



TOURISM MANAGEMENT PLAN
City of Charleston

Adopted April 26, 1994

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CREDITS

TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ann Baker, Facilitator
Howard Chapman
Mary Cutler
Kate Darby
Margaret Davidson
John Edwards
Council Member Yvonne Evans
Blaine Ewing
Yvonne Fortenberry
Barbara Gathers
Lewis Hudgins
Dan Hydrick
Mary Jackson
Council Member Hilda Hutchinson Jefferson
George Kefalos
Louie Koester
Vanessa Turner-Maybank
Evelyn McGee
Susie Parsell
Bill Regan
Kitty Rentiers
Candi Scott
Bob Seidler
Alada Shinault-Small
Council Member Henry Smythe, Jr.
Lawrence Walker
Bruce Whitaker

CITY OF CHARLESTON

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Yvonne Fortenberry, Director
Jody Muldrow, Planning Administrator-co-author
Cara White, Senior Planner-co-author
Sonya Gentry, Senior Planner
Allison Bello, Senior Planner
Charles Chase, Preservation Officer and City Architect
Carolee Williams, Special Projects Manager
David Withers, Graphics Supervisor
Sandra Reed, Administrative Secretary
Nicole Guy, Intern

CREDITS

DEPARTMENT OF TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Howard Chapman, Director
Jeri Johnson, Assistant Director for Parking and Transit
Hope E. Bleecker, Transit Administrator
Susan Richards, Transit Coordinator
William D. Stephens, Parking Administrator

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

John Foster, Assistant Director for Operation
James J. Wigfall, Superintendent, Sanitation Division

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS

Steve Livingston, Director

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

John V. Deehan, Director of Revitalization

SOUTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM

Lance J. Friedsam, Director
Henrietta S. Wilson, Program Manager

CHARLESTON TRIDENT CONVENTION AND VISITOR BUREAU

Helen Stansell, Executive Director
Kate Darby, Director of Visitor Services
Karen Cofino, Assistant Executive Director

CHARLESTON TRIDENT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mary Graham, Director for Center for Business Research
Jackie Warren, Research Analyst for Center for Business Research

SOUTH CAROLINA ELECTRIC AND GAS

John Kinloch, Vice President of Transit Fleet and Community Affairs

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INTRODUCTION
Chapter 1.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The first time the City of Charleston created a comprehensive tourism plan was in 1978 when it produced its "Tourism Impact and Management Study" with funding and support provided by the Charleston County Park, Recreation and Tourism Commission. Since then, a host of physical and economic changes has transformed the tourism industry and, indeed, the city itself.

During the Eighties, Charleston's tourism industry grew significantly. A nationwide upswing in tourism, the successful revitalization of Charleston's downtown and stepped-up marketing efforts contributed to its growth. In 1976, the Charleston Trident Chamber of Commerce estimated that Charleston hosted 2.2 million visitors; by 1989, that estimate had doubled. The number of hotel rooms has also doubled. In 1980, downtown Charleston had 1,551 hotel rooms; by 1993, hotel rooms numbered over 3,000.

As visitors continue to enjoy Charleston and to "spread the word," the city's popularity grows. Witness the results of a recent survey conducted by Conde Nast Traveler Magazine (to which 38,000 readers responded) which ranked Charleston as the sixth most popular destination in the United States.

The task of managing the tourists falls to several groups. The Visitor Reception and Transportation Center (VRTC), housed in a former train depot, "manages" tourists by providing them with information and by offering them convenient parking and shuttle service to and from the historic district. The City's Office of Tourism Management, along with the Office of Neighborhood Services, oversees visitor center operations and regulates tourist-serving vehicles (carriages, buses, etc.) The Charleston Trident Convention and Visitors Bureau, in addition to its sales and marketing efforts, supply staff for the visitor center.

An eleven-member Tourism Commission works closely with the City's Tourism Management Office. The commission spends most of its time managing the vehicle industries: certifying carriages and buses, discussing the appropriateness of vehicle styles, solving carriage clean-up problems, etc. The growth of tourism and the ever-changing conditions created by competitive vehicle industries have forced the Tourism Commission to amend and re-amend the tourism ordinances that guide their decisions. The result is a worn, confusing patchwork of tourism ordinances.

Despite the diligent efforts of all of the "managers" to minimize negative tourism impacts, residents' frustrations are evident. Complaints about noise, horse excreta, congestion, t-shirt shops and neon signs, are steadily filing into City offices. Some residents question the wisdom of promoting an industry whose negative impacts are so tangible. Meanwhile, the tourism industry struggles against the effects of a sluggish economy and various fee increases. The impending closure of the Charleston Navy Base brings the role of tourism in Charleston's economy into immediate focus.

Against this background, Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. commissioned a Tourism Advisory Committee to produce a new tourism management plan. The committee's charge was to look comprehensively at the subject of tourism, to re-shape existing ordinances, to manage tourism more effectively and to anticipate and plan for future tourism-related opportunities and threats.



OBJECTIVES

At the outset of the planning process, the Tourism Advisory Committee defined four primary objectives. These objectives shaped the committee's program of work and, thus, its final recommendations. The overarching theme of the planning process, not expressly written into the objectives but understood, is balance—the preservation of the residents' quality of life must be balanced against a profitable and expanding tourist-based economy.

Objective 1: Preserve Charleston and its uniqueness.

The *Tourism Plan* defines those qualities—architectural and environmental features, social habits, traditions, cultural opportunities—that make Charleston unique. Recommendations are intended to nurture and preserve those singular qualities.

Objective 2: Preserve the quality of residential neighborhoods.

The Tourism Advisory Committee has established a benchmark for downtown "quality of life". In establishing that benchmark, the Committee has outlined standards—safety, parking availability, noise levels, sanitation, etc.—which should remain inviolate.

Objective 3: Manage tourism for the benefit of residents, industry and tourists.

The *Tourism Plan* is intended to accomplish the following: 1. minimize traffic congestion, 2. minimize the negative impacts on residents and expand resident opportunity, 3. construct regulatory mechanisms which can be adhered to by the tourism industry and efficiently administered by the City, and, 4. ensure that the tourist's experience of Charleston exceeds their expectations.

Objective 4: Encourage economic diversity

The *Tourism Plan* supports a vibrant, thriving community and it recognizes tourism as a vital economic engine. While the plan offers suggestions for strengthening the tourism industry, it also encourages diversification of Charleston's economic base.

REPORT CONTENT

The *Tourism Plan* focuses on peninsular Charleston, where tourist attractions and tourism impacts are most concentrated. Following this introductory chapter, the *Tourism Plan* is divided into two major sections: Section II outlines the history of tourism and tourism management in Charleston, describes current and anticipated tourist patterns and summarizes the results of the resident survey and the tourist survey. Section III is composed entirely of the findings and recommendations of the four subcommittees of the Tourism Advisory Committee.

The major topics of the four subcommittees are outlined below:

Long Range Planning

- Resident/tourist balance
- Mission and composition of Tourism Commission
- Diversification of product mix
- Festivals, seasonal promotion
- Promotion of destinations outside Peninsula
- Integration of tourism and arts
- Tour variety
- Future educational facilities
- Waterfront planning
- Air and water regulations
- Casino gambling
- Diversification of economic base

City Image

- Sanitation
- Public restrooms
- Directional signage
- Commercial signage
- Sidewalk encroachments
- Market area/noise/night life
- Street vendors
- History and preservation
- Appropriate waterfront development
- Casino gambling
- Gateways

Tourist Related Vehicles

- Quad cycles
- Carriages
 - sizes/styles
 - lighting
 - insurance requirements
 - nighttime use/weddings/commercial area touring
- Rickshaws
- Buses
 - touring zones
 - distribution of routes
 - permitting
- Fee structure
- Enforcement of all tourism regulations

Transportation

- Regional transportation needs
- Comprehensive study of downtown
- Residential parking districts
- DASH
- Alternative transportation (ferries, light rail)
- Encouraging a pedestrian-friendly city
- Parking garage/lot use
- Tour bus parking



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

As with all planning processes conducted by the City of Charleston, the development of this plan involved extensive input from the community. This community participation was evident first in the formation of a twenty-six member advisory committee. The goal in establishing the committee was to obtain representation from as many sectors involved in tourism as possible. The obvious starting point was to include the eleven-member Tourism Commission. After examining its composition, a conscious effort was made to broaden representation. There was also an intentional effort to seek members who wore several hats—they live in the heavily impacted area and they work in the tourism industry. These members understood all aspects of the tourism industry and its impact on the community. The resulting committee was comprised of downtown residents, tour guides, City staff, the Tourism Commission and representatives from restaurants and businesses, tour companies, the Charleston Trident Convention and Visitors Bureau and City Council.

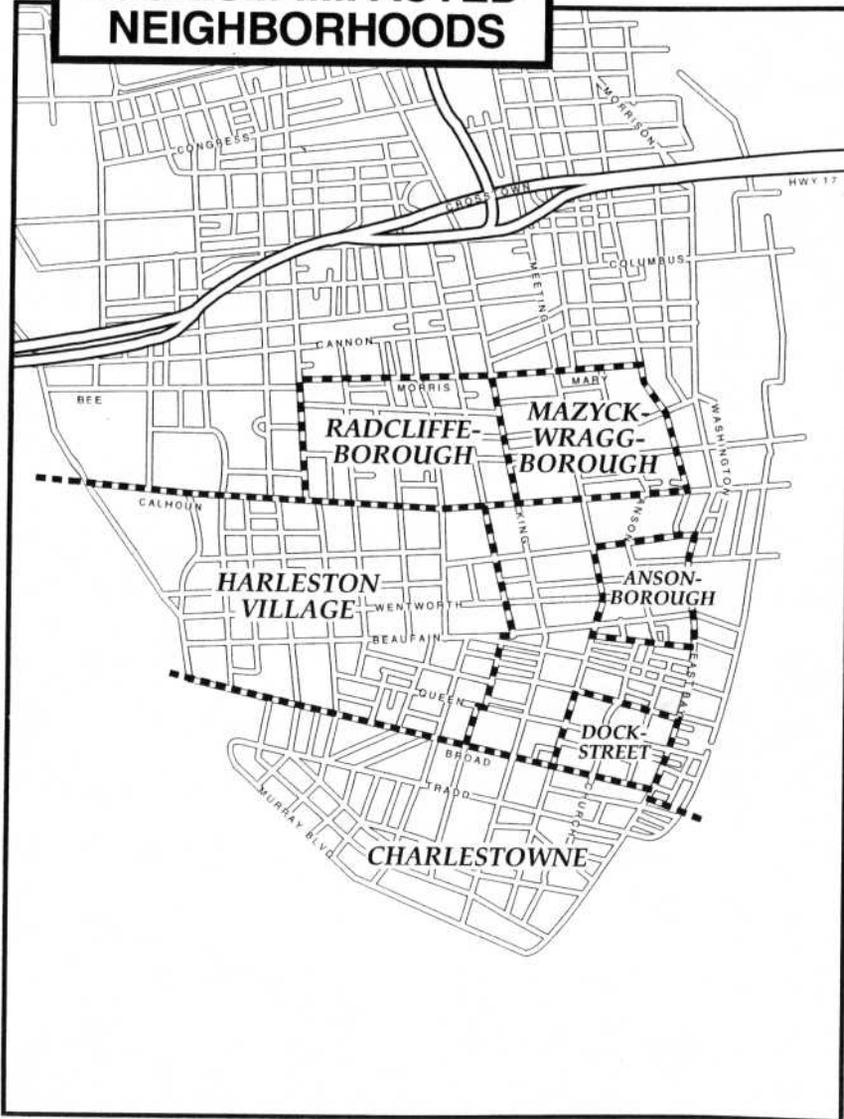
The overall planning process further demonstrates the City's commitment to develop a plan which truly reflects the community consensus. Having formed the advisory committee, the City sponsored a public meeting at the end of July—*The Future of Tourism*. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain feedback from the community on how tourism was working in the City of Charleston. The meeting was attended by the advisory committee and approximately 110 persons. The City presented an overview of tourism trends and a review of the original 1978 *Tourism Impact and Management Plan*. When the meeting was opened for discussion approximately thirty people spoke and presented a full spectrum of concerns and reminders of tourism's positive impacts. The City also received several written statements at the meeting and during the following week. This meeting was instrumental in helping the committee understand the community's perception of tourism and its role in Charleston.

In addition to holding the public meeting, the City realized that a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of public opinion in the form of a survey was necessary. Ideally all parties affected by tourism should be surveyed—residents, tourists and the tourism industry. During the months of July and August the City made available approximately 3000 surveys to downtown residents. Neighborhood association presidents were asked to distribute the surveys while residents were asked to return the surveys to several downtown businesses, the Department of Planning and Urban Development, or their neighborhood president. Thanks to the hard work of neighborhood associations, approximately 476 surveys (16 percent) were returned. This survey is discussed in detail later in this report.

The City also developed a survey for tourists. The City survey complimented the survey administered by the Charleston Trident Convention and Visitors Bureau. Results of the resident and tourist surveys were shared with the committee and, in large part, determined the focus of their work.

Tourism industry concerns were gained through the Charleston Trident Convention and Visitors Bureau's Travel Council. Rather than attempt to develop a survey for such a diverse group of interests, City staff attended their meeting to explain the study and seek to understand their perception of issues and potential solutions. The Travel Council president presented the industry's concerns at an Advisory Committee meeting.

TOURISM-IMPACTED NEIGHBORHOODS



TOURISM IMPACT ISSUES

Chapter 2.

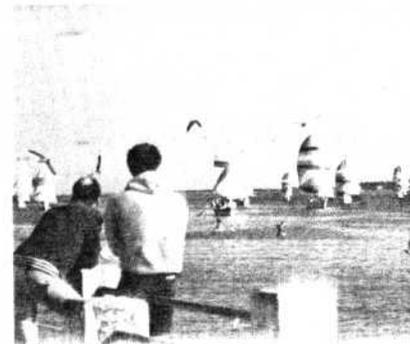
HISTORY OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT

Were it not for the restoration and preservation efforts initiated in the mid-to-late 1950's, Charleston would likely not be the tourist mecca that it is today. As a result of those early preservation efforts, Charleston had established itself as a tourist destination by the mid 1970's. Meanwhile, residents were growing increasingly concerned about the growth and impact of tourism. These concerns prompted Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. to establish a Tourism Impact Committee in 1977 and to hire consultants to develop a plan. This effort resulted in the development and adoption in February 1978 of the City's first tourism plan—the *Tourism Impact and Management Plan*.

The first study resulted in numerous actions taken by the City which alleviated many of tourism's impacts on the community: restricting tour bus sizes and routes; enacting a horse diaper ordinance; park regulations and the White Point Garden passive park ordinance; preparing initial plans for the Waterfront Park and the Visitor Reception and Transportation Center; initiating Sunday garbage pickup in tourist areas; forming the Clean City Commission; hiring four tourism enforcement officers and establishing the Downtown Shuttle and residential parking districts.

By June of 1979, the Mayor acknowledged the many accomplishments made towards controlling tourism, however, he cited the need to determine if further improvements could be made. Towards this end, a Tourism Management Study Committee was appointed. Staffed by the College of Charleston Center for Metropolitan Affairs, the committee was charged with developing revisions to existing ordinances and to consider new issues. In February 1982 the committee submitted recommendations to City Council and then began working on the ordinance. City Council adopted the ordinance in May 1983 and the following spring the Office of Tourism Management was established. The daily enforcement of tourism regulations have been handled through this office while the Tourism Commission has interpreted and helped administer the ordinance since 1984.

Today the impacts of tourism have expanded to the point that, in some cases, the existing ordinances are obsolete. The legal authority of the commission is so limited in some areas that the management of tourism is restricted. In essence, overall growth of the tourism industry has reached a point that the City realized the importance of re-evaluating all tourism management issues.



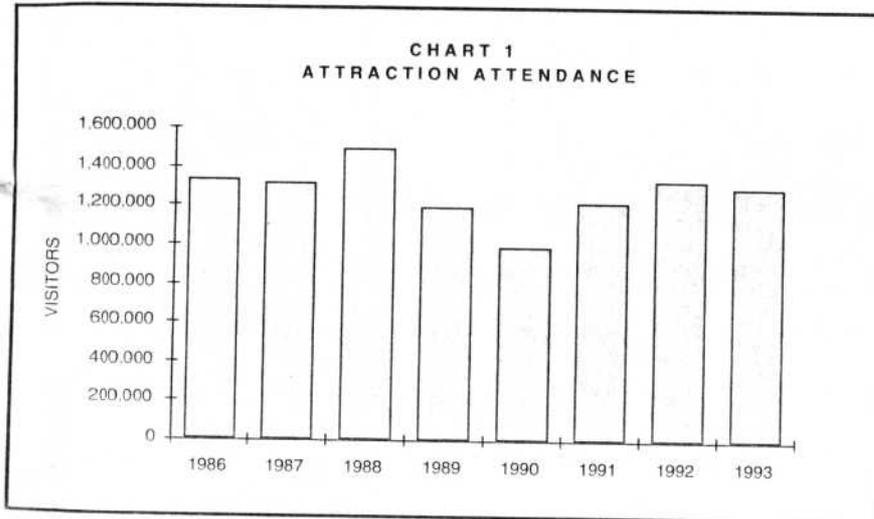
THE VISITOR INDUSTRY

Data sources for this section provided by The Charleston Trident Chamber of Commerce and City of Charleston Division of Tourism Management

For the city of Charleston and the trident area, tourism is big business. The economic impact of tourism falls only behind the Charleston Navy Base and the State Ports Authority activity. Annually approximately 5 million tourists visit the trident area and spend, on average, \$125 daily per person. There are 25,000 jobs in the trident area directly related to tourism at 1,700 visitor-related businesses.

Annual Visitation Cycle

The top three reasons for visiting the trident area are: 1. touring/sightseeing, 2. festivals/special events and 3. visit family and friends. As expected, the peak tourist time of the year is from April to August with monthly attraction attendance during the peak ranging from approximately 130,000 to 185,000 persons. Since 1984, visitation based on attraction attendance has experienced a typical cycle. In 1988 a peak was reached but in 1989, due to Hurricane Hugo, a steady decline began which ended in 1991 with a steady increase.

