

[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. Spring is around the corner
and we've already started

festival season. The Florida
Man Games were held on Francis

Field Cathedral Parish Festival

held its annual event at the

Mission and of course with all
that comes more visitors, more

cars, and more traffic. So,
we're going to get a quick

update from the city's mobility
manager, X Pellicer here is with

us in studio as well as our
first-time guest mobility

coordinator, Todd Clark.

Gentlemen, welcome to the break

room. [Todd] Thank you. It's good to
be here. [X] Great to be here,

Melissa as always. So, ex,
you've brought a friend. I want

you to introduce Todd. Tell us
a little bit about the shift up

over there in Mobility. It's

not really a shift but we've

never had Todd on before so.

Tell our listeners about it.

[X] Promotions Reuben Franklin used
to be mobility manager then he

became director of our public
works department and then

Reuben's been promoted up to our
assistant city manager and then

I was promoted from mobility
coordinator up to mobility

manager and so that left a void
at mobility coordinator and

Todd Clark. Uh he's been with
the city for how long Todd?

About 25 years? [Todd] It's it's 20
years now. [X] 20 years? [Todd] Yes. [X] And

so he's been here a lot twice as long as I have.
[Melissa] He knows what he's doing. [X] And

he he was always in the parking
division for a long time and so

he's he's moved up now to
mobility coordinator helping me

with a lot of different things.

Uh one one main thing that he

has really helped me with is
the the spring festival season

and I'll let Todd talk about
the spring festival season

that's coming up here very
soon. [Melissa] That's right. [Todd] Yup.

[Melissa] Welcome to the break room.
[Todd] Well, thank you. It's good to

be here and we're all set to go
for shuttle in. We've got five

Saturdays coming up starting
March the we're going to be

starting at 8 o'clock in the
morning we've got the Celtic

Festival that day which is a
really good festival and then

we got March the 16th 23rd are
going to be 11 AM to 10 PM and

then we've got the Easter
parade on the 30th that's

going to we're going to start
shuttling at 8 o'clock in the

morning and then the following
weekend on April the 6th we've

got the Lions Seafood Festival
and we'll be shuttling from 11

AM to 10 PM and we're just
going to be shuttling out of

the Broudy's lot at 198 West
King Street this year. [Melissa] And Patty's

Day Parade. That's an is that
an early day also? [Todd] Yeah, that's

8 AM. That's all part of the

Celtic. That'll kick off. We'll

start shuttling at 8. I

believe the parade starts

somewhere around nine thirty,

ten o'clock and it will be done

by eleven and then the festival

starts after that. [Melissa] So for any

new listeners, I know we've got

a lot of new residents in Saint

Johns County. We do have these

free shuttles and like Todd

said they're every Saturday

here coming up through April

6th and it's important to

remember those early start times for

the Saint Patrick's Day Parade

and the Easter Parade. [Todd] Easter

parade is March the 30th this

year. [Melissa] Okay. Um because we do

get those started a little bit
earlier. Um best place to park

for the shuttles is going to be
well the only place to park is

going to be Broudy's this time.

[Todd] That's correct. [Melissa] Okay. And then

that's no health department. No
three oh one. [X] Correct. [Melissa] Okay.

I'm I'm reiterating because I
want to make sure we get the

message. [X] And and and it works a
lot more efficiently for us out

of the Broudy's lot and the
Broudy's lot is very near the

intersection of US1 at King
Street and we normally have

some little blue signs that
kind of guide you into the

parking lot from that
intersection so it's it's very

easy to access so it's free

parking it's free free shuttle

ride and it drops off right at

the Visitor Information Center

parking garage [Melissa] tell me are the

how big are the buses sometimes

I've seen the big charter buses

sometimes they're the small [Todd] so

with Candy's coach we're is our

vendor for this shuttle season

and they have two size buses.

They have a small bus, 28 seats

and then they have a large bus

that's 56 seats. We will have

three buses for the Celtic

Festival and we will have three

buses for the Lions Seafood

Festival. The other days the

16th, 23rd, and

30th, we'll have a large

bus and a small bus just. [Melissa] Okay.

So, it it and it's pretty

quick. [X] Yeah. Yeah. I mean, you
shouldn't have to wait longer

than 15 minutes but if we we
don't have a set time, the bus

constantly going back and forth
and and normally I like to say

within 15 minutes you'll be
getting on the bus and it and

it a lot of times it's much
quicker than that. A lot of

times a bus is sitting there
waiting for you and so really

it's about 10 minutes, but but
normally we like to tell people

every 15 minutes a bus is
coming. [Melissa] And we've got you guys

have really gotten it down to a science. [X] I mean it it's well

thank you. [Melissa] It it really I mean I I took it for out loud. [X] Yeah.

