

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

MOBILITY PLAN & MOBILITY FEE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

WHAT IS A MOBILITY PLAN?

The City of St. Augustine's 2040 Mobility Plan is a vision, over the next 20 years, for how the City's transportation system will continue to transition from **moving and parking vehicles**, towards a multimodal system focused on safely and conveniently **moving people**, whether they choose to continue driving their cars, or decide to walk, bicycle, ride transit, or use a new mobility technology, and deploying **dynamic parking management strategies** to address future demand.

WHY DOES THE CITY NEED A MOBILITY PLAN?

St. Johns County continues to be one of the **fastest growing areas** in the U.S. and the City continues to experience **strong growth in visitors** to its Historic Districts. Long term residents of the City have experienced first-hand the effects of growth and the associated increase in traffic on residential streets in search of on-street parking and seeking to avoid congestion. The City is also experiencing increasing in-fill and redevelopment activity. This activity, combined with growth in County residents and visitors to the City, creates a need for mobility solutions.

HOW CAN THE MOBILITY PLAN ADDRESS CONGESTION?

The Mobility Plan proactively plans for multimodal infrastructure improvements, programs, and services needed to further **enhance the walkability** of the Historic Districts. The Plan also emphasizes creating a **park-once environment** that promotes using dynamic parking management strategies to encourage visitors to park their car in future multimodal parking garages on the periphery of the Historic Districts and using electric bikes, trolley circulators, and other forms of mobility, other than driving a car, to explore the City.

WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS ARE INCLUDED IN THE MOBILITY PLAN?

The Mobility Plan consist of **four (4) distinct plans** that include projects for sidewalks, paths, trails, protected bike lanes, low speed shared streets, complete streets, and multimodal ways. The Plans also address both **citywide and regional mobility** through microtransit circulators, multimodal parking structures, water taxis, an aerial tramway, regional rail that will connect St. Augustine with Jacksonville, and several regional road projects to direct cut-through traffic around the City.

The Mobility Plan also includes policies for **dynamic parking management strategies** such as: (1) variable rates for parking meters, (2) programs that can provide City residents parking discounts or priority parking in certain areas, and (3) real time message boards at gateways to the City that direct visitors to either existing garages or future multimodal parking garages. These projects are intended to enhance mobility and safety, while also seeking to reduce congestion and traffic in residential neighborhoods.

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HOW WILL THE CITY FUND MOBILITY PLAN PROJECTS?

The projects identified in the Mobility Plan will be funded through a **variety of sources**. Federal and State appropriations, funds, grants, and programs, allocated through the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), are some of the primary sources for funding mobility plan projects. Gas taxes, special assessments, property taxes, infrastructure sales taxes, and mobility fees are all other **potential funding sources** for funding mobility plan projects.

HOW WILL THE CITY PRIORITIZE MOBILITY PLAN PROJECTS?

The projects identified in the Mobility Plan are prioritized in five-year increments between 2020 and 2040. Each year, as part of the City's annual budget process, City staff will identify potential revenue sources over a five-year period and make recommendations to further prioritize the design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of Mobility Plan projects. The **City Commission will prioritize** projects through the City's annual Capital Improvements Program (CIP) update.

WHAT IS A MOBILITY FEE?

A mobility fee is a **one-time fee** paid by a developer to the City to mitigate the developments traffic impact to the City's transportation system. Mobility fees are **based on the multimodal projects** adopted as part of the **Mobility Plan** and will be used to **fund the identified multimodal projects** in the Plan. Mobility fees were established by the Legislature to provide developers a simplified alternative to transportation concurrency, proportionate share, and road impact fees.

WHAT IS TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCY?

In 1985, the Florida Legislature established the "Growth Management Act" to regulate new growth in Florida and required local governments to ensure that adequate road capacity would be available "concurrent" with new development to **offset its traffic impact**. Transportation concurrency, while well intended, had the unintended consequence of limiting or stopping development in urban areas, where it was cost prohibitive to add road capacity, and resulted in suburban sprawl where road capacity was either available or cheaper to construct.

In 2011, the Legislature replaced the "Growth Management Act" with the "Community Planning Act" that **repealed statewide transportation concurrency** and made it optional for local governments. The Legislature amended the "Community Planning Act" in 2013 to encourage local governments to **adopt alternative mobility funding systems**, such as mobility plans and fees, as a repeal and replacement of transportation concurrency systems, proportionate share, and road impact fees.