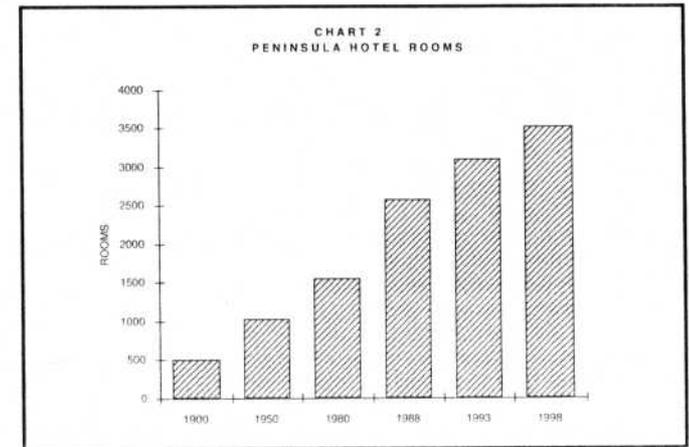


Source: Center for Business Research

Lodging

The trident area offers 125-135 accommodation properties with approximately 10,250 rooms. The regional average daily room rate is \$61.81. On the peninsula the average room costs \$87.49. The average occupancy rate for the region is 64.5 percent while peninsula accommodations average 71.7 percent. The months of April, May, June, July and October are considered peak months for hotel operators with average occupancy rates of 70 percent or greater. December and January are the slowest hotel months with average occupancy below 50 percent.

Peninsula Charleston comprises 40 percent of the region's accommodation properties while 27 percent of the rooms are located in downtown Charleston. As the chart below indicates, the number of accommodation rooms has steadily increased. By the year 1998 it is anticipated that an additional 368 rooms will open—a 12 percent increase.



Festivals

The city of Charleston hosts numerous festivals throughout the year. The most famous festival, Spoleto USA, is the most successful arts festival in the country. The Southeastern Wildlife Exposition attracts 45,000 visitors annually. Worldfest Charleston, a film festival initiated in 1993, promises to become a major activity. The Charleston economy is influenced to some degree by festival attendance nine months out of the year—only January, July and August are without festivals.

Cruise Ship Business

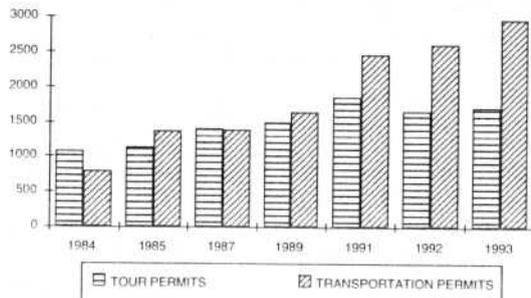
The State Ports Authority and Convention and Visitor Bureau are aggressively pursuing the continued expansion of Charleston's role in the cruise ship business. A variety of cruise vessels call on the port of Charleston with embarkations to Bermuda and the Caribbean, inaugural voyages, voyages along the intracoastal waterway and ports of call. The majority of Charleston's cruise ship activity is through port of calls. In 1992 a total of 38 vessels and 21,066 passengers passed through the port. This is almost twice as many the number of passengers served by the port in 1991. The future looks bright as Charleston continues to provide a variety of cruise ship services.



City Tourism Statistics

Large Buses—The Division of Tourism Management maintains records of the various permits issued. By reviewing the annual vehicle certification permits and large tour bus permits, the overall health of the local tourism industry can be understood. Large buses (35 to 40 feet) transport tour groups and must obtain a permit for every tour conducted—a tour permit. While staying in Charleston, large buses must also obtain permits for transportation—for example, to take a group from the visitors center to the hotel. In 1993 large bus transportation permits reached a peak with a dramatic 2,966 permits issued. Tour permits reached a peak in 1991 with 1,858 permits issued. Undoubtedly, the large tour bus industry is thriving in Charleston.

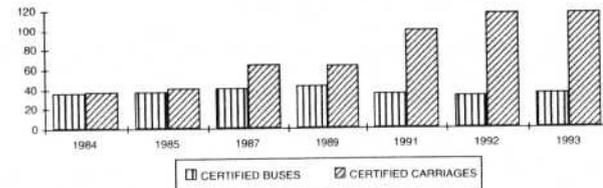
CHART 3
LARGE TOUR BUS PERMITS



Small Buses and Carriages—In addition to the large bus activity, the Division of Tourism Management regulates small buses (25 feet long or less), charter buses (25 to 35 feet long) and all carriages through the annual dispensing of certificates of appropriateness. Bus certificates increased steadily from 1984 to 1989. However the negative impact of Hurricane Hugo is evident in the small bus sector since the number of certified buses dropped 19 percent from 1989 to 1991. Today, the small bus industry seems to have recovered as a dramatic 24 percent increase is anticipated this year as eleven additional small buses are to be certified.

The carriage industry is a remarkably healthy sector of the tourism industry. Although according to the chart below the number of certified carriages has increased, the number of carriages on the street has declined. The decrease in the carriage tours is the result of the implementation of the new medallion system which allows a maximum of twenty carriages on the street at a given time.

CHART 4
SMALL BUS and CARRIAGE CERTIFICATES



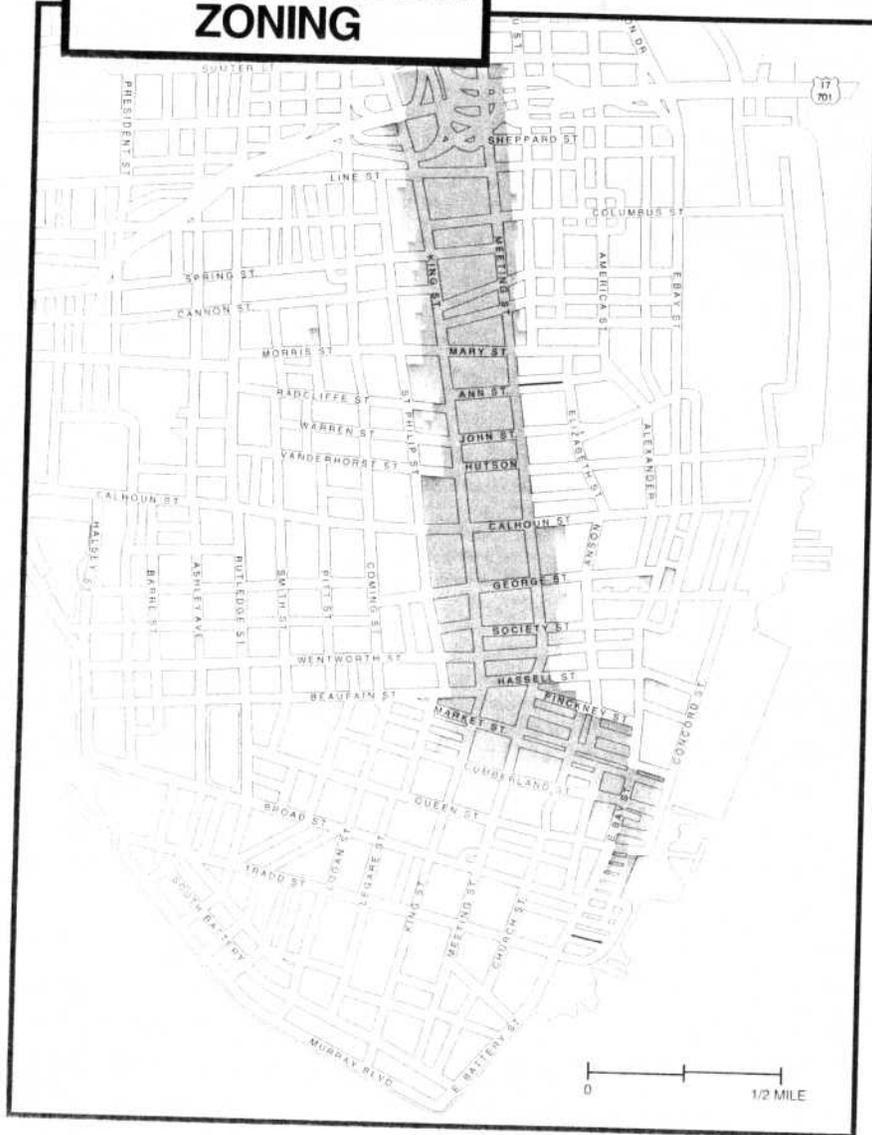
TOURIST PATTERNS

Although Charleston offers a wealth of attractions located off the peninsula—beaches, golf courses, plantation houses and gardens, etc.—the greatest concentration of tourist attractions and associated tourist activity occurs on the peninsula. Tourist activity has traditionally been concentrated south of Calhoun Street, in the heart of the historic district. With the opening of the Visitor Reception and Transportation Center (VRTC) in 1991, tourist activity expanded north of Calhoun Street. The most popular destinations, according to surveys conducted by the Convention and Visitor Bureau, are: historic Market area, Waterfront Park, White Point Gardens and the Battery, Exchange Building, Charleston Place, College of Charleston, Four Corners of Law, VRTC, historic district neighborhoods and several museum houses.

Lodging

The peninsula is populated by 45-50 hotels, motels and inns which provide approximately 2700 rooms. Compared to the region, 40 percent of the lodging properties are located on the peninsula while 27 percent of the rooms are located on the peninsula. Peninsula lodging properties abound but they are typically much smaller than those found outside the historic district. The average occupancy rate in 1993 for downtown lodging properties was 71.7 percent. On the peninsula, the siting of hotels, motels and inns is restricted to an officially-defined Accommodations Zone. The zone runs, roughly, down the spine of the Central Business District (CBD), between Meeting and Saint Philip Streets, from the Crosstown to Cumberland Street. In addition to these larger establishments, some bed and breakfasts are scattered throughout residential and commercial areas.

ACCOMMODATION ZONING



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Touring

Touring occurs in a variety of modes: on foot, in private automobiles, by bus, by carriage and by boat. Most bus tours initiate at the visitor center; carriage tours begin in the Market area; boat tours of the harbor and Fort Sumter launch from the City marina on the western side of the peninsula. Walking tours begin from various downtown locations. To minimize tourist-generated congestion, both the tour buses and carriages travel routes that are defined in terms of "touring zones". In the case of small tour buses, each bus is required to spend time in each of five zones, or areas, of the city. The five touring zones include the following neighborhoods: Charlestowne, Dock Street, Ansonborough, Harleston Village, Radcliffeborough and Mazyck-Wraggborough. In the case of carriages, each carriage, as it leaves the Market area, is assigned to tour one of three zones.

Visitor Center

Orientation to the peninsula often begins at the Visitor Reception and Transportation Center (VRTC) on Meeting Street, between John and Ann Streets. Surveys conducted by the Convention and Visitor Bureau indicate that 50 percent of Charleston's tourists visit the visitor center. The visitor center was strategically sited north of Calhoun Street to help reduce congestion on the southern portion of the peninsula and to introduce both tourist and resident to an underutilized section of the city. The Center "manages" tourists by encouraging them not to drive their cars in the historic district, but to park at the new 309 car Camden Station garage or 700 car VRTC garage and utilize convenient shuttle buses (DASH). The VRTC has already spawned the development of commercial neighbors: a new hotel and several stores and restaurants.

Exploring the Waterfront

The waterfront is, of course, a major tourist attraction. Prior to the completion of Waterfront Park in 1990, tourists seeking the waterfront headed south through residential neighborhoods to reach the Battery. Now, tourists and residents can access the water through the Waterfront Park, whose 13-acre viewing and passive recreation area stretches along the eastern side of the peninsula. The Waterfront Park sets up a new, east-west (as opposed to north-south) tourist axis and, thus, reduces tourist traffic in residential neighborhoods south of Broad Street.

Changing Development Patterns

Since the adoption of the *Tourism Impact and Management Plan* in 1978, much has physically changed downtown and impacted the tourist use of the peninsula. The patterns of public and private investment continue to shape, and alter, the patterns of tourist activity. The continued renovation of historic properties by the private sector has attracted increased tourist activity in neighborhoods such as Ansonborough. The Market area has also seen a dramatic increase in tourists. In fact, these areas have had such success in regards to tourism that the negative side effects have become apparent.

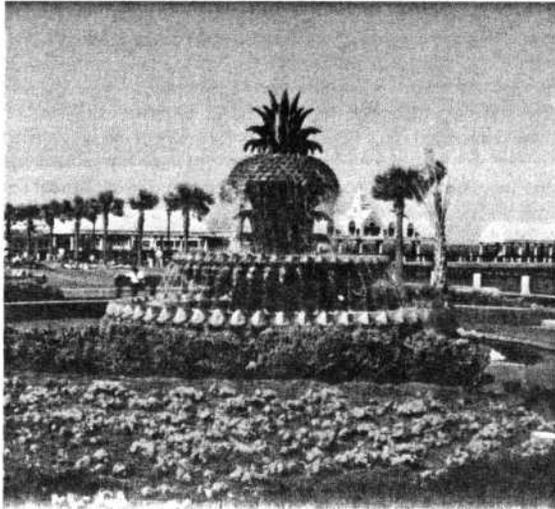
The City is investing considerable resources in the upper King Street area. In addition to building the new visitor center and three parking garages, the City is launching a streetscaping program, helping to secure funds for the renovation of the Francis Marion Hotel (at Calhoun and King Streets) and it is working to secure new tenants for abandoned commercial space along King Street. The desired result: a synergistic composition of tourist attractions, shopping, restaurants, arts and entertainment for upper King Street.

The City is also concentrating resources on the Cooper River waterfront. A \$60 million aquarium is planned for the waterfront, at the foot of Calhoun Street. Adjacent to the South Carolina Aquarium, the National Parks Service will franchise the operation of tour boats to Fort Sumter. Just south of the Aquarium, the Charleston Maritime Center is planned. Phase one of this development consists of new

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piers for shrimping and fishing boats and transient boats. As planned, the Charleston Maritime Center will serve as a new site for special water related events and provide retail space for the fishing industries. Continuous waterfront access from the Aquarium to the Waterfront Park is a long-range goal being implemented slowly. With the eventual exit of the South Carolina State Ports Authority from Union Pier, the City will be poised to ensure this continuous waterfront access for the tourists and residents.

Although the specific tourism activities downtown have shifted and will continue to do so, the historic district remains the top attraction for visitors to this area. According to the Trident Convention and Visitors Bureau's 1993 "Charleston Area Visitor Profile Study" of the top five attractions that do not have an admission fee, four of the most popular attractions are downtown—historic district, City Market, Waterfront Park and visitor center. It is important that all parties with a stake in the future of tourism continue to understand the significance of the peninsula. In order to remain such, we must be vigilant in our care of this attraction.



RESIDENT SURVEY

Purpose

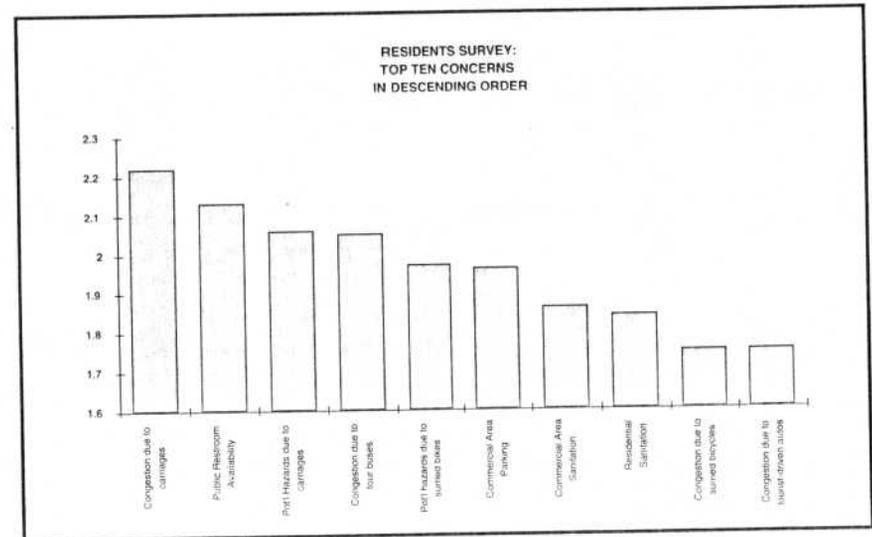
The Department of Planning and Urban Development initiated a resident survey during July and August of 1993. The survey was conducted in order to give the advisory committee a thorough understanding of tourism issues from the downtown resident's perspective. Results of the survey gave the four subcommittees clear direction as they discussed and tackled issues and formulated policies. Appendix A contains a copy of the survey.

Distribution

A very cost effective distribution of the resident survey was orchestrated by the Department of Planning and Urban Development. Approximately 3000 surveys were distributed to downtown residents primarily through neighborhood association presidents. Downtown businesses and the City planning office received the completed surveys. As a result of the hard work of the neighborhood associations, 476 surveys (16 percent) were returned.

Response

The most critical issues according to this survey include congestion due to carriages, the availability of public restrooms, the potential hazards due to carriages and congestion due to tour buses. The following chart shows the top ten issues in descending order of importance. A ranking of issues by individual neighborhoods can be found in Appendix B.



The overarching theme of nearly 100 percent of residents living in Charlestowne, Harleston Village, Dock Street, Radcliffeborough and Ansonborough neighborhoods is that their quality of life has deteriorated significantly over the past few years. Many long-time residents feel that local officials do not understand this deterioration. Many cited the numerous "for sale" signs as evidence that Charleston's residents have fled the peninsula to quieter, less congested suburban areas. Others pointed out that Charleston's primary attraction to tourists is the history and architecture, and advised local officials to encourage the restoration and upkeep of historic homes and structures by keeping the peninsula a desirable place for residents to live.

One major issue that has surfaced in these surveys is residents' fear that Charleston is losing its uniqueness and charm as more and more tourists and tourist-oriented businesses flood the city. The phrase, "It looks like Disneyland" was repeated over and over again. Residents cited tacky theme vehicles, inappropriate names ("Charlie Towne Tours" was often named), fleets of huge buses driving through the city and low-quality, "junk" merchandise overflowing the Market area. Basically, all downtown residents had similar complaints. Congestion caused by tour vehicles and tourists, parking, sanitation and noise disturbances were the primary topics that residents addressed on their surveys.

Residents of the Charlestowne neighborhood were mostly concerned with congestion caused by carriages, tour buses, out-of-town cars, the lack of resident parking, nighttime noise disturbances from the Battery and the bars on East Bay Street and inadequate sanitation in their neighborhood. Residents of the Ansonborough neighborhood focused on the lack of resident parking, the congestion caused by carriages and the trash and garbage on their streets. Harleston Village and Radcliffeborough neighborhoods residents cited parking, noise and trash problems caused by College of Charleston and Bishop England High School students. Residents of the Dock Street neighborhood were upset over noise, vandalism, trash and parking problems caused by the late-night Market night life.