[Melissa] So, we branch out. We're really trying to maximize this tool

for mobility concerns and we want people to take advantage

of it. [X] There's always been the complaint that there's not

enough parking downtown and way back in 2003 whenever we built,

it was sometime around then that we built the new parking

garage and at the Visitor Information Center and at that

time, everybody thought, oh my lord, it's so huge. [Melissa] It's huge.

[X] Why did you make it so? We towered the field. And and we

you know just to round off
numbers it holds about 1, 200

cars and and and so for the
first 10 years or so it never

really filled up but now over
the past five or 10 years

there's there's more and more
people coming into Saint

Augustine and so the parking
garage is filling up especially

on real busy Saturdays and
stuff and so that's why on

Saturdays we've evolved into
helping the city with with

providing more parking. [Melissa] And one
of the thing note I does the on

the weekends of the festivals
do the festival coordinators

have any buy in on that or

we've we're we're paying for

that [X] oh absolutely well the the
so our city commissioners have

mandated that the the festivals
need to really pay for this but

it's it's it's it's a it's a
combined effort because we have

like five Saturdays in a row so
we we want to try to have a

little bit of consistency and
so but but the festivals do

bring in they they cause the
parking garages to fill up and

so because they're they're
bringing in more traffic to the

area and they're and they're
they're they're basically

overwhelming us. [Melissa] Right. [X] With
with the parking issues. So so

that's a a condition that we
put on the festivals that that

they must pay for that for the
shuttling. [Melissa] I just want to make

folks understand that too that
we there's a little bit of

accountability I guess you
could say that we're asking

them to help pay for this
expenditure. [X] Yep. [Melissa] That they're

causing I guess like you say.
So that's that's good to know

that they that the festival
coordinators are also helping

with those with those expenses.
If you are just now tuning in

you're listening to the break
room. This week we have the

mobility team. We have X Pellicer
here and Todd Clark. X is our

mobility manager and Todd Clark

of course is our mobility

coordinator. Can you give me a

little information on the star

circulator. How we doing on

that? I really like I've used

it. I like it. [X] Star Star

Circulator works very well. We

we need to get more people to

to use it. It's kind of had

some peaks and valleys. We

started it back in July and for

that those first few weeks we

had really surprisingly amount

of number of people that were

riding it back then. We were

getting well over 1000 people a

week. Uh we even had we bumped

over 2000 people a week for a

couple of weeks there but then

we got into August and school
season kicked in. Uh a lot of

people kind of they weren't
coming you know it's kind of

when you say slow season we
don't really have a slow season

anymore here in Saint Augustine
but that is kind of a little

bit of a lull in there in in
August September but so so the

numbers that that first month
or so we had like say 3, 000

people over 3, 000 people for
the month of July and and

August started to come down say
2000 September 1000 and then

October but but once we got
into November and December we

we came back into our Nights of
Lights and we actually the the

by the way the Star Circulator
it operates everyday from 10 AM

to 10 PM and so it's everyday
everyday [Melissa] all day [X] including

Christmas New Years
Thanksgiving every day every
holiday 365 days, a year from
10 AM to 10PM, except we do

have on occasions we'll have
parades right and the roads are
closed and so what instead of
starting at 10 AM we'll start

it at 11 AM or twelve noon and
and then also in the evenings

during Nights of Lights our
downtown just becomes so

congested that we we we say
that the the star circulator

makes the loop in about every
15 minutes and by the way the

loop is from the visitor
information center park and

garage it comes out by the fort
comes along the bay front to

cathedral place then up to
Cordova and then it it it comes

right back to the Visitor
Information Center and then

it's got a total of three
stops. One is at the Visitor

Information Center. The other
one is is there one of the

crosswalks going over to the
fort right right at at the

Bayfront and [Melissa] the corner of
Hypolita. Yup. [X] Uh well, a

little bit. [Melissa] Right right around

there. [X] Little bit north of

Hypolita but and then the other
one is on Cathedral Place about

halfway between Saint George
Street and Cordova and so every

15 minutes it's coming by and
so Getting back to the numbers

when we when we got into the
Nights of Lights season we we

started at 10 AM but then we
stopped it at five. [Melissa] We had a we

had a discussion about that
too. It was a smart decision.

