

ANNOUNCER: You've tuned into another edition of The Break Room. A

weekly conversation about how the City of St Augustine

works from those who do the work everyday. Hosted by the

City of St Augustine's Communications Director Melissa

Wissel. The Break Room offers a closer look at the different

city departments and provides updates on current and upcoming

projects and events. And now your host, Melissa Wissel.

MELISSA: Thanks for tuning in. I'm

Melissa Wissel, Communications

Director for the City of St Augustine. There's always

something to talk about when we have the City's Public Works

Director in studio, Reuben

Franklin is with me this week.

Reuben, thank you for stopping

by. REUBEN: That's my pleasure. MELISSA: So,

there is never a dull moment in
your department. We always

bring you on when there's
either maybe something special

or lots of other things. But
you've got transportation, CRA,

mobility, development, traffic
studies, resilience, you always

have something going on. What
do we have going on right now?

REUBEN: Well, we always have
something going on and. But

right now, a couple things that
are happening. We have an express

lane in the parking garage.

We're running a pilot program

on. The intention of this
express lane is to provide easy

access. You don't have to stop
and pay at the parking

attendant. You can drive right
into the garage, park, and you

can pay with your mobile app. Or
you can find one of the

PayStation kiosks. They're the
same ones that are on our

on-street and flat lots and pay
there. And you can use the park

now card at that kiosk. So, the
intention is zip in, park, pay,

don't wait in line, and and
it's really integrating our

on-street parking and parking
facility, the garage together

into one unified parking system.

And so you can use the mobile

app in there, as well. MELISSA: Getting
all this technology. We've been

working on the technology of
parking for a couple of years. REUBEN:

That's right. Yeah. So, it's
been the step-by-step process.

But we've eliminated all, you
know, people remember the old

meter heads with coin operated. So we eliminated those,

we went to PayStations. We
launched the parking app. So

this is that next step is to
bring the parking garage into

the fold. And so hopefully
you guys, if you're out there, go

use it. Try it out. We're
looking for feedback. We're

running the pilot right now.

We'll probably run through, you

know, 60 to 90 days and then

we'll take a look at whether we

want to expand it. Not move

forward with it because it

didn't really work or maybe

keep it as it is and just have

that one express lane. So

right now, we're getting good

feedback. MELISSA: And we also want to

remind our listeners about the

St Johns County resident

discount. REUBEN: Yeah that's correct.

MELISSA: With the app and the kiosks in

town. REUBEN: Yeah so right now if you

have the app you can go to ParkStAug.com. You can apply

for a resident permit. That

provides a discount. So it's,

you know, 50 cents if you're parking on street or a \$3

dollar flat fee to park in the parking garage. You can use

the Park Now Card for that but the new system with the app you

can actually apply for the resident discount and it

gets applied to your app.

Automatically. MELISSA: Automatically. When

you when you put your license plate number in to pay,

essentially off of your app, it recognizes the license plate as

a registered resident, and it's going to automatically apply

the discount. REUBEN: That's correct.

And the one thing we're working

on with the pay stations on street is that when punch in

your license plate it would

recognize that without the

mobile app or the Park Now Card

and apply the discount. MELISSA: Okay.

And I don't have to put a

ticket or anything back in my

window. REUBEN: Nope. It's all pay by

plate. So it's all recognized

by your license plate. So everybody that's listening,

memorize your license plate

now. MELISSA: Or take a picture of it.

REUBEN: Or take a picture of it. MELISSA: And

then look it up when you get to

the kiosk. I've got 10, 15

minutes to get to the kiosk.

Pay my kiosk. REUBEN: There's a 15

minute grace period. So when you

enter express lane, you have 15

minutes to park and pay.

And and we're also
monitoring that. Is that enough

time? Do you need more time? So
feedback like that would be

helpful, as well. We thought 15
minutes gave enough of a grace

period to park and get to a
kiosk. But we may

look at maybe extending that to
20 minutes. MELISSA: Okay, so if you're

downtown or you're wanting to
come downtown we're going to

give you a quick way to get in
the parking garage, that's the

express lane. REUBEN: Yeah and the
whole idea is to make the

parking garage your 1st
option, whether you're a visitor

or a resident. Like there's,

outside of Saturdays, there's

plenty of capacity in the
parking garage. So go there, pay. MELISSA:

And \$3. REUBEN: And park yeah and \$3. And
then we also have monthly for

folks that work downtown, you
know, \$30 a month get you a

parking pass. You can come and
go as many times as you want.

