

## Levels of Use

Over the years, the buildings have aged and become outdated in terms of amenities offered to renters. Since these buildings were constructed, newer event venues have been built around the county, including many winery venues and a few convention centers. Many of these new facilities cater to a high-end market of renters looking for “wine country” atmosphere with state-of-the-art amenities. While most of these newer facilities offer air conditioning, most veterans buildings have no air conditioning, or are only partially cooled in certain rooms. The newer facilities have up-to-date audio-visual systems, whereas the theatrical lighting and sound systems in most of the veterans buildings are outdated and unusable for many events’ presentational needs. The veterans buildings also lack many of the high tech amenities that other venues offer, such as wireless networks. Nonetheless, the Veterans/Community Center Buildings seem to fill a need that other venues don’t provide, and their use has remained relatively steady for years.

Regional Parks measures the use of the Veterans/Community Center Buildings through two key indicators:

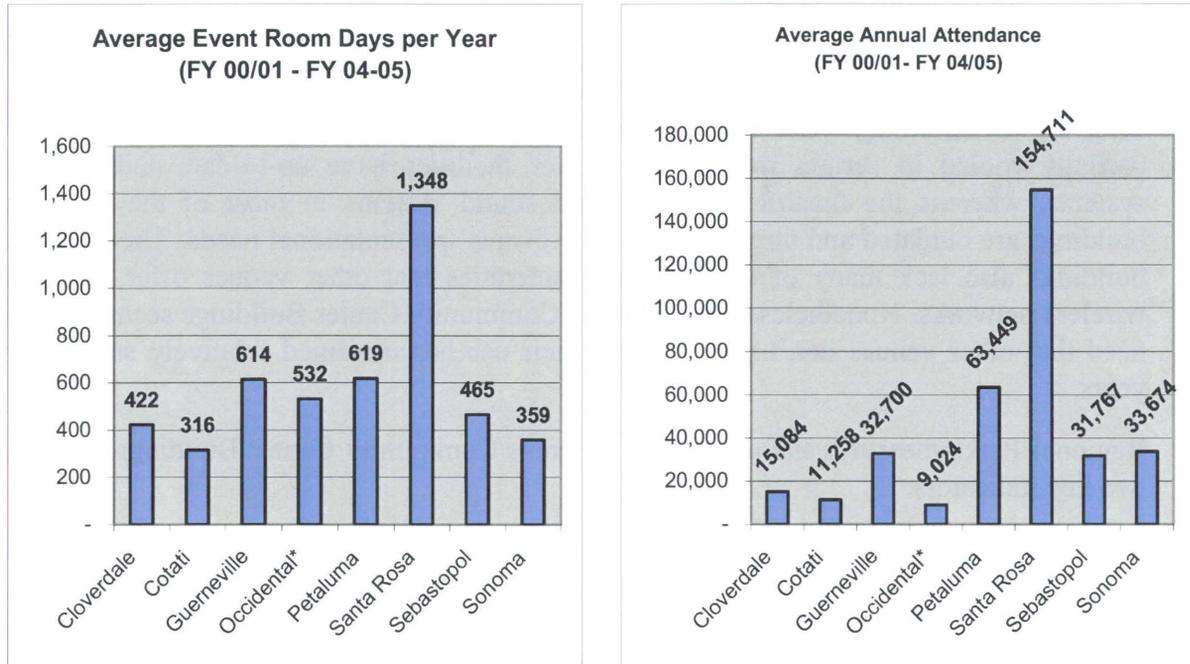
1. Attendance: The total number of people using the building each year, estimated by Parks staff each day, including all use, free or paid. Attendance at parking lot events is also included.
2. Event Room Days: the number of rooms and the number of days these rooms are used for each separate event. This includes all rooms available for use including kitchens, small meeting rooms and rooms dedicated to the veterans.

The chart on the following page compares these indicators for each of the buildings for FY 00/01 through FY 04/05. All buildings together had an annual average of 4,675 Event Room Days with an average annual Attendance of 351,667. The Santa Rosa Veterans Building is by far the most heavily used building in the group, with an average estimated Attendance of 154,711 (44% of the total) and 1,348 Event Room Days (29% of the total). The least used building in terms of Event Room Days is the Cotati Veterans Building with an annual average of 316 (6.8% of the total). In terms of Attendance, Occidental is the least used, with an annual average of 9,024 (2.6% of the total)

Attendance at Cloverdale includes swimming pool use, although Event Room Days data does not. The swimming pool, which is operated by the Sonoma County YMCA, is open for public use from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day and has an average annual Attendance of 2,560.

