

The Break Room with Todd Clark, Mobility Coordinator,

December 9, 2025

Narrator:

You tuned in to another edition of. *The Break Room*.. 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 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 Wissel:

Welcome to *The Break Room*. thanks for tuning in I'm Melissa Wissel Communications. Director for the city of Saint Augustine we are four weekends into nights of lights lots of changes this year but still lots of traffic and cars which means residents and visitors coming to the nation 's oldest city to see this most spectacular holiday lighting display still need to find a place to park so who better to join us. *The Break Room*. then Todd Clark the city 's mobility coordinator Todd this is not your first rodeo welcome back

Todd Clark:

thank you.It's good to be back.

Melissa Wissel:

Lot going on so let's do a quick recap in case people haven't heard about. I won't call it disastrous but there was a lot of feedback after last year that we needed some improvements. Let's talk about What we were doing last year that we're now seeing some changes for this year starting with our parking and shuttles.

Todd Clark:

so with the shuttles last year we only did 13 dates we did basically every Saturday until the day after Christmas and then we did the week of Christmas in between that and new Years

we did a couple of Saturdays in January uh so we gave us a total of 13 days this year we're doing 33 days we're doing every Friday Saturday and Sunday leading up to when the kids get out of school December the 19th they we will be shuttling everyday to January 4th excluding Christmas Day we won't be shuttling on. Christmas Day and we will be doing the 9th 10th and 11th of January which is going to be the last weekend of nights of lightsl

Melissa Wissel:

that's a lot that's a lot more days a.

Todd Clark:

Yeah. Lot more a lot more but it's working out really well.

Melissa Wissel:

so we also we saw a little bit of garage closures last year uh we're still seeing that this year so far expect it.

Todd Clark:

. Yeah we're we're going we're going to shut down so it it is you know shuttling and we are going to be shutting out of all three lots this year during every day where we didn't do that Last year during Christmas you.

Melissa Wissel:

I remember last year in from a messaging standpoint we had certain lots on certain days in certain times and you and I had many conversations why can't they just all run the same days the same time so that's been a really nice. Nice. Consistent opportunity for shuttling this year.

Todd Clark:

Yeah well last year was actually the first time we we really would have needed it during Christmas week years prior we didn't have to run out of those lots on the north side of town but now it's a necessity.

Melissa Wissel:

absolute Necessity and let's talk a little bit what are we seeing for ridership and when we talk about our numbers we're talking about shuttle riders and the people coming in and out from parking this has nothing to do with numbers of overall visitors this is our parking numbers.

Todd Clark:

Years yeah so last year during the month of November we shuttled just shy of 3000 people or just shy of 7000 people this year we're right about 14,000 for the month of November so we've doubled our ridership just in the month of November and I'm anticipating December to really be busy. Especially when the kids are out of school.

Melissa Wissel:

The mobile app Let's talk about the mobile app a little bit the good thing on that mobile app is it's displaying all of the parking one of the things I'm going to give a shout out to our developers at Visit St Augustine and a thank you to the VCB something I will point out to folks the parking garage. It does display available spots I think and when it closes it actually will show in the garage is closed.

Todd Clark:

that that's correct we have at the parking garage we have what's called OPR. Our technology which is license plate recognition and we can push that information out to the parking Finder as far as how much parking is available there unfortunately we won't we don't have that technology at the satellite lots.

Melissa Wissel:

So chances are if you're coming in at 5 or 6 o'clock Broudy's. Will Broudy's fill up?

Todd Clark:

Yeah Broudy's has been filling up getting close to filling at about 4:30 or 5 o'clock 301 San Marco. Probably about the same time 4:00 o'clock and we've got plenty of parking out at The health department.

Melissa Wissel:

lots of parking the health department Broudy's is great because it's close enough you can walk.

Todd Clark:

That's that's correct since by the 10 or 15 minute walk into town from Broudy's.

Melissa Wissel:

And 301 San Marco 's pretty small.

Todd Clark:

Yeah it's about a 100 if you're lucky we get 150 cars out there.

Melissa Wissel:

OK so that's going to fill up pretty quickly so the the the short answer is head to the Health and Human services.

Todd Clark:

Right especially on the weekends. OK we we do have an overflow lot at the admin building and if we need to we can slide over to the permit center lot which is where you're building get your building permit at the Saint Johns county building permit.

Melissa Wissel:

And all of the shuttles tell us again the days and times that they're running.

Todd Clark:

So all shuttles are will run from 1:00 o'clock until 11:00 o'clock at night except for this Saturday we have the Christmas parade so we will be starting the shuttles at 8:00 AM.

Melissa Wissel:

So tell our listeners one more time when are the shuttles running hours of operation and days.

Todd Clark:

OK so we'll be running every Friday Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 o'clock until 11:00 o'clock at night and during the week of December and starts December 19th we will run every day through January 4th. Except for Christmas Day we will we will not have shuttles on Christmas Day.

Melissa Wissel:

Friday Saturday Sundays yes not the weekdays other than that Christmas holiday that's a really big time frame too because like you said last year it was the day after Christmas until New Year's Eve we're actually pulling in almost a week.

Todd Clark:

That's correct you.

Melissa Wissel:

A week ahead and a week after. So that's fantastic OK if you're just now tuning in and listening to *The Break Room*. I'm Melissa Wissel communications director for the city of Saint Augustine and with me in studio this week we have Todd Clark he's our mobility coordinator we're talking about parking and. shuttles all kinds of exciting stuff for nights of

lights let's talk a little bit about the beach that's a brand new transportation solution if you will let's talk about the star circulator and the beach shuttle if you would.