And like I said, outside of the
Saturdays where we will close

for a few hours, there's plenty
of parking. MELISSA: Okay. So talking

transportation. We're also
talking, we've just gotten

funding approval for what we,
we're currently referring to as

a downtown circulator. REUBEN: Yeah, so
this is another exciting

component that kind of fits in with the parking garage.

Again, making the garage the easiest, most accessible way to

park. And now we'll have a public circulator, a shuttle

that's going to run on a fixed route downtown. It's main

stop is going to be at the Clock Tower at the parking

garage. And then it's going to go out and turn left on Orange down

to the Bayfront, make a right on Avenida, cruise down, there'll be

a stop on the Bayfront. Cruise down the Cathedral, make a right

on the Cathedral there'll be a stop around St George Street.

then head get to Cordova make a right on Cordova and head back

to the Clock Tower with a stop
in the midway on Cordova. So the

whole idea there is, man now you
park you really want to go to a

place in the south part of town,
it's it's hot out, you know, it's

a 12 to 15 minute walk. Now you
can jump on a shuttle the

circulator and get there. MELISSA: And
those are going to be air

conditioned. REUBEN: Air conditioned.
We did select historic tours of

America to run it. So that
would be your green trolleys

that are running around.
They'll be running this service

for the city. We did that
through, we advertised and got

proposals back from companies

that wanted to that met the

criteria to run the service. So
we've done all of that. And

we're looking forward to a
launch date in October. Ideally

it will be in the State's
Mobility Week which I think

starts October 22nd. MELISSA: So yeah
somewhere around the week of

October-ish. REUBEN: We're looking to
hopefully have a launch and a

little ceremony during Mobility
Week. But I will, I do want to

say one thing, just to clarify
for our listeners. The, you're

right. The Historic Tours of
America or the Orange and Green

Trolleys. But when this
circulator is launched, it's

going to have its own look.

It's going to have its own

color scheme, branding, so, just
so that folks aren't confused.

They're operating it. But this
is a free shuttle. REUBEN: Yes, a free

complimentary service.

MELISSA: Complementary. REUBEN: And it's to

move people around the city. But
you're 100% correct.

We're going through the
marketing and branding what the

shuttle's going to look like.

And it's going to have a

distinct look. You're going to.

It's going to be a city

service. It's a municipal
service that's free

to the public. MELISSA: You can't
just, you can't get on and ride

it around all day, though. You

gotta get off. You can't get,

you can't just go sit in it for

a couple of laps and cool off. REUBEN:

So coming with the free

services, there'll be rules,

like you can only ride it one

full loop before you have to

get off and get on again. And

and that's to prevent people

from. Setting up shop in

there and join the cool AC.

MELISSA: Right. We've also. If you're

just now tuning in, you are

listening to The Break Room.

Today in studio, I have the

pleasure of sitting with Public

Works Director Ruben Franklin.

Catching up on all those things

that are going on with our

transportation. Reuben, the
other thing I will talk about

here in our last half is... These
two things that we've talked

about, the express lane, the
circulator, those are coming

online relatively relatively
quickly. But most of the

projects, we've been talking
about for a long time. They do

not happen overnight. One of
the big ones of course, I'll

just throw out a couple and you
pick the one we want to talk

about. You've got King Street.
You've got of course this mobility

oriented development mode of
transportation zoning that

we're trying to figure out with
the property on the corner of

US - 1 and King for the
potential of a transportation

hub. Transportation or, excuse
me, traffic studies. We've been

talking about on Anastasia
Island at the fire station.

Pick one. Give us a recap on all three. REUBEN: Well, I'll
try to run down all

three. But so, the
first one I'll talk about is

the Broudy Development. People
have probably seen that on the

in the paper. And we've been really,
if you go back in the public

record in the paper, you'll find
articles from 2017 - 2018

discussing this. So we're right
now in the throws of doing a

zoning change that would allow
the development to take place.

And part of that development
would be a city parking garage,

500 to 700 parking spaces for
the public. And the idea there

would be to run the shuttle and
put parking on the periphery, so

when we're running shuttles
during our peak times, we've

we've got a lot of capacity to
have people park easily and and

access the historic downtown
area. MELISSA: That would also tie into

that circulator probably. REUBEN: And
yeah. And then it's a bigger

component of the circulator. So,
that would be our second

circulator route. In the

future. That ties in with

King Street. So we recently
entered an agreement with the

state where the state's giving
the city \$18 million dollars.

