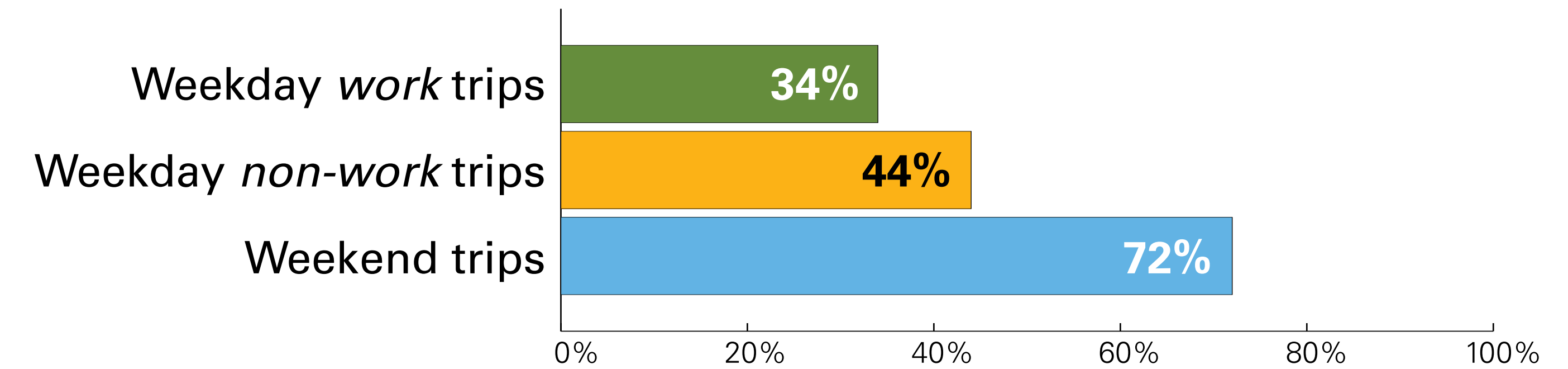
What are we doing for the growing number of households that do not have cars, but still need curb access in their neighborhood?

Many car owners don't commute by car

Vehicle availability is high, but commuting by car is much lower

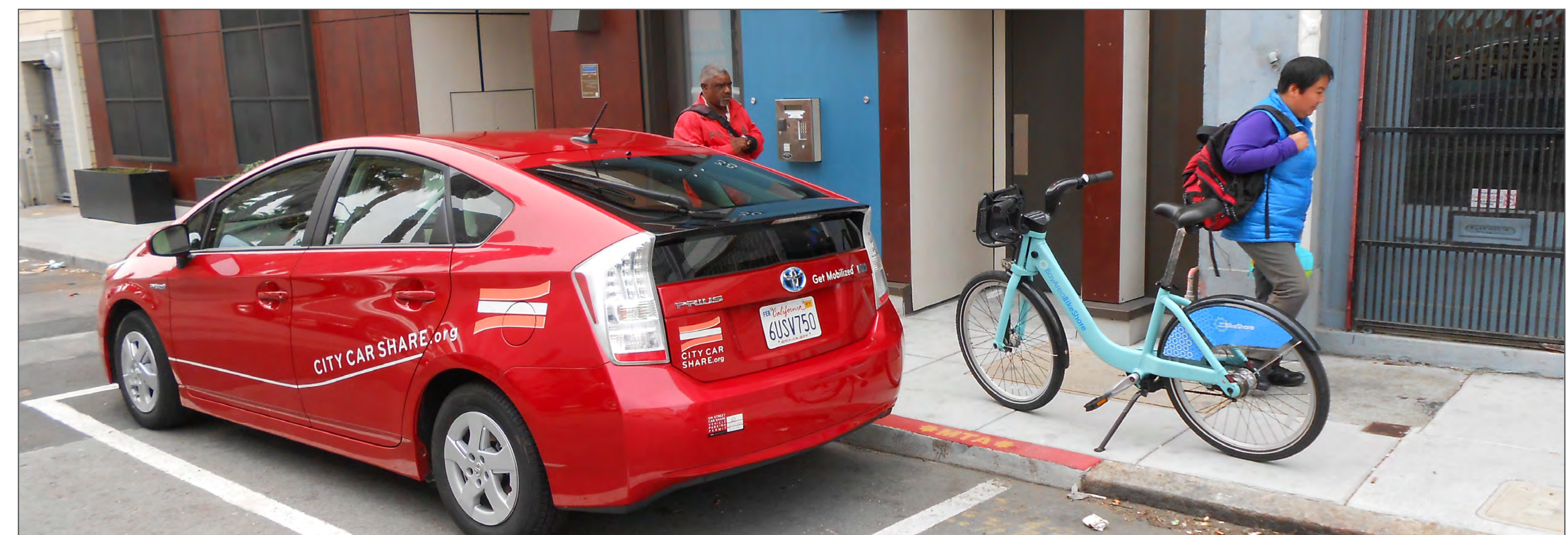
- 70% of San Francisco households have access to a private vehicle¹.
- 44% of San Francisco workers commute to work by car¹.

