

[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 every day. 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. I'm Melissa Wissel, communications director for the

City of Saint Augustine. This week, I've invited Todd Grant,

our public works to the studio

to talk about the park now

card. [Todd] Thank you, Melissa. [Melissa] I

don't really feel like we need

much more of an introduction.

[Todd] Yeah. [Melissa] It's a big topic. [Todd] It it

is and I know it's near and

dear to many of the residents

and you know, unfortunately,

technology wise, it's it's a

becoming a relic and so we had

to make a decision as far as

phasing out that technology.

The residential discounts still

there. There are ways in which

a a resident can actually get

that discount. [Melissa] So, the card,

the physical card, we all love

to have that security of a

card. The card is gone. We

don't have cards anymore and
the technology as you just said

is phased phasing out. We
actually ran out of we ran out

of inventory and could not
replace the inventory. [Todd] That is correct and

then also the mechanism in in
order to recharge them with

more funds, that technology is
becoming obsolete and so

anytime we have a charger go
down, we can't fix it. [Melissa] Okay.

Another important date, let's
point out to our listeners,

December 21st is a Thursday. Uh
any depleted cards after that

date will not be recharged.

[Todd] That is. [Melissa] Will no longer be

recharging. [Todd] Right. On the
thirty-first. [Melissa & Todd] On the

twenty-first. [Todd] Excuse me. You
you'll that's your last day in

order to get a more funds on
your existing park now card.

Now keep in mind we will only
maximize your recharge to \$30.

[Melissa] Okay. So now, if I have, let's
we're going to just kind of go

down the line of some of the
comments and concerns that

we've seen coming in on our
social media. Um what do I do

if I have a balance on my card?

[Todd] So, you can physically go down

to 50 Bridge Street customer
service and get that balance

transferred to a wallet as you
as you will on the app and so

you can use the remaining
balance that can be transferred

over. [Melissa] Okay, but I don't have to
Cuz my next question is, do I

have to use the app? I know
that's a big concern and I'm

just going to give a shout out
to the city. We've struggled

with phasing this out for a
long time. Internally, you

know, when was this going to
happen and the mobile app

versus the card was a was a big
sticking point and we are very

aware. Not everybody does
mobile. [Todd] Right and so again, if

you don't want to use the the
app on your your cellphone, you

can go down again to 50 Bridge.

You physically have to go there

and fill out an application to
your license plate put into our

software so that way when you
go to any pay station or the

parking garage it will
recognize your license based on

our license plate reader and so
let's say you have four cars in

your family you'll need to fill
out four individual

applications one for each car
due to the fact that people

sell cars things like that so
we don't like to bundle

multiple license plates under
one account [Melissa] This is not State

Farm we're not bundling [Todd] No
bundles. [Melissa] No bundles. [Todd] No. [Melissa] Um

what about so we talked about

okay here's one. Handicap

parking. People seem to be

confused about handicap

parking. The park now card does

not have any correlation to

handicap parking. [Todd] Correct. So

the city does not charge for

any handicap parking. You can

park in a designated handicap

space if for some odd reason

that's not available. You can

park anywhere at a pay to park

or pay by plate location or the

parking garage for free. You

don't need a park now card. You

don't need an app. [Melissa] Do.. I need my

placard. [Todd] Correct. [Melissa] Something visual [Todd] You need to

that you have a handicapped

sticker or license plate. [Melissa] So

some folks may be saying oh

that's a lot of hassle. Let's

talk let's talk about the

discount. It's a it's a

significant discount. Uh.

[Todd] Correct. So if you're not a

resident the the fee is \$2 and

50 cents an hour at a pay by

plate you know location and

it's \$20 an hour at the garage.

So the discount for residents

is 50 cents an hour or \$3 all

day at the parking garage. So,

it's it's significant. [Melissa] Uh okay

and I I'm a business downtown

and I have employees that I

want to be able to still get

the discount but they live in

Putnam County. They live in

Putnam County. So. [Todd] Right. So.

[Melissa] Saint Johns County resident
discount. [Todd] Saint Johns County

residents that have to. [Melissa] Right.
[Todd] Have that discount. [Melissa] It's and

it's hard but we do have
monthly parking. [Todd] Correct. So,

any business could again go
down to 50 Bridge and pay for

monthly parking in the parking
garage. [Melissa] And that's a pass.