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IS THE CITY REPEALING TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCY?

The proposed mobility fee is intended to repeal and replace transportation concurrency, along with associated proportionate share regulations. The City does not have a road impact fee and St. Johns County does not impose its road impact fees on development in the City.

HOW WAS THE MOBILITY FEE DEVELOPED?

The mobility fee is based on the multimodal projects in the Mobility Plan and is developed based on detailed methodologies designed to meet what are known as the dual relational nexus test and rough proportionately test established by case law and Florida Statute. A detailed Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee Technical Report has been prepared to document how the mobility fee was developed and to demonstrate that the fee is legally and statutorily compliant.

WHEN IS THE CITY GOING TO ADOPT MOBILITY FEES?

The City intends to hold two (2) public hearings in February. The first hearing is scheduled for February 14th, 2022 and the second hearing is scheduled for February 28th, 2022. The mobility fee, if adopted, would become effective May 17th, 2022. This time frame complies with Florida Statute, which requires a 90-day period between the notice by a local government to impose a mobility fee and the effective date of the mobility fee.

WHO PAYS A MOBILITY FEE?

Any new residential or non-residential development activity within the City that requires the issuance of a building permit and result in an increase in person travel demand (impact) above the existing use of property will be assessed a mobility fee. Mobility fees are not a tax, and they are not charged to existing homes, businesses, or property; unless there is an addition, change of use, expansion, modification, or redevelopment that **requires issuance of a building permit** and **generates additional person travel demand** above the existing use of property. Florida Statute exempts State of Florida governmental uses, and public and charter schools from paying mobility fees. The City is also proposing to exempt City and County governmental uses from mobility fees as these uses are funded by existing and future taxpayers.

WHEN DOES NEW DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY PAY ITS MOBILITY FEES?

If adopted, mobility fees will be assessed at the time of a building permit application, effective May 17th, 2022. Any valid building permit submitted prior to 12:00 AM May 17th, 2022, will not be assessed a mobility fee. The mobility fees would be required to be paid no later than issuance of a building permit, unless otherwise specified in an approved development order or agreement.

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HOW IS A MOBILITY FEE DETERMINED FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT?

The Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee Technical Report and the implementing ordinance include a simplified table, known as a mobility fee schedule, that provides the mobility fee rates for various uses of property, such as residential, retail, industrial, and office. The mobility fee assessed is calculated based on the mobility fee rate and a specific unit of measure, such as heated and cooled square feet for a residential use, and number of rooms for a hotel.

ARE OFFSETS OR CREDITS AVAILABLE FOR MOBILITY FEES?

Offsets of mobility fees may be available where redevelopment is replacing an existing structure. Credits may be available for previous proportionate share payments, for dedication of right-of-way, and/or the construction of multimodal projects identified in the mobility plan. The mobility fee ordinance contains details for off-sets and credits and administrative procedures would provide examples and additional details for determining off-sets and credits.

WHAT HAPPENS TO MOBILITY FEES PAID TO THE CITY?

Mobility fees are required by Florida Statute to be separated into a specific fund that tracks both payments and expenditures. The fund is subject to yearly audit by the State of Florida Department of Revenue. The requirement for a special fund is to ensure that: (1) mobility fees are not included in general revenues, (2) that the collection and expenditure of fees is transparent, and (3) the fees are being used for the purpose for which they were collected.

WHERE CAN MOBILITY FEES BE SPENT?

Due to the compact nature of the City and its overall size, the entire City is a single Mobility Fee Benefit District. The collected mobility fees can be spent on multimodal projects anywhere within City limits and on multimodal projects outside City limits so long as they are identified in the Mobility Plan or the Capital Improvements Program.

WHAT CAN MOBILITY FEES BE SPENT ON?

Mobility fees can be spent on multimodal projects included in the Mobility Plan or the Capital Improvements Program. The adopted Mobility Plan serves as the guiding vision for multimodal projects and is to be updated every five (5) years. During that time, there may be a need to fund multimodal projects that were not contemplated in the Mobility Plan. To expend mobility fee funds on multimodal projects not included in the Mobility Plan, the City would be required to amend its Capital Improvements Program to formally add the multimodal project.

CONFLICTS: This summary has been prepared for informational purposes only. The adopted mobility fee ordinance controls in the event of any conflict between the ordinance and this summary. Please reference the ordinance, the comprehensive plan, and the technical report for specific detail related to the mobility plan and mobility fee.