

[Narrator] You've tuned in to another  
edition of The Breakroom, a

weekly conversation about how  
the City of Saint Augustine

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

City of Saint Augustine's  
communications director,

Melissa Wissel. The Breakroom  
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] Welcome to The  
Breakroom. Thanks for tuning in

as we observe Mobility Week  
promoting awareness of safe

multi-modal transportation  
choices It's a good time to get

an update on the city's  
mobility initiatives so I've  
  
invited Assistant City Manager  
Ruben Franklin to join us. He's  
  
been leading the charge

focusing on mobility for the  
city for quite some time. Of  
course, in Saint Augustine,

it's mostly about  
transportation and parking,

clearing the congestion and  
finding efficient solutions to

help folks get into and around  
the city. Reuben, welcome back.

[Rueben] Thanks for having me. [Melissa] I know  
it's been a while. You've been

had a promotion to assistant  
city managers so thanks for

coming in and talking with us

about of these mobility issues.

I want to go back a little bit  
and recap but I also want to

get people's attention before  
we start the interview. Stay

tuned because we are going to  
be making an announcement about

some changes that are coming  
November 6th. So, now that

I've put everybody on the edge  
of their seats. Uh let's let's

do a little bit of a recap.  
Mobility does always seem to be

a hot topic. Um Todd is our new  
public works director. He

really does oversee that now  
but I've brought you here in

just to give us a recap and  
also to talk about those

upcoming changes. Remind us  
where we got all you know all

of this came from with  
mobility. You started out as

our first [Rueben] Mobility manager.

[Melissa] That's it. [Rueben] Uh well it started

with the city's vision plan  
that was adopted where it

identified mobility as one of  
the top initiatives that the

city should be actively  
pursuing improvements to and

so from that it sent us on this  
whole process of developing a

mobility division. Uh I got the  
opportunity to be the first

mobility manager Xavier  
Pellicer's our mobility manager

now and it also set us down the  
path of looking at our comp

plan and making sure elements  
of our comprehensive plan

included a long-range mobility  
plan which we did not have. So,

we've checked all those boxes.

We've implemented a mobility

fee for new developments that  
they pay into a fee that helps

with infrastructure  
improvements around the city

and we got into this 'cuz we're  
really popular place. [Melissa] Yeah. [Rueben] To

live and work and visit and  
especially around our really

peak times. Nights of lights is  
coming up and spring time we we

have a lot of visitors that  
pass through and enjoy our city

and so mobility becomes really

important of how we move people

around the city. Not just in  
their own personal vehicles but

a lot of times how can we get  
them? We call it a park once

environment. How can we get  
them to park one time and then

move around using bikes,  
walking, transit, our new star

circulator. [Melissa] Yup. [Rueben] That's been  
running is is part of the

equation and happy that we've  
got that off the ground that's

been running out of the parking  
garage and visitor center for a

few months now. [Melissa] And the the  
star circulator, I do want to

make sure folks are aware of  
that. It's a bright blue and

white bus. So, kind of that  
courtesy van-looking vehicle.

[Rueben] And it's free. [Melissa] It's free. [Rueben] Free.

[Melissa] Air conditioned in the summer,

heated in the winter. [Rueben] Yes. [Melissa] As  
you need it and it, like you

mentioned, picks up at the VIP.

It drops off there at the

corner kind of by the Fort and  
River and Fort in front of

Mary's and then back around by  
Saint George Street. [Rueben & Melissa] Cathedral

and Saint George. Um and that is  
free like you said. Uh just

helps you get from the top of  
Saint George to the bottom of

Saint George. Little bit  
faster. [Rueben] That's right and that

it's just the first phase. Uh  
we are anticipating of

expanding it. Um we have a

grant from the state that's

helping fund this project over

about the course of five years

and the ideas is is to make it

self-sustaining. Um the funding

goes away after five years but

we've had time to work out the

operational costs and budgeting

for that but the future of the

Star Circulator is not just

what you see now but eventually

maybe making a connection to

Saint Augustine Beach having

stops along Anastasia Boulevard

so people can get in the town

from the beach and vice versa

and then also the what's been

in the commission's been

deliberating lately is

developing a garage at the

Broudy site which is on the

corner of West King Street and

US one and where we build 750

car parking garage and the

circulator would run from that

point too. So getting people

parked in these garage

facilities and then having you

know transit a circulator you

can choose to use that walk,

bike, to get into the downtown

area. [Melissa] It's a lot of and that

that whole idea of the beach

has been a a question for many

years too. So I think that's

the other piece that's is these

things don't happen overnight.