Nearly everyone agreed that the garbage and trash in the Market area is a problem that needs to be addressed immediately. Residents cited restaurants and shops that do not clean their sidewalks or surrounding areas, offensive-smelling garbage cans and lack of citation of business owners for not following local ordinances regarding trash and garbage.

Other often-cited problems included lack of public restrooms in the downtown area, lack of trash receptacles throughout downtown, safety hazards of surried bicycles and tourists driving automobiles through town and a lack of tourists' respect for private property.

Most residents feel that the majority of problems cited could be addressed if there was better enforcement of existing laws, ordinances and regulations. Many suggested increased foot or horse patrols as a way to alleviate parking, traffic, trash and noise violations.

While some residents apparently just wanted to complain and let off steam, many more expressed a desire to help and backed that up with thoughtful advice and answers. The table on the following page indicates the importance of the issues to respondents. Appendix B lists how each neighborhood ranked each of the issues.

Appendix C lists recorded comments from the resident survey. They are grouped by topic and by subcommittee jurisdictions and are arranged in descending order of frequency, so the first on each list is the most frequently recorded comment regarding that topic. The number beside each statement is the number of times that particular comment was recorded.

RESIDENTS' RESPONSE

ALL NEIGHBORHOODS

ISSUES RANKED ACCORDING TO RESIDENT RESPONSE

(0=issue is not seen as a problem; 3=issue is deemed very serious problem.)

RANK	ISSUES	SCORE
1	Congestion due to CARRIAGES	2.22
2	Public RESTROOM Availability	2.13
3	Potential safety hazards due to CARRIAGES	2.06
4	Congestion due to TOUR BUSES	2.05
5	Potential safety hazards due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.97
6	Availability of PARKING for Residents/Tourists in Commercial areas	1.96
7	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of commercial areas	1.86
8	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of residential areas	1.84
9	Congestion due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.75
9	Congestion due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.75
11	Availability of PARKING for Residents in own NEIGHBORHOOD	1.72
12	Potential safety hazards due to TOUR BUSES	1.70
13	Potential safety hazards due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.67
14	NIGHTTIME NOISE/DISTURBANCES within residential areas	1.62
15	Potential safety hazards due to RICKSHAWS	1.60
16	Congestion due to RICKSHAWS	1.36
17	TOUR BUS STYLES	1.27
17	NIGHTTIME DRIVING SAFETY due to touring vehicles (any type)	1.27
19	BALANCE of tourist-targeted retail to resident-targeted retail	1.14
20	Location & Availability of TOUR BUS PARKING	1.13
20	NIGHTTIME NOISE coming from commercial areas	1.13
22	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in commercial areas	1.07
23	QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL	0.83
24	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in residential areas	0.69

TOURIST SURVEY

Purpose

The Department of Planning and Urban Development conducted a Tourist Survey during the fall of 1993. The survey was intended to give insight into visitor patterns of activity, visitor likes and dislikes. It was also meant to gauge the City's success in meeting visitor needs. Results were used in several cases by the subcommittees as they developed policy recommendations.

The Charleston Trident Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB) assisted with survey preparation and tabulation. In order that the survey results would be useful to the Bureau, the "Visitor Profile" section of the survey is very similar to that of other tourist surveys conducted by the CVB. Appendix D contains a copy of the survey.

Distribution

A package of 25 surveys was sent to the managers of 14 hotels, motels, inns and bed-and-breakfasts. The selection of survey sites was drawn to ensure variety in geographic location, price and lodging type. Surveys were also sent to Drayton Hall, Magnolia Plantation and Patriot's Point. In addition, CVB personnel conducted in-person surveys at the Battery and at the Waterfront Park.

Response

A total of 145 completed surveys were returned. Response was somewhat lower than expected. Both the length and the timing (late October/early November, when tourist numbers have fallen) of the survey contributed to the lower response rate. Ideally, a similar, but streamlined, survey would be conducted at various times throughout the year.

Despite a lower-than-expected response rate, the survey may still be viewed as a valid barometer of tourist sentiment. Responses to questions about age, income, employment, education, etc. closely resemble the responses to the same questions in previously-conducted surveys. This means that the survey "captured" the typical tourist.

Findings

The following summary highlights some of the findings of the tourist survey.

Expectations and Impressions of Charleston

Visitors were asked, "What were your expectations of the city before you arrived in Charleston?" The following are the five most frequently checked expectations. Ninety-one percent of the survey respondents imagined Charleston to be historic, 83 percent imagined it southern and hospitable, 76 percent expected a beautiful city, 71 percent expected a clean city, and, interestingly, 69 percent expected to find abundant dining opportunities. For all of the top five items, Charleston met the expectations of at least 95 percent of the tourists. In fact, the only expectation that was not clearly met for at least three-quarters of the respondents was "a city not overrun by tourists." (Twenty-seven percent of those who expected a city not overrun by tourists were "undecided.")

- Most tourists (87 percent) said they planned to visit Charleston again. (Five percent said they did not plan to visit again; 8 percent gave no response.)
- When asked if they had ever visited Charleston before, 43 percent replied that this was their first trip. (Fifteen percent had visited once before, 20 percent had visited 2 or 3 times and 16 percent had visited more than 3 times.)
- Of those who had visited Charleston before, 40 percent said the quality of their experience on this visit was better than before; 58 percent said it was the same; only 2 percent said it was worse.
- Visitors were asked if they found ample opportunity to enjoy a variety of nighttime activities: restaurants, shopping, theater, walking around the city, bars/nightclubs. If we base our percentages on the number of people responding to each activity (response rates varied greatly per item) the results are as follows: 95 percent of the tourists found ample restaurant opportunities, 89 percent found ample walking opportunities and 75 percent found ample bar/nightclub opportunities. For shopping and especially for the theater, the figures drop: only 67 percent found ample shopping opportunities and just 51 percent found ample theater opportunities.

Touring the City

- Tourists found public restroom facilities and water fountains lacking. About 40 percent of the tourists responded that public restrooms and water fountains were not in "ample supply." In addition, 45 percent of the respondents found signage to public restrooms to be inadequate. Another 20 percent found signage to points of interest inadequate as well.
- Just over half (54 percent) of the tourists replied that they went to the visitor center. When asked if the visitor center was "an excellent orientation to the city", 70 percent agreed. (Twenty-two percent were undecided; only 4 percent disagreed.) Of those who went to the visitor center, 35 percent saw the multi-media presentation "Forever Charleston". Three-quarters of the viewers thought it was appropriately priced.

Transportation

- Almost 60 percent of the tourists arrived in Charleston by private car. Another 19 percent arrived by plane then rented a car at the airport; 15 percent arrived by plane and were picked up by another party.
- Although 60 percent of the respondents said that they were encouraged to explore Charleston with out their car, only 25 percent of those tourists with access to a car left it parked during their stay in Charleston. Tourists used their cars most often to reach points of interest outside the historic district and to drive from home or hotel to dinner.

Profile of Respondents

- The largest number (44 percent) of tourists fall in the 35-49 age group. This group is followed by the 50-65 cohort, with 24 percent; and the 25-34 group, with 18 percent. (The over-65 and the 18-24 group each account for less than 10 percent.)
- Sixty-five percent of the tourists are married.
- The tourists are an educated group; 66 percent have at least a college degree.
- Most (70 percent) of the respondents work full time, outside of their home; 15 percent are retired; 6 percent work part-time.
- Almost half (48 percent) of the tourists indicated that their annual household income falls between \$40,000 and \$80,000. Another 26 percent have household incomes above \$80,000; 19 percent have incomes in the \$30 to \$40,000 range; 18 percent fall below \$30,000.
- Half of the tourists said that they were spending three to five days in Charleston. Another 20 percent were spending only two days. (16 percent were spending six or more days and only 6 percent were spending just one day.)
- Half of the respondents were in Charleston on vacation, 20 percent were in town for a convention or conference and 8 percent, each, were in Charleston for "other business reasons" and to visit family or friends.



LONG RANGE PLANNING

Chapter 3.

LONG RANGE PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Mission

- To evaluate the present and future role of tourism within the city of Charleston
- To examine activities in other areas of the Lowcountry only where they help establish tourism linkages to Charleston

Goals (the same as the full committee's goals)

- To preserve Charleston and its uniqueness
- To preserve the quality of residential neighborhoods
- To manage tourism for the benefit of residents, industry and tourists
- Encourage economic diversity

Objectives

1. To understand and mitigate negative tourism impacts
2. To promote a "diverse product mix"
3. To plan for a thoughtful integration of future waterfront development with existing city fabric
4. To anticipate change; to identify and plan for potential tourism-related threats to Charleston's character
5. To direct the City in its expenditure of limited resources and to recommend that energies and funds be focused on attracting and maintaining industries that generate growth and that give the highest value added impact

Objective 1: To understand and mitigate negative tourism impacts

A. The committee suggests that the most important charge of all parties involved in tourism management, planning and promotion should be the maintenance of a healthy balance between tourists and residents. With that charge, the committee has outlined a program designed to:

1. encourage greater tourism business in the slowest months,
2. discourage any significant increase in tourist numbers during peak months and
3. diffuse downtown tourism that has an impact year-round by developing a wider radius of tourist destinations

This program, in concert with a host of actions recommended by the other three subcommittees, should help ensure the desired resident/tourist balance. By spreading the tourists out (in time and geographic area) and by mitigating tourism's negative impacts, we are, in a sense, "controlling the levies" through which the streams of tourists travel. We need, also, to examine the "flow."

In tackling the issue of "flow"—the volume of tourists who visit the city—the committee has explored the idea of a comfort index. A city's comfort index (or carrying capacity) is defined as "the number of people who can use a site without an unacceptable decline in the quality of experience gained by visitors and without an unacceptable adverse impact on the society, economy, and culture of that city." Defining the optimal number of tourists or linking what "feels right" to hard data is difficult, if not impossible. Criteria necessary for establishing the optimal number must include the qualitative as well as the quantitative. While a technical study might be able to measure traffic and sewer impacts, for example, it might not be able to adequately measure visual and cultural impacts.

The committee is reluctant to set a particular optimal number of tourists. The committee agrees, however, that a 12-month calendar of peak volumes (every month with the intensity of April or June) would be unacceptable to residents of Charleston. The committee suggests, also, that such volumes would ultimately compromise the tourist's experience of Charleston. With this in mind the Committee offers the following:

1. The City, the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and all other entities involved in the management and promotion of tourism should adopt as a central goal the maintenance of a healthy resident/tourist balance.
2. Maintaining an accurate tourist count is a necessary component of balanced tourism planning. The CVB, with the Center for Business Research, should develop a methodology for estimating tourist traffic on a regular basis. Total tourist volumes should be calculated monthly and should be calculated for the downtown area as well as for the Charleston metropolitan area. If, in the future, the resident/tourist balance was to become unbalanced toward the tourist, the collected data—numbers of tourists by month and by year—could aid in restructuring promotional patterns and adopting regulatory mechanisms to restore a more harmonious balance.

B. Because of the need to preserve and enhance our residential areas, all City transit and tourist-related development activities must include careful consideration of possible negative impacts on those areas.

C. The committee has examined the long-term mission and composition of the Tourism Commission. The committee finds that the Tourism Commission is a valuable and necessary component of future tourism planning efforts. However, the following problems are associated with the operation of the commission:

- The City has been slow to re-appoint new members.
- A quorum is sometimes not met. (This can translate into costly delays for the affected parties.)
- Assimilation of new members is difficult.
- The new ethics legislation has rendered obsolete the required composition of the Tourism Commission.
- The commission has spent many hours "micro-managing" the industry. Numerous subcommittee meetings to formulate solutions to problems, combined with regular commission meetings, exact undue time and energy from commission members.
- The Tourism Commission is larger than the typical planning board or commission; the large size may impede maximum efficacy.

In order that the development of tourism be the product of thoughtful planning, the mission and composition of the Tourism Commission should be redefined, as follows:

1. The Tourism Commission's mission should be expanded to include responsibility for long range and strategic tourism planning, beginning with the implementation of the recommendations of this planning effort. A tighter set of vehicle regulations should allow the commission more time for long range planning. These regulations should be drawn up by the Tourism Advisory Committee and written explicitly into the tourism ordinance. The commission should keep apprised of decisions, however, through a monthly written report from the tourism director.

The responsibilities of the Tourism Commission, then, would be as follows:

- to facilitate the implementation of the plan recommendations,
 - to anticipate future threats and opportunities
 - to explore new policies and request research necessary to evaluate suggested policies
 - to serve as an advisory and "sounding" board for tourism director
 - to monitor the decisions of the Tourism Management staff to ensure their consistency with long-term tourism planning goals.
2. In order that the commission make the most informed and objective decisions possible and that new members are quickly assimilated into the commission process, the City should conduct a mandatory annual orientation session for the commission. The orientation session should include: a review of all pertinent ordinances, a review of past tourism planning efforts and explanation by the City's legal staff as to their responsibilities and powers of the Tourism Commission.
 3. Changes should be made to the existing composition of the Tourism Commission as outlined in the ordinance. The present ordinance specifies the following composition of the eleven-member commission.

- the mayor (1)
- City Council member (1)
- resident representatives (3)
- individual with general knowledge of business, commerce and urban economics (1)
- other (2)
- tourism industry representatives (3)
 - tour guide
 - tourist transportation
 - lodging

The proposed seven-member composition, as outlined below, is to accomplish the following:

- a. Prescribe a slightly smaller, more efficient commission and
- b. Give a voting voice to the tourism industry through CVB and/or Downtown Business Association and/or lodging industry.
 - City Council member (1)
 - residents, at least two should be drawn from downtown neighborhoods and one of those should be from the Old and Historic District (3)
 - individual with general knowledge of business, urban economics (1)
 - tourism industry representatives—should be individuals active in or with knowledge about the convention and visitors business, downtown business or the lodging industry (2)
4. To encourage broader participation in tourism issues and to allow industry representatives to supply information when needed, the Tourism Commission should include a non-voting, advisory committee to convene as needed. The advisory committee could include, for example: a carriage industry representative, a bus industry representative, a tour guide, a Restaurant Association representative and/or an arts organizer.
5. Decisions reached by the Tourism Commission may have direct and serious impacts on the downtown community. Full attendance at meetings is crucial. The Tourism Commission ordinance should be revised to provide for the replacement of non-participating members. Absences should be excused and if more than one-third of the meetings are not attended dismissal should be considered. Also the City should supply re-appointments in a timely manner and City legal staff should be encouraged to attend commission meetings on a regular basis.



Objective 2: To promote a "diverse product mix"

This "mix" should:

- draw tourists at different times throughout the year (thereby maintaining a steadier flow of tourists and tourist dollars),
- disperse tourists over a wide range of destinations (thereby lessening the burden on downtown)
- offer variety in the type of tourist activity (thereby giving more activity choices for the repeat visitor and fortifying Charleston against the "down cycle" of tourism)

A. Festivals are excellent draws for slower months. The City and Chamber should build on existing festivals and perhaps generate new ones.

B. The committee supports CVB's policy of not advertising for downtown locations during peak months. However, promotions targeted at the slowest months should be continued. Also, the CVB should continue its promotions of the area's beaches and golf courses, even during the peak months (April, June, July and October).

C. The CVB should promote destinations outside the traditional downtown sites.

D. Nature-based tourism should be promoted as a further diversification of destination mix.

E. The upper King Street area offers a prime opportunity for building a new center for tourist activity. Already, both private and public investments have planted the seeds for its development—potential change to two-way traffic for King Street, streetscaping through Tax Increment Financing, Francis Marion Hotel renovation, Marion Square park redevelopment, VRTC and it's new parking garage, Camden Station parking garage, completion of the Bell South building and the possibility of a hotel at the Old Citadel. Continued development of the area is encouraged as prescribed by the ZHA King Street Study which recommended resident-served shopping, ethnic restaurants and cafes, art stores and an arts center. Furthermore, the City should devote attention to the upper King Street area in its revisions (in 1995) to the official guide book, Information for Guides of Historic Charleston.

F. Encourage the development of tourist destinations out of downtown and to reduce downtown traffic congestion, the City of Charleston should work cooperatively with Mount Pleasant to explore ferry service links to Patriot's Point and Daniel Island. Ferries would serve both residents and tourists.

G. There is need for regional tourism planning which goes beyond the CVB's purely promotional efforts.

1. A trident tourism council should be formed to focus on tourism as an economic development tool—as means of diversifying the tourism product mix and lessening impact on downtown Charleston. The council should work in cooperation with Santee Lakes District planning efforts.
2. The South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism (PRT) should be encouraged to fund planning, as well as promotional, efforts.

H. There is a need for better integration of tourism and economic development with the arts.

1. Because of the central importance of the arts in maintaining a vital community, the CVB, the City's Office of Cultural Affairs and the Charleston Area Arts Council should develop a strategy for packaging and promoting the arts. As part of this effort, these groups should consider the development of a permanent visual arts center with studio and exhibit space, possibly on upper King Street.
2. The City should continue to require that a certain percentage of its accommodation tax moneys that go to the CVB be used for marketing of Charleston as an arts destination.
3. Future planning efforts should include arts organizers.

I. Ethnic tours should be promoted as a way to further diversify product mix. Also, special interest tours should be developed. For example, a Civil War tour could include a visit to archeological sites. Current efforts to develop a Heritage Corridor Tour, a self-guided tour that would link various historic sites along the state's roadways, are encouraged.

J. The development of new educational facilities such as an exploratorium, maritime museum, railroad museum, etc., is encouraged. Such facilities would be positive additions to the city's inventory of tourist destinations and resident educational opportunities. However, the creation of such facilities should not occur through public sector initiative; instead, such facilities should be born of private/public partnership.



Objective 3: To plan for a thoughtful integration of future waterfront development within the existing city fabric

- A. A formal planning process for the Cooper River waterfront corridor (bordered by the waterfront, East Bay Street, Waterfront Park and Charlotte Street) should be undertaken immediately
- B. Future waterfront development should be mixed use—with an emphasis on residential, recreational and educational uses. Commercial development should be limited to encourage residents and tourists to patronize the city's existing commercial areas.

