

[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] Thanks for tuning in to The Breakroom. I'm Melissa

Wissel, Communications Director for the City of Saint

Augustine. This week, I'm sharing the studio with Amy

Skinner, plan and building

director as well as Jacob

Fredrickson, our planning

manager. [Jacob] Yes. [Melissa] Excellent. Happy

to have you, Jacob. Welcome for

your first appearance and Amy,

welcome back. [Amy] Thank you. Glad

to be here. [Melissa] So, I'm glad you're

here too but I am going to talk

mostly with Jacob. So, we're

glad to have you. Jacob, you

did a presentation to the City

Commission talking about a

parking ordinance update. It's

been in the works for quite a

long time. I want to get

started with you particularly

for our listeners. Give us that

historic recap. You really

covered a lot of ground but it

was I thought it was really
really important. So, take it

away. [Jacob] Yes, so we gave a report
to the city commission

highlighting the work we've
done over the past year with

the planning board and updating
our city's parking code. Um we

saw we saw a bunch of
development coming into town as

we've seen over the past
handful of years and

unfortunately the type of
development we've seen is not

been very pedestrian friendly
and [Melissa] car parking friendly,

right? I guess. [Jacob] Yeah, not a lot
of considerations for, I mean,

yeah, walkability or
environmental concerns, really

just large parking lots for
single-use commercial uses.

[Melissa] Kind of a one-time, not a very
thoughtful way of using
parking. [Jacob] Not a thoughtful way,
not very resilient. [Melissa] Okay. [Jacob] Um

doesn't take a lot of historic
preservation to account as but

we still do the best we can for
it. [Melissa] Okay. [Jacob] Um so, we try to see

as to what was causing the
issue of only getting large

single uses on property as
opposed to mixed use compact

info development. [Melissa] Okay. And
there are numerous examples of

Saint Augustine residents that
want to open up businesses in

town. [Melissa] Right. [Jacob] That are on a small lot and it's just maybe

an office use or just a corner coffee store or a neighborhood

bar kind of thing and the first issue they always run into is

not being able to provide enough parking on site. [Melissa] Cause

there's... is there is there a correlation between the

occupancy of the business and the number of parking spaces.

[Jacob] Yes. [Melissa] There has been. [Jacob] Yes. In our parking code we have 43

different uses. [Melissa] I'm sorry. Forty-three? [Jacob] 43 different uses

yes. [Melissa] Oh wow. [Jacob] So it talks about art galleries, special event

venues, hospitals, commercial

uses, just anything you can

think of. It would either be
specifically listed or has a

very similar it's very similar
to it. [Melissa] Okay. [Jacob] So for things like

a commercial use for every 300
square feet of that building

you have to provide one parking
spot. For things like an

apartment for based on the
number of bedrooms in it you

have to provide a certain
number of parking spots for

those. So if you're trying to
build a 1000 square foot office

for interior design office
where you're consulting with

people trying to design things
and you want to have an

apartment on top that required

I believe five or six parking

spaces [Melissa] so that would be so I

want to have a small business

on the bottom and and something

residential on top where I

could have my business in the

daytime and then go upstairs

and sleep at night. [Jacob] Absolutely.

[Melissa] You have to have five parking

spaces. [Jacob] Yeah, you can either

live there, you could run it

out to someone but again, if

you're just having a office use

that you have one client at a

time that comes in, right? I'll

talk about things. Still five

spaces is what you're required

to have to build on that

property. [Melissa] And it doesn't make

sense on either. It doesn't
make sense from the standpoint

of me needing five spaces
because I'm not going to have

five cars coming in but it also
doesn't make a lot of sense.

[Amy] Right, correct. So, that's
where when we look back at the

code and the evolution of the
code, you know, we can look

back all the way to 1975, which
is where we consider sort of

our modern land development
code taking effect. Um you

know, it really encourages this
type of suburban

development Which really you
know we don't have to plan for

Thanksgiving you know the

Friday you know Friday

Thanksgiving. [Melissa] Right right.