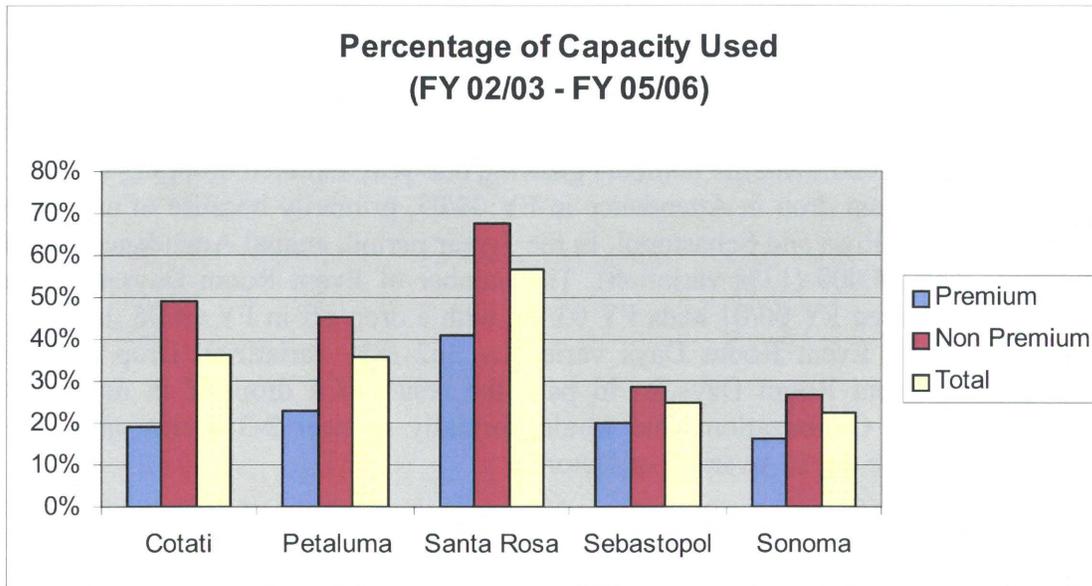
Occidental Community Center: This year (FY 05/06), Occidental has seen a drastic reduction in Event Room Days and Attendance due to changes in two of its primary users. Harmony Elementary School and the Sonoma County YMCA have used Occidental for years for school programs, after school programs and summer programs. Harmony recently closed, with its students transferring to Salmon Creek School and its property sold to a local developer. The license agreement allowing Harmony School to use the facility has been terminated. Also, the YMCA discontinued its after school program and now uses the building for 2 after school classes with much lower attendance. As a result, Occidental Community Center is only used for evening adult sports activities and the 2 YMCA classes. The facility is not in use at all during the

daytime or weekends during fall, winter and spring. However, the facility is used every weekday during the summer for YMCA Youth Summer Camp.



\*Occidental usage dropped significantly in FY 05/06 – see discussion above

Another measurement of use is the percentage of the total capacity being used. “Capacity” for the building is difficult to define because all of the buildings have a number of rooms for use and the level of use varies between rooms. In order to establish a meaningful measurement, staff defined “annual capacity” as the total number of major rooms available for rent multiplied by 365 days a year (i.e. “event room days” available). Not included in this calculation are kitchens, rooms dedicated to veteran use (such as the Club Room at Santa Rosa) or small or insignificant rooms (such as the conference room at Santa Rosa). Capacity is reduced by events that preclude the use of the building (such as the use of the Santa Rosa parking lot during the Fair) or for internal use. “Annual use” is the total number of rooms used for each event multiplied by the number of days they are used (i.e. “event room days”). It is possible that a room is used by more than one event per day, in which case its use would exceed capacity for that day. Parking lot use is not counted as either capacity or use, although parking lot use at Santa Rosa is a significant use and source of revenue (see note below). Both capacity and use were divided into Premium Event Days (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) and Non-Premium Event Days (Monday through Thursday). The following chart and table shows the summary of the data that has been collected daily by the Regional Parks Department for fiscal years 2002/03 through 2005/06. Because there is no dedicated staff at Guerneville, Cloverdale or Occidental, daily data was not collected and these buildings are not included in this capacity study.



Capacity and Use - FY 02/03 through FY 05/06									
Building	Premium			Non-Premium			Total		
	Capacity	Use	% Used	Capacity	Use	% Used	Capacity	Use	% Used
Cotati	1,210	233	19%	1,623	799	49%	2,833	1,032	36%
Petaluma	2,407	552	23%	3,244	1,466	45%	5,651	2,018	36%
Santa Rosa	2,262	929	41%	3,139	2,122	68%	5,401	3,051	56%
Sebastopol	2,407	480	20%	3,269	937	29%	5,676	1,417	25%
Sonoma	1,806	293	16%	2,443	650	27%	4,249	943	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,092</b>	<b>2,487</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>13,718</b>	<b>5,974</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>23,810</b>	<b>8,461</b>	<b>36%</b>

The capacity study indicates that the buildings are not being used to fullest extent possible and that premium time use is well below the non-premium use. For the 5 buildings in the study, there was a total capacity of 23,810 event days over the 4 years but only 8,461 event days used (36% of the capacity). Santa Rosa has the highest usage at 56% overall and Sonoma has the lowest use at 22% overall. However, staff is still researching to find a benchmark to judge this usage against. It is improbable that a building could be used at 100% of its capacity.

Note: Parking lot use is not included in the capacity study. This is a significant facility use at the Santa Rosa Veterans Building. Over the 4 years of the study, the Santa Rosa Veterans parking lot was used for 1,335 event days (497 premium event days and 838 non-premium event days). The total capacity for the parking lot over the 4 years was 1,460 event days, which indicates that the parking lot is used for over 91% of its capacity.