C. The accommodations district as currently defined by the *Zoning Ordinance*, accomplishes the following: 1. strengthens the existing commercial corridor; 2. keeps tourism-related development and transit lines together and 3. minimizes the impact on residential neighborhoods. There is no need to expand the accommodation zone to waterfront properties or existing residential areas.

Objective 4: To anticipate change; to identify and plan for potential tourism-related threats to Charleston's existing character

A. The City's legal and planning staffs should investigate the City's jurisdiction with respect to air and water regulations. City staff should draft regulations to control recreational activities in order to minimize negative impacts on the City. Specifically, the City should explore ways to control the noise and speed of water craft.

B. Casinos should be prohibited from locating not only in the City of Charleston but also in the Charleston metropolitan area. The City should work with surrounding jurisdictions to strengthen prohibitive regulations. The negative impacts of casinos, outlined in Appendix E, outweigh any potential revenue-producing impacts.

Objective 5: Direct the City in its expenditure of limited resources and to recommend that energies and funds be focused on attracting and maintaining industries that generate growth and give the highest value added impact

The committee cites the following negative aspects of a tourism economy:

- the tourism industry generally supports lower paying jobs
- owners of historic homes bear the burden
- economic/social dislocation occurs when tourist visitation dwindles
- the tourism industry is vulnerable to disaster-related disruptions

A. The City should continue to promote tourism; it should not rely entirely on tourism, however. Instead, the City should pursue a more diverse economic mix and seek new and emerging industries. These industries could include pharmaceuticals, automobiles and automobile parts, telecommunications and film-making.

B. The following recommendation of Charleston 2000 should be implemented: "the creation of a mayor's task force on the economy to successfully address economic issues. A central objective would be to address the economic needs and to facilitate cooperation between public and private entities to formulate a comprehensive economic investment strategy" This task force should work closely with the City's Department of Housing and Economic Development in coordination and implementation of a progressive, city-wide economic development strategy.

CITY IMAGE
Chapter 4.

CITY IMAGE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

In treating the subject of Charleston's image, a fundamental question was asked: "Does Charleston wish to continue its efforts to develop tourism?" This was answered in the affirmative, which led to the next question: "What type of image does Charleston need to protect and project if it is to continue its past success in attracting tourists?"

Defining the Image of Charleston

The committee recognizes that treating definitively the subject of the "image of Charleston" borders on the impossible. To understand the image of Charleston, one must attempt to understand the city's essence, the city's character. What makes Charleston unique? The historic buildings, the gardens, the physical beauty of the Lowcountry, the climate, the people—perhaps all of these make Charleston special. Legions of authors and historians have grappled with defining Charleston precisely. All, to some degree and most by their own admission, have failed. What the committee understands is that Charleston is one of the unique cities in North America. The committee's responsibilities lie in preserving and nurturing that uniqueness.



Inherent Tourist/Resident Conflict

In developing its list of key issues, the image sub-committee was confronted with a paradox. Ask any resident of Charleston's historic district what sort of environment he would like to inhabit and the reply would most likely include some of the following: clean, quiet, safe neighborhoods; streets that are not congested; tasteful commercial districts; and lower property taxes. Residents and tourists alike share many of the same desires for Charleston. There is a built-in conflict between resident desires and tourist desires. For example, both want clean streets but the tourist also wants to tour the city in horse-drawn carriages or buses that create congestion and pollution problems. The accommodation of tourist desires can lower the quality of life for the resident. This accommodation of tourist desires and the possible reduction of the quality of life for the resident amounts to a resident "subsidy" of the tourism industry.

Key Issues

The committee understands that the resident/tourist conflict is certain to continue in a tourism-dependent economy. The committee is tackling that conflict by attempting to make the interaction between tourist pattern and resident pattern as positive as possible. To accomplish this, the committee is addressing the following:

1. the needs and desires common to resident and tourist
2. the quality-of-life standards of the resident which are eroded by heavy tourist volumes and
3. the needs of the tourist, which if met, would detract from the city's appeal as a tourist destination

More specifically, the committee has chosen to address the following issues:

- Sanitation
- Public restrooms
- Directional signage
- Commercial signage
- Sandwich boards and other sidewalk encroachments
- Market area and noise/night life
- Street vendors
- History and preservation
- Appropriate waterfront development
- Casino gambling
- Gateways

Sanitation

The committee believes that tourists and residents alike enjoy clean streets. Charleston generally achieves the goal of clean streets, with the exception of horse excreta and garbage collection and clean-up in dense commercial areas. Residential sanitation could be improved through education and strict enforcement. Problems include: 1. trash placed on streets at inappropriate times, 2. garbage placed in plastic bags rather than containers, or not contained at all, and 3. unweeded, messy sidewalks. Horse excreta remain in the street for too long. Even after clean-up, strong odors remain. In the past, the owners of the carriage companies have failed to develop a cooperative solution to the problem.

To make garbage collection more efficient, the City's Sanitation Division has proposed a program of uniform garbage containers. The containers could accomplish several things: 1. minimize safety hazards to

garbage handlers (the containers are mechanically "flipped" to empty garbage so handlers do not touch the refuse) 2. contribute to a tidier appearance on city lawns and sidewalks and 3. allow most residential areas to be served only once a week, thereby allowing a significant savings in garbage collection. The City's actions in this regard have been restricted because of high set-up costs.

A. Horse Excreta: The Tourism Commission should monitor the effectiveness of the newly implemented clean-up program. This program places the financial responsibility on the carriage companies. Through a bidding process, the City awards a clean-up contract to a private company. The City then collects fees from the carriage companies based on the number of carriages touring per month per company. If this program is unsuccessful, one of two other programs could be considered: 1. the City of Charleston could administer a comprehensive clean-up program paid for by fees collected from carriage companies or 2. the carriage business could be franchised out by zone to various carriage companies, each responsible for its own clean-up. (Effective clean-up would be a condition of licensing and a non-compliant carriage company could lose its license.)

B. The City should look into a pilot program for uniform containers for the Market and commercial areas and a way to require businesses to pay for these containers.

C. The Sanitation Division has problems sweeping streets with cars and vans parked on Market Street in the early morning hours. So sweepers can do their job, the City should designate Market Street around the sheds a limited "no parking" zone, with strict enforcement, between certain hours.

D. The Restaurant Association should educate members about inside wash-out areas and provide information about Carolina By-Products, a private company that buys used grease, etc.

E. The City should hire one additional person to be a mobile sweeper around the Market and commercial areas.

F. Neighborhood associations should be more aggressive in educating residents about types of garbage and trash, recycling, pickup times, etc., to reduce rubbish on streets. A city-wide uniform containerization program should be seriously considered as a long-term money-saving solution.

G. The City should step up its efforts to remind residents of sanitation regulations. A suggested education vehicle is flyers in the Commissioner of Public Works bills. Another suggestion is that as part of a "sanitation awareness campaign," the City could produce quarterly "cleanliness reports" on the status of lingering garbage problems and improvements.

Public Restrooms

The lack of public restrooms in downtown Charleston is a complaint consistently registered by tourists and merchants. The resident survey results indicate that the shortage of public restrooms is a primary concern of residents as well. Presently there are twelve public restroom facilities—one at the VRTC, five in parking garages, one inside the Gaillard Auditorium, one inside City Hall, one inside the County Office building, one inside the Gastronomiserie in the Market area, one inside Market Hall and one at the City Marina.

None of the restroom facilities is south of Broad Street, where large numbers of tourists go. To a certain extent, the lack of public restrooms south of Broad functions as an effective "meter" on the length of time tourists can wander through the residential neighborhoods.

On the weekends, when tourist volumes are highest, only eight facilities are open—four of these are inside parking garages, one is hidden inside the Gourmetisserie, one is particularly well hidden inside the Market Hall, one requires the tourist to go into the visitor center; the other to the City Marina. Signage to existing restrooms is inadequate.

The committee is aware that some people are hesitant to use the restrooms in garages—especially where the lighting is poor. The restrooms are sited, however, so that they are in full view of the garage attendant.

Restrooms are a “necessary amenity” and the city’s shortage is a problem. To treat this problem, an approach that begins with better identification of existing restrooms and continues, as economically feasible, with erection of new restrooms should be implemented. The building and maintenance of public restrooms are costly. Financial costs must be weighed against the image that the City of Charleston is attempting to project to its visitors. The selling of this image also has an explicit cost: and when something as basic as adequate public restrooms is not available, there is a real gap between the product being sold and the one being delivered.

- A. All public restrooms should be clearly identified with internationally-recognized restroom symbols placed in conspicuous locations. This action should be taken immediately.
- B. All future Chamber and City directional publications should indicate restroom locations.
- C. The City should allocate resources necessary to ensure that restrooms are clean and safe.
- D. The restrooms at the City Marina should remain available to the public—even when the marina is privatized.
- E. The restrooms in the Market/Waterfront park area are inadequate to serve its large tourist volumes. If economically feasible, the City should erect attractive, free-standing restrooms. Suggested location: Between East Bay and Concord Streets—either on North Market Street or in the median between North and South Market Streets.
- F. Within a year following the implementation of a new restroom identification package, the need for a public restroom South of Broad should be re-evaluated. If, at that time, restroom facilities are still deemed inadequate, the Hazel Parker Playground building on East Bay Street should be re-configured with public-accessible restrooms to be open during daytime hours.

In evaluating south of Broad restroom locations, the possibility of restoring the bathrooms at White Point Gardens was considered. Given the cost of restoration, potential security problems and the desire to protect the integrity of the residential neighborhoods, the White Point Gardens option lost in favor of Hazel Parker Playground.

Directional Signage

The tourists survey indicates overwhelmingly that signage to restrooms is inadequate. (Sixty-three percent of the respondents said, “No, restrooms are not clearly marked.”) A third of tourist survey respondents also indicated that parking garages/lots and points of interest were not clearly marked. The City’s Office of Revitalization has, in the past, investigated a way-finding program—a comprehensive, graphically-coordinated signage program to direct people to specific points of interest (for example, the historic district, garages, etc.) Because of budget limitations, there are no immediate plans to implement this program.

One quarter of the respondents to the tourist survey felt that street names were not clearly marked. The survey of the residents, as well as complaints heard outside of the survey, indicate that tourists often drive the wrong way down one-way streets. Inadequate one-way signage makes driving both confusing and dangerous to the tourist.

- A. As stated in the above text addressing restrooms, the City should place internationally-recognized restroom signs in conspicuous locations to identify all public restrooms. This action should be taken immediately.
- B. The Department of Traffic and Transportation should examine street name signs and one-way signs and, where appropriate, enhance existing signage.
- C. All tourist-targeted maps published by the CVB and the City should indicate the direction of all one-way streets and the point of entry for garages where garages are bounded by one-way streets.
- D. When economically feasible, the City should proceed with its proposed way-finding program (a unified informational/directional signage program to improve the visitors ability to find parking and popular destinations).

Commercial Signage

The committee is concerned about the recent proliferation of neon signs, the multiple business signs in general and the relaxed enforcement of the existing sign ordinance. The committee finds that the use of multiple signs, neon and other electrified signs in particular, destroys the integrity of historic buildings and projects a “honky-tonk” image which is inappropriate to the character of the city.

The employment of neon and other electrified signage is the most glaring evidence of a trend towards multiple signage. Businesses feel that they must have a number of signs; right-angled, painted windows, sandwich boards, etc. to compete. The City’s current sign ordinance does not expressly prohibit multiple signage or neon/electrified signs. It does, however, require that every commercial sign be approved before it is erected. Many of the neon signs in use today have not been approved and, as such, are in violation of the law. Many violation letters have been issued but, up to this time, the City has taken few violators of the sign ordinance to court.

The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) has been granted the authority to rule on design matters within the historic district which includes commercial signs. When ruling on the appropriateness of any sign, the BAR seeks to determine whether a sign fits within the overall identification scheme of the building and whether it fits within the architectural context of the building and neighboring buildings. The BAR recognizes that Charleston’s urban fabric is composed of a broad spectrum of architectural time periods and urban design components. The BAR may occasionally approve neon signs.

- A. The employment of multiple signs and neon and other electrified signs, in particular is discouraged. Although a neon/electrified sign may occasionally be appropriate to its context, the use of neon/electrified signage generally detracts from the city’s historic integrity. As such, the judgments of the Board of Architectural Review are supported. The Board of Architectural Review should be guided by the standards used by the City’s Architecture and Preservation staff (See Appendix F).

B. The enforcement of the current sign ordinance is supported. The current sign ordinance should be strengthened by an amendment which allows no more than two signs per facade per business. In those rare occasions when neon or other electrified signage is approved, no more than one of the two signs should be neon/electrified.

C. The City's legal staff should pursue prosecution of sign infringements to the fullest extent possible.

Sandwich Boards and Other Sidewalk Encroachments

Increasingly, merchants are encroaching on public sidewalks by placing sandwich boards, merchandise displays and tables and chairs on the sidewalk area in front of their businesses. Although tourists (and locals) may enjoy sitting outside and outdoor seating may add an appealing European touch to the city, the encroachment upon the sidewalk crowds our already-narrow sidewalks. Furthermore, without strict regulations regarding style, material, dimension and placement, the tables and chairs contribute to visual clutter. The eating at open-air tables tends to generate more sidewalk litter and food droppings, much of which is washed into the drainage system.



Sandwich boards, in particular, crowd the sidewalks, impede pedestrian traffic and render passage by the physically handicapped virtually impossible. Further, since they are without historic precedent, the sandwich boards run counter to the City's ethic of preservation and appropriate adaptive re-use of the city's commercial neighborhoods.

Another troublesome encroachment into public space is pamphleteering—the distribution of advertisements, menus or coupons by individual businesses outside the confines of their establishments. The committee finds that the aggressive, invasive nature of this advertising is inappropriate to the character and image of Charleston.

The City's Department of Planning and Urban Development has already developed standards for proper placement, type and appearance of all other sidewalk encroachments—canopies, planters, flower boxes,

benches and newspaper boxes. A draft ordinance has been created. Due to the major commitment of staff time needed to implement the project, the draft ordinance has not become law.

A. Sandwich boards should be prohibited and existing sandwich boards removed. Because sandwich boards require minimal capital outlay, an amortization schedule is deemed unnecessary.

B. All other encroachments on sidewalks in commercial areas (tables, chairs, etc.) that are used for the purpose of extending the square footage of a business should be banned with no variances.

C. To the extent legally permissible, the City should develop a mechanism to discourage merchants from advertising on streets and sidewalks.

D. As the budget permits, the City should adopt the drafted encroachment standards for "other" encroachments—planters, benches, newspaper boxes, etc.—and it should devote resources to enforce those standards. These "other" encroachments should be allowed only upon approval of encroachment permits obtained through the City. The encroachment license should be granted on a year-to-year basis.

Market Area/Noise and Night Life

The committee recognizes that with the recent arrival of the fast food chain and the expansion of outdoor dining and evening entertainment, the face of the Market area is changing. The proliferation of bars and clubs has contributed to an increase in vandalism, parking pressures and noise in adjacent residential neighborhoods. The use of outdoor live entertainment, outdoor speakers and open windows and doors has elevated the noise in the Market area. The overall heightened noise level and outdoor activity contributes to rowdy and disrespectful behavior and it repels some locals and tourists who otherwise might patronize the area. Some business and property owners are fearful that the Market area's very success—mass tourist appeal, ability to support both daytime and nighttime activities, attractiveness to franchise operations—could, if improperly managed, toll the Market's decline.

The Market area activities require constant monitoring and stringent control so that neither the Market area or the surrounding residential neighborhoods are negatively impacted. It also demands that the City ask itself what types of commercial activity functions compatibly with existing residential character.

A. Desired Market Area Character

The Market area should be a commercial neighborhood in which residents can take pride. The Market area can be a positive force—an historically-significant commercial neighborhood, a forum for the small business person, a primary tourist attraction, a meeting place for locals, a significant revenue source for the city. With physical improvements and stricter design, noise and parking controls, the Market area can remain a lively commercial area and a vital public gathering place.

The Market area should respect the city's physical fabric and surrounding residential neighborhoods. Its visual appeal should be strengthened, and future improvements should enhance its pedestrian qualities and reduce vehicular congestion. The Market area should be a place that attracts a diversity of people—families, singles, locals, tourists—with a diversity of opportunities available during the day and early evening hours. The distinction of early evening is important. Because of its proximity to residential neighborhoods, the Market area must not be a hub of outdoor activity past 11 p.m. The area may retain its night life, but activity should occur indoors. Containment of that activity requires not only a noise curfew but also increased police presence.

The Noise Committee composed of area residents, merchants and City staff has produced a tentative solution to the noise problem. In order to maintain the integrity of both the Market area and surrounding residential neighborhoods, this solution is endorsed. As proposed, the new noise ordinance would impose a curfew on amplified outdoor music at 11 p.m. and an absolute noise curfew at midnight. The proposal also calls for the designation of an appropriate maximum decibel level for outdoor music (both live and recorded, whether coming from sidewalk speakers or through open windows and doors). The noise level would be enforced by the Police Department through the use of decibel meters.

It is hoped that the noise curfew will lessen rowdy activity outdoors, thereby further reducing the area's noise. The nighttime enforcement of residents-only parking in Dock Street and Ansonborough should further reduce noise disturbances in those neighborhoods.

B. Noise Control

The noise problem is really three problems: 1. noise emanating directly from speakers and entertainers within the Market area 2. noise created by legitimate customers and loiterers walking and driving around the Market area and 3. noise created by rowdy people leaving the Market area and passing through residential neighborhoods.

C. Market Area Study

The Department of Planning and Urban Development's Market Area Study is endorsed. The study, developed with contributions from merchants, residents and various City departments, outlines a program of action for achieving the type of "ideal Market area" described above. The study's stated goals are:

- to maintain the uniqueness of the Market area,
- to strengthen the aesthetic appeal of the Market area,
- to find solutions to the area's parking problems,
- to secure an appropriate market mix,
- to ensure the economic health and stability of the area,
- to strengthen the Market area's appeal to residents as well as tourists and
- to maintain the residential character of adjacent neighborhoods and protect the quality of life for residents.

Specific recommendations of the Market Area Study include the following:

- **Down zoning** of the northern edge of the Market area to protect Ansonborough from further intrusion of heavy commercial uses and rezoning of the central Market area from Light Industrial to General Business.
- **Design Guidelines** to prescribe appropriate design treatment for building details and signage.
- **Streetscaping** to enhanced sidewalks, tree-planting, water fountains, benches, etc. to beautify area and increase pedestrian area

- **Business Improvement District** to explore the idea of funding additional Market area security, clean-up, promotion, streetscaping and a parking garage through special levy on Market area business and/or property owners.