Or.. [Todd] Well, I think it's
also based on license plate.

[Melissa] Okay. So, if you're just now
tuning in, I have Todd Grant in

the break room with me this
week. We are, he's the Public

Works Director talking about
the dissolution if you will of

the Park Now Card but not the resident discount. We want to

make sure that folks understand we are not eliminating the

discount just using the card and the mobile app really

is not necessary although I do want to talk about the mobile

app just from a convenient standpoint. Let's say you you

you're okay with you getting in the garage for your 3 or you're

at a parking spot for your 50 cents an hour. Why would I

want to use the mobile app?

[Todd] Well, let me tell you. So,

you're sitting there in the middle of dinner and your

mobile app's going to let you know that your time is running

out and so instead of getting

up and sprinting towards

whatever pay station it was

that you used and getting

another ticket, you can simply

add more time via your app.

[Melissa] Mobile app. [Todd] So it it's a nice

convenience and also it reminds

you of your times running out.

[Melissa] Time's running out. Right. Mm

hmm. Um so let's try to remind

folks you can still use your

remaining funds. [Todd] Correct. So

you can still use your Park Now

card until your funds are

depleted. You will not be

allowed to add more funds to

that Park Now card after

December 21st. [Melissa] Right. [Todd] So I like

I said I understand that many

residents may not be happy with
this decision. It's a change. I

understand that it's park now
has been around at least ten,

10 years, 15 years now. So,
it's become a mainstay and like

you alluded to earlier, we've
been wanting to phase this out

and you know, at some point,
you have to rip the band aid

off and and and move forward
and so, yes, I understand that

there's some residents that may
not be happy with this decision

but there's there's
alternatives. There's two easy

alternatives to still get your
residential discount whether

you're you like the technology
and want to use app or you just

want to fill out a paper
application and we'll put your
license plate into the system.

[Melissa] Into the system and that's
going to be in there. I think I
I actually use it the app that

I've registered my car and I
think when it comes up for
renewal, it you get an Email
that reminds you. I was afraid

I was going to have to go back
in and re upload everything and

you don't. [Todd] No. [Melissa] You just you
literally click the link you

say yes I this is still me and.
[Todd] Correct. [Melissa] Magic. [Todd] That's why we we have

you physically come in so we
can make sure we get an Email

address because once it expires
or people sell a car, you know,

when it's associated with that
car, those are the little

things that we try to make it
more convenient for you. [Melissa] Yes.

So, let's hope this is answered
our our listeners questions. Um

we're going to we're going to
switch subjects a little bit

because we do have a few more
minutes. I do want to talk a

little bit about the glass
recycling and some of the

changes in the department of
some of our sustainability

programs. [Todd] Yeah, I'm excited.
So, we've added another

location for glass recycling

out at City of Saint Augustine

Beach City Hall and so we're
helping them out to try to

increase volumes there and then
hopefully in the very near

future we're going to be adding
a single stream recycling and a

glass recycling in West
Augustine more than likely in

the parking lot that is the
city's compound if you will off Pellicer

and Old Dixie. [Melissa] Okay. [Todd] And so
we're getting to a point now

where we're almost having the
larger dumpster dumpster

emptied every three to four
weeks which is a really good

sign and so that means we can
actually go to a larger

dumpster and it it's starting
to catch on. [Melissa] I I I do use it. I

live on the west side of US one
so I'm excited that something's

going to come over to my side
of town but the locations help

me remember. I know there's one
down by Solid Waste. [Todd] Right. So,

by the way, I'm putting that
one in West Augustine just for

you. [Melissa] Sure, thank you. I
appreciate it. [Todd] Uh so, we have

one right there at the end of
Riberia Street prior to going

into RB Hailing Park. You would
take a left towards the

wastewater treatment plant.
There's a dumpster outside

there. There's one on Redcox
Road which is by the RB Hunt

Coach Durr Field. There's one
North US one which is near the

Los Palmas Condominiums. [Melissa] So, I
can throw that recycled glass

bin in the back of my car on my
way in or out from work and.