[Amy] Shopping [Melissa] Black Friday. [Amy] Black

Friday shopping for everyday

use. [Melissa] Right. [Amy] And so this update

since the code hadn't been

updated since nineteen

eighty-8. You know again we

were thinking it had a

different mindset then. So now

we realize that we're really

kind of a more urban

environment. We have had to

make decisions about our roads

and things that were were not

going to widen the roads to be

super highways through the city

where we you know have to

maintain we prioritize

maintaining our character on
our core corridors like San

Marco Avenue King Street
especially that we needed to

sort of update the code and
modernize it so we really

looked at the engineering
manuals now that have been

updated multiple times updated
the parking requirements which

in a lot of cases reduced the
requirements were that a lot

more people walk and use other
forms of mobility, bicycles,

the little motorized bikes and
things like that. So, we

want to again goes back to our
mobility plan as well and the

comprehensive plan as well and
that we're trying to encourage

people to to use alternative
forms of transportation. We

realized that the parking code
was kind of contrary to that.

[Melissa] Right. [Amy] So, that's where we rode
in a lot of options and and

gave people choices. [Melissa] So, if
You're just now tuning in.

You're listening to the break
room. I have Amy Skinner with

us, planning and building
director but also Jacob

Fredrickson who is our planning
manager recently gave a a

presentation to the commission.
So, we've talked a little bit

about that antiquated history.
Fill us in a little bit now

about what is this look like?

What are these new options that

are going to matter to the the
people who are developing our

building? [Jacob] Yes, so again, we've
been using a parking care that

was last updated nineteen
eighty-eight. So, a parking

care that's 36 years old. [Melissa] I was
a senior in high school. [Jacob] And

it's been used as kind of a one
size fits all. [Melissa] Right. [Jacob] And if

you've been to Saint Augustine
know that there's not two

businesses that are the same.

[Melissa] Right. [Jacob] Everyone's different.

[Melissa] Yeah. [Jacob] So what we've done here
is reduce the again these are

minimum requirements to build
in Saint Augustine. So if we

reduce those it's now more on
the developer of they can

decide of how much parking
they're going to generate. So

if it is a retail use that does
have a lot of traffic. They

will provide amount of parking
I think is appropriate. But if

it is a one on one type office
use they might think they need

a little bit less parking than
the one per 300 [Melissa] So is there

something in the proposal of
the business where they can

they can project their their
use in terms of I don't I won't

need five parking spaces I only
need two. [Amy] Yeah usually [Melissa] but then I have to provide

it. [Amy] Yes they can come up with
some they know their business

best. [Melissa] Okay. [Amy] So they can describe their business or come

up with a narrative of how they want to function and we can we

have more options written to this new code like shared

parking option which You know, if you have some uses that are

open during the day and some uses that are open at night,

then you can actually now kind of get a discount and share

share the parking for real instead of having to provide

all the parking for all the uses. We wrote in a park fee in

lieu of option where if you know a lot of our lot our lots

or small little infill lots in

between other things and if you

just can't provide physically

the parking then there's an

option that you would pay a fee

per parking space that would go

into the mobility fund and you

know, help help pay for like

bicycle improvements or

shuttling services or things

like that. In that way, you

don't have to provide the

parking on on site. It also

takes into account where you

can kind of look within a

quarter mile and see if there's

opportunities to provide

off-site parking where maybe

people you know, if you have

employees that just sort of

park for the whole day, they
can park offsite and walk to

the to your Business and and
things like that. So it opens

up more options for people and
trying to provide parking.

[Melissa] Jacob do you see this being an
impact to even our current I

mean this this how does this
affect our current owners or

our current property managers
or the folks that are having or

to provide parking? Can they go
back now and does this affect

them? [Jacob] Yes so existing
development does benefit as

well. [Melissa] Okay. [Jacob] So if you do have a
small neighborhood use

commercial use you do provide
parking on for that. By

reducing requirements, you now have buyer code excess parking.

You can now either expand the size of your business if you're

doing well and you want to expand or if you want to

diversify what's going on that property. Adding a separate

type of commercial use or even adding housing. So now we have

a more resilient type of a built environment. [Melissa] What else do

you think as an example can you give me one or two more

examples of some of those changes? Amy mentioned some

what else what else can they can folks look for in the

changes in this parking code?

[Jacob] Yes so again these are all

geared at kind of helping the
small time business getting

established. So, they may not
be able to provide 10 parking

spaces from day one. They may
only be able to start with

enough room on their site or
cost to actually construct a

parking lot because it does
take. [Melissa] Right. [Jacob] Money to design a

parking lot or even construct
it. [Melissa] Yeah. [Jacob] So, if they can only

start out with two parking
spaces, then they are limited

to a certain size of a building
but over time as they grow and

become more successful, they
can increase parking or pay

fees into or find shared
parking elsewhere as they grow

but to even get them started,
we reduce those barriers.