- **Noise ordinance** (as described in recommendation B, above)

- **Parking concerns** addressed by the study were the resolution of the open Market merchant meter-feeding problem, proposed solutions included a hard-hitting campaign to increase patron and employee use of parking garages especially on weekends and evenings, possible new parking garage to serve the Market area, to encourage merchant participation in validation program for customer parking in garages and lots, better garage and restroom signage and nighttime enforcement of residents-only parking in Ansonborough and Dock Street neighborhoods.

Miscellaneous:

- Various marketing suggestions
- Tighter open Market display regulations
- Continuing economic analysis
- Restoration of Market Head building

Street Vendors

The present regulations controlling street vendors appear to be effective. However, the City should keep a watchful eye on other areas of the city where vendors are currently allowed. Prohibitive measures like those already in place for the Market area and south of Broad could be extended to other areas if vendors pose a problem.

History and Preservation

The leading tourist attraction of the city of Charleston is its well-preserved collection of historic buildings. It is incumbent upon the city residents and City government to continue their preservation efforts. However, we must closely examine the costs to the residents of this continued preservation effort. Ever-increasing property taxes and repair costs bring the cost/benefit equation into question for the owners of the historic buildings. Although the tourist pays for secondary services provided by the commercial tourism industry, it is the property owner—the owner of the historic house and garden—who pays for the primary historic attractions.

The Long Range Subcommittee should examine the cost/benefit equation of tourism and explore ways to reduce the financial burden on the downtown homeowner.

Appropriate Waterfront Development

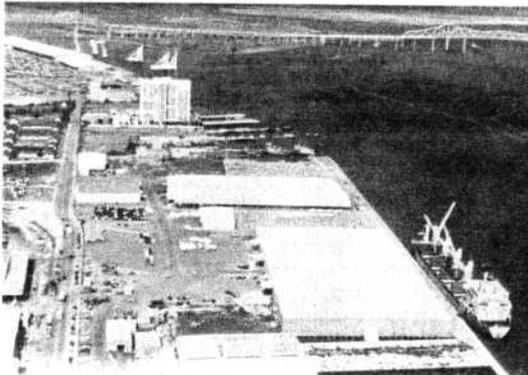
The committee supports the following recommendations offered by the Long Range Subcommittee for the development of the Cooper River waterfront corridor (bounded by the waterfront and East Bay Street, from the Waterfront Park to Charlotte Street).

A. Waterfront development should be the result of a formal planning process—to be undertaken immediately.

B. Waterfront development should be mixed use with an emphasis on residential, recreational and educational uses. Commercial development should be limited to encourage residents and tourists to patronize the city's existing commercial areas. Plans should include continuous public waterfront access and substantial public park space with athletic fields. Existing accommodation zones should not be expanded to the waterfront.

C. The following recommendations should apply to waterfront development:

- provide appropriate residential and commercial sanitation,
- prohibit sandwich boards and other encroachments,
- promote a lively, family-oriented, educational atmosphere neither bawdy and raucous, nor disrespectful of the city's existing physical fabric or residential neighborhoods,
- include internationally-recognized and conspicuous public restroom signage and
- provide clear directional signage.



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D. Development should occur as an extension of the city's current grid. Grand mega-structures, festival marketplaces or other large-scale developments occupying sizable parcels of land would be inappropriate to the character and modest scale of Charleston. Towering structures, clamoring for harbor views, would be equally inappropriate. Development should be consistent with existing height limitations.

Casino Gambling

Commercial gambling should not be allowed in the city of Charleston. The unique character of Charleston is linked inextricably to its quality of life, rich history, architectural jewels and natural beauty, all of which co-exist in fragile balance with already-healthy commercial and tourist trades. Casino gambling would threaten the balance that is so crucial to the residents' quality of life and detract from the uniqueness of Charleston.

Gateways into Charleston

The committee recognizes that the gateways into a city—the highways, boulevards, bridges, waterways—make an immediate impression on visitors. A city's treatment of its gateways makes a statement about the city's pride in itself, maintenance habits and fiscal resources, vision and commitment to beauty and livability. A city's gateway can also be a source of beauty, a visual treat, for the resident.

At present, each of the gateways into Charleston could be significantly improved. Given the City's limited resources, transformation of the gateways will occur gradually through cooperative efforts. The committee recommends the following:

A. The City should continue to encourage private property owners whose properties lie within gateways to beautify their own property. The City should also continue to assist community groups such as the Calhoun Corridor Partnership and the Savannah Highway Neighborhood Commission to initiate beautification projects.

B. The City should continue to encourage the South Carolina Department of Transportation to participate in the beautification of its roads.

C. The City should continue its own gateway efforts. Gateway projects already proposed or underway include:

- **I-26:** general clean-up and new plantings
- **Ashley River Bridge:** plantings surrounding "All American City" sign
- **Meeting Street:** planting trees
- **King Street:** streetscaping
- **East Bay/Morrison:** live oaks (project 3/4 complete)
- **Savannah Highway:** Palmetto trees in Avondale area and mixed species plantings in median near the Clemson Experimental Station (cooperative effort of ReLEAF, Savannah Highway Neighborhood Commission, City of Charleston and Charleston County)
- **Crosstown:** new plan to eliminate fences, clear weeds, etc.
- **Calhoun Street:** tree plantings, mainly live oaks (cooperative effort of Calhoun Corridor Partnership, ReLEAF, and City of Charleston)
- **Cooper River/Ashley River Walk:** plans are being developed for a continuous waterfront pedestrian path between Aquarium and Brittlebank Park. 1994 plans to build walkway (seawall, sidewalk, green space, palmetto trees) between Coast Guard Station and City Marina
- **James Island Bridge:** intersection with Calhoun Street and Lockwood Drive

TOURIST RELATED VEHICLES

Chapter 5.

TOURIST RELATED VEHICLES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Quadcycles

Are quadcycles an appropriate vehicle type to have on the streets with cars, trucks, etc.? The historic district where these cycles now operate is unique: 1. streets are narrow and congested, 2. buildings are placed on the right-of-way edge creating blind street corners and 3. vehicle types using the streets include cars, buses, horse-drawn carriages and trucks. Because of these unusual characteristics, quadcycles are a nuisance and inappropriate in the historic district.

The Committee recommends that the City restrict, with a two-year amortization schedule, quadcycles entirely from the historic district where they are a nuisance.

Carriages

A. Franchising Carriages

The committee discussed all issues related to carriages in the context of how a franchise or the current system can address them.

- The major problem of street clean-up is being addressed with the contract approved by City Council on November 23, 1993. The City will be billed monthly by the private company contracted for clean-up and require a monthly payment from each carriage company based on the number of carriage tours.
- Enforcement problems due to lack of accountability could be better addressed by a franchise only if there is one carriage company per touring zone. With or without a franchise, the City needs better enforcement. Punishment for violations must be severe enough to deter these actions (i.e., closing the operation for a day).
- The problem of some carriages not pulling over out of the way for vehicles will potentially always be a problem. Franchising will not make a difference.
- Unknown destinations for tourists are not a major problem although franchising could address this.
- Carriages are not always evenly staggered but this will remain a potential problem with a franchise.

Based on these findings, the committee concludes that a franchise system will not offer any new solutions or an improved system. Additionally, the industry is satisfied with the current system.

B. Carriage Sizes

There is a public perception that during the summer months horses are overworked when pulling full loads of sixteen persons. Numerous City offices receive complaints especially in the summer. The situation reached a peak in 1993 when the City consulted several impartial experts. The majority of veterinarians who evaluated the situation felt that horses pulling full loads were not in any risk as long as they were not required to work in extreme high temperatures.

In addition, there have been no reported instances of people falling off a carriage holding sixteen persons. Currently, when carriages are certified a capacity is established. No certified carriage has a capacity above sixteen. Even though sixteen is the maximum capacity, carriages have been known to exceed this limit. Under no circumstances should approved capacities be exceeded. As carriages pass through the gate the approved capacity should be visible so it can be checked.

The committee recommends that prior to certification, a maximum carriage capacity (not to exceed sixteen) be assigned and placed on each carriage, in a location to be determined, and visible to the gatekeeper. The gatekeeper should routinely check each carriage's capacity to ensure compliance with the certified capacity.

C. Carriage styles

Currently the ordinance incorrectly references styles in a book which identifies small buggies as the only acceptable carriage style. The majority of certified carriages are wagons not buggies. To refine the approval process, a chart of acceptable styles and colors should be developed.

The Office of Tourism Management should develop a system which identifies acceptable styles, colors and capacities based on what has been approved (similar to the bus chart).

D. Insurance

The current ordinance states that the Tourism Commission must determine the amount of liability insurance with Personal Injury Protection (PIP) coverage required for carriage companies. Effective coverage should be \$1 million minimum insurance which the ordinance should specifically require.

The committee recommends that the City revise the ordinance to require \$1 million minimum liability insurance with PIP coverage.

E. New carriage tour zones

Currently, carriages operate in three zones located below Calhoun Street, in the more congested area of the peninsula (See following map). Why not encourage carriages to spread out more by offering new zones? There is a zone at the Visitor Reception and Transportation Center (VRTC); however, a few companies tried it for several weeks but found it unprofitable. This area is not yet marketable.

The committee recommends that, at some point in the future, the possibility of re-activating this "VRTC" zone should be explored.

F. Special medallions

It was brought to the committee's attention that at certain times of the year, namely holiday weekends, carriages must wait forty-five minutes or more for a medallion. The tourism director could be given the authority to issue extra medallions based on special criteria, thereby creating a relief mechanism for the industry. On holiday weekends, the business traffic is greatly reduced but tours in the neighborhoods significantly increase creating congestion in residential areas.

The committee recommends that no extra medallions be provided based on the impact on residential areas.

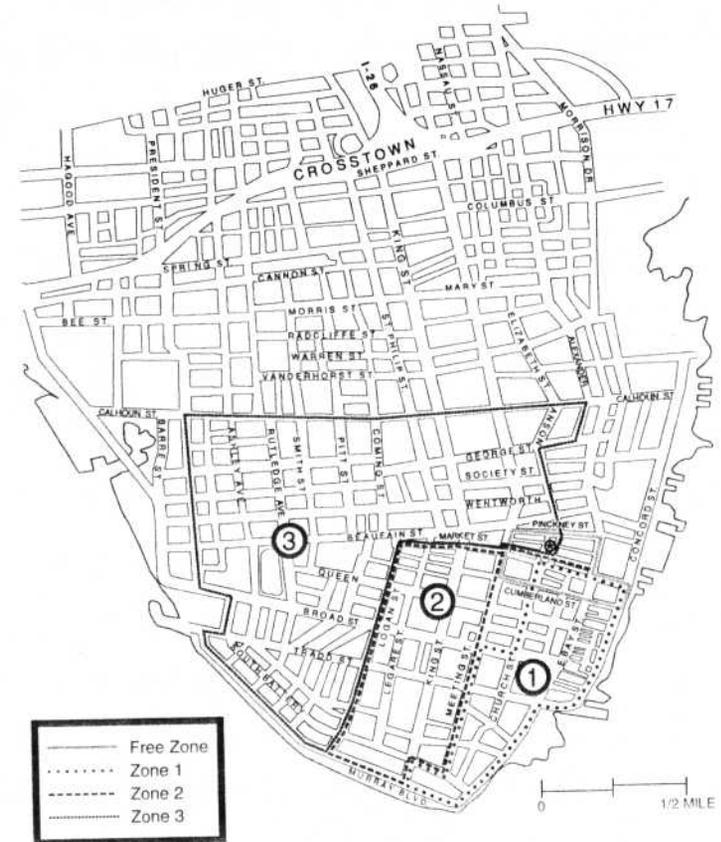
G. Reserving medallions

In 1993, the Office of Tourism Management allowed companies to reserve medallions if companies had made commitments for special tours prior to the establishment of the gate system. This was seen as a fair way of dealing with the transition to the new gate system which does not allow for reservations. In the past reservations were made when large groups of visitors came to town—cruise ships and large conventions. One problem with reservations is the carriages in line at the gate sometimes have to wait for medallions to be returned from companies who reserved them. This is a major problem when tour groups are late.

The committee agreed that a group of cruise ship tourists with limited time on land or conventioners with limited tour time should be allowed to schedule reservations. Reservations should be limited to organized groups and never should all medallions be reserved.

The committee recommends that the director of tourism should develop a system for consideration by the Tourism Commission which will make a limited number of medallions available for off-peak hours. Reservations should be for organized groups only and the current maximum time to keep a medallion (seventy-five minutes) should apply. This system should not adversely impact walk-up carriage business.

CARRIAGE TOUR ZONES



⊕ = Starting point

H. Carriages—nighttime use

The current authority of the Tourism Commission as it relates to the regulation of carriages providing point-to-point transportation is unclear.

The committee recommends that City Council should expand the Tourism Commission's responsibilities to include the regulation of non-touring carriage transportation via the Office of Tourism Management with regards to the number of carriages, hours of operation, clean-up and routing for day and night.

There are currently several carriage activities which occur at night including wedding related transportation, buggy rides in the commercial area (an abbreviated tour) and transportation for special events such as the Film Festival. In discussing the appropriateness of these activities, the committee obtained suggestions from Blaine Ewing of the Downtown Neighborhood Coalition and Dr. Charlton deSaussure, President of the Charlestowne Neighborhood Association. They formulated a solution that allows some nighttime carriage activity in commercial areas and allows wedding transportation with restrictions. All other point-to-point transportation in residential areas is prohibited.

Commercial areas

At night carriages are permitted to give tours in the commercial areas only. This practice is acceptable if they limit the use of Meeting and East Bay Streets. These are congested at night, especially with pedestrians. The addition of carriages makes the situation unsafe. In the Market Street area, in particular, the availability of carriage tours at night may help attract families—a goal of the Market Area Plan.

In the congested areas below the Crosstown, nighttime tours and point-to-point transportation by carriages in commercial areas only should be allowed. The use of Meeting and East Bay Streets should be carefully monitored.

Residential areas

Weddings and some special transportation requests impact neighborhoods at night. Weddings are viewed as a service to the downtown residents. Wedding transportation possibilities include: a) from private downtown home to the church, b) from the church to the reception and c) from the reception to the honeymoon location. A few times in the year, during special events, carriages are requested for transportation from the Omni Hotel to the Edmonston Alston House, for example.

Neighborhood concerns include the following:

- Carriages should not be allowed to provide transportation in the neighborhood at night; neighborhoods should be given back to the residents at night.
- Carriages which provide transportation after wedding receptions which are later at night, often have cars honking horns following the bridal party.
- Carriages tend to take scenic routes, not the most direct route.
- Lighting on some carriages is inadequate.

Based on these concerns the committee recommends that in residential areas the City should permit night time transportation for the purpose of the bride and groom going from home to the church and the

church to the reception. The permit, to be obtained from the Office of Tourism Management, should specify the most direct route which must be taken. No permits shall be given for carriage transportation at night in neighborhoods except for weddings as stated above.



Carriage Safety

Currently the Department of Traffic and Transportation is charged with inspecting carriage lighting equipment for compliance with state requirements. To ensure proper lighting on all carriages which operate at night, stronger lighting requirements and an annual permit and inspection program should be administered by Tourism Management and Traffic and Transportation. Because Tourism Management offices work only during the day, alternative nighttime enforcement must be developed. To improve safety at night, the committee recommends the following:

- The Department of Traffic and Transportation should determine an appropriate lighting intensity (front and rear) and inspect all certified carriages' nighttime lighting on an annual basis to ensure it is adequate.
- Regulations should be strengthened to require that horses wear reflective hoof bands.
- The Police Department should be reminded of the need to enforce nighttime carriage and horse lighting and/or illumination regulations.

Rickshaws

To better understand the rickshaw business, the committee discussed rickshaws with the owner of the only local rickshaw company. There are currently ten certified rickshaws. The law prohibits rickshaw use for conducting tours by restricting them to taxi purposes. Consequently, rickshaws only operate during the evenings when visitors are going out the restaurants or returning to their hotels. Spoleto is the only time of the year when all ten rickshaws are in operation.

A. Safety (lighting)

Rickshaws use a battery powered front halogen bulb and a rear reflective device. The committee expressed concern about rickshaw lighting being too dim. There has been research into the possibility of installing a generator powered by the pedaling action. However, pedaling does not generate enough power.

The committee recommends that the Department of Traffic and Transportation determine the candle power needed for rickshaw lighting (front and rear) which should be required immediately.

B. Insurance

The City requires the same minimum insurance as required by the state. This minimum is not sufficient.

The committee recommends that the City revise the ordinance to require \$1 million minimum coverage.

C. Capping rickshaws

The law allows for a maximum of twenty rickshaws. When the maximum is reached, a medallion system is required to spread the rickshaws across the five tour zones. There are now ten permitted rickshaws. Concerns about the impact of twice the number of rickshaws were expressed. Generally, it was agreed that doubling the number of rickshaws on the street would create major traffic safety problems. Perhaps some growth could be accommodated.

The committee recommends that the maximum number of rickshaws should be reduced from twenty to fifteen. At fifteen a medallion system will be activated.

Buses

Buses are classified into four types: small buses, charter buses, large buses and extra large buses. Current regulations appear to be working well for all buses except small buses (to be discussed below) and bus parking (to be addressed in the Transportation section).