Yeah. Very smart. [X] Because
actually it it would literally

take about 45 minutes. [Melissa] Yeah. [X] To
make that loop. [Melissa] If you were

keeping it. [X] So it it's it's
just we can't really do it. And

and so we got it to where the
numbers getting back to the

numbers riding it even though
we cut down the hours

tremendously. We stopped it at
five. We still had two or 3,

000 people running it for a
riding on it for the month of

November and December and then
January we still had the

night's of lights going but once
we got past January 1st New

Year's Day we we went back to
the Star Circulator running

until 10PM right and so there
was a lot of there were a lot

of people riding the star
circulator just to look at the

nights of light [Melissa] it's a great
[X] but it's a great tour it's not

a tour no it it is a transport

It is a mobility transportation

system and so it's taking you

from point A to point B and so

it it's not a tour. [Melissa] Right.

You're going to get on it at

the like so in an ideal world.

You're going to park at the

Visitor Information Center.

You're going to hop on that

star circulator. It's a big

blue and white bus. They're

beautiful. They're very

comfortable and if you want,

you can ride it down there

near the corner. Like you said,

it's just on that curve right

near the corner of Hypolita by

the fort and the crosswalk or

you can write it down on

cathedral it's just past Saint
George Street on the right

again clearly marked signs and
then it's going to loop you

back [X] yeah and the number of
passengers so in December and

January we had well over 3, 000
people riding it once the

Nights of Light season ended
at the end of January so

February the numbers are
kind of down a little bit now

we're assuming that once we get
into March you know we have

spring break and and that
kind of stuff in the festival

season so we do expect the
numbers to come back up. This

is our first year running it.

We're learning a lot of things

and so we'll we'll massage the
system to fit the need and. [Melissa] But

anybody can ride it. You can
hop on it at any time. [X] Yes. [Melissa] On

on any of those stops. So if
you want to get back to the

garage and you're tired of
walking. [X] And it's free. [Melissa] Yeah.

[X] And and we have you know when
people talk about how much it

costs and stuff like that. You
can get a we call it a prox

card at the parking garage. [Melissa] Mm
hmm. [X] Which cost about \$30 a

month. It's I think it's a
little bit less. It might be

\$28 a month, something like
that and and and and then you

can go into the parking garage as often as you want and and

that's only thirty dollars. So, that kind of works out to about

a dollar a day. You can hop on the Star Circulator for free.

[Melissa] Yeah. [X] And so, that's a very efficient, cost-effective means

for parking and one of the complaints that we had with

with people would park in the parking garage and they would have

to walk. [Melissa] Walk. Right. [X] So, this this provides that

transportation. [Melissa] It's it's a nice ride. It's it's

comfortable. It's brand new.

Air condition [X] brand new. Brand

new [Melissa] and the big vision of

course is we know that the

Broudy development is underway.

We haven't seen it yet but it's

it's making some progress so

the goal ultimately is that

that the Star Circulator would

also stop at the Broudy lot.

[X] Yes. [Melissa] Ultimately. [X] So we we will

have to figure that out. [Melissa] Right.

[X] But but that is the plan. Uh

right now we have the downtown

we call it the circulator and

that's about a one-mile loop

around the historical core area

but the whole vision and plan

is to branch it out and so

we'll branch it out to include

the the new parking garage that

will be coming at the at the

Broudy's lot. [Melissa] Yep. [X] And and then
hopefully eventually we'll get

it going across the Bridge
of Lions over the Anastasia

Island, the Anastasia Boulevard
area and and so you gotta walk

before you run. [Melissa] Yep. [X] And so
we've [Melissa] baby steps. [X] Yep. It it's

it's funded by the the DOT so
that it it is expensive to

run public transportation [Melissa] yeah
[X] but the DOT has a huge funding

source for it and so we're
taking advantage of that

[Melissa] excellent well we're I told you
it's going to be fast Todd

we're done we're about done
thank you Todd for joining us

[Todd] hey thank you for having me
we're going to look forward to

using the free park and ride

shuttle it's going to start and

run through April 6th, 11 AM to

10PM with the exception of

Saint Patrick's Day parade and

Easter parade so look for that

starting at 8:00am. Always try

the parking garage and I will

say too, if you're driving near

that parking garage, you've got

those neat little signs that

tells you how many spots are

left. So, lots of cool stuff

happening in mobility and with

that, it's a wrap. [X] Thank you,

Melissa. [Todd] Thank you, Melissa. [Melissa] If

you missed part of this

broadcast and want to go back

and listen from the beginning,

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want to keep you informed about

what's happening in and around

the city and most importantly

that you hear it here from the

people doing the work, making

it happen every day. Thanks for

tuning in. Until next time.

[Narrator] You've been listening to The

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addressing projects and

programs offered by the City of

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