Todd Clark:

yeah so our STAR Circulator which runs downtown right now during nights and lights normally runs 10 to 10 every day. Is now running 10 to 4 downtown and this is provided by our vendor Old Town trolley and now we've moved them over to the beach at night from 5:00 PM to midnight and it has really taken off. We have shuttled almost 4000 people in the last 15 days.

Melissa Wissel:

Wow yeah and you said you and I were talking earlier it was 300 something the first and then it jumped.

Todd Clark:

For 5 days which more than 300 and then the next 2 days it. Was almost 700 and then we've got about 3000 people after that.

Melissa Wissel:

So word is getting out yeah.

Todd Clark:

this Friday we're going to double the buses we're going to have 4 buses instead of 2 so we're going to try to have a bus about every 15 minutes give or take a few

Melissa Wissel:

OK. Let's remind listeners because you and I again we're talking about this it's really not a satellite parking it's really a a service for the visitors people that are out of the at a destination in a hotel or resort on the island or residence and where does it drop?

Todd Clark:

that that's correct. We have I believe it's 15 locations where this bus will stop but the main the main hub closest to the bridge is at Gerardo Street and Anastasia Boulevard which is at 103 Anastasia Boulevard there is a pick up and drop off location there. So if you live in that neighborhood want to go to the beach to go have dinner you can go get off and 8th street you can get off at embassy suites And then ride it back to Girardo street

Melissa Wissel:

or almost a reverse if you live in Davis shores or you're near downtown and you want to go to the beach go hop on it at on the island side and go run to the Beach and then come back

Todd Clark:

And we do have 2 drop off pickup locations. Kind of close to the amp. One is at the alligator farm and one is at the surf station.

Melissa Wissel:

OK so if you're out at the beach look for that and what hours of operation?

Todd Clark:

5 PM to midnight.

Melissa Wissel:

5 to midnight And will that run all the way through now through the end of nights of lights.

Todd Clark:

It it will run through the end of nights of lights so January 11th will be the last day and who knows it may be if it's uh we can do it further than that, but we are hoping.

Melissa Wissel:

and it will not run for the downtown nights of lights circulation but it will be running for the usual New Year's Eve for the beach. Right it won't actually be servicing on New Years Eve?.

Todd Clark:

I mean we will not be able to service New Year's Eve because of beach blast.

Melissa Wissel:

This last OK all right so one last topic US 1 the barricades and also pedestrian barricades downtown let's talk about downtown first. We've taken the parking of the. Street which people are not real happy about but we are we're happy with it.

Todd Clark:

So we've we've done that for the weekends Friday Saturday Sunday So what you're north of the bridge of Lions on the Bayfront both on east and West side of the roads and we we've not we've deleted that parking as well as cathedral place now these barricades will be up every day from December 19th through January 4th they will not come down so there will be no parking on cathedral or the Bayfront for those two weeks.

Melissa Wissel:

and what is the purpose of it people look at that and say why did they take out. All this parking.

Todd Clark:

Well when you don't have parking there you don't have people backing in spaces or getting out of spaces so it's keeping the traffic flowing and people are less congestion.

Melissa Wissel:

People aren't darting out.

Todd Clark:

Most pedestrians walking out we want the pedestrians to cross where there are crosswalks it's much safer that way.

Melissa Wissel:

forces that forces that behavior and then US 1 the barricades some of that is nights of lights and I did notice that the intersection there by Malaga there's a little bit of activity as part of that part of our. There. Anticipation of the bridge closing but the barricades is for nights of lights.

Todd Clark:

That's that's correct yeah so they they have to build a new arm mask or temporary traffic signal and that's the work that you see there but the barricades are to keep the left hand turn lane open going to Malaga street but to not to allow left hand. Turns on Carrera Elmira Saragasso and Lemon streets.

Melissa Wissel:

So for the so I really shouldn't be turning right around those barricades.

Todd Clark:

No. If you're northbound you should not be turning right on those streets when those barricades are out and those barricades as well are out on Friday Saturday Sunday and they will be out for the 2 weeks of December 19th through January 4th they they are going to stay out the whole time.

Melissa Wissel:

Anything else how are you feeling about things. There you didn't. I don't believe you guys were really part of the porta potties going out

Todd Clar:

We were not.

Melissa Wissel:

that was not you but we're that you were seeing positive success with that positive.

Todd Clark:

For the most part I've. Heard nothing but positive reviews.

Melissa Wissel:

About lots of changes. Keeping you busy

Todd Clark:

yeah very very busy.

Melissa Wissel:

how are you how are you handling those? What's? Your what's your vision or what what's your feedback on how things are going. So far people are. People getting it.

Todd Clark:

Yeah I think so I I think one of the key things is the is the star circulator on the island it's keeping a lot of cars out of downtown and it's I mean it's a really good service people are taking advantage of it.

Melissa Wissel:

and the mobile app we want folks to be using the mobile app to find the. Parking lots.

Todd Clark:

Any other information regarding nights and lights will be on your mobile app.

Melissa Wissel:

And that set you can look that up at nights of lights.com or you can find out on the city 's website CityStAug.com/NightsofLights. Uh I think people are getting it so great job to you guys and your team I don't know that there's anything else or messaging how are our message boards working.

Todd Clark:

The message boards are working fine we do have 2 message boards at Saint Johns County Sheriff's Department is letting us use outside of town and. We we tell them what to put on and it's basically just pointing people to the Broudys lot for the most part.

Melissa Wissel:

OK well keep it up keep all that keep all those cars out of downtown

Todd Clark:

we're trying.

Melissa Wissel:

Well Todd thanks again for coming in great job I know it's been a lot of work and congratulations on the success of of all the stuff that's working out so well

Todd Clark:

thank you very much.

Melissa Wissel:

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Narrator:

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