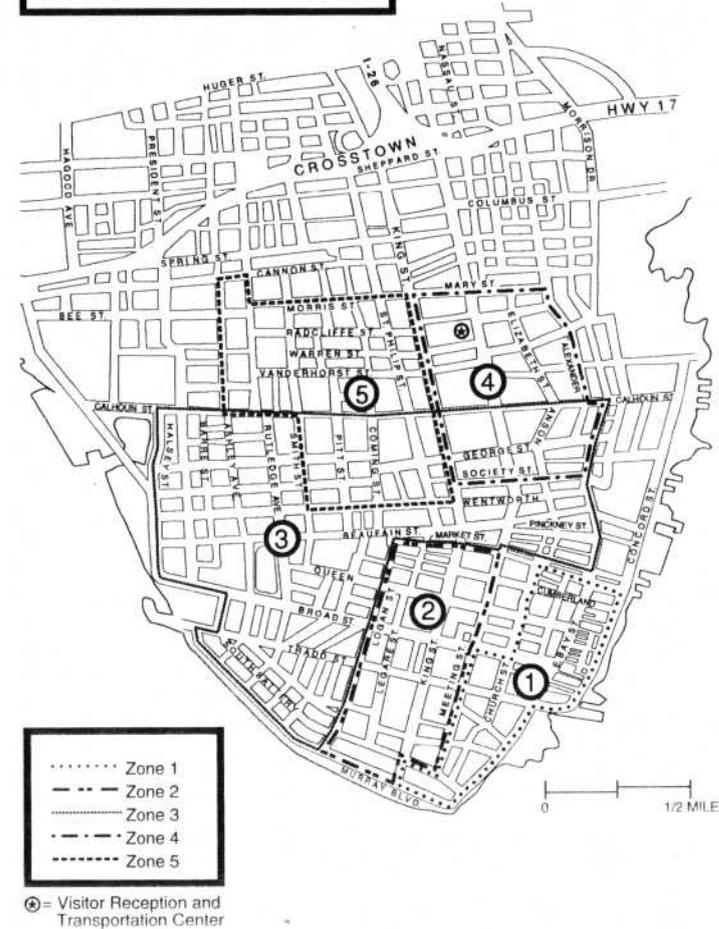
Small buses

Small buses are 25 feet in length or less. They are required to have a certificate of appropriateness issued by the Tourism Commission. Annually, small buses which conduct regularly scheduled tours must submit routes to the tourism director for approval. Routes are to be distributed equally among the touring entities. Each touring entity must follow its approved route(s) and utilize their best efforts to spend an equal amount of time in each zone. Touring entities which do not conduct regularly scheduled tours must notify the tourism director 24 hours in advance of the tour and shall be assigned a route. All small bus tours must be conducted by registered guides. Passenger loading occurs only at designated passenger loading zones.

The committee discussed congestion due to small buses and realized there is no easy way to know for certain how many buses are on the street at a given point in time. The committee was advised that at any given point in time there are probably twenty-four buses on the streets. In the peak season this may rise to thirty-five buses.

A gate through which all buses must pass would be the only way to know the actual number. However, a gate has several problems: 1. some buses leave from local hotels and motels and, therefore, do not need to come through the VRTC shed which is the logical gate and 2. if all buses were required to pass through the VRTC, traffic in this area would become more congested.

TOUR BUS ZONES



The committee discussed the five tour zones and the use of those zones. There are several streets which the majority of buses use. At the same time, there are other streets which could be used. To ensure routes approved by the tourism director are equally distributed and no streets are burdened, routes as approved should be consolidated on to one map. Also, each bus should be required to obtain its own tour route and each company should be required to spread its routes out and make each route substantially different. The majority of bus routes flow in a counter-clockwise direction on the peninsula. This is due in part to the passenger loading zone on the east side of East Battery Street where most buses let riders off to walk up on the battery. An alternative bus stop on the west side of the street should be identified which would enable buses to leave the VRTC and travel in a clock-wise direction. To further lessen the impact of buses on the lower peninsula, the committee discussed the possibility of adding another zone to include the Citadel and Hampton Park area. On average, tours take one to one and one-half hours. Adding a new zone should result in buses have less time to visit the lower peninsula.

In order to lessen the impact of small tour buses, the committee recommends the following:

- Buses should be required to incorporate a new zone to encompass all of the peninsula not currently included in zones 1 to 5. This will reduce the amount of time buses spend in the heavily impacted areas. Information on this area should be developed and included in the update of the tour guide notes in 1995.
- In approving routes, the tourism director should ensure a variety of routes so as to not over burden any street or neighborhood. To facilitate the distribution of routes, twice a year (season and off-season) tour companies and City staff should map all touring routes. Routes should be changed as needed to alleviate congestion.
- The City should explore the possibility of adding a small tour bus passenger loading zone on the west side of East Battery Street in the vicinity of the Battery. This will enable buses to leave the VRTC and travel in a clock-wise direction further alleviating the bus impact.
- Each bus certified by the City must have a specific route. Companies with only one bus must have two routes. Every route approved for a company should be substantially different from the other routes approved for that company.
- Limit the number of certified vehicles permitted to tour to fifty. Implement a permit system when the certified number of vehicles surpasses fifty.
- Revise the ordinance to require \$1 million minimum liability insurance.

Vehicle Fees

On the surface there appears to be some inequity in the City's fees for different touring vehicles. For annual certification, a carriage company must pay \$17,500, while a comparably sized small bus company must pay approximately \$9,250. The committee began an evaluation of the various fees paid by the different touring vehicles and determined that it was beyond the scope of their expertise to fully understand and evaluate all the issues. The committee acknowledged that a thorough evaluation of all fees and costs should be undertaken in a timely manner so that the findings could be developed into a new ordinance and incorporated into the 1995 budget. Active participation and guidance by the City Finance Division is critical as is the need to begin the process immediately.

The committee therefore recommends that the mayor should immediately appoint a special committee to determine if fees are equitably distributed between the various types of touring vehicles. The committee should include representatives from the different touring vehicle industries (one per vehicle type) and the City's Finance and Legal Divisions. Findings from this committee should be incorporated into the 1995 budget.

Enforcement of All Tourism Regulations

During the day, the Tourism Management office provides enforcement of all tourism related ordinances. Tourism officers are educated so as to understand the complex tourism ordinance. In the evening, the Police Department assumes the enforcement responsibility; however, no training or tourism ordinance education occurs for these officers.

The committee recommends that a conscious effort should be made to ensure and coordinate the education of police officers to enable them to properly enforce the tourism ordinance.



TRANSPORTATION

Chapter 6.

TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Regional Transportation Needs

The committee finds that Charleston's long-term public transportation needs demand an effective regional transportation authority. The benefits of an effective public transportation system are: reduced auto congestion and pollution, reduced gasoline consumption and elimination of the need to widen roads, build new bridges, etc. In addition to the obvious benefits, a good public transportation system can also serve as another carrot in the wooing of industries to the area. The committee recommends the following:

- While the City of Charleston should encourage increased ridership and refinement of the DASH system, it should also focus efforts on the development of a Tri-County public transportation system.

Comprehensive Study of Downtown

The residents survey has identified traffic congestion and parking availability as prime concerns of residents of peninsular Charleston. The issues of traffic and parking are of vital importance to merchants and tourists as well. A comprehensive transportation and parking study can provide guidance for long term solutions.

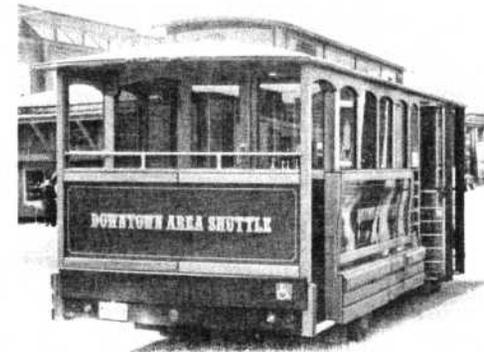
The City should fund a comprehensive downtown traffic and parking study.

Residential Parking Districts

Visitor and local intrusions into the Ansonborough and Dock Street neighborhoods from the Market area are a problem. The City should establish a 1-hour residential parking district that would be in effect 24 hours, 7 days a week, for Dock Street and Ansonborough. This would require a nighttime enforcement officer.

DASH

Increased DASH ridership would mean less congestion on streets. Although it has achieved much success since its birth in 1991 (ridership has increased 50 percent), DASH is not realizing its full potential in terms of resident or tourist ridership. Resident ridership, in particular, remains low because residents view DASH as a tourist vehicle.



The committee offers the following recommendations to increase resident, business and tourist participation in DASH:

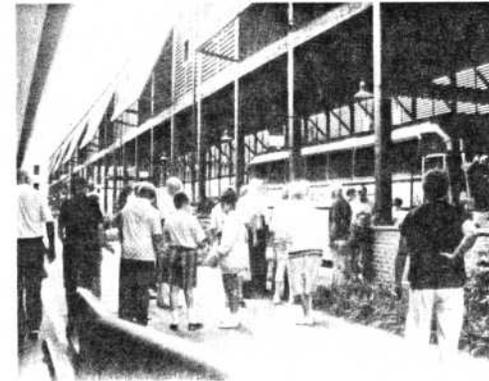
- Extend DASH service to West Ashley to lessen congestion caused by tourists and residents driving into Downtown. Serve West Ashley hotels and establish park-and-ride lots at mall and plaza lots along Savannah Highway. (A consultant is currently evaluating the cost-effectiveness of developing a West Ashley route. Findings will be forwarded to City Council's subcommittee on Transportation in the near future.)
- Remove canned audio tour. The audio program, designed to orient tourists to the City, discourages resident ridership. It also creates a theme park feel; as such, it is inappropriate to the image of Charleston.
- Replace canned audio tour with driver's announcement of stops. (Announcement of stops legitimizes DASH as public transit.)
- Investigate new computerized fare boxes to allow riders to purchase passes on the bus, instead of having to go to a designated DASH pass site. (Union regulations prohibit drivers from money-handling. The fare boxes would allow more ticketing flexibility.)
- Sell weekly and monthly DASH passes in addition to daily passes.
- Establish sales locations for DASH passes where convenient for residents. (SCE&G office, parking garages, grocery stores, etc.)
- Have participating hoteliers share their DASH experiences with other members of the Hotel/Motel Association in order to increase participation in DASH sales/promotion.
- Require businesses which advertise that they are "on the DASH route" to sell and promote DASH passes.
- Use neighborhood groups as vehicle for educating locals about DASH.
- Devote more energy to securing satellite lots on DASH routes to be used by Downtown employees. Keys to success are heavy promotion and education, low parking fees for the satellite lot and much stricter enforcement of Downtown parking regulations. A possible lot location is at Lockwood and Fishburne Streets.
- Eventually, trolleys should be retired and replaced with a non-theme type vehicle.
- Transit office should be encouraged to work aggressively with the College of Charleston to buy and sell student DASH passes and with Downtown employers to purchase passes for their employees and patrons.
- The Meeting/King route, which currently is routed by Waterfront Park and through the Market area, should become purely a King/Meeting "express" route. With the elimination of the Waterfront Park stop and the trip through the Market, the King/Meeting route would become a very efficient

north/south transportation route for tourists and residents. The proposed route would link commercial, office and residential uses south of Calhoun with the growing commercial area north of Calhoun in a quick, easily defined (and thus easily marketed) route. (See DASH map.)

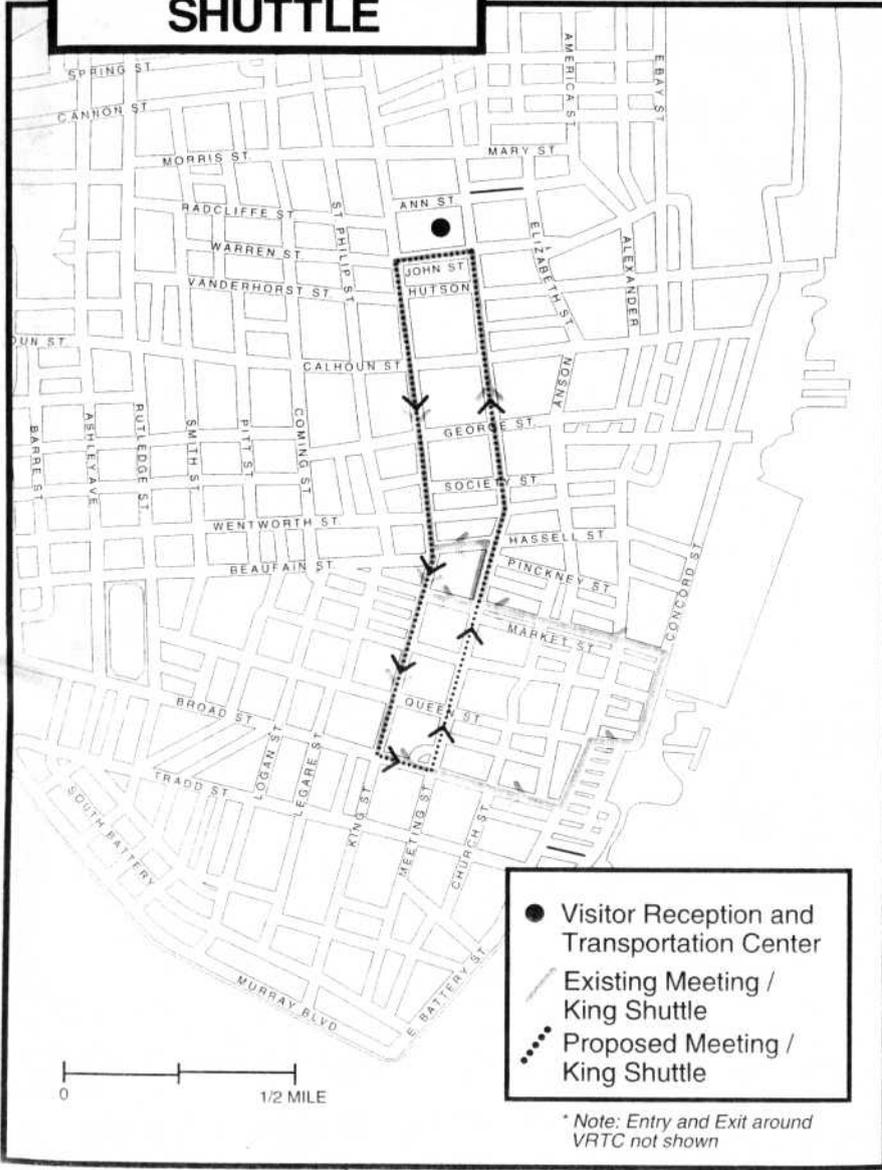
- At the King Street merchants' request, the Meeting/King route currently makes a redundant loop via Hasell Street. In an effort to make the Meeting/King route a more efficient, "express" route, Committee recommends removal of the redundant loop.
- The Market area and Waterfront Park would, instead, be served by the existing Medical Complex/Market route. The Market route would be extended to include a stop at Waterfront Park and, eventually, a stop at the Aquarium and Maritime Center. Committee recommends that the shuttle carry only the name of the route it is running so that, as it leaves the visitor center, the shuttle will be labeled either "Medical Complex/Marina" or "Market/Waterfront" (The bus driver would be responsible for changing the signage.)
- As a necessary component to the suggested route changes, a single DASH map with color-coded routes should be created. Visitor center staff should be educated about the changes.

Alternative Transportation

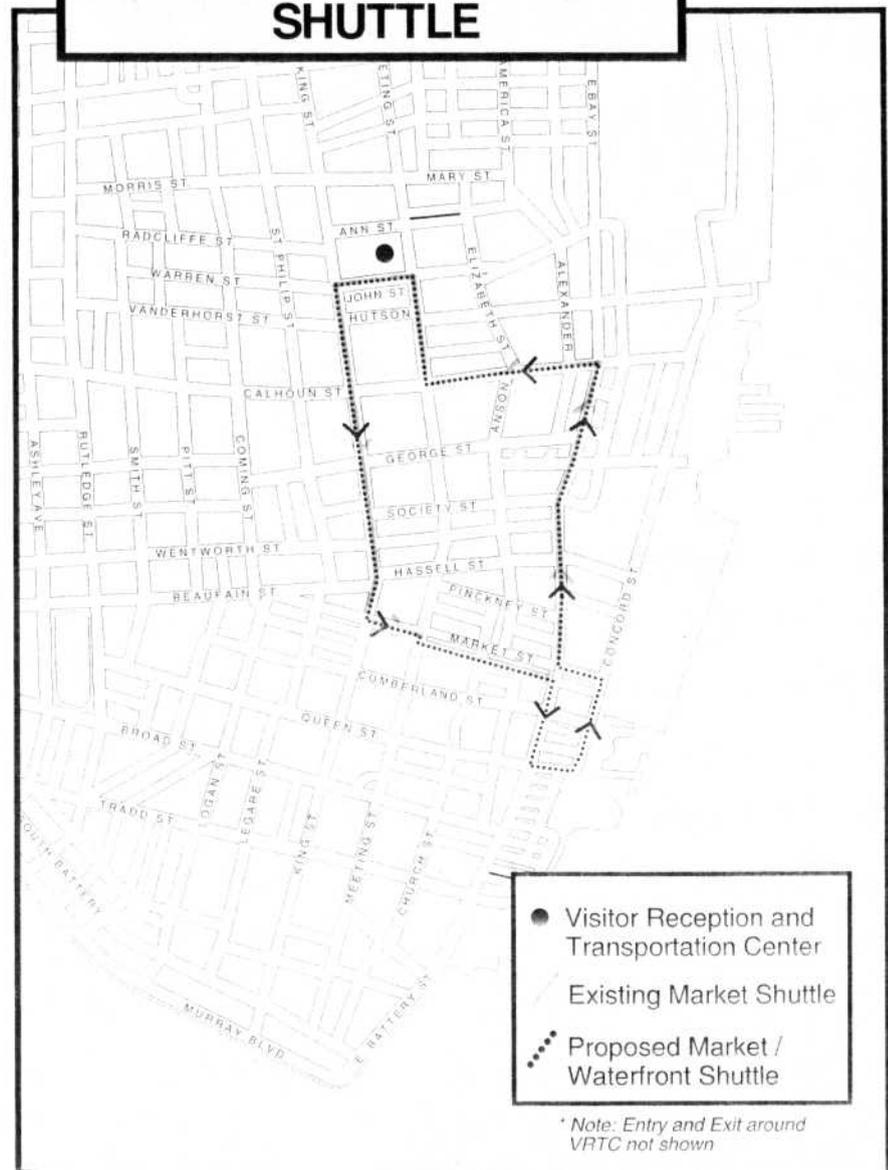
The City should work in cooperation with other jurisdictions to investigate such alternative transportation links as water ferries and light rail.



MEETING / KING SHUTTLE



MARKET / WATERFRONT SHUTTLE



Pedestrian Friendly City

Charleston prides itself on the pedestrian nature and the walkability of downtown. The city should continue to foster a pedestrian-friendly environment, thereby maintaining the city's uniqueness and reducing vehicular congestion.