Weekend trip-making dominates among permit area residents²



Vehicle sharing is growing in popularity

Car, bicycle, and scooter sharing programs can help reduce the demand for parking. Research has shown that members often sell their cars or don't buy a car at all – one study estimates that 9 to 13 vehicles are taken off the road for each car share vehicle.³



¹ American Community Survey 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates
² Residential Parking Permit Evaluation Household Survey, Nov 2015
³ Martin, Elliot, Susan Shaheen, Jeffrey Lidicker. "Impact of Carsharing on Household Vehicle Holdings." Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board 2143 (2010): 150-58.

¹ DMV Registration Data; Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Historical Data
² Census Transportation Planning Products (CTPP) 2006-2010 5-Year Estimates

Sharing the Curb

In mixed-use neighborhoods...

Many neighborhoods are mixed-use in character, including areas that have long had a rich variety of land uses as well as formally industrial areas that are now seeing an influx of residential development.

Parking in such areas is challenging to share between the various people who want to park, especially with limited curb space. Traditional residential permit parking gives preference to residents for parking and may not provide the best balance in such areas.

Apartments next to a screen door factory – who gets to park here?



In residential neighborhoods...

Even in mostly residential neighborhoods, people other than residents themselves may have a claim to park in the area. This could include a plumber coming to fix a leaky pipe, teachers at the school down the street, day care providers, your neighbor's dinner party guests, firefighters, and medical caregivers, just to name a few.

Who has a claim to park?

While many of these people may already be accommodated by the program through existing time limits and permit options, it is possible that not all needs are being served in the neighborhood.



Your neighbor's guests



Your relatives



Day care teacher



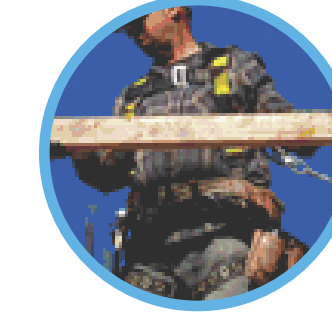
Mail carrier



Elementary school teacher



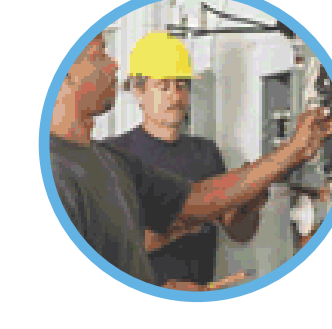
Gardener



Rofer, plumber, electrician



Housekeeper



PG&E line worker



Firefighters and police officers



Corner store owner



Who else?

Modernizing the Program

The SFMTA is aware of the difficulties purchasing a 1-day guest permit last minute for a friend visiting from out of town. We also appreciate that permit area boundaries are irregular, some areas are altogether too large or small, and that parking regulations vary block-to-block.

In the coming years, the SFMTA will be improving customer service with every aspect of the Residential Parking Permit program. We are striving to use technology to the fullest in order to streamline permit purchasing, enforcement, the planning process, and in other ways.



**Do you have suggestions for how we could improve the program?
Here are some ideas we've heard so far... please leave your own!**

"In our neighborhood, evening is the primary issue"

"You should be able to print a 1-day permit yourself at home"

"We live just outside Area 'S' and parking has become increasingly difficult"

"Get rid of RPP and ruthlessly enforce the 72 hr rule"

"It does not make sense to charge motorcycles and scooters the same fee – they do not add to parking congestion"

"SFMTA should incentivize smaller and cleaner vehicles with a lower rate"

"Have more car share in all neighborhoods – every block should have 1 space"

"Very difficult and slow to get permits for visitors – why can't you use them past one year?"