[Melissa] Gotcha. [Amy] And another big thing
is we introduced more areas of

the city you know right
historically I guess I should

say the historic districts.

[Melissa] Right. [Amy] Have not been required

in the core downtown have not
been required to provide

parking and we did that because
we didn't want people to tear

buildings down in order to
provide parking. We're trying

to kind of maintain the
historic core. We've actually

expanded areas from basically
the parking garage area where

the parking garage in Castillo

Drive is up San Marco up to San

Carlos where the commercially

zoned properties on on San

Marco Avenue will not have to

provide parking. Uh King

Street, King Street, the east

side of US1 as well as the

west side and if you're

commercially zoned, you will

not have to provide parking and

on Washington Street and as

well as I guess I should say

Palmer and Pellicer Lane off of

West King Street and then on

Washington Street which is

downtown and has a commercial

zoning district. It was

historically commercial but one

of their biggest impediments to

redeveloping is having to
provide parking. So, we we

exempted the the proposed
ordinance exempts them from

having to provide parking. [Melissa] So,
I don't need to be tearing

something down next to my
business to provide parking.

[Amy] Correct and also, if you have a
vacant lot in between your

buildings and whatever that
hopefully it'll encourage

somebody to build build back.

[Melissa] We'd rather we'd rather build

back than fill it in. Every
time we talk parking I think of

that song You Pay Paradise and
put in a parking. [Amy] Exactly. [Melissa] And

that's just that it's like I

just really feel like we are a

paradise and we just fill it

with parking. [Amy] And if you if you

fill in with with a building

then you become more walkable

because it's just more you know

appealing to walk and not have

kind of a sawtooth. [Melissa] Right. [Amy] Kind

of streetscape and It just

makes it easier. We also wrote

in options for bicycle

providing bicycle racks and

mobility hubs so that if you do

take an Uber and that sort of

thing you can get a credit for

your parking if you provide a

mobility of a hub. [Melissa] Oh like a

stop. [Amy] Like a right like

basically like a loading zone

where your your your
alternative transportation or

whatever can pull in and drop
you off. [Melissa] That's a [Amy] so we we've

got a lot more options. [Melissa] Well
and I know that one of the

nightlife issues. I mean, all
of this just intertwines. You

mentioned mobility, you
mentioned parking, nightlife

even. I know there's been
discussion about creating

rideshare hubs. So, that's a
really great, I've never heard

of, I've never read that
before. [Amy] So now, if you on any

private property, if you're the
business and you don't

necessarily have room for all

hundred parking spaces or

whatever you would
theoretically be required to

provide, you could get some
credit and you can provide a

mobility hub and and have a
little flexibility but also

then encourage alternative
forms of transportation that

people are using. [Melissa] And we've got
the Broudy piece coming into

play with all of this parking.
That's that's a benefit. We're

going to have a parking garage
mixed use transportation hub

all of that. [Amy] That's correct.
That's one reason we looked at

these areas because if you if
you know where the parking

garage is and you go south you
know to the plaza we basically

took that same distance north
up San Marco. So if you can

walk if you're walking down
toward the plaza and then you

can walk up San Marco that way
you know that's and it has the

central parking garage there
same as Broudy's anticipating

that the Broudy's parking
garage is coming would be

coming online then you can park
there and you can walk down

West King Street and you know
have a space to park but also

patronize those businesses so
we're trying to encourage

economic development in a
mixture of uses [Melissa] Anything else?

Cuz we're out of time. Told you
it would go fast. [Jacob] Yep. That's a

pretty good quick overview of
it. [Melissa] Any anything else that you

can think of that you want to
just throw in there or is it a

wrap? It's a wrap. [Jacob] Should be a
wrap for now. Yeah. [Melissa] Alright.

Thank you both for coming.

Great update. Uh and Jacob

great job at the commission
meeting and if our listeners

missed it, you can go to City
Saint Auck Radio. com to listen

to this episode. You can also
check out City Saint Auck TV.

com to watch that component of
the commission meeting. Um

great job on the presentation.

I know that was your first

presentation as well. [Jacob] Yes,
thank you very much. Thank you

guys for coming. [Amy] Thank you. [Melissa] You
can now find us on your

favorite podcasting app. Look
for us on Spotify, Apple

Podcasts, and more. You can
find that this episode and all

of our previous episodes at
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@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. See
you at this time next week for

another edition of The Break
Room.