[Todd] Very convenient. [Melissa] It is very
convenient. Uh talk a little

bit about sustainability. [Todd] So
yeah, I'm very excited. The

city's never had this position
so it's brand new. Um we hired

Liz Johnson for that position. She has
her degree in sustainability

from Jacksonville University
and so we've been putting our

heads together as far as some
some items that we want to try

to tackle first. The the main

thing is getting back to our

internal sustainability program
and so we've already identified

some key people that are
going to be part of that group

and so we're going to try to
make sure that our our

footprint is lessened within
the city before we start, you

know, reaching out to the
community. Another big

initiative that she's going to
Work on is solar power as far

as the parking garage and some
of the city buildings where we

can implement that that doesn't
obstruct or interfere with

historic preservation
archaeology so there's a lot of

moving parts but we're looking
at some of that proverbial

low-hanging fruit to go ahead
and and capture that first. [Melissa] We

use solar or the pig bellies?

[Todd] Yes. So, the trash cans, the

recycle side of it is a
compactor because on the trash,

no the trash side, sorry, the
trash side is compact with

recyclings not just because
people will put glass in there

even though it shouldn't go in
there. Uh so we don't want that

to break and and puncture. So.

[Melissa] I do know one of the things

you're talking about internal
changes. Uh it seems very minor

but it it makes a difference.

We used to have printers on all

of our desks. [Todd] Correct. [Melissa] And I
remember couple of years ago

when my printer went on the
fritz and IT said nope you're

going to print down the hall. I
was like what do you mean I

have to print down the hall?

[Todd] Yeah it's simple things like

electronic signatures and
documents if you have to print

print on both sides you know
the types of seem like little

mundane things but they do make
a difference and then she's

also going to work on we had
started prior to COVID a a

business appreciation as far as
for sustainable businesses. So

Liz is going to kick that back

up and and get that program

running and she's also going to
take over the tree planting,

the composting, and so she'll
she'll be taking that off of

Glabra Skipp's hands and putting
it under sustainability. [Melissa] I'm

glad to know about the
recognition program. I was going to ask

you but I wasn't quite sure
where we were on it. So, that's

good to hear. Uh that she's
going to bring that back up.

[Todd] There's some businesses that
have actually been reaching out

to us with some really
interesting initiatives that

they're doing on their own and
so we're seeing how the city

and the businesses can team up

together maybe from from a

logistics or resource

perspective so [Melissa] recognition

seems to go a long way. I have

to say. [Todd] Yeah. So, what we hope

to do is again, like have

certain tiers as far as

depending on what you do and

then also publish that

information via a map on our

city website so that if there's

residents or tourists that are

coming here that are want to be

conscientious about where they

go, they'll have a a place to

land and and see what the

businesses offer. [Melissa] And support,

yeah, because they, you're

right. People do tend to come

and they have if they have a certain interest, they're

going to go find the business that that shares that. So,

well, lots of exciting news.

Recap on the park now card.

Park card is going away. [Todd] It is.

[Melissa] Don't have to use the app. Just

need to register your license plate. Uh we did we did not

mention it's Park Saint Aug. com is where you want to go

online to register your license plate online. You can also go

directly to 50 Bridge Street.

You can cash or you can trade

in your card for funds to go onto the app so you would need

to use the app for that but you

don't have to. You can just

deplete the funds that are on
your existing card. I think we

covered up got it all. [Todd] I think
so and then people just need to

frame their old Park Now card
as a historic [Melissa] as a relic.

[Todd] Exactly. [Melissa] Put it in a time
capsule. [Todd] Exactly. [Melissa] We need it

for a time capsule. Uh it's all
on the website CityStAug.com. Todd, thanks for coming
down to the break room. [Todd] Thanks

for having me. [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
app. We're on Spotify, Apple

Podcast and more. You can get a
complete listing of our

podcasting platforms and a a
episode of this episode on CityStAugRadio.com. We
want to keep you informed about

what's happening in and around
the city and most importantly

that you hear it hear from the
people who make it happen every

day. Follow us on social media.

You'll see us on Facebook,

Twitter, and Instagram at CityStAug. Until next time,

thanks for tuning in. [Narrator] You've
been listening to The

Breakroom, a weekly program
addressing projects and

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

week as the city's
communications director,

Melissa Whistle, 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 Saint Augustine,
Cindy Walker. See you at this

time next week for another
edition of The Break Room.