To accomplish this, the committee recommends the following:

- Sandwich boards crowd the sidewalks, impede pedestrian traffic and render passage of the handi-capped virtually impossible. Sandwich boards should be prohibited and existing sandwich boards should be removed.
- The City should explore ways of increasing the safety of the following key intersections.
 - East Bay at North and South Market
 - East Bay at Vendue Range
 - Meeting at Ann Street
- The Market area is an area that could be improved, both visually and functionally, by increasing the pedestrian area and enhancing its pedestrian nature.
 1. The City should strictly enforce its ordinance prohibiting meter-feeding in the Market area.
 2. The Market Area Streetscaping plan is endorsed to include enhanced sidewalks, tree-planting, benches and other pedestrian amenities.
 3. The City should investigate possible vehicle-detering mechanisms for North and South Market Streets as components of the Market area's eventual streetscaping plans.



Parking Garages

The committee feels that parking garages are, at certain times, underutilized.

In the name of making employee parking more efficient, freeing up surface lots for patrons, lessening congestion and easing the parking problems and noise in residential neighborhoods surrounding the Market area, the committee proposes the following recommendations:

- The Market area garages are underutilized in the evenings and on weekends. Greater garage use could ease congestion and noise problems in the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Committee recommends:
 1. The Cumberland/Meeting garage be designated as the garage for nighttime Market area and theater patrons.
 2. The Cumberland/Meeting garage remain an attended operation with extended hours on weekends.
 3. The city encourage use of the garage by charging reduced nighttime rates.
 4. The newly-assigned Market area foot patrolman initiate regular patrol of Market area garages and parking lots.
- As a necessary complement to the efforts to ease congestion and noise in the Market area and to encourage garage use, the City should extend Market area meter hours.
- Parking Validation Program: City currently offers validation stamps (125 for \$90) to merchants for customer use in City parking garages and lots. The City and DBA should work to encourage greater participation in the validation program.

Tour Bus Parking

The need for bus parking space peaks in April, when as many as 28 buses must be parked downtown. Although hotels are required to provide parking for the buses used by their patrons, few hotels are situated to accommodate them. To compound the problem, bus parking sites which have been available in the past (at Gaillard Auditorium, for example) are no longer available. There will be ten spaces for buses in the VRTC garage currently under construction.

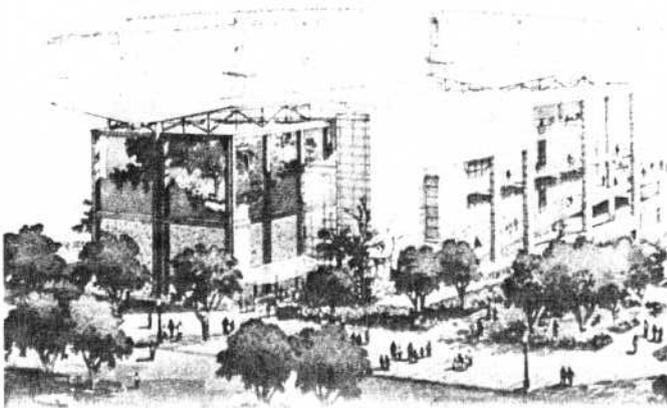
The State Ports Authority's passenger terminal lot may be used for tour buses. With coordination between the Office of Tourism Management, the Department of Traffic and Transportation and the State Ports Authority and, with efficient parking, the passenger terminal lot can accommodate twenty to thirty tour buses.

1. The City should give tour buses priority in the passenger terminal lot, day and night. When required by heavy tour bus volumes, the City should strictly enforce the reservation of the passenger terminal lot for tour bus parking only.
2. On the occasions when the passenger terminal lot is full (City can acquire this information in advance), the City should re-direct the tour buses to Pritchard Street and/or Concord Street, where a series of on-street metered spaces can be reserved for tour buses.

Aquarium/Waterfront Impacts

The development of the waterfront will certainly create additional parking needs for cars and buses. Although projections are tentative, initial calculations indicate that the Aquarium may generate the need for parking thirty buses at one time. Aquarium planners are hesitant to provide bus parking adjacent to the aquarium because of noise and negative visual and environmental impacts on the Aquarium.

Committee asks that the various parties involved in planning for the Aquarium, Maritime Center and future waterfront development, make the issue of transportation a priority. Proper planning demands: visitorship projections, adequate provision for cars, satellite parking for buses and possibly for cars and a thorough exploration of DASH links.



APPENDIX

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APPENDIX A

The City of Charleston Needs Your Ideas!

The City is about to embark on an important process: the updating of our 1978 Tourism Impact and Management Plan. A key step in the update process is obtaining citizen input. This survey is designed to seek advice from downtown residents—those of you who are most directly impacted by the tourism industry.

1. Please indicate your neighborhood: _____
2. Carefully consider each issue below and indicate whether you view the issue as a serious problem by placing a check in the appropriate column. (0 = not a problem; 1 = slight problem; 3 = very serious problem.) Please provide a brief explanation where needed. Add issues to the list, if desired.

	0	1	2	3	COMMENT/ EXPLANATION
1. Availability of PARKING for residents in own neighborhood					
2. Availability of PARKING for residents/tourists in commercial areas					
3. Location & availability of TOUR BUS PARKING					
4. TOUR BUS STYLES					
5. Public RESTROOM availability					
6. Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in commercial areas					
7. Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in residential areas					
8. Congestion due to TOUR BUSES					
9. Potential safety hazards due to TOUR BUSES					
10. Congestion due to CARRIAGES					
11. Potential safety hazards due to CARRIAGES					
12. Congestion due to RICKSHAWS					
13. Potential safety hazards due to RICKSHAWS					
14. Congestion due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES					
15. Potential safety hazards due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES					
16. Congestion due to AUTOS driven by tourists					
17. Potential safety hazards due to AUTOS driven by tourists					
18. NIGHTTIME DRIVING SAFETY due to touring vehicles (any type)					
19. Street/sidewalk SANITATION of commercial areas					
20. Street/sidewalk SANITATION of residential areas					
21. NIGHTTIME NOISE/DISTURBANCES within residential areas					
22. NIGHTTIME NOISE coming from commercial areas					
23. QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL					
24. BALANCE of tourist-targeted retail to resident-targeted retail					
25. Other _____					
26. Other _____					

3. Do you have any suggestions on how to solve any of the issues listed on the reverse?

4. Other comments?

The Department of Planning and Urban Development and a special advisory committee will soon be studying a variety of issues related to tourism management. Your response to this questionnaire will help shape their analysis and recommendations. Thank you for your participation in this critical planning process.

Please respond by
July 30

Deliver to:
Drop Box at
East Bay Cleaners
480 East Bay Street

OR

Mail to:
Planning Department
116 Meeting Street
Charleston, SC 29401

APPENDIX B

SURVEY OF THE RESIDENTS

RESPONSE RATE BY NEIGHBORHOOD

	# Surveys Distributed (Estimate)	# Responses	% Response Rate
Charlestowne	550	274	50%
Dock Street/French Quarter	100	40	40%
Ansonborough	500	49	10%
Mazyck/Wraggborough	200	12	6%
Radcliffeborough	600	29	5%
Harleston Village	1,000	38	4%
"Downtown"	NA	476	16%
TOTAL	2,950	476	16%

RESIDENTS' RESPONSE

ANSONBOROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD

ISSUES RANKED ACCORDING TO RESIDENT RESPONSE

(0=issue is not seen as a problem; 3=issue is deemed very serious problem.)

RANK	ISSUES	MEAN SCORE
1	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of commercial areas	2.43
2	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of residential areas	2.15
3	Availability of PARKING for Residents/Tourists in Commercial areas	2.02
3	Public RESTROOM Availability	2.02
5	Congestion due to TOUR BUSES	1.95
6	Availability of PARKING for Residents in own NEIGHBORHOOD	1.90
7	Congestion due to CARRIAGES	1.83
8	Potential safety hazards due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.77
9	Congestion due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.76
10	NIGHTTIME NOISE/DISTURBANCES within residential areas	1.71
11	Potential safety hazards due to CARRIAGES	1.63
12	Congestion due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.55
13	Potential safety hazards due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.52
14	NIGHTTIME NOISE coming from commercial areas	1.44
15	Potential safety hazards due to RICKSHAWS	1.42
16	Potential safety hazards due to TOUR BUSES	1.20
17	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in commercial areas	1.16
18	Congestion due to RICKSHAWS	1.15
19	TOUR BUS STYLES	1.07
20	NIGHTTIME DRIVING SAFETY due to touring vehicles (any type)	1.06
21	BALANCE of tourist-targeted retail to resident-targeted retail	1.04
22	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in residential areas	0.93
23	Location & Availability of TOUR BUS PARKING	0.84
24	QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL	0.71

RESIDENTS' RESPONSE

CHARLESTOWNE NEIGHBORHOOD

ISSUES RANKED ACCORDING TO RESIDENT RESPONSE

(0=issue is not seen as a problem; 3=issue is deemed very serious problem.)

RANK	ISSUES	MEAN SCORE
1	Congestion due to CARRIAGES	2.44
2	Potential safety hazards due to CARRIAGES	2.28
3	Public RESTROOM Availability	2.22
4	Congestion due to TOUR BUSES	2.21
5	Potential safety hazards due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	2.12
6	Availability of PARKING for Residents/Tourists in Commercial areas	1.92
7	Potential safety hazards due to TOUR BUSES	1.88
8	Congestion due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.87
9	Congestion due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.79
10	Potential safety hazards due to RICKSHAWS	1.75
10	Potential safety hazards due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.75
12	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of residential areas	1.72
13	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of commercial areas	1.71
14	Availability of PARKING for Residents in own NEIGHBORHOOD	1.52
15	Congestion due to RICKSHAWS	1.50
16	NIGHTTIME NOISE/DISTURBANCES within residential areas	1.48
17	TOUR BUS STYLES	1.44
18	NIGHTTIME DRIVING SAFETY due to touring vehicles (any type)	1.38
19	Location & Availability of TOUR BUS PARKING	1.19
20	BALANCE of tourist-targeted retail to resident-targeted retail	1.09
21	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in commercial areas	1.02
22	NIGHTTIME NOISE coming from commercial areas	1.00
23	QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL	0.83
24	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in residential areas	0.60

RESIDENTS' RESPONSE

DOCK STREET NEIGHBORHOOD

ISSUES RANKED ACCORDING TO RESIDENT RESPONSE

(0=issue is not seen as a problem; 3=issue is deemed very serious problem.)

RANK	ISSUES	MEAN SCORE
1	NIGHTTIME NOISE/DISTURBANCES within residential areas	2.63
2	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of residential areas	2.45
3	Availability of PARKING for Residents in own NEIGHBORHOOD	2.27
4	NIGHTTIME NOISE coming from commercial areas	2.17
5	Availability of PARKING for Residents/Tourists in Commercial areas	1.98
6	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of commercial areas	1.97
7	Congestion due to TOUR BUSES	1.90
8	Congestion due to CARRIAGES	1.88
9	Public RESTROOM Availability	1.86
10	Potential safety hazards due to TOUR BUSES	1.81
11	Congestion due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.79
12	Potential safety hazards due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.74
13	Potential safety hazards due to CARRIAGES	1.60
13	Potential safety hazards due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.60
15	Congestion due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.48
16	Location & Availability of TOUR BUS PARKING	1.34
17	TOUR BUS STYLES	1.32
18	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in commercial areas	1.28
19	NIGHTTIME DRIVING SAFETY due to touring vehicles (any type)	1.25
20	Potential safety hazards due to RICKSHAWS	1.19
21	BALANCE of tourist-targeted retail to resident-targeted retail	1.15
22	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in residential areas	0.89
22	Congestion due to RICKSHAWS	0.89
24	QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL	0.68

RESIDENTS' RESPONSE

HARLESTON VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD

ISSUES RANKED ACCORDING TO RESIDENT RESPONSE

(0=issue is not seen as a problem; 3=issue is deemed very serious problem.)

RANK	ISSUES	MEAN SCORE
1	Congestion due to CARRIAGES	2.19
2	Availability of PARKING for Residents/Tourists in Commercial areas	2.18
2	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of commercial areas	2.18
4	Availability of PARKING for Residents in own NEIGHBORHOOD	2.14
5	Potential safety hazards due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	2.06
6	NIGHTTIME NOISE/DISTURBANCES within residential areas	2.05
7	Potential safety hazards due to CARRIAGES	2.03
8	Public RESTROOM Availability	2.00
9	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of residential areas	1.97
10	Congestion due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.81
11	Congestion due to TOUR BUSES	1.73
12	Potential safety hazards due to RICKSHAWS	1.68
13	Congestion due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.67
14	Potential safety hazards due to TOUR BUSES	1.64
15	Potential safety hazards due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.50
16	Congestion due to RICKSHAWS	1.43
17	BALANCE of tourist-targeted retail to resident-targeted retail	1.24
18	Location & Availability of TOUR BUS PARKING	1.23
19	NIGHTTIME NOISE coming from commercial areas	1.19
20	NIGHTTIME DRIVING SAFETY due to touring vehicles (any type)	1.15
21	TOUR BUS STYLES	1.08
22	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in commercial areas	0.88
22	QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL	0.88
24	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in residential areas	0.58

RESIDENTS' RESPONSE

MAZYCK-WRAGGBOROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD

ISSUES RANKED ACCORDING TO RESIDENT RESPONSE

(0=issue is not seen as a problem; 3=issue is deemed very serious problem.)

RANK	ISSUES	MEAN SCORE
1	Availability of PARKING for Residents/Tourists in Commercial areas	2.33
2	Potential safety hazards due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.92
3	Potential safety hazards due to CARRIAGES	1.91
4	Congestion due to CARRIAGES	1.83
4	Congestion due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.83
6	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of commercial areas	1.67
7	Congestion due to TOUR BUSES	1.58
7	Potential safety hazards due to RICKSHAWS	1.58
7	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of residential areas	1.58
10	Public RESTROOM Availability	1.55
11	Availability of PARKING for Residents in own NEIGHBORHOOD	1.50
11	Potential safety hazards due to TOUR BUSES	1.50
11	Congestion due to RICKSHAWS	1.50
11	Congestion due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.50
11	Potential safety hazards due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.50
16	BALANCE of tourist-targeted retail to resident-targeted retail	1.20
17	NIGHTTIME NOISE/DISTURBANCES within residential areas	1.18
18	NIGHTTIME DRIVING SAFETY due to touring vehicles (any type)	1.17
19	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in commercial areas	1.09
20	NIGHTTIME NOISE coming from commercial areas	1.08
21	Location & Availability of TOUR BUS PARKING	1.00
21	QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL	1.00
23	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in residential areas	0.90
24	TOUR BUS STYLES	0.58

RESIDENTS' RESPONSE

RADCLIFFEBOROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD

ISSUES RANKED ACCORDING TO RESIDENT RESPONSE

(0=issue is not seen as a problem; 3=issue is deemed very serious problem.)

RANK	ISSUES	MEAN SCORE
1	Availability of PARKING for Residents in own NEIGHBORHOOD	2.10
2	Potential safety hazards due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.85
3	Public RESTROOM Availability	1.79
4	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of commercial areas	1.72
5	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of residential areas	1.69
6	Congestion due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.64
7	Availability of PARKING for Residents/Tourists in Commercial areas	1.61
8	NIGHTTIME NOISE/DISTURBANCES within residential areas	1.55
9	Congestion due to TOUR BUSES	1.48
10	Congestion due to CARRIAGES	1.45
11	Potential safety hazards due to CARRIAGES	1.38
12	Potential safety hazards due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.37
13	BALANCE of tourist-targeted retail to resident-targeted retail	1.36
14	Congestion due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.33
15	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in commercial areas	1.19
16	Potential safety hazards due to TOUR BUSES	1.11
16	QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL	1.11
18	Location & Availability of TOUR BUS PARKING	0.88
19	TOUR BUS STYLES	0.85
20	Congestion due to RICKSHAWS	0.81
20	Potential safety hazards due to RICKSHAWS	0.81
22	NIGHTTIME DRIVING SAFETY due to touring vehicles (any type)	0.59
23	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in residential areas	0.50
24	NIGHTTIME NOISE coming from commercial areas	0.48

RESIDENTS' RESPONSE

"UNDEFINED" NEIGHBORHOOD

ISSUES RANKED ACCORDING TO RESIDENT RESPONSE

(0=issue is not seen as a problem; 3=issue is deemed very serious problem.)