We're going to redevelop and
redesign King Street. We'll

take the Broudy development in
consideration with having that

parking garage on the periphery.
And that's a 10-year agreement.

So, 20, by 2033, we have to have
the road rebuilt and the states

providing us \$18 million
dollars to do that. So, what's

going to happen right now, from
people that are listening,

we're going to start to have
public meetings, engagement,

provide concepts of what that looks like. But we're going to

wait until we've, the Broudy Project gels a little bit more,

so we understand what we're dealing with, and then we'll

take that into consideration as we redevelop the King Street

Corridor. One of the city's entry corridor. So I'm really

excited about the redevelopment of that corridor. MELISSA: And the big

thing, just before you go to the next one. The big thing on that

King Street is the is that little bridge part. REUBEN: Well the bridge

is going to be, yes the bridge is going to get reconstructed.

That's anticipated to start construction in 2024. Summer 2024. And that is actually

going to be rebuilt by the state. So they're moving forward with that plan. Now we

we had a public meeting, but there'll be a couple more

public meetings in the future, to go over the the MOT, the

maintenance of traffic detouring, that's going to be associated with that project.

And then the, one of the my favorite ones is the Red Cox Road, Anastasia Island traffic study that you were discussing.

So we have a roundabout that's proposed for Red Cox Road and

Anastasia Boulevard and Old Quarry. This has been a long standing issue accidents that

have occurred there with

neighbors, neighborhoods asking
for improvements, we finally

have an improvement that DOT is
agreed upon. The next step for

the city is to relocate the
fire station. So that's what

we're working on right now is
to work on relocating the

existing fire station that's
right there at that

intersection, because the state
DOT needs that additional land

in order to make the roundabout
work. MELISSA: Okay. And this is

that whole area, if you're, if
you're thinking, where's Red Cox

Road again? It's all that
neighborhood area down out by

the lighthouse. Fire
station, that whole. And we've

had unfortunate fatalities. But
we had to do us again traffic

study and finally it it met the
it met the the litmus test as

it were and so we're ready to
start working forward on that.

REUBEN: Yep and so it's, but as you were
saying earlier, these things

take time. You know, the DOT
works in five year work program

increments, so the five-year
clock hasn't even started until

the city can relocate the fire
station. And then DOT has

basically five years to work on
the design and construction of

the roundabout. So, the
ball's in the city's court, but

we're actively working on it.

MELISSA: And if all things, being

working out the way we want it,

the fire station will stay

somewhere out there on the

island.. REUBEN: Yes, it has to stay in

close proximity. We're looking

actually across the street from

The Amp. There's a

triangular piece of property

that we think would be ideal.

It's owned by the state, so

we're currently working on how

we could acquire that piece of

property from the state. But

very important is emergency service

respond response times. So it

has to be located somewhere in

that area, so we don't increase

our emergency response times.

MELISSA: Right. Lots of moving parts as it were, no pun intended or pun

intended. And things are constantly moving. Anything

else before we wrap up? The, you're talking about the

roundabouts, the roundabout, the big roundabout at San Marco,

that's done from all intensive purposes. REUBEN: It's done. The last remaining thing that happen is a landscaping project

that the city's working on right now. We got \$200, 000

from the state to do the landscaping there. So, that'll

happen when it's planting season. So, we're anticipating

you know, early spring time that we'll do the landscaping

project. MELISSA: Great. Well, that that wraps it up. We got everything.

REUBEN: We got everything. MELISSA: Hopefully, everybody got a a recap. If you

missed any part of this broadcast and you want to go

back and listen from the beginning, you can now find us

on a podcast, look for us on Spotify, iHeartRadio, Apple

Podcast. You can find a complete listing of our podcast

platforms with links to those at CityStAugRadio. com.

We want to keep you informed about what's happening in and

around the city and most importantly, we want you to

hear it here from the people doing the work and making it

happen every day. Stay
connected with us. We're on

Facebook, Twitter, and
Instagram @CityStAug.

Thanks again for tuning in.

Until next time. ANNOUNCER: You've been

listening to The Break Room, a
weekly program projects and

programs offered by the City of
St Augustine. Join us each

week as the City's
Communications Director, Melissa

Wissel, has in-depth
conversations with the people

who make our town work to meet
the needs of our community. The

Break Room is produced by
Communication Specialist for

the City of St. Augustine,

Cindy Walker. See you at this

time next week for another

edition of The Break Room.