

**FEB. 15, 2024**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**STATEMENT BY BRYAN MAYOR BOBBY GUTIERREZ REGARDING PARKING IN DOWNTOWN BRYAN**

For more than 25 years now, Bryan citizens and City Councils have made sustained long-term investments in infrastructure and economic development activities to revitalize our historic downtown from an empty and run-down blight to the flourishing cultural district that we all enjoy today. This exciting growth and success has resulted in dozens of new retail establishments, residential projects, and business offices.

Over the past several years, the momentum we've all enjoyed in our downtown has led to some changes. We have been working to address those as quickly as possible and in the best interest of all visitors who work, eat, live and play in our downtown.

The City of Bryan has invested time and money to improve parking in downtown over the years. We've been working on options with Destination Bryan, downtown merchants, residents and office owners, but the reality is, each stakeholder has different needs and feelings, and in some cases, one stakeholder's preferred approach may directly counter the approach of another stakeholder. I do not believe we have parking problem in downtown, I believe we have a walking problem. Any successful downtown urban area involve some form of walking to desired destinations.

I have decided to appoint an ad hoc Downtown Parking Committee with members comprised of each stakeholder group between visitors, residents, retail merchants and business offices. In the coming days, I plan to announce committee members from each stakeholder group. I've asked former Mayor Andrew Nelson to Chair this committee and he has agreed to volunteer his time to help us. Andrew represents the needs of our visitors through his service on the Destination Bryan board and his distinguished service as our former Mayor. His extensive global travel and experience in various parking environments around the world will bring us a broad perspective.

As we continue to seek creative solutions to our latest challenges, I want to thank all of those who continue to invest in Downtown Bryan. Thank you for believing in us, including our most recent large-scale investments with the Varisco building, Hush & Whisper Distillery, Kimball Building, BCS Modern's new project, Gessner Engineering's Bowie building, the Renovation Wrangler's projects, and the La Salle Hotel which is transforming into a Marriott tribute hotel.

Finally, I want to especially thank Texas A&M University for its longstanding and growing presence in downtown, not only faculty of the College of Architecture in the Parker and Perry buildings, but also the amazing A&M staff members who now call the Varisco building their home. I want to welcome students and employees to enjoy all that our historic downtown Bryan has to offer. We have all looked forward to this day! When our downtown returned to being a vibrant, thriving business and cultural district. Where downtown merchants, offices, and residents happily learn to accommodate our growing crowds and abundant customers. Many merchants and community members have expressed to me that this is a wonderful situation have.

I look forward to working with this committee and all other stakeholders as we expand options to accommodate the continued growth and success of our Historic Downtown Bryan.