RANK	ISSUES	MEAN SCORE
1	Public RESTROOM Availability	2.45
2	Potential safety hazards due to CARRIAGES	2.13
3	Congestion due to CARRIAGES	2.12
4	Availability of PARKING for Residents/Tourists in Commercial areas	2.09
5	Congestion due to TOUR BUSES	1.97
6	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of commercial areas	1.94
7	Potential safety hazards due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.91
8	Street/sidewalk SANITATION of residential areas	1.78
9	Congestion due to RENTED, SURRIED BICYCLES	1.67
10	Potential safety hazards due to RICKSHAWS	1.59
11	Congestion due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.55
12	Potential safety hazards due to TOUR BUSES	1.53
13	Availability of PARKING for Residents in own NEIGHBORHOOD	1.50
14	Congestion due to RICKSHAWS	1.48
14	NIGHTTIME DRIVING SAFETY due to touring vehicles (any type)	1.48
16	BALANCE of tourist-targeted retail to resident-targeted retail	1.25
17	Potential safety hazards due to AUTOS driven by tourists	1.22
18	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in commercial areas	1.17
19	NIGHTTIME NOISE/DISTURBANCES within residential areas	1.10
20	TOUR BUS STYLES	1.07
21	Location & Availability of TOUR BUS PARKING	1.06
22	Availability of PUBLIC BENCHES, SEATING in residential areas	0.93
22	NIGHTTIME NOISE coming from commercial areas	0.93
24	QUALITY OF DOWNTOWN RETAIL	0.77

APPENDIX C

Resident Survey Results

Tourist Related Vehicles Sub-Committee

Motorized Tour Vehicles/Buses (number of responses)

- Too many buses/reduce number of buses (67)
- Buses are too big (45)
- Ban "theme" vehicles (30)
- Buses/tour vehicles should have to pull over to let cars pass (29)
- Ban large, coach-style buses (22)
- Ban all motorized tour vehicles/buses in historic district (16)
- Keep all tour vehicles off narrow & one-way streets (15)
- Ban tacky, inappropriate names of tour companies/buses (14)
- DASH trolley/trolley style is attractive & a good idea (10)
- Air pollution from tour buses is very serious problem (7)
- Too many van-style tour vehicles (5)
- Large buses are too dangerous (3)
- Should be an additional tax on tour vehicles (3)
- Buses should have designated parking at the VRTC (2)
- Buses should have designated loading/unloading areas away from traffic (2)
- Tour buses don't use existing designated loading/parking areas (2)
- Buses should be closed so driver's amplified voice can't be heard on the street (2)
- Use the BAR to control "theme" vehicles (1)

Carriages

- Too many carriages/limit number of carriages (100)
- Horse urine/odor a major problem (54)
- Require carriages to pull over for cars to pass (35)
(Ban carriages from streets where this is not possible)
- Carriages unsafe/ban carriages (35)
- Horses should not be used on very hot days (over 85 degrees) (13)
- No change in carriage congestion with new route system (12)
- Smaller carriages preferable (6)
- Stop evening carriage tours (5)
- Put all carriages somewhere else, like Hampton Park (5)
- Carriage tours are tacky/don't tell accurate history (5)
- Carriages should have a driver and a guide, so driver isn't looking backwards all the time (4)
- Ban horses from congested streets so horses don't get spooked (3)
- Increase carriage fees/fares to pay for larger policing force to enforce regulations (3)
- Carriages should not be allowed on streets from 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Rickshaws/Surried bicycles

- Ban rickshaws (27)
- Rickshaws unsafe (25)
- Rickshaws dangerous at night (5)
- Rickshaws are non-polluting; drivers courteous and fun (5)
- Rickshaws inappropriate to Charleston (4)

- Ban surried bicycles; inappropriate and dangerous (85)
(Do not obey any traffic laws; often driven by children and/or inattentive drivers)
- Surried bicycles in poor taste/too much like theme park (6)
- Establish a scenic route for surried bicycles/avoid congested areas like the Market, East Bay St., Meeting St., etc. (1)
- Ban all evening tour vehicles (16)
- Establish a "siesta" time from 11:30-1:30 for tour vehicles to alleviate lunch time congestion (4)

Transportation Issues Sub-Committee

Parking/Automobile Traffic

- Need stricter enforcement of parking regulations (80)
- No place for residents to park on street (57)
 - On weekends
 - Due to B&B guests
 - Because of C of C students
 - Because of Bishop England High School students
- Visitors should be encouraged to see historic areas on foot (51)
- Tourists drive too slowly and erratically (safety hazard) (48)
- Should be large parking area away from downtown w/shuttles to market/historic areas (22)
- Market area bad for parking (13)
- Reduce number of parking decals sold (12)
- Downtown workers park in residential areas (8)
- Restrict tourist parking to garages, lots, hotels (8)
- Reduce speed limit for automobiles (7)
- Restaurants should be required to have off-street parking for workers (6)
- Residents abuse residential parking permits (4)
 - park on other streets
 - don't use their off-street parking
- Downtown workers park all day on East Battery--should be a time limit on those spaces (4)
- Ban non-resident cars from below Broad Street. area (4)
- Contractors should park in driveways of houses they work on (4)
- East Battery should be all residential parking (4)
- Motorcycles should be banned from historic district (4)
- Residents should get one free parking decal (3)
- Apartment owners should be required to provide off-street parking for each tenant, not each apartment (3)
- Reduce visitor parking decals to one week (2)
- Shorten non-residential parking to one hour in peripheral neighborhoods (2)
- Ban 18-wheelers from historic area
- No RV parking should ever be allowed in historic district (1)
- Should not charge for parking at VRTC (1)
- Should ticket vehicles moving too slowly (1)
- Should increase parking meter fees & parking ticket fines. Would encourage students, workers to find alternate areas to park. (1)
- Should close market area to cars (1)

Mass Transit

- Should be large parking area away from historic district with reliable, regular shuttles to & around historic areas (32) (see Parking)
- DASH trolley is attractive and a good idea (11) (see Buses)
- Local SCE&G buses are too large & never filled. Smaller, less polluting mini-buses would be much better (6)
- Should have seated, covered bus stops (4)
- Should expand DASH routes to allow residents to take advantage of it/could purchase monthly passes (3)
- Need to encourage mass-transit use for residents around town (2)

Bicycles

- Make bicyclists, joggers, rollerbladers obey laws (10)
- Go wrong way down one-way streets
- Don't obey traffic lights, stop signs, etc.

Walking/Pedestrian Traffic

- Need better walking signals at E. Bay & Broad (1)
- Should be "pedestrian green light" at E. Bay & Market (1)

City Image Sub Committee

Sanitation

- Overall sanitation very inadequate (35)
- Market area disgusting (trash, garbage and smells) (30)
 - weekends particularly noxious
 - rats and vermin attracted
- Restaurateurs/shopkeepers need to take more responsibility for upkeep of sidewalks. Should be swept and hosed down daily (25)
- Dog feces a problem in residential areas (13)
- Need more garbage cans in public places (13)
- Property owners should be required to maintain property (12)
- Issue summons to property owners leaving trash out too early (11)
- Weeds, trees, need removal/pruning (7)
- Need uniform residential garbage cans (6)
- Streets look like a third-world country (6)
- Needs to be garbage/trash pickup on Mondays of long weekends (6)
- Tourists throw trash into private yards (4)
- Garbage truck spills and leaks—disgusting and offensive (4)
- Recycling should be stopped/use of bins is sporadic and unsightly (3)
- Colonial lake area bad—trash/garbage (1)

Public Restrooms

- Need public restrooms throughout downtown (51)
 - should have attendant, with charge (no portalets)
- Should have restrooms at White Point Gardens with attendant (13)
- Need public restrooms in commercial/park areas (11)
- Restrooms not wanted in residential areas (5)
- Need better signage for existing restrooms (5)
- Need portalets at large public gatherings (1)

Public Seating

- Don't want benches/seating in residential areas (41)
- Too few seats in residential areas (10)
- More benches on King Street/Shopping areas (7)
- Need seated, covered bus stops (5)
- Need more public drinking fountains downtown (2)

Signage/Directions

- One-way streets need to be better marked (22)
 - tourists go down wrong way
- Need better marking of parking/no parking areas (6)
- No neon signs wanted (4)
- Better signage needed for existing restrooms (4)

Noise/Night Life

- Noise disturbance a very serious problem/ordinances need to be enforced (70)
 - Enforce with decibel meters
- Boom boxes/car radios around Battery a very serious problem (45)
- Nighttime Market area noise/commotion very bad (12)
- Too many bars in Market area (11)
- Bars should close at 12 a.m. (7)
- Sunday evening gathering on Battery obnoxious, drives away locals & tourists (2)
- Motorcycle noise around historic district a problem (7)
- No more festivals
- No evening entertainment for tourists

Miscellaneous Issues

- Too much junk sold at the Market (27)
- Need a downtown department store (18)
- Need more residential retail (16)
- Need downtown movie theater (2)
- Need more gas stations/corner grocers (1)
- Mayor prefers tourism industry over welfare of residents (21)
- Don't encourage more tourism (17)
- We must be visitor-friendly and try to maintain a reasonable balance (6)
- Consult with other cities/tourist areas about ways to keep traffic to a minimum, keeping city areas clean (3)
- Develop tourist attractions northeast of historic district/in other areas (i.e. Goose Creek) (3)
- Commercial ventures need to be banned on residential streets (1)
- Should have historian on staff at tourism office to try to regulate authenticity of history on tours (1)
- Children's museum like Boston's to increase tourism opportunities for families (tap into historical, cultural heritage) (1)
- Limit size of walking tour groups
- Growth of College of Charleston should be checked (16)
- should provide more student housing downtown or West of the Ashley
- Should develop a reasonable no-car policy for students
- Should distribute a brochure to tourists explaining local laws/ordinances, emphasizing that they're a "guest" in Charleston, good manners, local traffic laws, don't ring private bells, explore private gardens, etc. (21)

Appendix D

VISITOR SURVEY FALL, 1993

SURVEY SITE _____

The City of Charleston is currently conducting a comprehensive tourism management study. The following survey will help us understand visitor patterns and will serve as a report card—letting us know if we are meeting visitor needs. Your participation in the study is very much appreciated.

I. EXPECTATIONS AND IMPRESSIONS OF CHARLESTON

1. Before you arrived in Charleston, what were your expectations of the city? How did your expectations compare with what you found?

a. Please check all of the following that describe how you imagined Charleston:

- ___ Clean city
- ___ Safe city
- ___ Pedestrian city
- ___ Fun/lively city
- ___ Historic city
- ___ Beautiful city
- ___ Authentic, REAL city where people work and live
- ___ City not overrun by tourists
- ___ Abundant dining opportunities
- ___ Abundant cultural opportunities
- ___ Abundant shopping opportunities
- ___ Southern and hospitable
- ___ Other: _____
- ___ Other: _____

b. For only those items you checked, please indicate whether or not Charleston met your expectations by circling one:

- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
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- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no
- Strongly yes / yes / undecided / no / Strongly no

2. If any of your expectations were not met, please explain why: _____

3. If you have visited Charleston before, was the overall quality of your most recent Charleston experience: better / worse / or about the same? (circle one)
 Please explain: _____

4. Please fill out the following chart by placing check marks where appropriate:

	<i>I have participated in these activities during previous visits to Charleston</i>	<i>I have participated in or plan to participate in these activities on this trip</i>	<i>If I were to visit Charleston again, I would participate in these activities</i>	<i>If I were advising a friend about what to see and do in Charleston, I would advise him/her to:</i>
Visit the Market				
Visit King Street				
Visit shops at Charleston Plc. (Omni)				
Visit College of Charleston				
Visit the Battery				
Visit Colonial Lake				
Tour historic house(s) downtown				
Visit Patriot's Point				
Visit Fort Sumter				
Visit beaches				
Take a carriage ride				
Take a bus/van tour				
Take a boat tour/cruise				
Take an organized walking tour				
Explore neighborhoods on your own				
Other:				

5. Did you find ample opportunities to enjoy the following nighttime activities?

	YES	NO
restaurants	_____	_____
shopping	_____	_____
theatre	_____	_____
walking around the city	_____	_____
bars/nightclubs	_____	_____
other _____	_____	_____
other _____	_____	_____

II. TOURING THE CITY

1. Did you find:

Street names clearly marked?	yes / no
One-way streets clearly marked?	yes / no
Public restrooms clearly marked?	yes / no

2. Did you find the following amenities sufficiently supplied?

Water fountains	yes / no
Public restrooms	yes / no
Benches/seating	yes / no
Bike racks	yes / no
Signage to major points of interest	yes / no

3. When you first approached Charleston, were the following easy to find?

Visitor center	yes / no / NA
Historic District	yes / no / NA

4. Did you visit the Visitor Center?

yes / no	
If yes, did you see the orientation film Forever Charleston?	yes / no
did you feel it was appropriately priced?	yes / no

5. "The Visitor Center was an excellent orientation to the city" (Circle one)

strongly agree / agree / undecided / disagree / strongly disagree

If you disagree, what improvements should be made?

III. TRANSPORTATION

1. How did you arrive in Charleston?

- _____ private car
- _____ chartered bus
- _____ cruiseship
- _____ airplane—with taxi, limo, or friend/relative pick-up at airport
- _____ airplane—with car rental at airport
- _____ other: _____

2. If you had access to a car in Charleston, did you:

- Leave car parked during entire visit? yes / no
- Drive from hotel (or home) to dinner? yes / no
- Drive from hotel (or home) to points of interest outside the Historic District? yes / no
- Drive from hotel to points of interest within the Historic District? yes / no
- Drive around to tour the Historic District from car? yes / no
- Did you park your car in public parking garages/lots? yes / no
- Did you find public parking garages/lots clearly marked? yes / no

3. Were you encouraged to explore Charleston without your car? yes / no

4a. If accessible and easy to use, would you choose to use the following forms of transportation *instead of your car* to move around Charleston?

Bike rental	yes / no
Public bus system (trolley/DASH)	yes / no
Taxi service	yes / no
Rickshaw service	yes / no

4b. Did you use the following forms of transportation?

Bike rental	yes / no
Public bus system (trolley/DASH)	yes / no
Taxi service	yes / no
Rickshaw service	yes / no

5. Did you find any of the forms of transportation listed in #4 inadequate? yes / no

If yes, please explain: _____

6. If you rode the trolley (DASH), did you:

Use it to orient yourself to the Historic District?	yes / no
Use it to get to specific sites?	yes / no
Find stops/routes easy to find and understand	yes / no

IV. SUMMARY

1. Is there anything that could have further enriched your visit to Charleston?

V. PROFILE OF RESPONDENT

1. Gender: ___ male ___ female
2. Race: ___ black ___ white ___ other
3. Marital status: ___ married/living with a partner
 ___ single
 ___ separated/divorced
 ___ widowed

4. Please identify your age group for your next birthday:

- ___ 18-24
___ 25-34
___ 35-49
___ 50-65
___ 65+

5. Indicate your highest education level:

- ___ less than 12 years
___ high school graduate
___ technical/trade school
___ some college
___ college graduate
___ master's degree
___ Ph.D, Ed.D, etc.

6. Which of the following describes your current employment status?

- ___ student
___ temporarily unemployed
___ part-time employed
___ full-time employed
___ full-time homemaker
___ retired

7. In what category is your annual household income?

- ___ under \$15,000
___ \$15,000 to \$19,999
___ \$20,000 to \$29,999
___ \$30,000 to \$39,999
___ \$40,000 to \$49,999
___ \$50,000 to \$74,999
___ \$75,000 to \$99,999
___ \$100,000 to \$149,999
___ \$150,000+

8. How long will you be in Charleston?

- ___ 1 day
___ 2 days
___ 3-5 days
___ 6-7 days
___ 8-14 days
___ more than 2 weeks

9. Where are you staying?

- a. ___ with friends/relatives
 ___ hotel/motel
 ___ inn/bed and breakfast
 ___ camping
 ___ other: _____
 ___ just here for the day

- b. ___ Downtown
 ___ Mount Pleasant
 ___ West Ashley
 ___ Airport/North area
 ___ Kiawah/Seabrook
 ___ Isle of Palms/Wild Dunes
 ___ other _____

10. What is the purpose of your visit?

- ___ convention/conference
___ other business-related travel
___ visit family/friends
___ vacation
___ to evaluate Charleston as a future home/business site

11. How many times have you visited Charleston previous to this trip?

- ___ none
___ 1
___ 2-3
___ more than 3

12. Do you plan to visit Charleston again?

yes / no

APPENDIX E

Potential Negative Impacts of Gambling

1. Typically, casinos are large-scale, inwardly-focused developments inappropriate to scale and character of Charleston
2. Casinos are particularly insular. With all services (hotel, restaurants, shops, bank) on premises, casino will divert business from the city's existing commercial areas.
3. Statistics show that 1 percent of population will develop compulsive gambling problem.
4. Research indicates significant crime increases around casinos.
5. Industries may be discouraged from locating in a community with gambling.
6. Casino-generated real estate speculation causes property values to skyrocket. This may drive out residents and/or businesses.
7. Typical casino jobs are low-paying.
8. Casinos are targeted to tourists. A casino would surely mean more visitors to Charleston. The resident would receive little benefit, yet he would continue to bear the burden of infrastructure, enforcement and administrative costs.
9. Research indicates that gambling is not always a revenue producer for a city. Profits tend to concentrate in the hands of the licensed casino owner. Casino operators lobby continuously for lower gaming tax rates.

APPENDIX F

Commercial District Signage

As existing mercantile businesses evolve and new stores are created an opportunity is also created to improve the visual quality and character of efficient advertising signage in the Commercial/Central Business District.

The following is submitted for comment on the type and appearance of signage currently available to merchants. In addition, this is intended to stimulate thought and evoke suggestions on what measures should be taken and/ or instituted beyond what is currently being enforced through the City's Sign Ordinance and the Board of Architectural Review.

Current Regulations Pertaining to Signage

1. Permitted Signs

Currently the following sign types are permitted on buildings:

- Right-angle sign
- Facade sign
- Awning sign
- Window sign
- Sandwich board

2. Prohibited Signs

Sign types that are prohibited by ordinance or have been denied in the past by the Board of Architectural Review. The following are prohibited signs:

- Freestanding/Pedestal sign
- Off Premise sign
- Flashing or animated sign
- Portable sign
- Snipe sign
- Sandblasted relief signs (prohibited by BAR policy dated 2/8/84)

3. Exempt Signs

Signs that are exempt from the regulations. These include:

- Fluttering signs (flags, pennants, banners, or other aerial devices)
- Political signs
- Official notices (court, public agency, or officer)
- Historic plaques
- Traffic/Directional/Warning/Informational (public)

Design Guidelines for Signage

A. Limitations on the Number and Combination of Sign Types

1. No more than two (2) signs per building, or one sign per establishment excluding window signage

2. *Exemption to Rule 1:* Buildings having a second elevation containing a display bay or access

3. Inappropriate signage combinations include
- sandwich board and free-standing signage
 - facade and right-angle signage
 - facade and window signage

B. Right-Angle Signage Design Guidelines

1. Right-angle signage may not extend lower than eight (8) feet above the ground surface.
2. Right-angle signage may not extend beyond sill of second story windows.
3. Right-angle sign projections are limited to ninety (90) degrees.
4. Right-angle signs may project a maximum of four (4) feet, but no more than one-third (1/3) of the sidewalk width.
5. A minimum of fifty (50) feet shall be maintained between right-angle signs.
6. Right-angle signs may be used by the first floor occupant only.

C. Facade Signage Design Guidelines

Facade signage is limited to fifteen (15) percent of the facade of specific elevation. The Board of Architectural Review may restrict signage to less than specified based upon the architectural design, location, and physical features of the building facade.

D. Awning Signs

1. Limit awning valance size to no more than one (1) foot and largest letter size no more than eight (8) inches in vertical height.
2. Awnings shall identify street number and name of establishment. No graphic, number, logo type, or corporate symbol is to be located on sloping or curved surfaces of awnings.
3. All awnings shall be made of opaque material, i.e. canvas. No lettering, logotype, or corporate symbol shall be illuminated from within the awning.

E. Sandwich Boards

All sandwich boards shall be prohibited from placement in the public right-of-way.

F. Directory Signs

Buildings or structures where there are more than one tenant occupying the same space above the ground floor and are occupied for commercial use, directory signs shall be encouraged to be used to identify multiple tenants. Signage for multi-tenant buildings shall be evaluated and approved in concert with all other signage.



City of Charleston
Department of Planning & Urban Development