So what we're talking about  
here today we may be back in

another year talking about the  
next phase of something. [Rueben] Yeah

the plan too with the beach is  
to we just started running the

circulator in the downtown area  
so now that we got our legs

under us there we're going to  
start to talk about the next

expansion phase. Um the beach  
makes sense so we're going to

reach out and talk to officials  
at the beach and see what what

we can do to get something up  
and running. What that looks

like. [Melissa] We were talking, you're  
talking about parking and the

festivals and things, I do  
want to touch on, we do have a

local resident discount option.

We have a mobile app and a park

now card. Give us a refresher  
on the park now and how those

discounts work I should say  
too. [Rueben] Yes, so if you're a

resident of St. Johns County,  
you can apply for or the

resident discount and the  
resident discount can either be

used through a park now card or  
through our mobile app where

you go on prove that you're the  
resident of Saint Johns County

and you get applied the  
discount and the discount is

you pay \$3 per entry at the  
parking garage or you pay 50

cents an hour to park on street

in one of our public flat lots

or on-street parking area. Um  
so a lot of people just refer

to it as the park now card but  
really it's it's a resident

discount. Discount. [Melissa] The mobile  
app is really really the way to

go. [Rueben] Yes, the mobile app you use [Melissa] way  
to go. [Rueben] Um eventually, the Park

Now Card itself is going to get  
phased out. Um it's kind of old

technology. We're having issues  
getting new cards but the

program's not going to go away.

Resident discount goes away.

It's just going to be a  
different way of using it. Um

in the future, you'll just  
apply for the resident

discount. Um prove your  
resident of Saint John's County

and then you'll either be able  
to use the mobile app or you'll

just walk up to a PayStation  
and punch your license plate

number in. It will will  
recognize as a permit for the

discount and then it will just  
apply the rate. So in the

future you won't need the Park  
Now card but we'll we'll put

plenty of public noticing out  
there and if you do have a Park

Now card you'll be allowed to  
spend down whatever balance is

on it. On it. [Melissa] The the Park Now  
app. It's called that. It's

called Park Now. com. Uh or  
[Rueben] Park Saint Aug. [Melissa] Sorry. Park

Saint Aug. We've we worked a  
hard on that one. Park Saint

Aug. com. So if you are using  
the mobile app or if you

haven't before that is where  
you go to get your registration

information uploaded to submit  
that to the mobile app. So if

you haven't done it yet, go  
ahead and do that. If you are

just now tuning in, I have  
Ruben Franklin in the break

room with me this week. He is  
our assistant city manager.

We're talking about parking  
transportation. It's mobility

week at the end of October.  
Reuben, I did tease our

audience about the changes that

are coming. We were talking a

bit about although discounts.

Tell me about the changes that

are coming November sixth,

that's a Monday and we're

going to see some times of

enforcement in our parking

change and possibly something

at the parking garage changing.

[Rueben] Uh yes, that's correct. So,

with the new budget process, we

have approved new rates that

are going to go into effect

November sixth. Uh so, starting

with the parking garage, it's

going to be twenty dollars.

It's going to go from \$15 to

\$20 per entry. Uh the resident

discount stays the same. So, if

you have the Park Now Card or,  
the resident discount, it's

\$three dollars per entry and  
we're going to do \$20 per entry

from 7 AM to 5 PM and then  
after 5 PM, it's going to drop

to \$5 dollars per entry and the  
whole purpose of that is try to

in the evening time get more  
people to park in the parking

garage use the circulator with  
the exception of events so in

our really peak times nights of  
lights will have an events

calendar out there that it will  
be \$20 per entry during events

when we're running shuttling  
kind of on the periphery of the

city then the parking garage  
itself will be \$20 per entry

from 7 to 9 PM but outside of  
events will be 20 from seven to

5 PM and then once 5 PM hits  
it's going to drop to \$5 and

then our on-street parking  
we're going to extend the pay

times from 5 PM it's going to  
be paid parking for on street

and our flat lots all the way  
to 9 PM now and we're also

going to institute Sundays from  
1 PM to 9PM will be paid

parking we'll leave the  
mornings free for you know our

residents and citizens that are  
going to church and on Sunday

mornings but in the afternoon  
and the whole incentive and

reason for extending that is to

try to push more people into

the parking garage get them  
parked in that central location

and use utilizing the star  
circulator. [Melissa] The when you

mention nights of lights I also  
wanted to point out there may

be either a change or a  
suspension with the maybe not

suspension but a change in the  
hours for the star circulator

as well. I think right now it  
goes until ten I do think we've

talked about those hours may be  
cut back just because that

circular time may be  
constrained so. [Rueben] Yeah it gets

adjusted and so we're we're  
learning you know so we're

going to make adjustments as necessary. Uh this will be the

first season that we go through  
Nights of Lights with the Star

Circulator. So yeah there there  
may be adjustments that have to

be made but at the end of the  
day you know we we really want

people to get parked in the  
garage and and utilize have

free service from here until we  
start adding on additional

services into the future. Um  
the other thing when we when

you and I were talking about  
this and I've been speaking to

staff about it. There also will  
be a change I think the morning

times. Is that correct? It's  
going to be the same. [Rueben] Well no

the morning times around the  
plaza enforcement doesn't

start. Pay parking doesn't  
start till 10 AM around the

plaza. [Melissa] Okay. [Rueben] Um so we're  
going to keep that in place. Um

but what our city commission  
approved was to extend the

times into the evening. Okay.

But outside of the plaza area

will will be pay park will  
start at 8 AM. [Melissa] Okay. Um and of

course any changes that happen  
you'll see that it is coming

out on November 6th. Um the  
other thing about the parking

that's interesting is by doing  
all of this it really helps to

give us that push to being you

know working with the

transportation hub over at

Broudy. That will be another

benefit of this parking idea

and parking garage is if that

other garage goes in we're

going to have that additional

place to park. [Rueben] Right. Yeah.

We'll be adding 750 more

parking spaces to our

inventory. You know right now

we are we're around 1500

parking spaces for the total

city for public parking. So

it's almost we're increasing

our inventory by half. Now the

change that has to occur is

people have to embrace shuttles

and a different way of

accessing the city of Saint  
Augustine. Um the other thing

the Broudy Garage does is it  
really opens up that West

Augustine business district as  
well. Um we have intentions if

we move forward to relaxing  
parking requirements in that

area so they can benefit from  
that public garage being there

and we get usage of the garage  
as well so I'm really excited

about what it can mean to the  
west city area. Yeah. Um as

well as a different way for  
accessing the downtown area.

We've always envisioned it  
maybe being more of the local

workforce hub location where  
you you park there. It's

accessible off of homes

Boulevard, State Road sixteen,

US1. [Melissa] You don't have to come  
downtown. [Rueben] And it will change

the way that you access the  
downtown area. [Melissa] Yeah, commuting.

[Rueben] And commuting, yeah. [Melissa] Well,  
there's a lot of changes going

on. I will also remind folks to  
check out information. Uh we do

have residential parking. There  
are monthly discounts for

parking permits at the parking  
garage. So, there's a lot of

mobility programs, solutions  
out there that I think a lot of

folks aren't necessarily always  
aware of. [Rueben] Yeah, that's so the

parking garage it's \$30, \$33

anything with tax and you can

get a monthly parking pass so  
that that's a great opportunity

if you're working downtown now  
where that gets difficult is in

our peak times people you know  
that garage fills up so it's

not as easily accessible so  
that's kind of where the Broudy

Garage comes in is we'll have  
the same type of monthly

parking program there that  
hopefully will be accessible

during our real peak times  
right for residents because to

prevent spill over from people  
just parking in our residential

areas we have a residential  
permit parking program So any

resident can if they feel like  
they have a lot of commuter

traffic and parking they can  
reach out to the our parking

division and we'll do a study  
to see if it qualifies for

residential permit parking and  
that's a great way especially

in our historic neighborhoods  
of preventing that spill over

from the historic downtown  
area. [Melissa] Well, Rueben, lots of

exciting stuff coming for  
parking and mobility. Um we're

always thinking forward. So,  
thank you for coming and

talking to us about it and  
everybody else can listen and

wait for that official  
announcement for November the

sixth just be aware that

changes are coming [Rueben] yes thank

you very much [Melissa] if you missed

part of this broadcast and

want to go back and listen from

the beginning you can now find

us on your favorite podcasting

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Thanks again for tuning in.

Until next time. [Narrator] You've been

listening to The Breakroom, a

weekly program addressing

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

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communication specialist for

the City of St. Augustine,

Cindy Walker. See you at this

time next week for another

edition of The Breakroom.